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No Pain, No Gain? Motivation and Self-Regulation in Music Learning

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Abstract

This paper explores the issue of motivation in music learning in higher education by contextualising data collected as part of the *Investigating-Musical-Performance* research project (Welch, *et al.,* 2006-2008). The discussion begins with findings which suggest that popular, jazz and folk musicians experience more pleasure in musical activities than their classical counterparts. Also significant are results indicating that the latter are more influenced by parents and teachers, with the former primarily motivated by intrinsic factors. In examining these findings, three interrelated themes are considered: the quality of musicians' motivation, genre-specific learning practices, and the competencies demanded by particular music systems. Critiquing the socio-cultural assumptions inherent in Western music pedagogy, and the role of external regulation in formal education systems, a case is made for the importance of autonomy. Questions are raised about the purpose of music education and consequences of formalising musics traditionally learnt through direct engagement with communities of practice.

Introduction

This paper explores the issue of motivation and self-regulation in learning music in higher education by comparing the divergent approaches and attitudes of select groups of classical, popular, jazz and traditional folk musicians. Drawing upon research from the fields of social, ecological and developmental psychology, ethnomusicology and music education, it will examine and contextualise data gathered as part of the *Investigating Musical Performance (IMP): Comparative Studies in Advanced Musical Learning* project (Welch, et al*.,* 2006-2008). The IMP research was designed to investigate how musicians from different genres deepen and develop their learning about performance in undergraduate, postgraduate and wider music community contexts. The findings we present here are principally drawn from a questionnaire that was distributed to a mix of professional musicians and music students at four higher education institutions (the Institute of Education - University of London, University of York, Leeds College of Music, and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Glasgow) during the first phase of data collection. The idea was to gather comprehensive information about participants' (n = 244) backgrounds, attitudes and approaches to making music. As Creech, et al. (2008) elaborate,

> In addition to demographic information, the musicians provided self-reports about their earliest engagement with music, their first instrumental or vocal training, their secondary education and significant musical experiences and influences. The participants were questioned about their attitudes towards the relevance of a range of musical skills and activities, how they spent their time and the pleasure they derived from engagement in musical activities, as well as their beliefs about the nature of expertise in musical performance and teaching. (p. 217)

Selected qualitative data, obtained through focus groups and interviews with popular and jazz musicians studying at Leeds College of Music, will also be included to illustrate particular points. Readers are referred to Welch, et al. (2008), Creech, et al. (2008), and Papagiorgi, et al. (in press), for more detailed statistical information.

The starting point for this paper was the identification of discrepancies between the sample of popular (n = 66), jazz (n = 45) and Scottish traditional music students (n = 16), on the one hand, and Western classical music students (n = 117), on the other. One of the most intriguing results relates to reported levels of 'pleasure' in musical activities, a finding which, on closer inspection, is evidenced in several complementary ways. In order to fully appreciate the relevance of this body of data we will consider three interrelated factors: musicians' subjective experiences of and potential motivations for making music, the genre-specific learning practices they employ, and the specific competencies demanded by the music systems in which they are involved. The reciprocal relationship between these three elements

can be represented in the form of a triangle (see Figure 1).

The first part of the paper addresses the issue of motivation in music-making and music learning in relation to different music genres: this involves taking into account musicians' current attitudes as well as developmental differences. Part two examines the link between motivation and genre-specific learning and performance practices, and the extent to which types of musical activity promote or thwart intrinsically motivated and self-regulated music-making. Finally, part three looks at the correlation between differing approaches to competence acquisition and the genre-specific knowledge and skills that result. This raises questions about the potential impact of formalising music learning on both the evolution of music systems and musicians' experiences of music making.

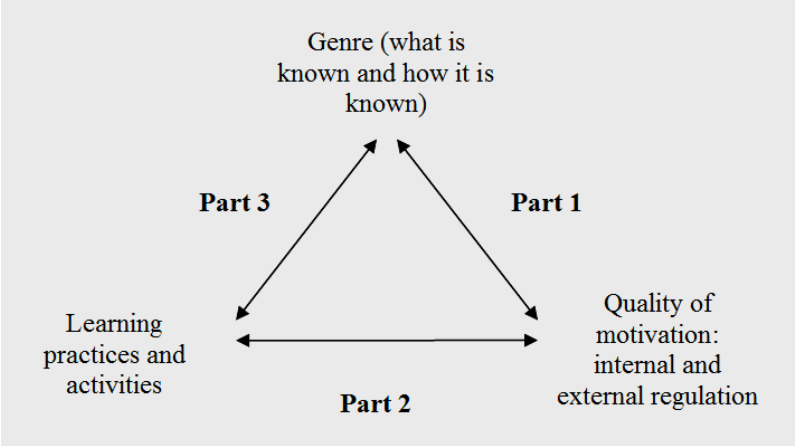

Figure 1. Interrelated factors.

Before proceeding any further it is important to acknowledge that the discussion presented is dealing with broad tendencies and trends, and that we are aware of the potential pitfalls of dealing with generalisations. It is also problematic that within the initial analysis of the research data, participants involved in jazz, popular and Scottish traditional music genres were amalgamated into a single category and classified together as 'non-classical'. The rationale behind this 'classical/non-classical' split was to facilitate a comparison between the classical students pursuing a more conventional music training with those involved in less well established (in terms of degree programmes) areas of study. This approach is inevitably open to the criticism of analytical bias: defining musicians by what they are not and categorizing them in opposition to a dominant classical grouping reflects a prejudice which is inherent in the formal music education system at large (see Part 3). It is clear that no two musicians, even within the same genre, are likely to have followed the same career path or share identical views on aspects of music making.

Another factor that has a potential bearing on the data is that all the musicians involved in the study are or have been students on formal music education programmes. As will be discussed in part three, although many of the non-classical musicians questioned continue to employ a range of 'non-formal' learning practices, they are, when enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, subject to many of the same forms of external regulation as their classical colleagues.

The above concerns notwithstanding, the wider research literature does suggest that the jazz, popular and Scottish traditional musics under study share common performance and learning practices. From several perspectives, it is Western classical music which can be considered to be the odd one out (see Small, 1996). The IMP study as a whole (including the qualitative data) suggests differences between the classical and, for want of a better term, 'non-classical' musicians which warrant further investigation.

Part 1 – Music, enjoyment and motivation

The starting point for this paper is an IMP study finding that the popular, jazz and Scottish traditional musicians reported experiencing *more pleasure in engaging in musical activities* than did their classical counterparts. While this result by itself may have been dismissed as an isolated finding, it is evidenced in several other ways. Firstly, those in the non-classical cohort rated *playing for fun* as of higher relevance to their musical development than did their classical-music-playing peers, with the former group allegedly spending significantly more hours per week playing for fun alone. Respondents in the non-classical sample also cited *performing in groups* and interacting informally with other musicians as a major source of enjoyment and, similarly, claimed to devote more time to such collective activities: the popular, jazz and Scottish traditional musicians reported spending more hours per week *playing for fun with others*, *having professional conversations* and *networking*. The role of group learning will be considered later in the paper. For now, it suffices to note that the IMP questionnaire found that the classical musicians generally attached more importance to activities associated with *solo professional work*; interestingly *solo performance* was rated as the *most effortful* musical activity by both sets of musicians.

Another point of divergence between musicians in the classical and non-classical samples lies in their respective attitudes towards music *listening*. The data shows that the non-classical cohort reported experiencing *more pleasure* than classical musicians when *listening to music from their own genres*. Moreover, while the non-classical group rated listening to music from their own genres as the least effortful musical activity, the classical musicians did not view listening to the music that they perform in the same light. Instead the classical respondents cited listening to music *outside* of their own genre, and presumably this includes the mass-mediated musics omnipresent in popular culture, as the least effortful activity. This finding is

particularly noteworthy because it hints at a split between production and consumption: between an individual musician's different motivations for making and listening to music in distinct social contexts. It further brings to mind Sloboda and Davidson's (1996) comments about young musicians (presumably classical) they interviewed who seemed "to have lost the ability to enjoy listening to music for its own sake". These individuals appear to be "so focused on achievement, competition, and being the 'best' that they almost look down on listening to music for pleasure as 'a waste of time'" (Sloboda & Davidson, 1996, p. 186).

