In their voice: Lower secondary school students' beliefs about playing musical instruments, and the impact of the instrument lesson upon those beliefs

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Abstract

Many young West Australians learn musical instruments through school based elective programs. However, many students drop out from these programs, particularly in lower secondary school. This paper reports on a study I conducted into the motives of 48 lower secondary school students for playing a musical instrument, and the role of the instrument lesson in influencing student decisions to continue learning. Students in their first year in secondary school in WA (Year 8) were chosen, because the first year of secondary school has been identified as a time when student motivation towards elective activities in general decline. Focus group interviews revealed that while Year 8 students generally enjoyed playing an instrument and described playing as important to affirming notions of self, their competence beliefs were fragile. Importantly, students also indicated that the instrument lesson did impact their competence beliefs, and that competence beliefs can, in turn, impact student decisions to continue learning. After discussing the implications of the findings, I conclude the paper with a series of recommendations for teaching practice, designed to target the competence beliefs of lower secondary students.

Key words: instrumental music, motivation, music education, retention, secondary school, competence beliefs

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Introduction

Learning a musical instrument has well documented cognitive and emotional benefits for young people. Many young Western Australians play instruments, and this is reflected in Australian Bureau of Statistics figures indicating that approximately 21% of young Western Australians aged 12 learn musical instruments against a national average of 17% (ABS, 2003). Music instrument lessons run as elective programs in most WA secondary schools. However, many students would appear to drop out of these elective programs, particularly in lower secondary school, as evidenced by low numbers presenting for examinable post-compulsory music courses in WA (Curriculum Council, 2008). I set out to examine why this might be the case by focusing upon the experiences of a group of WA music students in their first year in secondary school (Year 8). The first year of secondary school has been identified as a time when motivation towards elective activities in general exhibit strong declines (Wigfield and Wagner, 2005; Bandura, 1994; Harter, 1990).

Student motives for engaging in activities are less stable than adults, and are more

susceptible to outside influence (Stahlberg & Frey, 1988). Given that the instrument lesson is the central point of interaction in a school based instrumental program, I chose to examine Year 8 student motives for playing an instrument, and the potential influence of the instrumental lesson upon the decisions of these students to continue. Specifically, this paper reports on a study involving 48 Year 8 students drawn from seven government, Catholic and private secondary schools. In focus group interviews, students were asked about their motivation for playing an instrument, and the positive and negative aspects of the instrument lesson.

Creech and Hallam (2009), Lierse (2007), St George (2006; 2004) and Brakel, (1997) report that the instrument lesson is a determinant in student decisions to continue learning an instrument. However, as St George (2004) notes, there has been a surprisingly little critiquing of instrument teaching practice in relation to its impact upon student decisions to continue. Accordingly, after considering the findings of this study, this paper make a series of recommendations for instrument teaching practice targeted at enhancing the beliefs of lower secondary students towards learning a musical instrument.

While the findings and recommendations of this paper stem from a substantive setting, I believe they have relevance to all music teaching systems and sectors across Australia. Retaining students in elective instrument programs is not just an issue in WA, but represents one of the great challenges facing music education, both internationally and in Australia. By constructing an understanding of the beliefs of this particular year group for playing an instrument, and the impact of the instrument lesson upon those beliefs, I hope to better equip instrument teachers with principles designed to enhance student beliefs, and ultimately reduce the drop-out rate from instrumental music programs in lower secondary school.

Background

Music Instrument lessons in Western Australia

Music instrument lessons are centrally organised in the government system in Western Australia through the agency of the School of Instrumental Music (SIM). All students are selected via a music aptitude test and lessons are provided at no cost to the student. SIM commences around 4000 beginners each year (DEST, 2005). Students are taught in groups of up to five by qualified specialist peripatetic instrument teachers, and lessons run for 30 minutes on a weekly basis. Students are taught in school time, and are withdrawn from regular classes on a rotating timetable. String instruments are started from Year 3, while wind, brass, percussion and guitars are started from Year 6. Thus, students in Year 8 are generally into at least their third year of learning when they enter secondary school.

In the Catholic and private systems, students generally pay for individual lessons. Around 4000 students per year also commence or continue lessons from Year 8 in both these systems. Instrument teachers do not have to have teacher qualifications to teach in the Catholic or private systems in Western Australia.

