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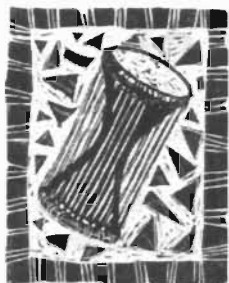
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Editorial

Dorette Vermeulen and Kim Flores, Music Education lecturers at the Department of Music, University of Pretoria, wish to thank Elizabeth Oehrle, editor of *The Talking Drum* (TTD), for the opportunity to share some of the latest work done by our postgraduate students in issue #40.

Two articles in this issue – those of Julius Kyakuwa and Rosemarie Graham – provide brief accounts of projects conducted as part of the Community Music Involvement module. This module forms part of the Coursework component of the Masters degree in Music Education, and encourages the students to listen in to the needs of local communities and to respond sensitively through music-based interventions.

The articles by Melani Fouché and Roy Nyathi provide an overview of outstanding research conducted by students completing their BMus Honours degrees. This work forms the basis for the long essays written in partial completion of the said degree.

The Music Education Division is actively working to align the research

being done with the Institutional Research Focus of the University of Pretoria: *Capital Cities*. The existing Coursework module, Community Music Involvement, lent itself readily to this timeous endeavour. The aim of this module, and other community-oriented projects, is to enhance the accessibility and relevance of music practices.

The excellent on-going work of Kyakuwa with PAMATA, in association with the University of Pretoria, is an ideal example of community outreach through the applied arts and music. It highlights elements of sustainability, since the training of members to become educator/facilitators is a core component of its design.

Graham demonstrates commitment to the vision of Kodály; that every child should have access to high-quality, developmentally appropriate musical experiences. In the midst of an informal settlement near Centurion, this highly experienced music teacher shares her knowledge and passion with children who would otherwise have little or no access to such an opportunity.

The work of Fouché takes place in a very different setting – in an

affluent private preparatory school for boys. Nevertheless, she is investigating a critical and growing need faced by school teachers working towards inclusive education. She examines how the music classroom can play a unique role in enhancing social interaction amongst a group of children who struggle to keep pace with their peers.

Finally, Nyathi takes his readers to another capital city – Gaborone of Botswana. His informative article considers how the inclusion of marimba lessons, workshops and festivals in Thornhill Primary School and the surrounding community has enhanced the lives of learners and promoted the vitality of music education in this school.

We trust that these articles will inspire music educators to form and foster mutually beneficial relationships with local communities. To our understanding, these practical experiences have provided our students with invaluable insights into themselves as musicians, teachers, leaders and socially responsible individuals capable of making a meaningful contribution to various sectors of society.

Dorette Vermeulen and Kim Flores



African indigenous musical arts as youth community outreach

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Community outreach can be understood as an organisation, a company or an institution's involvement or contribution of resources to benefit a community in an effort to improve the quality of life for the community's residents. The use of musical arts can be an important strategy for effective community outreach because they stir emotions and attract new audiences, increase awareness, improve instruction, introduce new perspectives and foster community stewardship (Conservation biology, 2007:07).

Music with its many uses and functions is an important and valuable tool in empowerment and human

upliftment (Dillon, 2006). According to Dillon (2006), community empowerment through music-making allows for the following: increased expressiveness and understanding concerning how human cultures express themselves through sound; promotion of self-motivation; openness to genre, time, culture and style as an opportunity for expanding knowledge of expressive music making; cultural inclusiveness; and dynamic interactions with the community.

Active music involvement

Kokotsakia and Hallamb (2000) contend that practical music making among

youngsters has importance beyond the development of a range of musical skills. When the youth actively engage with music, it can also increase their self-esteem, especially those of low economic status (Costa-Giomi, 1999).

Programmes which include active involvement in music making enhance self-development as they enable individuals to lead a healthy, satisfying and productive life as youth, and later as adults (Hamilton, S.F., Hamilton, M.A. & Pittman, 2004). Through obtaining music skills, youth are afforded the capacity to earn a living, to participate in civic activities, to support others and to engage in social relations and cultural activities.



PAMATA members performing African dances accompanied by indigenous instruments

Community music and African indigenous musical arts

As part of the Community Music Involvement module within the MMus (Music Education) programme at the University of Pretoria, students are expected to organise and be actively involved in a community service programme. Community upliftment in this regard is aimed at making a positive impact and a contribution to change in society through music. Julius Kyakuwa – being a student in this academic programme – geared his involvement to conduct training towards a gala concert. The programme he chose was based on African indigenous musical arts. African indigenous musical arts refer to the all-in-one use of music, dance, poetry, instrumentation, storytelling, dramatization and costume/props in an artistic presentation or contextualised setting (Nzewi, 2003).

The practice and performance of African indigenous musical arts is Kyakuwa's speciality and its values, in his experience, have been enormous. As a music educator he has found them to be a practical tool in conducting music lessons, and also a means to artistic development amongst youngsters. He has been part of projects and programmes in East and South Africa that use African indigenous musical arts to create change and build hope within vulnerable groups such as disadvantaged youth, HIV/AIDS victims, widows, orphans and refugees. This experience and background motivated him to use the same approach for the community involvement project.

Community group: PAMATA

The community group Kyakuwa chose to work with is the Pan African Music and Theatre Arts group (PAMATA). It is a cultural and skills development group that was established to develop, educate, nurture and inspire South African youth through arts and culture. It is supported by UP Arts and the Music Department of the University of Pretoria as an outreach community body. Through this support, the group

is able to reach out to more youngsters by using music to shape their tomorrow and develop their artistic skills. In turn, the group serves as a practical platform for the university music students, especially those in Music Education, to develop their teaching and practical skills, particularly African musical arts practice and performance.

As part of its activities to further showcase its members' achievements and development in the project, PAMATA performs a repertoire of African dances and songs accompanied by African indigenous instruments.

PAMATA also engages in various projects and outreach programmes aimed at promoting arts and culture in schools. Furthermore, the group collaborates with other youth organisations by using music as a tool for youth empowerment. My involvement with them was to add value and cement the importance of African indigenous music as a tool towards community development and upliftment.