This is not the first study to highlight a disparity between the experiences and motivations of music learners studying Western art music and those involved in other popular, folk and world music genres. In her study 'How Popular Musicians Learn', Green (2001) contrasts the "fun" and "enjoyment" described by her informants in their accounts of learning popular music with the "alienation" that many experienced when receiving classical music tuition (p. 134-5). Moreover, a survey of 2465 British 13-14-year-olds conducted by North, Hargreaves and O'Neill in 2000 found that the perceived benefits of playing and listening to pop music included "enjoyment" and "relieving tension and stress", whereas involvement in classical music was more commonly motivated by a desire to "please parents and teachers" (Hargreaves & North 2001, p. 231). Elsewhere, Hallam (2006) comments that the lack of "financial reward in playing jazz is offset by musical satisfaction, indicating high levels of intrinsic motivation" (p. 148-9). At the same time she summarises research which found that younger students "require parental encouragement to practice (Howe & Sloboda, 1991)" because "practicing for love of the instrument is rare (Harnischmacher, 1995)" (Hallam, 2006, p. 149). Although Hallam does not specify which genres of music or types of practice were the focus of these latter two studies, it is not likely that she is referring to students of popular or folk music genres. Green's research (2001) demonstrates that practising for the love of the instrument is widespread amongst learners of popular music. This fact may have escaped the attention of researchers because, as Sloboda and Davidson (1996) concede, popular and folk musics "have received almost no serious psychological study" (p. 187).

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

The reasons that individuals are motivated to play and study music are potentially complex. Human beings are motivated – moved to do something, or to avoid doing something – for a multiplicity of often interrelated, and sometimes conflicting, reasons. From an ecological perspective, the goals which give rise to such action emerge from the interplay between an individual, including his or her emergent physiological and psychological needs, abilities, sensitivities (including personality factors), and the ever changing properties of the environment. In short, motivation may be viewed as a function of the evolving individual/organism-environment fit. Motivation operates hierarchically in the sense that goals may be more or less specific to a given situation, context or entire developmental phase,

as well as more or less urgent, demanding action in the short-, mid- or long-term relative to an individual's lifespan.

Motivation also differs in its quality, in terms of whether the 'perceived locus of causality' (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; 2000b; 2002) lies within or outside of an individual. Intrinsic motivation commonly refers to motivation which originates within an individual: that is the motivation to do something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p.55). With reference to the data presented above, the popular, jazz and folk musicians in the IMP study could be considered to demonstrate high levels of intrinsic motivation in relation to certain learning practices – to play for fun alone and with others, and listen to music from their own genres – in that they perceive these activities to be inherently pleasurable. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, tends to refer to externally regulated behaviours which are performed "in order to attain some separable outcome" (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, p. 71). Musicians, for example, may be motivated to undertake less immediately rewarding activities – such as 'more effortful' and potentially anxiety-inducing solo performances – with a longer term view to gaining praise or avoiding criticism, being allowed to do something pleasurable once the activity is concluded, winning a competition, gaining a qualification, receiving financial recompense and so forth.

This is not to suggest that an externally regulated activity may not eventually come to be perceived as interesting, enjoyable, or worthwhile in the longer-term, in line with an individual's evolving needs and goals. This is the aim of much formal education. Self-determination theory, a model of motivation developed by Ryan and Deci (1985; 2000a; 2000b; 2002), explains this by differentiating between degrees of extrinsic motivation as more or less externally/internally regulated actions. Within their scheme sub-categories of extrinsic motivation are represented as points on a continuum (as external, introjected, identified and integrated regulation). At one end are actions that are felt to be externally regulated and controlled while, at the other, are those which are more integrated, self-regulated and autonomous.

This model is helpful when thinking about music education because it takes into account processes of socialisation and the varying degrees by which external regulations may be internalised by a learner. For example, an individual may partially internalise an externally controlled and regulated action without fully accepting it as his or her own (Ryan & Deci 2000a, p. 72). Introjected regulation is a noteworthy category in that it encompasses actions that are primarily undertaken to avoid guilt and anxiety, or maintain feelings of worth and self-esteem. Returning to the example of music learners, the expectations and judgements of parents, teachers and peers may, over time, be introjected so that they come to be experienced as though originating from within, in the form of what psychologists might refer to as a

demanding super-ego or self-concept. Consequently, certain music-based behaviours may appear self-regulated while remaining, first and foremost, motivated by a desire to avoid feelings of guilt, or a wish to impress. Although the two other categories of extrinsic motivation (identified and integrated regulation) correspond to increasingly self-regulated forms of action and share many qualities with intrinsic motivation proper, Ryan and Deci (2000a) argue that they remain extrinsic in orientation in that they still relate to actions which "are done to attain separable outcomes rather than for their inherent enjoyment" (p. 73).

Formative Musical Influences: A Developmental Perspective

Given the differences in attitudes, approaches and motivations between the classical and non-classical cohorts outlined above, it is informative to consider IMP data relating to respondents' earliest musical choices. Interestingly, there is a disparity in the degree to which classical and non-classical musicians claim to have been influenced by extrinsic factors in the form of parents and family members as children. The data shows that while instrument choice amongst the classical contingent tended to be determined by instrument availability and family history, the non-classical group reported having been influenced by personal desire, well-known performers and friends.

Research into instrumental playing has generally found that parents and family members play a key role, at least during the earliest stages of the learning process. In her study of musical participation, Pitts (2005) mentions informants who "spoke of it having been 'natural' for them to learn a musical instrument because siblings were already doing so, or because parents expected and encouraged it" (p. 123). Similarly, Sloboda and Davidson (1996) conclude that "parental involvement is critical as to whether the child persists or gives up musical activity" (p. 180). While not denying the role that family members play in a child's earliest musical development and enculturation, nor the importance of a supportive social system throughout childhood and adolescence, the IMP results suggest that popular, jazz and folk musicians may be less directly influenced by parents and more autonomous in their musical choices. This supports Green's (2001) finding that popular music learners are likely to be "self-motivated in their choice of instrument and decision to play", with many saving up or begging for "an instrument of their own" (p. 26). Popular music and jazz students at Leeds College of Music described parents who, for the most part, gave them the freedom to develop their own musical interests.

> [My parents] *weren't musical at all… They were happy for me to go off and try out a lot of different things. They didn't really want me to be a classical musician, they didn't really want me to be a pop musician, they just said "go and do what you want and have fun doing it", which is what I've been doing* (2nd year popular music student).

> *No, they didn't push me away, and it was good, in a sense, that they didn't force me into doing stuff either. They weren't pushy like some parents can be. Like a friend of mine, his parents were pushy and now it's put him off music. He'd probably still be doing it otherwise* (3rd year jazz student).
>
> *I was never really forced to do anything. My parents just let me get on with it. I think that that's pretty important. I've got a brother and sister who both stopped on their own after maybe a year whereas I just carried on* (2nd year popular music student).

One explanation for this discrepancy is that the classical students generally reported taking up their first study instrument at an earlier age than the other musicians studied. From a developmental perspective it makes sense that a younger child is more dependent upon parental guidance, approval and support. Ryan and Deci (2000a) observe that, following the relative autonomy and freedom to play during the first few years of life, the demands of socialisation mean that intrinsically motivated behaviour is increasingly curtailed after early childhood (p. 71). Formal education provides children with new opportunities for growth but, at the same time, confronts them with greater demands for discipline and compliance. A shift in psychological goals during the teenage years and early adulthood means that, differing socio-cultural constrictions and personality traits notwithstanding, there is a tendency for individuals to question externally imposed regulations, expectations and values, while experimenting with different roles (Coren, 1997, p. 29). This obviously has implications for music learning, particularly during the transition from primary to secondary education, a time when many young people give up playing a musical instrument altogether. As Creech found in her study of the parents of violinists, even the most committed of parents may begin to feel "less efficacious" as their child matures "past the age of 11" (Hallam, 2006, p. 110). Notably, this is the average age at which most of the non-classical musicians in the IMP study actually started to play. Viewed from a more holistic psychological perspective, it might be considered as developmentally appropriate for adolescents to seek new identifications outside of the immediate family sphere by turning away from the music associated with parents, authority figures and educational institutions, towards that enjoyed by themselves and their peers in the wider world. Certainly, self-determination theory asserts that intrinsically motivated and self-regulated learning will only occur when individuals can identify with the values and goals of a specific context and these values and goals are congruent with their underlying needs (Boekaerts & Minnaert, 1999, p. 537).

In seeking to understand the specific conditions that promote or thwart continued psychological growth and wellbeing throughout the human lifespan, Ryan and Deci have identified three primary human needs: a sense of relatedness, competence and autonomy. Of

these three elements, *autonomy* is most important to the discussion at hand in that it is a necessary precondition for self-regulated and intrinsically motivated action to occur. The second part of the paper will examine the distinct learning practices associated with different music genres and consider the degree of autonomy and, thereby quality of motivation, these practices afford. It will be argued that one explanation for why the classical performers do not rate or prioritise intrinsically pleasurable music practices to the same extent as their non-classical counterparts may lie in the higher degree of externally regulated activity that has come to characterise their training. Competence acquisition in popular, jazz and traditional folk musics has, historically at least, tended to be a less-prescriptive and more self-directed affair, not least because of the marginalised position these musics have traditionally held in formal education spheres. In order to consider the subjective experiences of music learning in classical and non-classical genres, and identify the potential challenges arising when integrating a wider variety of musics into HE degree programmes, the next section will begin by making explicit some of the socio-cultural presumptions and biases inherent in mainstream systems of music education.