The first year in secondary school

A range of international studies describe the move from primary school to secondary school as disruptive for many students. Disruption and the resulting sense of dislocation can have a major impact upon student motivation, particularly towards elective subjects and activities (Wigfield and Wagner, 2005; Bandura, 1994; Harter, 1990). Harter (1990) states that dislocation occurs as a result of 1) disrupted social networks, 2) more impersonal interactions with teachers, 3) less personal school bureaucracies and 4) ability streaming in some subjects. In indirect support, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2003)

statistics indicate that student participation in elective music instrument programs can decline by up to 25% per year following the transition to secondary school (from age 12).

The effects of dislocation combine with psychological changes in students as they begin to mature from a state of 'parent protection' to 'self determination' commencing from around age 11 (Zillman and Gan, 1996). Students from this age desire greater freedom and autonomy which cannot always be accommodated in the highly organised and controlling secondary school environment (Eccles and Midgeley, 1989). Conflict can occur when inappropriate instruction practices, ability groupings and competitive assessment practices impact fragile self efficacy beliefs across a range of subjects, leading to avoidance behaviours (Bandura, 1994). As a result, students may disengage from elective programs such as learning an instrument because these programs do not meet their changing emotional needs. I considered it important to consider the extent to which these general issues are reflected in the responses of Year 8 instrumental music students.

Research Assumptions

The student voice

This study was guided by the need to construct an understanding of the motives of Year 8 students for learning an instrument, and the impact of the lesson upon student motivation to continue. The phenomenological nature of the research called for rich data derived from a natural real life setting. Accordingly, I chose to speak directly with the students themselves. The student voice has widely been used in 'drop-out' research in other subject areas (Smyth and Hattam, 2001; Willis, 1997), but has not been widely used in music education (Pitts, 2004). Based upon my previous research, I believe Year 8 students have well developed beliefs about learning an instrument (Lowe, 2008). I agree with Fielding (2004) that speaking *with* students rather than *for* students can yield a clearer picture of the motivational issues faced by Year 8 instrumental students.

Expectancy-value theory

I employed expectancy-value theory as the theoretical foundation for this study. The intention of this study was not to prove or disprove the theory, but rather to use expectancy-value theory as a 'regulatory ideal', to make sense of the phenomenon. The theory was also used as a conceptual organiser for the data, and I was aware that findings needed to be reported through the expectancy-value lens.

Expectancy-value theory was specifically developed by Eccles (1983) to explain adolescent motivation for mathematics, and has been widely employed in other subject areas, including instrumental music (Wigfield and Wagner, 2005; De Backer and Nelson, 1999; Wigfield, O'Neill and Eccles, 1999; O'Neill, 1996). Importantly in the context of this study, the values components of the theory are reported to accurately predict future enrolment decisions, whereas expectancies predict future effort (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002). Therefore, understanding the values Year 8 students attach to learning an instrument, and the impact of the lesson upon these values, may help me understand why many Year 8 students drop out. Values derive from student beliefs about learning activities, and expectancies are closely linked with ability beliefs. In general terms, values can be defined as 'why should I do this learning activity', whereas competence / expectancies can be defined as 'what do I think about my abilities to complete this learning activity', and 'will I succeed in the future'.

Values are differentiated into attainment (importance), intrinsic (interest) and extrinsic (usefulness) components. These are in turn mediated by both the physical and personal cost of involvement. Attainment value is closely linked with identity, and whether learning activities

provide students the opportunity to express or confirm aspects of self. Learning activities will be described as important to self if they are optimally challenging and relevant to the individual. Intrinsic value relates to the inherent enjoyment the student gets from undertaking the learning activity (situational interest), and the overall interest in the subject (individual interest), while extrinsic value relates to how well learning activities conform to current (short-term) and future (long-term) goals (Eccles, 2005).

Competence beliefs include student self assessments of their current ability beliefs to complete learning activities, and expectancies for future success. These are informed by the learning environment, past experience and teacher feedback (Wigfield and Wagner, 2005).

Method

Based upon my beliefs about the student voice in research, I employed a focus group methodology. I deemed this approach less intimidating for Year 8 students than individual interviews with an adult, and focus groups offered the potential for a rich, wider range of responses. To ensure a degree of representativeness, government, Catholic and private schools were included in the sample.