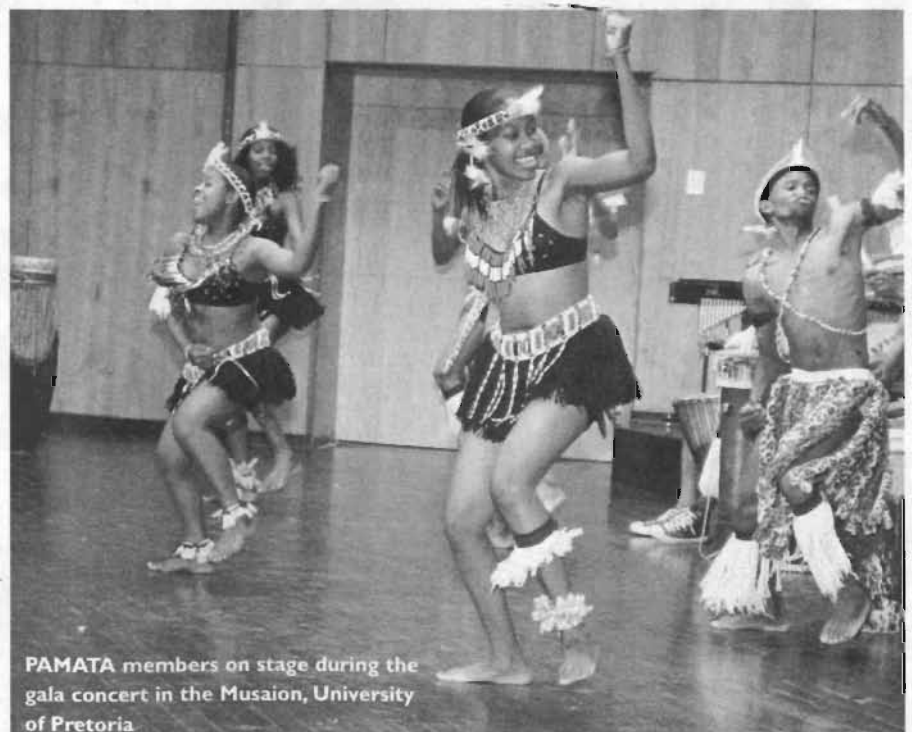
Characteristics of PAMATA members

The group comprises of teenagers and youth between the ages of 16 and 27. They come from different areas of

Tshwane in South Africa which include Pretoria Central, Mamelodi, Soshanguve, Mabopane, Garankuwa and Atteridgeville. The members are given the opportunity to develop their skills and to become empowered with artistic proficiency and etiquette, required in the arts industry and/or other fields, as integral values in today's competitive world. The group consists of over 30 members, including students as well as working and non-working youth. It is a mixture of some who have had training in the musical arts before and some that have never had such exposure. Their passion for music and the arts in general is exceptional. Different kinds of music and young people retain a remarkable bond, as is reflected in Dan Laughy's comment that music and the youth are usually deemed to hold a special relationship with each other (2006).

Gala event or showcase

As expected according to the module outcomes for the masters' degree, the community involvement project culminated in a gala event which took place in September 2013 and was entitled the "Spring Gala concert". It took place at the University of Pretoria's Musaion auditorium. The Spring Gala



PAMATA members on stage during the gala concert in the Musaion, University of Pretoria.

concert also featured other community groups using music as a tool for empowerment and as an aspect of education. Our audience included music teachers, students, the public and parents. Members of other performing groups, friends and fans of the groups that performed were also present. The gala was also graced to have in its audience, members of staff from the host University and officials from some embassies around Pretoria.

Contribution to community outreach

The community project resulted in many benefits, not only for the participants, but also for Kyakuwa personally as the coordinator of the PAMATA project. This project contributed to the popularisation and promotion of African indigenous musical arts, especially among youngsters within the group he was involved with. Furthermore, the participants evidenced a growing of musicianship and increased interest in

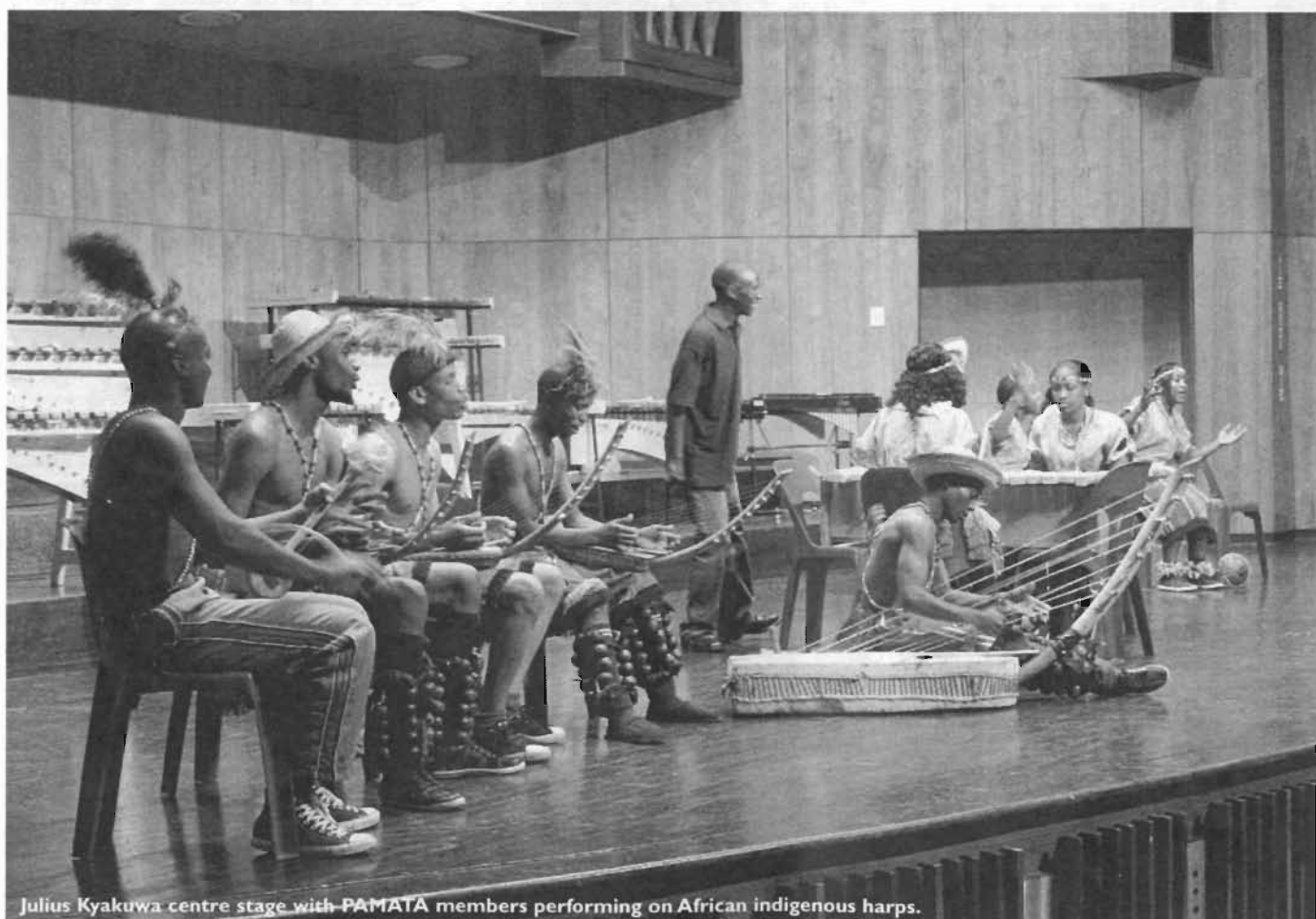
music. This entire process contributed to the development of key aspects amongst the participants, which were a result of ensemble music making and included, among others: cooperation, co-ordination, team work, creativity and spontaneity, respect for each other's strengths and weakness, self-discovery, confidence and self-esteem, social bonding, performance skills, leadership skills, talent identification, and learning about other cultures. Some of the members in this programme were also involved in training the others, which was good for developing skills as future educators and facilitators. Through this programme, there was positive exposure for the community group as well as for the members that took part in the final concert.

