



Evidence in Action

A K20 Center Research Brief

Extracurricular Music Activities in School and School Engagement: Students' and Teachers' Perspectives

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Introduction

This intervention brief explores the impact of extracurricular music activities on school engagement from the perspectives of students and teachers. The research article by Costa et al. (2023) investigates how participation in a school percussion group influences students' engagement with school, particularly focusing on vulnerable students. The literature reviewed highlights the benefits of music education in promoting social skills, self-esteem, and academic success. However, there is a gap in understanding the specific impact on school engagement, especially for at-risk students. This study aims to fill that gap by examining the perceived effects of music activities on students' school engagement.

Methodology

Research Design:

The study employed a qualitative research design using individual semi-structured interviews to gather in-depth insights from participants.

Sample:

The sample included six students aged 11 to 15, two teachers, and two facilitators of the percussion group. Students were selected based on their long-term participation and regular attendance in the percussion group.

Data Analysis:

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved coding and identifying patterns or themes within the interview transcripts. NVIVO software was used to organize and analyze the data.

Results

The study found several key themes regarding the impact of participation in the percussion group on school engagement:

- **Motivation:** Students were initially motivated by peer influence and leisure but developed intrinsic motivation over time, enjoying the activity and the relationship with facilitators.



- **Behavioral Engagement:** Participants reported improvements in behavior, participation in class, attention, and concentration.
- **Affective Engagement:** Students showed increased interest in school, better mood, and a greater sense of belonging.
- **Cognitive Engagement:** There were positive changes in self-confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of competence.
- **Agency:** Students demonstrated increased autonomy and proactivity, proposing ideas and taking initiative.
- **Interpersonal Relationships:** Participation in the percussion group enhanced cooperation, communication, and social relationships among students.

Application into Practice

To replicate this intervention in a school or similar context, consider the following steps:

1. **Establish a Music Group:** Create a percussion or other music group that meets regularly and is open to all students, especially those at risk.
2. **Promote Inclusivity:** Ensure the group is inclusive and values each student's contributions, fostering a sense of belonging and community.
3. **Encourage Participation:** Use peer influence and initial external motivations to attract students, then build intrinsic motivation through enjoyable activities and positive relationships.
4. **Monitor Engagement:** Track students' behavioral, affective, cognitive, and agency dimensions of engagement to assess the impact of the music group.
5. **Support Facilitators:** Provide training and support for facilitators to help them create a positive, engaging environment for students.

Work Cited

Costa, M., Cruz, I., Martins, F., Veríssimo, L., & Castro, I. (2023). Extracurricular music activities in school and school engagement: Students' and teachers' perspectives. *Qualitative Research in Education*, 12(1), 52-80. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17583/qre.11206>