Part 2 – Motivation and learning practices

The IMP data further suggests that the classical and non-classical musicians prioritise different aspects of musical competence and, consequently, pursue distinctive approaches to learning. It is notable that the classical musicians rated the following skills higher in importance than did the other respondents: *ability to sight-read*, *technical proficiency*, *quality and control of tone*, and *ability to communicate musically with an audience*. In addition, the classical group cited *musicality/expressive skills* and *overall standard of performance* as the most important areas of competence. In contrast, the non-classical musicians rated the ability to *memorise* and *improvise* as more important than did the classical, with an *ability to collaborate with other performers* regarded as the most important musical skill. Clearly these discrepancies reflect the differing demands of the music systems in question. For example, classical musicians tend not to be called upon to improvise to any significant degree, while popular musicians may not necessarily need to be as proficient at sight-reading. However, such disparities also point towards the genre-specific nature of systems of music learning as, in this instance, manifest in specialised pedagogic categories. It could be that the popular, jazz and folk musicians in the study are simply not accustomed to thinking of technical proficiency, quality of tone and musicality/expressive skills as separate domains of competence because they have not traditionally learned music in quite such a fragmented way. A survey of music learning in other cultures reveals that these classifications are not ubiquitous.

Formal Education: External Regulation and Divided Labour

Nevertheless, despite the number of different music genres now taught in schools, colleges, conservatoires and universities, music education in the West largely continues to be defined by practices and conceptual models which derive from Western classical music pedagogy (see Green, 2001, p. 4). No doubt one of the main reasons for this is that, for many years, formalised music education was predominantly concerned with the study of Western art music. Indeed, classical music and the music education system can be considered to have shared a partially co-dependent evolution. As the structural qualities and performance rituals allied to classical music eventually found expression in the types of pedagogic activities that came to be associated with that music's propagation, so formal education practices in the West have shaped the development of classical music. Consider the amount of instrumental repertoire and études specifically composed for public examinations and conservatoire entrance auditions.

Embarking on his own critique of formal music education, Small (1996) contextualises Western classical music within the rationalist and scientific worldview of Post-Renaissance European society. Drawing attention to the linear organisation of tonal harmony made possible by notation, Small writes of Western art music coming to be "logically explicable and ultimately knowable", with "nothing in the relationships which it contains… left unclear or resistant to analysis" (1996, p. 13). He goes on to highlight an analogous preoccupation with "logical, linear progression" in classical music pedagogy (p. 188). Green (2001) expands on this last point with reference to formal music education in the UK: "The learner begins with a variety of relatively simple – or simplified – tasks and rudimentary aspects of knowledge, then proceeds logically on to more complex ones" (p. 207). Stepwise progression leads to "systematic assessment mechanisms", usually geared towards extrinsic rewards in the form of "a variety of qualifications" (p. 4).

The compartmentalisation of music learning into discrete domains of competence is also indicative of subsequent shifts in Western society. From a historical viewpoint it is significant that the rise of mass education and gradual professionalisation of teaching and learning in Europe and North America coincided with the advent of industrialisation (Abbott & Ryan, 2001). As methods of mass production and processes of mechanisation began to dominate working life, so attributes such as interchangeability, reliability, rapidity, repeatability and predictability came to be seen as the "hallmarks of human intelligence" (Reed, 1996, p. 80). Behavioural psychology, itself a product of this mindset, came to provide the theoretical model for an education system in which efficiency, standardisation and, perhaps most importantly, measurability became primary educational goals.

Ecological psychologist Reed (1996) contends that the ensuing fragmentation of aspects of everyday life and increase in divided labour in industrial and post-industrial societies has served to degrade human experience (p. 68-91). One manifestation of this is the dichotomisation of work and play. Work, which is seen to be predominantly driven by extrinsic motivation, demands discipline and application, while play (sometimes referred to as 'life', as in 'work/life balance'), is considered to be intrinsically enjoyable and often presented as a reward for more arduous endeavour. The use of playtime, free time, holiday and extra-curricular activity as incentives and forms of compensation reinforces the idea that "work is hard, if not actually unpleasant" (Youell, 2006, p. 34).

Returning to the IMP data, it is possible that the classical students do not prioritise pleasure and playing for fun in music-making because their teachers (who are more likely themselves to be products of the formal education system) do not. Indeed, music educators in the formal sector may find themselves in the dubious position of having to emphasize the more unpleasant aspects of music learning – music as work – whilst downplaying seemingly frivolous and enjoyable elements in order to justify the subject as being worthy of serious study. Pitts, for example, cites an inspector criticizing a school music department for "an over-emphasis on fun" (Pitts, 2005, p. 120). Small considers such an attitude to be a manifestation of the protestant work ethic, with its implicit decree of work (suffer) now, so that one can enjoy the rewards later (1996, p. 89). Rather than running the risk of an "over-emphasis on fun", he suggests that the preoccupation with technique in Western classical music training curtails enjoyment in music-making at all stages of the learning process. He outlines the "long years of drudgery" (p. 195) and "mind-destroying drill" of scales, studies, technical and theoretical exercises (p. 83) deemed to be a prerequisite to being able to 'play a musical instrument' – whatever that might mean from one context to another (p. 167).

Another far-reaching effect of industrialisation was the dividing of labour itself between individuals who plan and evaluate activity, and those who carry out such plans. Equivalent processes may be observed in Western classical music in the separation of the roles of the composer, responsible for devising (and owning) a piece of music, and the performer, responsible for its practical execution (de Bézenac, 2007, p. 8-17). This split, which has become increasingly pronounced since the latter half of the 19th century, is a feature which continues to set Western art music apart from most of the other musics of the world, many of which provide music-makers with a greater degree of creative flexibility in the act of performance. By contrast, classical compositions, as with industrial commodities, are designed to be accurately and repeatedly reproduced regardless of particular geographic settings, social functions or performance contexts.

Reed (1996) has argued that individuals who do not plan but merely carry out the plans of others are relegated to tools for implementing a process. Of relevance here is his additional proposition that tools must perform consistently to be of use (p. 87). It is for this reason music education must prepare classical musicians to be highly skilled and specialised, but ultimately interchangeable performers. Confined to relatively standardised modes of practice, their training has perhaps as much in common with that of an athlete as that of an artist. Unlike a painter, composer or other creative artist, the classical performer is deemed to be more or less exchangeable. Small (1996) writes,

> A work is composed, not for a person, but 'for voice and piano', 'for violin and orchestra', 'for oboe and tape'... True, each performer will bring his own special skills and his personality to bear on the written notes, but he has very little room for manoeuvre, since the essence of the music lies in the notes, not the performer. (p. 87)

This is especially true for orchestral performers. Western symphony orchestras are hierarchical organisations in which player substitutions may be an everyday necessity. Extrinsic regulation is necessary to ensure adequate conformity of practice, with musicians bound by both a written score and the overriding creative vision of a conductor. This level of external control is similarly in evidence in classical music pedagogy with young musicians didactically guided through curricula and rehearsal strategies which, as with other industrial processes, divide musicianship into discrete domains of competence. The reality is that the categories rated as high in importance by the classical musicians in the IMP study – technique, tone quality, musicality/expressive skills and so on – represent sets of skills which are segregated and made explicit in a Western art music training via the use of written syllabi, staff notation and study books. In other words, these musicians have rated as musically important that which they have been taught to be important.

Second-hand Information and the Loss of Autonomy

Returning to the issue of motivation in music-making, it is evident that an increasing degree of prescription in formalised education leaves less scope for autonomous decisions and actions on the part of the learner. According to Ryan and Deci (2000a), this disregard for individual abilities, sensibilities and interests reduces the likelihood that basic psychological needs will be met and, therefore, that self-regulated and intrinsically motivated behaviour will occur. Reed theoretically framed this problem more ecologically, in terms of the devaluing of firsthand experience and the disproportionate emphasis placed on 'secondhand information' in industrial and post-industrial societies. Secondhand information, which leads to secondary experience, is that which has been selected, modified, packaged and presented to individuals by other people. In contrast to firsthand information – that which "we can see, hear, feel, taste,

or smell for ourselves" (Reed, 1996, p. 158), through "direct contact with things, places, events and people" (p. 3) – secondhand information imposes limits on what can be uncovered through autonomous scrutiny. Thus the description of an event, a photograph, or video footage are examples of phenomenon that unavoidably involve an externally imposed selection of information (p. 93). The way a camera is moved during a film shoot, for instance, determines what visual information is available to a perceiver; no amount of exploratory behaviour on his or her part can recover additional data about that scene. When encountering the original scene at firsthand, the perceiver is able to move around and pick up an array of information that is uniquely relevant to his or her changing needs, interests and sensibilities.