Through Kyakuwa's interaction with youth over many years, he came to realise that African indigenous musical arts are not very popular amongst youngsters today; yet values that

include cultural awareness and preservation are important to a young generation. This community engagement project contributed to this need by developing a sense of appreciation and interest in this music type among the participants.

Highlights of the process

Through the process of this community outreach project Kyakuwa experienced moments that stood out intellectually, academically and personally. From an intellectual perspective there were increased levels of creativity, resourcefulness and a quick response to instructions by the participants as the process of training progressed. Academically, his pedagogical approaches were often challenged by the need to act spontaneously under a given circumstance. Such moments included: finding easier ways to help participants master a given dance motif, drum rhythm or the lyrics of a new



Julius Kyakuwa centre stage with PAMATA members performing on African indigenous harps.

song. At other times, he needed to uplift the participants' moods and attitudes on days their morale seemed low. On a personal level, he remembers each member's ability when beginning to work with them in preparation for this particular programme. He was greatly inspired by their progressive growth in artistic abilities, confidence levels and the overall stage presentation during the gala concert. Still on a personal note, it was very challenging to train the participants given their varied levels of ability and rates of learning. Preparing them through aspects of training, rehearsal, stage awareness/use, performance techniques, the entertainment factor, organisation and an overall quality presentation, was indeed challenging. However, amidst this, it was overwhelming that what was taught was done to precision during the gala concert. This positive display not only nurtured the participants but was equally beneficial to Kyakuwa.

Challenges of the community outreach

There were inconsistencies in training attendance due to the difficulties some members had keeping to the necessary arrangements of time and place. As trainer, this was challenging for Kyakuwa because he is aware that every absence from a continuous process directly affects the trainee. Moreover, the continuous process of assessment so important to optimal development is affected by the absence of some of the participants. However, understanding the causes and finding a way forward was very crucial. Developing the participants to a uniform level in terms of stage performance was another challenge. As an educator, he could appreciate participants' differences in learning ability and their capacity to acquire new skills. However, it was indeed demanding to appreciate this reality and yet work to balance efficiency and precision given the time constraints we experienced. He was also careful not to overwork the participants in the process, as there was

the danger that they could lose interest. The choice of repertoire for the indigenous African items involved songs and dances that were totally new to the participants. Developing their interest in and acquisition of song texts foreign to their mother tongues was equally very challenging. A simplified and step-by-step approach appreciative of this challenge was a good solution.

African indigenous musical arts performances often involve dancing, singing and instrumentation, which all happen simultaneously. In addition to this, performers must remember set stage procedures, choreography, order of songs, dance motifs and other routine techniques. Training performers to acquire these types of skills require a lot of concentration from their side, tolerance and understanding from the teacher's perspective and it also takes time, which is indeed challenging.

Influences of the community outreach on the participants

A community outreach programme is bound to have an influence on the participants. The process of training, preparation and performance developed confidence amongst the participants. This is not something that can be taken away from the participants and Kyakuwa believes that it will continue to play a significant role in their lives even after this experience. As a music educator, he takes pride in identifying and developing artistic talents amongst his learners. The benefits of this growth affect them positively in their social, academic, creative and intellectual development. His input did contribute to that in many ways. Other notable areas that are likely to have been influenced by his involvement, and which are important amongst such a young generation, include: high levels of creativity, organisation, and

listening and communication skills. His time and engagement with these participants was a means of skills development, especially concerning artistic skills. This, too, is a worthy contribution that his involvement must have achieved at an individual level.

The community outreach project's influences upon the facilitator

In view of the varied abilities and expectations of the facilitator of the project, it required Kyakuwa to be flexible in order to deal with the participants with ease and understanding. This was important because he had to strike a balance between the dual approaches of caring and educating. He was touched by the changes in expression, enthusiasm, levels of confidence and the quality of the final performance. He continued to add to his first-hand experience that music brings the best out of every individual. This was evident considering the



PAMATA members performing with poise and flair.

attitude and level of skill of the participants at the beginning of the community engagement and how much they developed during the course of the project.