For this study, 48 students were drawn from seven secondary schools, and organized into focus groups within each school. Schools were selected from across the Perth metropolitan area via a random stratified sampling process based upon school districts, and included four government, two Catholic and one private school. All the research schools offered instrumental lessons to Year 8 students.

All focus group participants learned an instrument. Students were selected in conjunction with their class music teachers to ensure focus groups were socially compatible and participants were willing to talk to an adult. While acknowledging the potential of this approach to skew the sample towards a certain type of student, I did not consider this problematic as students were drawn from an existing pool representing 'typical cases' (Bloor et al., 2001). Participants were not chosen based upon their musical abilities, and included a range of students from highly motivated to others on the verge of discontinuing.

The focus group interviews were semi-structured to allow room for student directed discussion. Each interview was based around ten key questions, including three icebreaker questions, framed by the expectancy-value constructs. Interviews were undertaken in each school for maximum student comfort, and each focus group ran for approximately one hour. I undertook a facilitator's role, keeping discussion focused, and students appeared comfortable. Resulting discussions were animated and wide ranging.

Each focus group interview was digitally recorded and professionally transcribed. Data went through a three stage analysis process; firstly, data was coded against the questions. Secondly, data was grouped under three headings relating to 1) motivation for playing an instrument, 2) the positive influence of the instrument lesson, and 3) the negative influence of the lesson. Finally, data under each heading was compared against expectancy-value theory constructs. Nvivo 8 qualitative software was used to assist data management and manipulation.

In presenting the findings in this paper, I have selected a number of representative student quotes to illustrate the various themes which emerged through the analysis process, and to bring a sense of realism to the report.

Findings

Motivation for learning an instrument

From the data, 18 different motives for learning an instrument were coded. Individual students described short-term extrinsic reasons for learning, including the enjoyment of undertaking music exams and getting out of regular classes,

but a majority of responses described attainment and intrinsic reasons for learning. These included playing for relaxation and de-stressing, and for the love of performing. One student described motivation in terms of expressive sound quality:

> *I really love the sound of the saxophone and really like playing music and the expression it can give you and stuff.*

Another student described the joy of self-expression and the challenge associated with succeeding:

> *It's the way of expressing myself and I want to be good at my instrument and so it makes me feel better when I can practice and I can get over a piece and actually play it well…*

Many students described play as fun, but struggled to articulate why this was so, as illustrated in the following:

> *I don't want to become a musician but I want to keep playing my instrument for ages. I don't want to stop. I don't want to become a musician. I just like playing 'cos I like playing.*

Overall, the majority of student in this study appeared to enjoy playing an instrument. Enjoyment was most commonly described in global, stable terms (individual interest) rather than in relation to specific activities. Whereas intrinsic valuing was strong, I also noted the presence of attainment values. Many students favorably described playing an instrument in terms of the challenge of successfully learning new, difficult pieces, and relevance of playing to an emerging sense of self. In summary, the majority of students in this study described playing an instrument as fun and enjoyable. In addition, playing an instrument was becoming an important expression of self.

Positive influence of the instrument lesson

Based upon the frequency of student responses, I coded five emergent themes relating to the positive aspects of the instrumental lesson. They were:

- The provision of a supportive and non-threatening learning environment
- Respect and rapport with the instrument teacher
- Professional teacher attributes relating to organisation, enthusiasm, encouragement and patience which build competence beliefs
- Professional musician attributes relating to the instrument teacher's playing ability
- The instrument teacher's learning activity selection, relating to repertoire choice and ensemble playing.

Twenty-five students described the instrument lesson as being different to regular classes. They described the lesson as an intimate environment, and enjoyed the opportunity to relate to their teacher.

> *I really like going to lessons, cos, like, it's good if you have a bond with the teacher and you feel pretty special.*

Three quarters of all students across focus groups stated that having a rapport with their instrument teacher was important.

> *[My teacher] is always happy and it's easy to relate to what she's talking about as well. She seems to really like us and it makes me want to try harder…*

The importance of professional teacher attributes such as organisation, enthusiasm, encouragement and patience were constantly reiterated across all focus groups. Encouragement was described as a key component of the supportive learning environment.