Secondhand information is endemic in systems of mass education. Knowledge and skills that can be explicitly conceptualised, taught and assessed take precedence over lived experience and firsthand knowledge. Rather than being free to search for and select relevant information for oneself or through interaction with others, it is instead government bodies, public institutions (universities, schools, exam boards) and teaching staff who variously come to decide what is worth knowing and how it should be known. And this brings us to another interesting discrepancy in the IMP data relating to teachers.

The Role of Teachers

The IMP questionnaire found that, in comparison to the non-classical sample, the classical musicians regarded teachers as playing a more important role in their development. Not only did the classical cohort report having more teachers on average than those studying jazz, popular and Scottish folk musics, but individuals in the former group also agreed more strongly with the notion that success as a performer is related to expert tuition. Given the historical link between classical music and formal music pedagogy outlined above, this is, perhaps, to be expected. More generally, formal education systems privilege teachers, often principally purveyors of secondhand information, in the belief that learning is predominantly the direct result of teaching. As Illich (1976) claimed, there is a widespread view in Western society that "behaviour which has been acquired in the sight of a pedagogue is of special value to the pupil and of special benefit to society" (p. 71). With the advent of mass education, learning came to be viewed as "something schools did to you" and "teachers became more important to learning than did the students' responsibility for developing their own learning strategies" (Abbott & Ryan, 2001, p. 93). This is of particular significance when considering music education, which may be experienced as more invasive and controlling than many other forms of teaching. Instrumental tuition entails the manipulation of minds and "bodies, and through them tastes, like no other area of the curricular or instructional endeavour: stand this way; move this way; hold your arms… precisely like this; inhale now and in this manner, now exhale" (Bowman, 2004, p. 45).

In a system reliant on external regulation, teachers not only function to select information and provide instruction, but also to motivate and encourage students in a variety of ways. This is reflected in the IMP data in the classical students' belief that it is important to receive praise from the teacher. As other studies have shown, it is teachers as well as parents who provide the encouragement and discipline which is often needed to uphold 'more effortful' practice regimes (see Sloboda & Davidson, 1996, pp. 181-2; Hallam, 2006, pp. 137-8). Davidson (2004) cites research which discovered that the first teacher should "be 'nurturing initially', but then this teacher needed to demonstrate excellent skills and to become a figure of respect and source of inspiration" (p. 122). This is supported by research conducted by Burt and Mills (2006) which found that students entering a London-based conservatoire aspired to be allocated an "experienced and distinguished" principal study teacher (p. 54). There is a danger that, as with parental approval, students may become overly reliant on the personal validation provided by teachers, with praise coming to function as a less helpful form of anxiety-producing introjected regulation. Maclellan (2005) explains that although "enjoyably experienced by recipients" in the short term, person-orientated evaluations (such as 'you're so musical' or 'I'm proud of you') may leave an individual "vulnerable in the face of subsequent difficulty because they interpret such praise to be deep-seated, intractable and all important" (p. 202). This can also create problems for individuals making the transition from formal education to life in the 'real world'. Pitts (2005) warns of the danger of students in higher education programmes becoming "excessively dependent on their teachers and so ill-equipped for the difficulties of a 'precarious and unpredictable career in music'" (p. 134).

More generally, the awarding of certificates and prizes may similarly serve to curb enjoyment and self-regulated behaviour. Psychologists have shown that "tangible rewards", as well as "threats, deadlines, directives, pressured evaluations, and imposed goals" diminish intrinsic motivation because "they conduce towards an external perceived locus of causality" (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, p. 70). Csikszentmihalyi (1988) cites specific research conducted by Deci in the 1970s which found that "if people were given money for doing things they enjoyed, they lost interest in those things faster than when they were not rewarded" (p. 6). Notably, the same loss of intrinsic motivation is potentially observed when "concern shifts from playing to winning", "when scholarships, prizes" and, no doubt, exam grades and degree classifications "ride in the balance" (Mitchell, Jr., 1988, p. 55).

The fact that the jazz, popular and Scottish traditional folk musicians do not consider teachers to be as important is explained by ethnographic research looking at traditional approaches to music learning. While such learning practices are often loosely categorised as 'informal', this catchall classification appears rather inadequate in the face of the heterogeneous practices employed by young musicians across the globe: consider, for example, the disciplined rigour of an Indian classical music apprenticeship outside of state-sponsored music education

institutions (see Farrell, 2001, pp. 60-65). Studies of competence acquisition outside of formalised settings reveal that teaching often occupies an ambiguous and even peripheral position. Brinner (1995) outlines the varying and complex models of interaction that typify 'teacher-student' relationships in a range of cultures, and explains that not all teaching involves "the explicit commentary that characterizes most Western teaching methods" (p. 121). Rather than nurturing, spoon-feeding or setting out to inspire students, he describes 'teachers' in some traditions deliberately withholding information by refusing "to play an example more than a few times because of a philosophical stance towards reception" (p. 121). In many musical cultures the onus is on the learner to be sufficiently self-motivated to first teach themselves, proving themselves capable of absorbing new material from more experienced players: "a student who is really ready to receive a particular piece of knowledge should be able to perceive, retain, and emulate the teacher's example without explanation or extensive repetition" (p. 121).

There are many musicians around the world who acquire skills and knowledge with little in the way of any didactic instruction at all, a fact acknowledged by several researchers in the field of music education. Green (2001) concedes that "music education has had relatively little to do with the development of the majority of those musicians who have produced the vast proportion of the music which the global population listens to, dances to, identifies with and enjoys" (p. 5). Likewise, Pitts (2005) recognises the importance of "independent learning" and urges music educators to be "humble about their role in fostering musical participation" (p. 135). Bowman (2004) goes as far as to suggest that some of the most fundamental assumptions implicit in conventional systems of formal music education are based on "deeply flawed notions about mind, cognition, and intelligence" (p. 33). With reference to education more generally, Illich (1976) argued that it is a myth that most learning is the result of formal instruction; consider the way children learn to walk or acquire their native language. He proposes that, while teaching does contribute to certain types of learning, knowledge and skills more commonly result from "unhampered participation in a meaningful setting" (p. 44) – in other words from primary experience. More recent studies looking at the neurobiological basis of learning concur with this view. Abbott and Ryan (2001) cite a multidisciplinary research project which found that the "human mind is better equipped to gather information about the world by operating within it than by reading about it, hearing lectures on it, or studying abstract models of it" (p. 17). The researchers concluded that while, "Nearly everyone would agree that experience is the best teacher", what many "fail to realize is that experience may well be the only teacher" (p. 17).

Learning through Firsthand Experience

How do musicians learn from experience? Studies of musical development outside of the framework of formal music education programmes (see, for example, Berliner, 1994; Brinner,

1995; Green, 2001) highlight a variety of non-teacher-led practices, ranging from autodidactic listening and transcription, to more socially-driven activities such as 'hanging out with' and playing alongside more experienced musicians and peers. Research suggests that jazz and popular musicians traditionally learn their craft by listening to and memorising/transcribing recordings, going to gigs, starting a band, jamming with friends, making friends with more experienced musicians and gaining access to a specific musical community. Anecdotal accounts suggest that most of these activities require comparatively little in the way of extrinsic regulation and are, instead, intrinsically rewarding for the individuals involved. As Green (2001) writes of the popular musicians in her study, "Practice was something they did so long as they enjoyed it – if they were not enjoying it, they did not do it" (p. 87). Outside of the sphere of formal education the boundary between practising and performing is also frequently blurred with musicians from a wide variety of traditions acknowledging the importance of 'learning on stage.' Comments from students at Leeds College of Music indicate that their early experiences of playing in front of an audience were positive ones. As one 2nd year popular music student recalled:

> *I can remember the first gig that I did with my band at home: it was really fun. It was part of a band night and we were playing with loads of other bands from school that were well known. That was my first gig as a bass player. I just really enjoyed it and wanted to do more and more.*

Naturally, classical musicians too may be intrinsically motivated to engage in certain types of playing, and to seek out musical activities that they enjoy. Sloboda and Davidson's (1996) research reveals that some degree of autonomy and self-motivation is essential at more advanced stages of learning, with high achievers being likely to engage in 'informal' practice ("playing favourite tunes from a score", "improvising", and "non-specific 'fun' playing") (p. 183). However, while music educators may overlook these forms of 'informal practice' as extra-curricular musical play, such activities lie at the heart of music-making in many parts of the world. For musicians in many genres, musical play *is* the work, with certain practices not even deemed to constitute something as effortful as that which has come to be perceived as learning at all.