Relevance of the facilitator's involvement

Firstly, being an experienced educator contributed to the success of the project since Kyakuwa engaged with the group from a sensitive and empathetic perspective. As an educator he uses an approach of understanding and relating to the participants. Secondly, he shared his passion – African indigenous musical arts – with the participants. This was equally important because his energy and fervour for what he did easily passed onto them. They therefore had trust and confidence to appreciate his contribution.

Furthermore, being knowledgeable in his area of engagement assisted him to work effectively with the participants. Finally, he was able to relate with the participants and their needs as youngsters, and respond through the integration and application of African music. This helped establish mutual understanding, especially considering differences in socio-cultural contexts.

Kyakuwa's involvement and the success of the entire project depended upon teamwork and delegation of responsibilities amongst the group members. This sharing of responsibilities helped him to observe if the members were ready for the concert and passionate about the concert preparations. Furthermore, there was collaboration with other parties who had to assist and provide support in the overall organisation and administration of the programme. As the project leader, he had to undertake a high level of organisation in order to

coordinate everyone involved and facilitate a successful project.

Right from the start of Kyakuwa's involvement with this community, especially regarding preparation for the gala concert, the strategy was to put the members in the mood to perform. This helped to prepare their minds beforehand. A different approach would have been used if the project did not culminate in a final concert programme. While conducting the training and rehearsals for the gala, he also integrated lessons in stage performance, self-awareness, self-confidence, self-esteem and artistic presentation. By the time of the performance, the participants had gained sufficient knowledge and confidence of these aspects that they could perform with poise and flair.

During the preparation process, continuous dialogue about the importance of music and the arts in general was included. Through these conversations and sharing with the participants, the aspect of performance as an essential part of music and all performing arts was emphasised. The benefits that come with performance were also discussed. This was done in a natural discussion environment that involved ideas and input from the members themselves. For this reason, they all looked forward to the showcasing with curiosity and positive anticipation. At the end of the concert, when all was done and the audience gave the performers arousing applause and words of appreciation and congratulations, all the benefits of performance were confirmed. It therefore had a positive and motivating influence on the performers.

Conclusion

Kyakuwa found this experience to be very enriching and uplifting for both the

community and for himself as the Master's student. With such value to both students and community members, and especially the youth, there should be a strategy for continuity so that the hopes and knowledge given have a way of being sustained. More such projects and programmes should be encouraged and promoted; this type of involvement is feasible and worthwhile.

This reflection and article in general should encourage those who are involved in using music as an outreach activity, or who intend to engage in this kind of involvement. For the music educators, it is another way to share experiences from which we continue to motivate, inspire and encourage each other. As Marian Wright Edelman (2013) suggests, the purpose of education is to improve the lives of others and to leave our communities and the world better than we found it.

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Teaching music to young children in a marginalised community

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“It may well be hoped that by the time we reach the year 2000, every child that has attended the primary school will be able to read music fluently”

Zoltán Kodály

The above quote indicates Kodály's belief that music education should be the right of everyone (Choksy 1981), and in the view of the authors of this article, this sentiment is echoed by most dedicated and vocational music educators. However, the only way that this dream can be realised is through music educators offering their knowledge and skills and sharing their love of music with local communities, especially those who have least access to such opportunities.

Background

Situated on the outskirts of Centurion in Gauteng is a small community primary school which is privately run with funding coming primarily from a local church that founded the school in 2004. The school caters for 140 children from Grade R up to Grade 4. An after-care facility is available to children who need to stay at school in the afternoons. This service is run by a vibrant and caring group of volunteers every day, and it was with a group of children from this environment that Graham has been involved by providing a music education programme.

The group with whom Rosemarie Graham worked comprised children from the Grade 2 classes who stayed for after-care at the school. There were 21 children in the group, including both boys and girls. The children were taught music on a weekly basis, for thirty minutes, in three groups of seven

children each. The music programme was initially aimed at teaching the recorder only, but she changed this soon after commencing with the music programme. Enrolled as MMus student at the University of Pretoria, her weekly lessons at this school became part of the Community Involvement module which forms part of the Masters in Music Education degree and as a final showcase of her work, a concert event was planned at the end of the process.

The children in the school come from a marginalised, black South African community. Many of them are growing up in single parent households and some are in households where there is no income at all. The community includes diverse ethnic groups, each having their own language, though the language medium at the school is English.

Teaching this group of children to play the recorder with good intonation,

developing musicianship and thereby making them aware of their own musical potential, was the primary musical goal of Graham's involvement in this community. A relevant approach to recorder playing needed to be found in order to achieve this goal.

The Kodály method of teaching music to young learners

Having had several years of experience of implementing the Kodály approach, Graham was particularly keen to share this approach in this environment. Effectively this method would be introducing a structured Western approach to music learning in a setting that is more spontaneous.

During the process of the community involvement project, focus was placed on the following two primary elements from the Kodály philosophy:

- Solfa/solmization
- Singing



The community school where the project took place.

Using singing as a teaching tool was both stimulating and rewarding. Vocalising is innate to African culture, and Graham had no difficulty encouraging the children to sing, or having to work on their intonation or pitch, such as differentiating between the "speaking" voice and "singing" voice (Choksy, 1981:19).

Kodály's premise is that young children should first develop music skills such as inner hearing, listening and music reading skills before embarking on the learning of a music instrument. However, to make the best use of the opportunity to work with the children in the marginalised community, Graham wanted them to experience instrumental playing and the joys of ensemble work as soon as possible. She found the ideal link to extend Kodály's method by investigating the work of the Hungarian educator and violinist, Geza Szilvay, who adapted and extended Kodály's philosophy into his own music education approach in the late 1970s.

Szilvay's approach is founded on the premise that a child should have a strong music foundation before beginning to play a music instrument (Mackenzie, 2013:10). Szilvay was involved in Finland as music educator to young violinists and his approach to string tuition flows out of the music programme for Kindergarten which he developed. Although Szilvay's approach was initially aimed at teaching young violinists through the *Colourstrings*¹ method, this approach has consequently developed to include other instruments, and the basics of the Kindergarten programme can be applied effectively, irrespective of the chosen instrument of the young learners. The use of colour in Szilvay's teaching approach arose out of a personal need to make him understood by his class of pre-school children in Finland. Being Hungarian, he was unable to converse in Finnish and so adapted his teaching to include colours and pictures. The Finnish folksongs and music stories that he collected to share

with his young daughter became the material that he used to teach his young Finnish pupils (Homfray, 2006:78).