> *My teacher repeatedly gives me good comments and says, 'Well done' and 'good job' and that's like, it gives you a better self esteem, and you practice more and you get better, and then you start liking the music too…*

All students described a need to feel competent, and a desire not be singled out in group lessons. Bandura (1994) notes that students at this age are particularly sensitive to their relative standing among peers in activities that determine prestige.

Students also drew inspiration from hearing their teachers demonstrate on their instruments.

> *My saxophone teacher, he plays the instrument like really, really well so he always plays to me, like how he plays…so that I can know how I will sound maybe one day if I keep practicing and stuff – it's like sort of inspiring.*

Students responses indicated that hearing their teacher model their instrument was 1) helpful in terms of understanding how a piece should sound, 2) helpful in terms of understanding how the instrument should sound, 3) useful as a practical application of verbal instructions and 4) valuable for time management – hearing what to play was quicker than repeated verbal instructions.

All focus groups indicated a desire for a regular turnover of repertoire, and a desire for repertoire with particular musical characteristics; students indicated a preference for faster, more rhythmic pieces to slow pieces. In addition, students enjoyed ensemble playing in group lesson situations. Ensemble playing was described as fun and non-threatening, because ensembles catered for a range of differing ability levels:

> *It's also lots of fun because when you are in a group, you can like do trios and duets and things….if you make a mistake, then there's also other people who can cover it up…which also helps.*

In summary, students described the instrument lesson as different to other school learning environments. Lessons were described favourably when students felt encouraged and inspired, and teaching practices protected prestige and musical efficacy beliefs.

Negative influence of the instrument lesson

Also based upon the frequency of student responses, I coded four emergent themes relating to the negative aspects of the lesson. They were:

- A dislike of technical work
- Comparative teaching practices in group lessons leading to perceptions of loss of prestige and feelings of incompetence among students
- Repetition, including lack of repertoire turnover
- Lack of rapport between the instrument teacher and students.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, virtually all students did not enjoy being asked to practice scales. Most described a failure to see the point of them, especially when they were asked to play them every week. All students involved in group lessons described an awareness of differing levels of ability within their groups. Issues relating to prestige within the group and musical efficacy were raised when students were placed in comparative assessment situations in lessons:

> *Because sometimes, if you stuff it, you get all embarrassed and there's people that will laugh at you or something, if you do.*

Students across all focus groups were quick to suggest teaching strategies designed to reduce comparisons and competitive teaching practices. Prestige and efficacy related not just to playing, but had implications for the teacher / student relationship:

> *… sometime people, they're like, 'yeah, right, we've got it' and stuff, and other people are behind. Then they're too scared to say anything and then Miss just presumes they've got it and just goes ahead…*

Repetition was negatively described in relation to lack of variety in instructional practices, and lack of repertoire turnover:

> *Just the repetitiveness of having to play the same boring songs and then trying the hard ones which sound better but take a long time to get them. If you tried like different things every lesson, just like to make it more interesting…*

Lack of rapport manifest itself in the teacher having a dull voice and a general lack of enthusiasm and encouragement:

> *One of my teachers told me, well, she's not my teacher anymore but she told me that I would never be good enough to do TEE (Tertiary Entrance Exam) in music which I thought was*

pretty harsh, so I kind of don't really like her anymore, and I was seriously looking at my cello going, 'am I really that bad?' Oh really. But you know what, my teacher said, like my other teacher I went back to, said I was fine so I've just kept playing. But I don't really like the other teacher a lot.

The importance of the teacher in creating a positive learning environment was well summed up in the following quote:

In my first year in Year 6, the first year I was playing, we had a really bad teacher and he always just set lots of homework and he wouldn't do very much at all. He didn't bring his trumpet in so he didn't play it at all, he'd just tell us what to do. And there was about…there was five people offered the position of the trumpet. Everyone took it up and then by the end of the year there was only two left. Lots of people had just quit and dropped out and I was actually thinking about it until I asked in the office and they said we were getting a different teacher for next year. So that's the only reason I stayed.

Students commonly cited boredom as a reason for dropping out. Discussions revealed that, while boredom could result from teaching practices such as a lack of repertoire turnover, it was also a label associated with a desire to protect self efficacy. Students who were made to feel less competent than other students in lessons described avoidance behaviours such as not attending lessons and not practicing. Avoidance behaviour, under the guise of boredom, was a strategy designed to protect them from a fear of confronting feelings of failure. The need for the instrument teacher to identify this behaviour was emphasised:

One of my friends, she gave up because she couldn't do one of the things that she had to do. And she didn't speak up or anything...