Most people acquire their initial knowledge of popular/folk music idioms and repertoire through processes of enculturation. Individuals automatically memorise certain melodies and songs by osmosis as they are repeatedly exposed to them at home, in the wider community and through radio and television broadcasts. For musicians in aural/oral traditions, such as pop, jazz and traditional folk genres, listening continues to function as a central learning practice at more advanced stages of musical development. As one third-year jazz student at Leeds College of Music explained:

> *When I came here in the first year, the whole of my first year, somebody directed me to listen to things that I never would have picked up. My instrumental tutor was saying: "play this, look at that, check out this guy, it's really worth learning". And then you feed this back to your friends whose instrumental tutors are also doing that, and you buy stuff and listen to it.*

The IMP study found that, in comparison to the classical cohort, the popular, jazz and Scottish traditional musicians reported spending significantly more hours per week listening to the music that they study: while the non-classical group claimed to listen to popular/jazz/Scottish traditional music for a mean average of 13.38 hours per week, the classical group reported listening to Western classical music for a mean average of only 2.78 hours per week. As previously stated, the non-classical cohort similarly cited listening to music from their own genre as the least effortful musical activity; presumably this is because, in the absence of extrinsic rewards and regulation, the individuals in this group have chosen to play forms of music that they enjoy listening to. At the same time, the study also found that both the classical and non-classical musicians reported spending several hours per week listening to music *outside* of the genre in which they are specialising. What is particularly interesting here is that the two sample groups expressed different attitudes towards this 'extra-curricular' listening, with the *non*-classical musicians rating this as of higher relevance to their musical practice. This finding is further indication that listening has not been prioritised as a means of acquiring competence in instrumental playing within the notation-bound field of Western classical music as it has in the more predominantly oral/aural traditions of popular, jazz and traditional folk music.

While the notion of learning by osmosis may suggest that knowledge and skills are acquired in a relatively passive and sometimes unconscious way, the autodidactic process that many popular, jazz and folk musicians describe also involves more focused and demanding forms of listening, observation and practice. Green (2001) employs the term "purposive listening" to describe the highly concentrated type of listening that has the aim "of learning something in order to put it to use in some way after the listening experience is over" (pp. 23-4). For musicians operating outside of the Western classical tradition, recordings often constitute a type of aural score, a source from which material may be repeatedly studied and eventually reproduced. The non-classical musicians in the IMP study generally rated the ability to memorise repertoire as more important than their classical counterparts. By contrast, the classical players arguably put more emphasis on visual learning: they agreed that they were more competent at *reading notation* and *quick at learning new music*. This focus on processing novel material rapidly and efficiently, if arguably more superficially, is congruent with the wider values of industrialisation outlined above.

The self-directed learning practices of jazz, popular and folk musicians also tend to be more social in nature. The IMP study found that non-classical questionnaire respondents were much more likely than classical musicians to have been influenced by *informal groups with friends*. This contrasts with the classical musicians who rated solo practice as of higher relevance and, when it came to group playing, cited music-education-sponsored ensembles such as university/college/school and county-based orchestras, choirs and bands as more important than home grown groups with peers. Also telling is the fact that individuals in the non-classical cohort rated the *ability to collaborate with other performers* as the most important musical skill. Singers and instrumentalists in musical cultures around the world do not only employ recordings as learning tools, but also utilise what Merriam (1964) referred to as the "universal learning technique of imitation" (p. 158) – observing and copying other musicians at rehearsals, jam sessions and performances. Research suggests that group learning is central to competence acquisition in jazz, popular and folk music genres, with the enjoyment and inspiration that comes from interacting with peers constituting a key motivating factor. Students at Leeds College of Music commented:

> *I started playing in bands at school and doing little gigs: it was really good fun. I made lots of friends doing that, whereas the piano, it was always by myself. I didn't play with anybody else. I would sit down and practice for hours alone. With my bass I could play with others and that was always more fun* (2nd year popular music student).

> *I suppose different people learn in different ways: some people will learn better from the course work and some people will learn better from other peers. But I think that I learn loads through other students. A lot of people on the course would say that the best way to learn is by having fun and learning in a group situation* (2nd year popular music student).

> *From my point of view* [the best thing] *has been playing with other people off the course and particularly musicians who are more experienced and better than me.* [That] *has been amazing* (3rd year jazz student).

Inevitably, the inherently collective nature of many popular, jazz and traditional folk musics poses practical difficulties when introduced into an education system which positions the individual student as "the primary locus for knowledge and learning" (Borgo, 2007, p. 82). In many traditions, and arguably even in forms of Western classical music, a virtuosic solo technique is not the primary goal and music-making is considered to be more than the sum of its parts. Musical competence is often thought of as distributed amongst musicians in an ensemble and manifest in group interaction. Barratt and Moore explore the inadequacies of

conservatoire-based teaching and assessment practices when applied to a genre such as jazz in which interpersonal communication and collective creativity are paramount. While the one-to-one teaching format which assumes so much importance in classical instrumental tuition may encourage an unduly narrow emphasis on solo technique, individualised assessment procedures further distort the traditional performance practices associated with ensemble playing in jazz (Barratt & Moore, 2005). Similar problems confront those designing courses in traditional folk, world and Western popular musics. How should music educators undertake assessments in musical contexts in which a student's musicianship is most aptly demonstrated by taking a back-seat and supporting other members of an ensemble in an idiomatically appropriate manner? What about the case of popular genres such as punk, where apparent technical incompetence is arguably the best way to display competence, at least from a stylistic point of view? How about when technical dexterity and even virtuosity are musical goals but, as in the case of certain forms of jazz, popular and traditional folk musics, instrument technique is not entirely standardised but is developed through experimentation and creative rule breaking? While not attempting to answer these specific questions, the concluding part of this paper will consider the desirability and implications of institutionalising musics that have only relatively recently been incorporated into higher education music programmes in the UK (for more information about popular music programmes see Green 2001, pp. 167-90).

Part 3 – Learning practices and music genres

The first two parts of this paper have considered the relationship between motivation in music learning and the degree of autonomy, and thereby self-regulation, which different approaches to competence acquisition afford. The paper will conclude by exploring the interdependency between learning practices and the musical knowledge and skills demanded by distinct music systems. As Brinner (1995) has demonstrated with reference to Javanese gamelan, not only do different types of music system privilege distinct approaches to learning, but the manner in which skills and knowledge are acquired favours the development of different types of competence or 'ways of knowing' (p. 134).

Musical Competence and Cultural Assumptions

Ethnomusicological studies illustrate that conceptions of musical competence are not absolute, but rather reflect the worldview of the musical culture within which these traditions have emerged (see, for example, Blacking, 1976; Rice, 1994; Bakan, 1999). Such accounts have repeatedly demonstrated that an examination of learning practices – of which types of knowledge and skills are prioritised and how competence is distributed as well as acquired – offers insights into the wider values and assumptions of particular socio-cultural groups.

Taking the fundamental learning practice of imitation as a case in point, Brinner (1995) contrasts the "simultaneous" or "consecutive" forms of imitation that typically occur in teacher-student interactions, with the type of "delayed imitation" that is more commonly associated with less formalised encounters (pp. 136-7). He notes that in the absence of systematic one-to-one instruction, musicians are frequently compelled to construct their knowledge of instrument techniques and repertoire by replicating as best they can performance models that were committed to memory minutes, hours, and perhaps even days or weeks earlier. Inevitably, this delay between hearing and imitating a model affects the accuracy of its reproduction (p. 135). With specific reference to gamelan performance practice, Brinner contends that one of the reasons that Javanese musicians are so tolerant of individual variability is because of the independent way in which many musicians acquire competence and the resulting "lack of extensive and specific feedback from a teacher or other more knowledgeable musician" (p. 135). Over time, as such players become increasingly discerning about what is musically apposite from one context to another, what may have started out as a discrepancy in imitation begins to mature into a distinctive personal style. This way of learning ensures the continued dynamism of the music system, with the subtly distinctive playing techniques developed by individual performers eventually feeding back into the wider tradition to be loosely imitated by new generations of novice musicians (Swindells, 2004, p. 58).