Szilvay's Kindergarten programme

The Kindergarten programme was designed by Szilvay by way of preparing the child to seamlessly enter the instrumental arena. The *Little Rascals* series of books (Szilvay, Hyrske & Ailes) are beautifully illustrated and form the core repertoire of this programme. Many of these songs in the *Little Rascals* books are re-introduced in the instrumental books of the *Colourstrings* series. During the kindergarten years the songs are taught and performed in various ways, namely:

- singing with words (with and without solfa hand signs)
- humming softly (with and without solfa hand signs)
- singing inside the head (with and without solfa hand signs).

Naturally, this means that there is much repetition of material which slows the process, but deepens the learning experience. Learning songs or making music this way creates an acute awareness of pitch and intonation in the child. Developing inner hearing is important for instrumental playing,

particularly for string and wind players where they are controlling the pitch of the instrument through the fingers or through breathing.

The music programme for young children encompasses all the elements of music: rhythm, pitch, dynamics, melody, tempo, character, form and style. The use of toys, fairy tales, singing, movement, playing percussion instruments (pitched and unpitched), listening to music, improvising and composing are all components incorporated into the early childhood programme (Mackenzie, 2013:7).

Szilvay's approach is child-centred and focuses on the development of learners in a holistic way that encourages the use of all the senses to understand musical concepts and apply them practically in a fun way (Mackenzie, 2013:8). There is a strong emphasis on music development through education of the senses², especially hearing, seeing and touching (Mackenzie, 2013:9; Homfray, 2006:79). Implementation incorporates much repetition of material, which is presented in a varied fashion so as not to become boring. This repetition always includes some form of singing, which is core to developing a child's inner hearing or internalisation. Inner



Rosemarie Graham teaching solfa using pictures from Szilvay's book.



Children playing on multi-coloured bells to experience different pitches.

hearing develops good musicianship (Choksy, 1981:7). Szilvay uses the word "smuggle" to describe the way in which his approach aids the internalisation of musical knowledge or understanding (Homfray, 2006:79). Music concepts of pitch, dynamics and tempo are imparted without the child being conscious of any learning, with progression occurring from the known to the unknown (Homfray, 2006:79).

Szilvay's intention is that the instrumental application of the *Colourstrings* approach be used to teach young children up to the age of eight years. He is of the opinion that children older than eight are no longer as attracted to colour and pictures to motivate them to study (Mitchell, 1998:73). According to Szilvay, the foundations for all musical development are laid through the Kindergarten programme and he deems it to be the most important phase of the entire music education system (Mitchell, 1998:74).

There are two important differences between the Kodály method and Szilvay's approach relevant to the community music project. Firstly, Kodály believed emphatically that a child should start with instrumental playing only once he is musically literate. Szilvay introduces instrumental playing before the child can read music. Secondly, Kodály teaching uses a simplified version of music notation, consisting of vertical lines representing

the stems of notes without the egg-shaped note-heads being added. These 'stick notes' are black. Szilvay's *Colourstrings* approach initiates note reading also through the use of 'stick notation' but colour and pictures are also incorporated. Specifically in the recorder method 'stick notation' is built up in stages until it becomes proper notation. These steps are all depicted in the colours related to the pitch of the notes.

Music lessons in small groups

At the outset of the music interaction project, all the children received their own recorders. The 21 children involved in the project were divided into three smaller groups of seven children each. The recorders remained at the school and the learners were encouraged to practise on them whenever they wished. The intention was to give the children instrumental lessons combining Kodály's principles with the Szilvay's approach adapted for the recorder³.

The *Colourstrings* approach on recorder introduces notes using coloured lines depicting solfa names initially. Colour is a visual aid which makes learning more child-friendly. Each note is sung and its related solfa hand sign is used before being played on the recorder. Therefore, the child is made aware of the sound of the note before it is played, so that intonation can be corrected or improved. Graham

began implementing this approach to learning, but soon realised that the lack of musical grounding as well as the physical difficulties relating to the holding of the instrument was making the process slow and tedious. With seven children in each group, she soon realised that each child needed a measure of individual instruction within the thirty minutes of the lesson. Accordingly, it was decided that she first needed to establish a solid music foundation through singing, movement, playing non-melodic percussion instruments and rhythmic awareness. This was obtained through the Kodály music education approach, further expounded by Szilvay's Kindergarten programme.

A selection of songs from the Kindergarten repertoire was chosen to be relevant to the cultural setting, and with which the solfa and solmization could be incorporated and applied. The reasoning behind this strategy was that the children's understanding of these important elements needed to be secured, and their confidence in these areas needed to be developed relatively quickly, to enable all the participants to recommence with recorder. Being a school with a religious stance, a sacred song was included in their repertoire which they sang using solfa hand signs. This enabled the desired teaching approach to be maintained, whilst considering the boundaries of the school ethos and the cultural setting⁴.

Gala concert

The gala concert was a highlight of the year's work, and held dual benefits for the children and for Graham. For the children it was an opportunity to share and show. They were able to share with their parents what happens in a music class, and also show (and show off!) what they had accomplished and achieved through music participation. The whole experience was uplifting and encouraging; it brought about a dynamic change in the way the children perceive their part, and even their responsibility, within the music programme. This

change was particularly evident in the behaviour of the boys during the follow-up lessons after the concert. Bringing the recorders out again resulted in a renewed response to learning the instrument. There was clear evidence of a link forming for the children between their own music interactions and making music through the medium of an instrument. Though they had only learned two notes on the recorder, some of these children were now volunteering to take on roles of mentorship to their peers. Once again, this was particularly noticeable in the boys.

The children received individual certificates of participation at the gala concert. These were well-received and this clearly gave them a sense of ownership in the music programme.

The gala concert gave Graham the opportunity to view what she and the children had achieved during the year, through the eyes of others. Even though she was facilitating and leading throughout the concert, she was able to evaluate the children's music performance skills as well as observe the response of the audience and the children's reaction in a performance scenario⁵. In addition to music evaluations she was able to observe the supplementary skills which the children had developed and experienced, including self-confidence and enjoyment which play an important part in music advocacy.