Discussion

When viewed through the expectancy-value lens, all students in this study described a strong individual interest in playing an instrument. Students generally enjoyed playing, and individual interest motives appeared relatively stable. However, predictably, the instrument lesson impacted situational interest through the repertoire teachers chose, and attendant teaching pedagogies. For Year 8 students, ensemble playing, lively music and a regular turnover of repertoire stimulated their situational interest while scales, slow music and repetition of repertoire reduced their situational interest. For many students, playing an instrument appeared to activate attainment values relating to the challenge of successfully learning new music, and growing relevance of playing to self. Accordingly, I recorded relatively high and stable intrinsic and attainment values. Motivation for playing was stabilising around cognitive and affective notions of self. Apart from situational interest, the lesson did not appear outwardly to greatly impact student values. Relatively stable values should be indicative of strong motivation to continue learning an instrument beyond Year 8.

However, competence beliefs appeared less stable and much more open to the influence of the teacher and the learning environment. Students consistently spoke of the need to feel competent, and sought reassurance through teacher encouragement. Conversely, students were deflated and discouraged by a lack of teacher encouragement. The emotional insecurity of adolescence may explain the need for high levels of reassurance in lessons. Some students may drop out because a lack of positive reinforcement undermines already fragile competence beliefs, and thus their expectancies for future success. They don't think they will get better at playing an instrument. Further, Wigfield (1994) reported an empirical link between competence and attainment value in that a fear of failure can undermine the perceived importance of the activity to notions of self. By inference, low competence beliefs can begin to outweigh the values some students associate with playing an instrument.

In group lessons, fragile competence beliefs are exacerbated by a consistent fear of appearing

incompetent in front of others. Students in this study were aware of differences in ability, possibly due to their increasing cognitive capacities, and a greater emphasis on competitive practices in secondary school. For less able students, awareness of differences in ability reduced competence beliefs, leading to avoidance behaviours to avoid feelings of failure. Students who perceived that they were not as good as others dropped out under the guise of boredom to protect self-efficacy, especially when teaching practices emphasised ability differences between students. Further, competence beliefs impacted not just self-efficacy, but also prestige. Students were conscious of their social standing, and uniformly expressed a fear of being embarrassed in front of other group members. The primacy of social standing in group lessons may result from Year 8 students being placed in new and unfamiliar groups, and the need to establish their social standing within the group.

The dangers of teaching practices which emphasise competition and highlight ability differences are well documented (Weiner, 1974; Asmus, 1994; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). Students tend to attribute differences in standard to ability rather than effort. They view ability as a fixed state over which they have no control. Accordingly, when students perceive themselves as 'failing' in competitive situations, they attribute failure to lack of ability and don't think they can improve. In this study, I detected a strong overarching theme of fear of failure among Year 8 students, the majority of whom were taught in group lessons.

The impact of dislocation and the emotional challenges of adolescence may contribute to the fragile competence beliefs and the fear of failure detected among participants in this study. The desire of Year 8 students for a non threatening learning environment may be a reaction to the competitive practices of secondary school in general, while their desire for rapport with the instrument teacher may be reflective of a desire for close and personal reassurance from an adult in an increasingly impersonal school environment. Fear of embarrassment in the group setting may be reflective of the need to rebuild disrupted social networks.

Whatever the reasons, the key finding of this study is that given the primacy participating students attached to the need to feel competent, competence beliefs may be just as important as values in determining lower secondary students' decisions to continue learning instrument. Perceptions of levels of support from the instrument teacher in the context of the instrument lesson appear to be highly influential in student decisions to continue learning. Further, because students view their instrument teacher as professional musicians, they view their instrument teacher as the most appropriate person to emulate and provide meaningful encouragement. This finding represents a departure from previously reported expectancy-value findings, and warrants further research in the instrumental music context.

Building student confidence: recommendations for teaching practice

Based upon the findings of this study, I now make a series of recommendations for teaching practice. The recommendations take the form of general teaching principles with pedagogical implications, and are aimed at building the competence beliefs of lower secondary school students. They are also aimed at countering some of the general negative effects associated with the transition into secondary school.