Brinner's research resonates with ecological and 'situated learning' models which argue against the separation of "content from context, information from application, learning from participation, knowledge from experience" in education (Barab, et al., 1999, p. 354). However, curriculum designers in mainstream music education in the UK have not always acknowledged the interrelationship between the manner in which competence is acquired and what comes to be known. Of concern here is that the radical overhaul of the music education system over recent decades has resulted in changes to curriculum content without necessarily sufficient consideration being paid to the ways in which that content might best be delivered. Those responsible for developing new music programmes do not always appear to be as eager to reform the teaching, learning and assessment practices employed, as they are to expand the types of music included on their syllabuses. As previously discussed, the music education system largely continues to be defined by teaching strategies derived from the conventions of Western classical music pedagogy, regardless of the music that is being taught. As a result popular, jazz and traditional folk musicians may increasingly find themselves receiving specialist one-to-one tuition (which usually compels them to choose a first-study instrument), taking examinations which specify 'set repertoire' and attending separate practical and theory classes. That classical music pedagogy provides the default model for music education more generally is even reflected in the design of the IMP questionnaire. As one of the second-year popular music student at Leeds College of Music explained:

> [As a pop musician] *I don't think that you need to go as deep as someone in jazz would technique wise. That's why I play a range of different instruments... Instead of just playing piano, I play what I pick up and do what is needed on it. That's why when I filled out your questionnaire and was asked "what is your main instrument?" I didn't know what to say: I did guitar for my BTEC, I did drums for my GCSE and now I'm doing piano for the BA.*

Even popular musicians may revert to familiar classical models when employed as teachers. With reference to the formal learning experiences of her own informants, Green (2001) comments, "as with classical tuition, their memories of popular music lessons centred around acquiring technique, partly through exercises such as scales and learning to read notation" (p. 152). The situation may be self-perpetuating in that, as with other forms of enculturation, individuals are more likely to model their own teaching behaviours according to their past experiences of being taught, rather than in accordance with the way that they actually learnt.

This is not the whole story however. The fact also remains that there persists an ethnocentric misapprehension in certain sectors of the education system that the Western art music tradition encompasses the "basic and universal elements of all music" (Small, 1996, p. 8). Indeed, debating at the government-sponsored Music Manifesto State of Play conference on the future of music education in January 2007, cellist Julian Lloyd Weber is reported as arguing for classical music to be the basis of all music education because it is the "root of all styles" and the "grammar of music"; "it is the harmony, the melody, the notation" (Asthana, 2006). Explaining that, "a child taught the basics of classical music can succeed in any style", he is alleged to have stated that, "there was nothing wrong with other types of music if there was time to fit them in [to the timetable]" (Asthana, 2006). Inherent in this assumption is the erroneous notion of music as a homogenous, abstract, and essentially unchanging entity that is capable of being learnt, taught and assessed by homogenous means: in other words there is one music but many *styles*. This line of reasoning lends credence to the idea that a classically-trained musician is capable of teaching all other musics and inevitably leads to the conclusion that these other music systems are in some way less sophisticated – inferior. Left in the hands of non-specialists this is arguably what they are likely to become. It is noteworthy that the non-classical musicians in the IMP study agreed more strongly than the classical musicians that expert performers *cannot* automatically transfer their skills to another domain. One reason for this might be that individuals in the non-classical cohort have had to contend with the hegemonic position of Western art music within the formal education system and, therefore, have become sensitive to the genre-specific nature of musical competences.

Popular and World Musics in the Conservatoire

Accounts from the fields of ethnomusicology, popular music studies and music education challenge the classical-music-as-omniscient view and, moreover, suggest that the utilisation of standardised teaching and learning practices may have a detrimental impact on music genres themselves. Research looking at formalised jazz education is particularly pertinent to this discussion. Barratt and Moore (2005) identify a potential schism between institutionalised jazz learning and "the realities of jazz performance among working musicians" (p. 304). Commenting on the emphasis placed on solo rather than ensemble skills in higher education jazz programmes they conclude, "there seems a danger that the most essential aspects of jazz may be distorted when they are transplanted to conservatoire settings" (p. 305). In a similar vein, Nicholson (2005) critiques mainstream jazz pedagogy in the US, arguing that the 'bebop-hard bop style' taught in high schools, colleges, and universities has been singled out because it is compatible with formal education methods. This form of jazz has been adopted because, like Western classical music idioms, it is readily teachable – "explainable, analyzable, catergorizable and do-able" (p. 100). One of the unfortunate consequences of this approach is that by the 1990s, "a lot of jazz on CD and at clubs and festivals played by younger musicians was sounding as if it was "explainable, analyzable, catergorizable and do-able" (p. 101).

As the IMP data reveals, the situation is complicated in practice because many popular, jazz and folk musicians enrolled in formal education programmes continue to pursue their own musical interests in a more autonomous fashion outside of the constraints of scheduled timetables. Moreover, educational establishments may, albeit inadvertently, play a key role in facilitating this extra-curricular activity. Focus group discussions and interviews with popular and jazz musicians at Leeds College of Music suggest that one of the most useful functions of the institution, as they see it, is that it brings groups of likeminded peers together. Both popular and jazz musicians spoke of the importance of networking at the College as a means to forming their own bands and gaining performance opportunities in real-world contexts. At the same time, students remained positive about those aspects of their formal courses that they deemed to be relevant to their development as working players. Several individuals remarked on the benefit of having teachers who are practising musicians. As with more experienced peers, such figures serve as role models not only in terms of their musical expertise and experience, but also because of their links to and ability to negotiate local and national music scenes.

> *You're seeing one of your teachers play which is always great. You realise that they're not just dry and dusty academics; they're actually really hip, and then you're seeing one of your friends playing with them and really upping their game because they're playing with someone who is a considerable way on in*

> *their musical journey* (3rd year jazz student).
>
> *My drum tutor gigs around a lot and I often go to see him* (2nd year popular music student).
>
> *That's another thing that I think is good with the college here, because J, my teacher, is an active gigging musician. So whether or not I agree with him or not, at least I know that what he does has relevance; he's still working* (3rd year jazz student).

Students also talked about the importance of being able to access practice rooms, rehearsal spaces and studio facilities for their own groups, as well as being given sufficient time to cultivate their individual musical interests. It seems that many of their most valuable learning experiences occur in the gaps between scheduled activities: in informal conversations in the corridors or bar, in influential recordings passed from peer-to-peer, and impromptu demonstrations and jams in practice rooms. One final-year jazz student described the institution as "almost accidentally" fostering an enthusiasm for wanting to learn more:

> *While the college and course content maybe isn't directly responsible for everything that I learned, it fostered the atmosphere… My personal opinion is that I've learned more from things I've done off my own back and got together with other musicians who were very like-minded, within the context of college, using their practice rooms, but not overseen by anyone but ourselves* (3rd year jazz student).

This sometimes results in students splitting aspects of their musical development, as well as motivations for undertaking specific tasks. As a second-year popular music student explained: "there is work that has to be done for College and there's the stuff that I enjoy doing". He elaborated that he sometimes felt that he was doing the academic work just to "please other people" and that he was "not getting anything out of this" for himself. Similarly, a third-year jazz student believed there to be a "clash of interest" between those "aspects of the programme essential to achieving an "academic qualification", and the "incredibly vocational" and "practical" skills required of a professional jazz or pop musician.

Conclusions

The findings of the IMP study raise questions about the design and ultimate purpose of higher education music programmes. Given that not every music graduate is going to find employment as a professional musician, many would agree that it is the intrinsic rewards afforded by the subject which legitimise music as being worthy of advanced study. With the

experience of students in mind, how might courses be better structured to make use of rather than to diminish the more inherently enjoyable aspects of music-making? This paper has proposed that the high degree of second-hand information, rationalisation and external-regulation in systems of formal education more generally is not conducive to the promotion of intrinsically motivated and self-regulated behaviour. Boekaerts and Minnaert (1999) contend, "Self-regulation… will only emerge when students are allowed to learn in a context where they can weigh the feasibility and desirability of alternative actions and goals (Heckhausen & Gollwitzer, 1987), using their own criteria" (p. 542). This is not usually possible in formal learning contexts in which "students are expected to pursue teacher-defined and teacher-initiated goals" (p. 542). Might one solution be to devise music courses that allow for more autonomous, self-directed learning, and permit greater collaboration with peers? Would this help to curb any potential over-dependence on teachers and educational establishments and facilitate the transition from full time education into the world beyond academia? Green (2001) hypothesises that musicians who acquire musical competence through informal learning practices rather than via formal instruction "may be more likely to continue playing music, alone or with others, for enjoyment in later life" (p. 56). It seems probable that musicians who prioritise the more pleasurable and fun aspects of music making and who are used to taking responsibility for their own musical development will continue playing music for its own sake after graduation.

Enjoyment aside, another primary justification given for advanced music education is that it provides vocational training both in terms of developing professional musicians and imparting transferable life/work skills. Research conducted in a London-based conservatoire found that students were unanimous in their "hope to pursue a career in a music-related field" (Burt & Mills, 2006, p. 64). What is more, the vast majority of students entering the music college were "striving to become performers or composers" (p. 70). Burt and Mills (2006) describe how students confront possible feelings of inadequacy and resignation as they come to terms with the competitive reality of the music profession and the relative scarcity of paid employment opportunities (p. 70). For Green (2001) this raises ethical considerations in that courses "geared to vocationalism can mislead students, who find the 'real world' of the music industry less available to them on finishing the course than they had expected when they began it" (p. 213). This is perhaps more of a concern if students are overly focused on unrealistic future career goals at the expense of enjoyment in existing activities and current experience.