Conclusion

Being involved in a community project such as this convinced the authors of the inimitable role that music has to play in the social, emotional and cognitive development of young children. Community involvement



A young girl beaming when receiving her certificate for taking part in the concert.

benefits everyone. Teachers are fulfilled through their passion for sharing music with others, and the recipients of the teaching are placed on a path that will provide them with aesthetic pleasure that will last a lifetime, as well as equip them with many necessary skills needed to function responsibly in life.

Endnotes

1. *Colourstrings* is a relatively new concept to South Africa. The Kindergarten course was introduced to the South African music teaching fraternity in 2011. For more information on this approach internationally and nationally visit www.colourstrings.co.uk and www.colourstringssa.co.za
2. Rosemarie Graham have been teaching music to young children for eighteen years in the Montessori environment, and the *Colourstrings* approach has many elements that overlap with the Montessori philosophy in the context of music.
3. The first *Colourstrings* instrumental book was written for violin, followed by the cello, and mini-bass. Subsequently books were written for other instruments, based on this

approach to instrumental playing, by various authors. This approach now also embraces piano, flute, guitar and the most recent publication in 2010 being the recorder.

4. Community involvement requires one to keep a humble spirit and work in harmony with the cultural ethos and religious views of the community.
5. A video-recording was made of the gala concert which offered an extended opportunity for reflection, observation and evaluation.

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Techniques enhancing social interaction of children with Asperger's Syndrome during foundation phase music education

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Music educators come into contact with a diversity of children each day. Children all have individual characteristics and personalities, and engage with the world around them in their own unique way. Klass and Costello (2003:4) use the term "quirky kids" to describe children who react to situations a little differently than most children. Such children do not follow a standard developmental curve along with their peers, whether regarding behavioural, physical, mental or emotional development. Only a few decades ago these children would merely be considered deviant or strange. Presently, there are an increasing number of children being diagnosed with various developmental disorders. Klass and Costello (2003:315), both paediatricians, have noticed a rise in the number of children diagnosed with special needs and they also make mention of the fact that teachers report the same trend.

Children and Asperger's Syndrome

Increasing numbers of children, especially boys, are diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome (AS) each year (Darrow, 2009:24). Boys are four times more likely to have this syndrome than girls (Darrow, 2009:24) which could explain why there are a number of known cases at the boys-only private preparatory school in Gauteng where this study took place. In rural communities, where there may be

insufficient funds or qualified therapists on school staff, there could be many more children who go undiagnosed.

To a person unfamiliar with the characteristics of AS, a child with this syndrome may come across as strange or socially inept. It is essential for a teacher to recognise that a child with AS has difficulty understanding the rules of acceptable social interaction. They do not understand the concept of personal space, they have trouble using or understanding body language, they do not know how to initiate social encounters and finally, they do not adapt to change easily (Mayton, 2005:87).

Inclusive education

Children with AS show no delays in cognitive development or language acquisition and there is no reason why these children should not be included in mainstream education situations. South African schools follow the international trend towards an inclusive education environment (Prinsloo, 2001:344). This movement is in line with the RSA Constitution Act 108 of 1996 which stipulates that all children have a right to freely receive education (Prinsloo, 2001:344). The aim of an inclusive education is to eliminate discrimination against children with difficulties. Inclusion in South African schools will, however, only be effective if teachers are equipped to deal with the demands this system places on them.

An important aspect in the success of inclusive education, when aimed at a child with AS, is social competence. Difficulty in expressing oneself in a socially acceptable manner could have dire effects on a child's success in education (Mayton, 2005:88). A study by César (2006:342) shows that interactive group work fosters a successful inclusive setting; therefore, inclusive education can possibly be very beneficial, enhancing the social interaction of a child with AS.

Classroom techniques:

The buddy system and PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System)

Children with AS do have the desire to form friendships. They struggle to do so due to their social ineptitude and a buddy may be an effective way of reaching the friendship goal. Some children in the classroom may show a natural aptitude to understand the AS child and these should be encouraged to act as buddies (Attwood, 2007:81). Often, a child with AS will more readily accept advice or guidance with regards to social skills from a peer than from an adult (Attwood, 2007:81; Hammel & Hourigan, 2011:43). If there are only certain parts of an activity a child with AS will be able to manage independently, a buddy can be used to assist with more challenging sections of the activity. The child will then feel involved without feeling overwhelmed (Darrow, 2009:28, 29).

Many teachers use visual aids in their teaching and this could be a highly effective method of teaching children with AS. Attwood (2007:252) explains that a child with AS has a mainly visual thought process. Hagedorn (2004:47) quotes a school student with AS saying that "Pictures are my first language, and words are my second language". The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) (Hammel & Hourigan, 2011:41) is a system that uses icons to help the child with AS understand and prepare for the activities in the classroom.

Music to enhance social interaction

It is widely reported that music therapy is beneficial in the treatment of children with special needs, including autistic spectrum disorders (Wimpory & Nash, 1999) but this treatment can become expensive and time consuming to the child and parent. Similarly, it has been reported that active music participation in itself can improve social interaction in children (Darrow, 2011; Hagedorn, 2004). It is therefore a possibility that techniques incorporated in music education lessons may positively influence the social interaction of children with AS.

Participation in music activities has indicated that it improves social interaction amongst children in general, as shown in the research study conducted by Wimpory and Nash (1999). Darrow (2011:29) makes it clear that music classes are inherently social events and that many socialisation skills, such as eye contact, appropriate social behaviours and mannerisms can easily be practised through fun, engaging music activities. A music setting is an opportune time for the child with social difficulties to learn how to deal with the environment around him.

In a study by Whipple and Van Weelden (2012:34), two classroom strategies are prominently mentioned as highly effective when working in an inclusive music classroom. These are the buddy system and PECS. I

embarked on a study with the main aim of exploring the effects of these two classroom techniques upon the social functioning of children with AS in the foundation phase music classroom environment.