The learning environment

The instrument lesson represents a unique teaching situation. Because of the small numbers involved in group and individual

lessons, instrument teachers can consciously attempt to build an intimate, supportive learning environment. This can be done by taking a personal interest in students, through the use of simple 'meet and greet' strategies. While acknowledging that the lesson represents such a short time in the overall academic week, the instrumental lesson environment still offers teachers an opportunity to build a personal relationship with students in the increasingly impersonal secondary school learning environment.

Instrument teachers as professional teachers

Students in this study reported the value of professional teacher attributes such as organisation, enthusiasm, encouragement and patience. Of these, encouragement emerged as the most important to students. Given that lower secondary students appear to have relatively fragile competence beliefs, judicious encouragement in particular can help maintain and build competence beliefs. Further, it is recommended that instrument teachers encourage student effort, not ability, to counter students' beliefs that ability is a fixed state.

Instrument teachers as professional musicians

Students in this study uniformly viewed their instrument teachers as professional musicians. They drew inspiration from them, and sought to emulate them. Accordingly, instrument teachers are encouraged to model their instruments to their students when and as appropriate. Teachers should be aware of the pedagogical value of modelling. Modelling not just helps teach the music, but helps students conceptualise how their instrument should sound, and aids in the application of verbal instructions. This recommendation has particular implications for multi-instrument teachers.

The group dynamic

This study found that students both consciously and unconsciously compare themselves against others in their groups and are acutely aware of differences in playing standards between group members. Comparative learning environments can lead to negative ability beliefs among weaker students, resulting in avoidance behaviours and ultimately discontinuance. The use of ensemble music (duets, trios and quartets) in group settings can accommodate differing levels of playing ability, enhance group dynamics and reduce comparative practices.

Repertoire

Students in this study indicated a desire for a regular turnover of repertoire, and a preference for faster, rhythmic and catchy music. Instrument teachers are therefore encouraged, where possible, to consider repertoire with these motivation properties, and regularly rotate repertoire to maintain student situational interest. Further, offering students a degree of repertoire choice may encourage student feelings of autonomy and independence.

Alternative pedagogies

This study found that while students of this age acknowledge the importance of technical work such as scales, they struggled to see its de-contextualised value. Instrument teachers are therefore encouraged to review the appropriateness of technical work in relation to repertoire being studied, and investigate alternatives forms of delivery of technical work, such as call and response type activities. In addition, instrument teachers may wish to consider varying technical work delivery modes to maintain situational interest.

Conclusion

In this study, I set out to examine the motives of lower secondary students for learning a musical instrument, and the influence of the instrument lesson in the decision of Year 8 students to continue learning. The study was framed by the knowledge that retention in elective instrumental music programs is an issue, and that many students drop out following the transition into secondary school.

I found that, while Year 8 students appear to have outwardly strong values associated with playing, their competence beliefs are fragile, possibly due in part to dislocation associated with the move into secondary school, and in part to changing emotional needs. While values are reported to be accurate predictors of students' future enrolment decisions, in the context of this study, competence beliefs may be just as important in determining Year 8 student decisions to continue. Accordingly, I have presented a series of principles for teaching practice designed primarily to enhance student competence beliefs.

This paper confirms that instrument teachers have a role to play in improving student retention rates. Urdan and Turner (2005) report that when students exhibit avoidance behaviours, many teachers tend to dismiss the students as unmotivated. However, this study suggests that avoidance behaviours among many Year 8 students may be a mechanism for protecting prestige and musical efficacy. Ultimately, understanding the motives students have for playing, and students' views on the impact of the instrument lesson upon their beliefs can place instrument teachers in a better position to respond to the specific needs of this year group.

Motivational theories such as expectancy-value theory offer music educators a well developed framework for investigating student motivation. The next step for music educators may be the greater application of theoretical perspectives in more practice based research in substantive settings. Given that this study uncovered issues specific to students in their first year in secondary school, it may well be that similar practice based research will uncover issues of relevance to other year groups. Music education will then be better placed to develop teaching pedagogies which target specific year groups, resulting in improved retention rates across elective music programs as a whole.

Learning a musical instrument does have significant cognitive and emotional benefits for young people. Therefore, any future practice based research aimed at improving retention rates must ultimately be of benefit to not only school music programs, but to the well-being of the students themselves.

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