For some individuals the main aim of studying for a music degree will be to obtain the more generic graduate status necessary for entrance into a wider variety of professions. Inevitably, this diversity of purpose creates additional dilemmas for course designers who are not always transparent about what it is they are trying to achieve. Taking a popular music degree as an

example, is its primary function to train the next generation of rock or pop musicians and allied music professionals, or is the real goal to provide students with a qualification which will enable them to pursue a variety of what might be termed 'fall back' careers? While many might agree that both of these outcomes are valid, is it really the case that a one-size music education fits all? Are the knowledge and skills acquired in the context of one activity/environment really transferable to other settings?

The final part of this paper has argued that the formal pedagogic methods that have evolved alongside the Western classical tradition engender genre-specific competencies that are not always compatible with popular, jazz and traditional folk music systems. Extending this line of reasoning it is probable that distinct approaches to competence acquisition will also result in learning outcomes that are more or less congruent with the demands of different types of work and working environments. Abbott and Ryan (2001) maintain that the industrial age teaching methods widely employed in formal education settings equip students with basic subject-specific skills and an ability to follow orders. It is a possibility that the resources and attitudes that one needs as a pop musician are not those required in hierarchically-structured workplaces which, like schools and colleges, tend to demand some degree of conformity and compliance. Popular, jazz, and even traditional folk musicians may need to be bold, creative, independent, and ready to defy conventions in order to develop something new and get ahead in their respective scenes. Admittedly these are attributes that probably cannot be taught. What is of concern, however, is that they may be suppressed. As Ryan and Deci (2000a) observe, while, when provided with the right conditions, most people are inherently "curious, vital and self-motivated", what is also clear is that "the human spirit can be diminished or crushed" (p. 68). Self-determination theory posits that intrinsically motivated and self-regulated behaviour is curbed in situations characterised by high levels of external control. Musicians are more likely to develop the skills they need through autonomous participation and experimentation in real world contexts, rather than solely through didactic instruction.

If developing credible popular, jazz, folk and even classical musicians (rather than administrators, accountants or civil servants and so on) is the primary goal, the challenge for academic institutions may be to create flexible communities of practice with strong links to the environments in which the musics under study typically take place. Whether this is really what is desired, or even possible, remains open to debate. What is clear is that doing so would call for fundamental changes to the way in which formal music education is conceptualised and conducted. If changes are not made, institutions must at least acknowledge the potential danger that what comes to be learnt as a result of their programmes is not popular, jazz, or traditional folk musics as we know them, but more homogenised forms of academic music, the context for which begins and ends within the walls of the institution.

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About the Authors

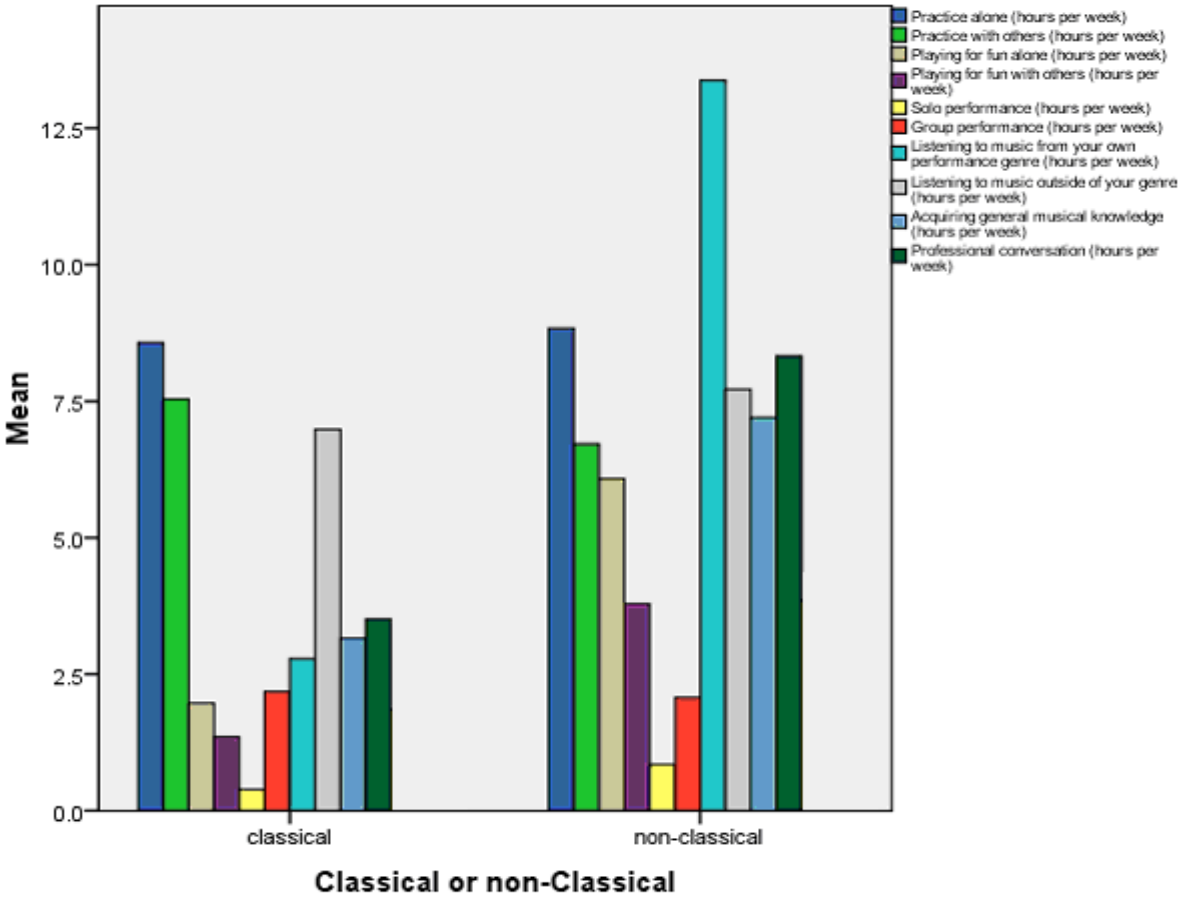
Christophe de Bézenac is a musician, researcher and lecturer based in the UK. A graduate of the Strasbourg Conservatoire, he completed a PhD at the University of Leeds which examined improvisation and perceptual ambiguity in music making from an ecological perspective. He was a research officer for the IMP (Investigating Musical Performance) project, exploring how musicians from different genres deepen and develop their learning about music making. His research interests also include perceptual psychology, cognitive neuroscience, ethnomusicology, and human-computer interaction. As an improviser/composer, Christophe is actively involved in the European experimental jazz/rock scene, where he performs at international festivals and music venues alongside artists from diverse artistic backgrounds.

Rachel Swindells holds MA and PhD degrees in Ethnomusicology from City University, London, and a Postgraduate Diploma in Psychoanalytic Observational Studies from the University of Leeds. A performer of Sundanese music, she has taught at higher education institutions across the UK and currently runs gamelan and community music projects in the north of England. She is also an independent researcher and arts project evaluator, with particular interests in the Indonesian performing arts, applied ethnomusicology, music and mental health, and cross-cultural approaches to learning and creativity.

