

Oral Defense Announcement

University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy in Education with an emphasis in Teaching & Learning Processes

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M.A. in Band Conducting, August 2015, Sam Houston State University
B.M. in Music Education, December 2006, University of Memphis

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder in Secondary Instrumental Music Ensembles: A Qualitative Intrapersonal Inquiry

Date: November 15, 2024
Time: 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Place: 205 Music Building

Abstract

Executive function is deficient in individuals with ADHD. Playing a musical instrument has been shown to improve executive functions. This study examined if participants with ADHD perceive a connection between playing an instrument in a music ensemble and improved executive functioning, as well as improved ADHD presentations. The research design used for this study was a basic qualitative design, focusing on phenomenological intrapersonal inquiry. Data collection is done entirely through 60-120 minute semi-structured interviews with both music educators and non-music school personnel that participated in instrumental music ensembles as young students. Interviews were recorded using Zoom, transcribed using Microsoft Office 365 Word, and coded using NVivo coding software. These participants with ADHD did perceive a connection between playing an instrument in a music ensemble and improved executive functioning, including improved working memory ability and processing speed, improved inhibitory control and attention, and increased motivation and self-esteem. Additionally, participants with ADHD did perceive a connection between playing an instrument in a music ensemble and improved ADHD behaviors. The findings are significant because they provide evidence of higher engagement, motivation, structure, and self-esteem in individuals with ADHD that they so rarely experience in other facets of their lives, and these benefits are transferable to other non-musical aspects of their lives. The benefits learned from this study could help improve the overall quality of life for individuals with ADHD.

Defense of Dissertation Committee

Chairperson, Michael Smith, Ph.D.
James Goodman, Committee Faculty Member, Ed.D.
Phyllis Balcerzak, Committee Faculty Member, Ph.D.
Nancy Singer, Committee Faculty Member, Ph.D.