Methodology

In this qualitative research Fouché used a case study design to explore the effects of the buddy system and PECS on the social interaction of children diagnosed with, or suspected to have, AS. The case study was carried out at a private boys-only preparatory school in Gauteng. To validate the findings, data was collected from several sources of information (Fouché & Schurink, 2011:321). Empirical data included field notes, focused observation and a semi-structured interview with a general class teacher. Field notes and observations were made during the course of regular weekly music education lessons of 30 minutes each over a period of eight concurrent weeks. Thematic analysis followed and allowed for the emergence of themes.

Fouché chose two boys with AS diagnoses, who attended her music lessons, to participate in the case study.

*Jasper' is a seven year old boy in an inclusive Grade 1 classroom. Although his language skills are highly developed, appropriate social interaction is a challenge for him. His interaction with peers had been erratic for some time and he often lost control of his emotions which led to disruptive behaviour. This behaviour resulted in reluctance by *Jasper's peers to befriend him. During week seven of the study Fouché was informed that his diagnosis had been changed to Sensory Integration Disorder. Both authors decided to include the findings regarding *Jasper in this article as it still has value in the paradigm of integrated education.

The second participant in the case study was *Caleb. He is an eight year old boy with a diagnosis of AS in an integrated Grade 2 classroom. He has a greater need for an improvement in

his social interaction with his peers than *Jasper. *Caleb does not frequently engage in conversation with anyone. During previous music lessons *Caleb rarely participated in classroom activities. The rest of his peers mostly leave him to his own devices and they do not actively include him in their activities. *Caleb dislikes being touched and is visibly uncomfortable when addressed directly.

The intervention: Implementing the buddy system and PECS

At the beginning of the first lesson using the new technique, the buddy system was explained to all the children. The purpose of the buddy system is mainly to provide the child with AS a single focus of social interaction, which will hopefully ease the anxiety when confronted with an entire class of children. Fouché decided to put the entire class in buddy pairs so as to not draw attention to the child with AS. The buddies were instructed to help one another portray acceptable behaviour. Buddies were also used in group work. During an activity with a worksheet, each pair would only receive one worksheet and one pencil. They would then have to communicate and decide how to complete the worksheet together. Other group activities, such as playing on instruments and moving to music in pairs, were also conducive to the buddy system. After two lessons the buddies were changed to provide opportunities to interact with different children in the classroom.

PECS were introduced by placing pictures depicting the flow of the lesson in a central area of the classroom. A number of activities took place during a 30 minute session and the pictures provided a visual cue for the children as to which activity would follow. It was hoped that the PECS would ease the transition between activities, which can be problematic for the child with AS. At the start of each lesson Fouché as the facilitator would briefly explain the order of activities while referring to the pictures.

Research findings

In the first case study with *Jasper, the initial diagnosis was that of AS. Only at the end of the study was his diagnosis changed to that of Sensory Integration Disorder. The buddy system did not improve *Jasper's social interaction at all; in fact, he became combative and even more uncooperative as the study progressed. In retrospect it is clear that the sensory nature of the music classroom became overwhelming to an already sensitive child. Imposing the buddy system on *Jasper increased stimulation as he was now forced to interact directly with another child. He may have felt trapped in a sensory situation he could not cope with. PECS, on the other hand, was a very successful classroom technique with *Jasper. A possible explanation could be that PECS created order for *Jasper and made him feel in control of his surroundings. During lessons, he would walk up to the pictures and touch them. These tactile encounters with the pictures showed his need to feel in control of some aspects of his environment and PECS created the space for him to do so.

The second child in this case study involved *Caleb. He responded very well to the buddy system. *Caleb was unable to cope with the expectation of interacting with a class of 25 children, but the buddy system narrowed his focus to only one child at a time. For the first time, *Caleb was able to make a spontaneous contribution to the lessons. The buddy system removed the pressure of having to interact with multiple children and he was able to involve himself with group work and class discussions as long as his buddy was close at hand. PECS also showed a positive effect on *Caleb's behaviour. He formerly showed anxiety when he needed to conclude one activity and move on to the following one. With

the use of PECS, he was calmer during transition time and this led to an overall improvement in his behaviour and social interaction. The ease of his transition between activities may, in part, be due to the fact that he felt completely in control of the structure of the lesson as he was well prepared for all the activities that would take place.

Conclusion

The buddy system has an encouraging effect on the social interaction of a child with AS. Shifting the focus of interaction to only one child at a time gives the child with AS the confidence to initiate interaction where none may have occurred before. The buddy system leads to increased spontaneous conversation and participation in activities. Furthermore, the buddy system enhances pro-social behaviour, as evidenced by *Caleb's ability to take turns in activities and sharing responsibilities for certain tasks. PECS creates structure in a potentially overwhelming environment, as well as an opportunity for a child to better regulate his own emotions and behaviours. Confidence in the classroom is heightened as the child feels more in control of his environment and this leads to an increased sense of belonging to the group.

The buddy system and PECS clearly have a positive effect on the social interaction of a child with AS. This positive effect has a direct influence on the overall atmosphere within the classroom and therefore affects not only the child with AS, but all the other children in the class as well. A classroom free of conflict becomes an environment conducive to acceptance of the integrated child. This acceptance is at the heart of successful inclusive education.

Endnotes

1. Participants' names have been replaced with pseudonyms in order to protect the privacy of children involved in the study.

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Marimba pedagogy in a Botswana private primary school: A case study

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Botswana is a landlocked country with its capital city as Gaborone. Its bordering neighbours are South Africa on the south, Namibia on the west, Zambia on the north and Zimbabwe on the north east. Botswana's economy is stable and prospers mainly from diamond mining and the beef industry (Dunn, 2003:129-155). The Kedikilwe Report of the Botswana National Commission on

Education (1993:38-39) proposed some of the following common goals underlying the philosophy of education in the curriculum: to acquire and appreciate moral and social values; to acquire and appreciate cultural and aesthetic values; to develop higher order cognitive competences, problem solving skills and the ability to learn how to learn; and to develop interpersonal and social skills. Roy Nyathi embarked on the current study with the above philosophical goals in mind.

Overview of the development of marimba pedagogy at Thornhill School

Thornhill is a private primary school in Botswana whose motto reads "We are happy children", and a strong emphasis is placed on music education.