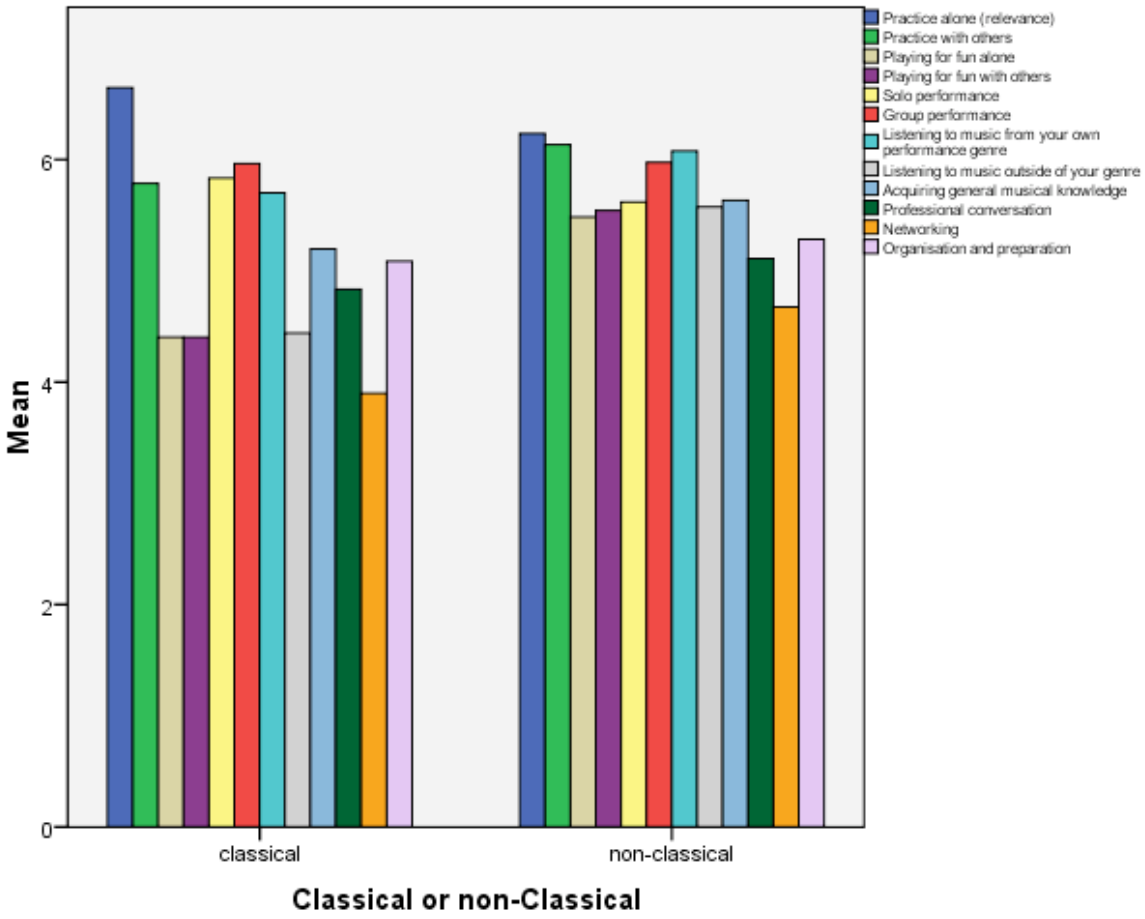
Appendix

The following graphs were generated by Ioulia Papageorgi.

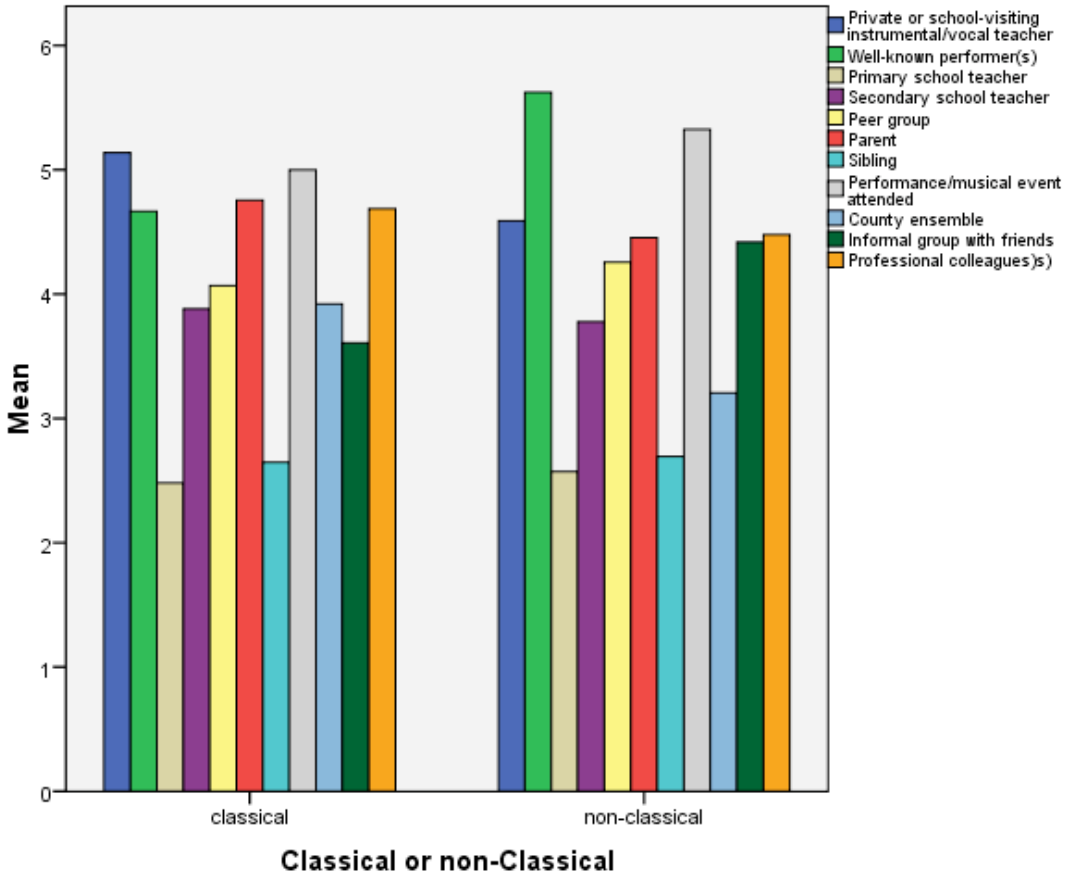
Graph 1. Participants were asked to how many hours they spent on specific musical activities during a typical week.



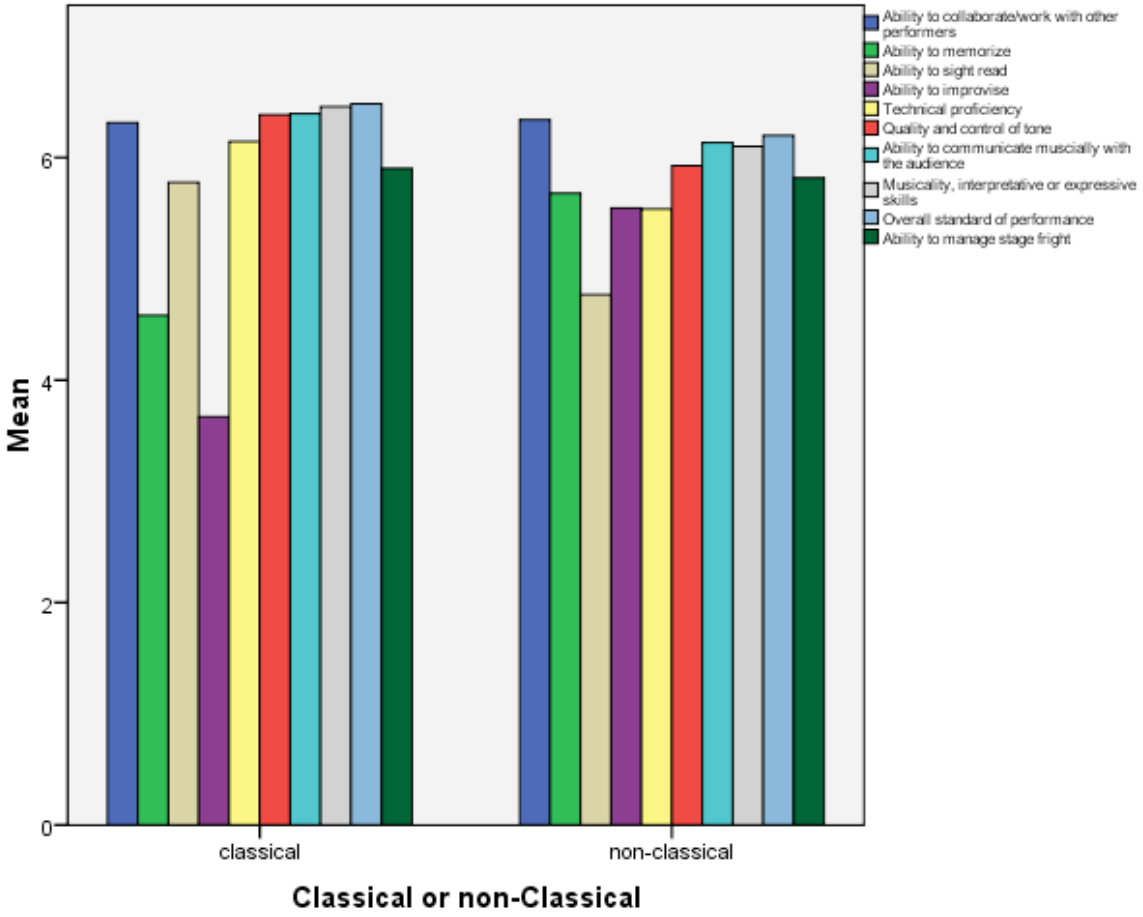
Graph 2. Participants were asked to rate (on a seven-point scale) the relevance of specific musical activities.



Graph 3. Participants were asked to rate (on a seven-point scale) the importance of the individuals, events and activities that have influenced their musical development.



Graph 4. Participants were asked to rate (on a seven-point scale) the importance of different musical skills and abilities.



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