The late former head of the school, Helen Mathole, endorsed the recruitment of Michael Sibanda to



Happy children playing marimbas at Thornhill primary.

initiate the stimulating and exciting marimba pedagogy at the school in 1993. The school boasts a vibrant marimba band CD recording under his legacy entitled *Thornhill Marimba Magic*. In 2004 Roy Nyathi took over from Sibanda when he left for South Africa. In 2006 Nyathi initiated and hosted the energetic and annually growing marimba festivals that involve private schools in and around Gaborone. At Thornhill, marimba lessons are given to all learners, starting from the reception classes. The afternoon marimba ensemble pedagogy is part of the extra-curricular programme that involves two groups of pre-auditioned talented players who form the junior and the senior marimba bands. The senior band is entered annually for Trinity College Music performance examinations. The marimba bands provide special performances at school assemblies,

concerts and festivals in and outside of the school setting as part of the outreach programme to the community. Several Thornhill School magazines (internal publications of the school) reflect that the Thornhill marimba bands' performances have promoted the school's music at many prestigious events, including at the 23rd World ISME (International Society of Music Education)

conference in Pretoria (1998), as well as for several visiting dignitaries over the past decade.

Personal motivation

Roy Nyathi is a former student of the Kwanongoma Music College in Zimbabwe, under the mentorship of the late master of marimba, Alport Mhlanga, a renowned composer, music educator and ethnomusicologist. Working with Mhlanga during marimba festivals that were hosted in Gaborone, Botswana, Nyathi was motivated to conduct the current study as part of his BMus Honours degree at the University of Pretoria. He has found the marimbas to be extraordinary instruments to use in a music classroom since they create a vibrant and exciting sound which inspires the learners, thereby becoming a unifying tool in music education.

Aim of the study

The aim of this case study was to explore how marimba playing has influenced music education at Thornhill Primary School, impacting on learners' performance in general music education; and affecting their psycho-social development. Through the study, Nyathi also wanted to find out how marimba pedagogy could be promoted in all Botswana primary schools.

The overall approach for this research was qualitative, employing a case study design at Thornhill School where Nyathi is employed as music educator. Empirical data were collected through interviews, participant observation and audio-visual recordings during lessons, concerts, assembly performances and marimba festivals.

In order to contextualise the use of marimba pedagogy in Botswana, aspects such as a comparison between the Orff pedagogy and the traditional African marimba approach is considered. A brief account of the origins of the African Kwanongoma marimba and its spread into Botswana is also provided.

Carl Orff's approach compared to the African oral marimba pedagogy

Review of the literature reveals that the African marimba and its oral teaching approach existed before the use of Orff instruments (Lithgow, 2004:8). There are striking similarities between the Orff approach and the African marimba pedagogy, and according to Nzewi (2003:16-19) and Maubach (2006:23), these two pedagogical approaches share the same tenets of modern music education, which include creativity, improvisation, imitation, observation and listening. Furthermore, both pedagogies emphasise the importance of rhythm as key for performing on the instruments. Both approaches also highlight full, active participation and music-making through interactive participation. Finally, Lithgow (2005:17-21) refers to the rote method that is characteristic of African traditional teaching and rates it as the best method adopted by Orff in his pedagogy.

The spread of the Zimbabwe marimba tradition into Botswana

A development that is core to this study is the creation of the prototype Zimbabwe marimba used at Thornhill School. It was designed at the Kwanongoma Music College in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. According to Tracey (2006) the Kwanongoma marimba design was based on a pentatonic scale and was influenced by the *timbila* xylophone of the Mozambican Chopi people and the *silimba* of the Lozi tribe of Zambia. It was built on the C major scale with an added F sharp that allows the ensemble to perform a wider range of pieces with additional scales. When the well-known and influential Zimbabwean music educator Alport Mhlanga immigrated to Botswana in 1987, he promoted the use of the Kwanongoma marimba, offering a practical approach to music education in the country.

The Mambo Arts Commune Cultural group had the largest impact in Botswana regarding the manufacturing of the Kwanongoma type of marimba sets and running country-wide workshops with the help of the brothers Michael and Onesmus Sibanda. The marimba playing tradition has now become part of the musical culture of the Botswana people.

The impact of the marimba pedagogy on Thornhill School and its learners

After observing marimba lessons and performances with learners at the school which Nyathi taught and conducted, he interviewed various respondents involved at the school, such as focus group interviews with learners and individual interviews with parents and teachers. From the collected data, it became clear that the learners' psycho-social development were influenced positively by marimba pedagogy. Firstly, it improved the learners' self-esteem. The learners started off being shy and withdrawn, but gradually opened up and became more confident through performing on the marimbas. Improved confidence was evident when learners stood bravely in front of the audience while performing and expressing themselves without fear. The learners experienced a sense of achievement and satisfaction. Next, marimba playing developed the psychomotor and cognitive skills of the learners. It helped keep their minds alert and active during music education lessons. The marimba teaching helped develop discipline as they had to follow set rules and instructions, working expertly together as a group during marimba ensemble performances. Learners developed skills of leadership



Making new friends and developing listening skills while waiting for the next instructions.

and cooperation through musical roles within the ensembles. The approach brought unity and a positive sense of togetherness among learners of different ethnic backgrounds. They participated in large numbers such as in classes and school ensembles. Marimba playing brought communities together. The pedagogy built friendship among participants who learned to appreciate each other's performances. Positive feelings were stimulated within the learners who described these with words such as happy, relaxed, energetic, calm, excited and proud. The phenomenon tended to have a positive effect on their academic performance, which could be deduced from interviews with teachers from the school. Finally, marimba playing improved the learners' communication and listening skills.

Promotion of music education

A key finding from this study was that the marimba pedagogy had emerged as an effective approach to enhance music education at Thornhill School. Firstly, it was easy for learners to grasp the playing technique of the instruments and they learned a wide variety of pieces in a short space of time. Secondly, it accommodated most, if not all, learners regardless of their musical abilities. Next, it had a high motivational value for learners since they were all keen to participate and be part of the performances. Furthermore, all types of music could be performed on the instruments. Finally, the approach promptly ushered learners into an experience of fun-filled active music-making.

The marimba pedagogy as an African approach has been passed on through oral tradition over many centuries and has stood the test of time. This was evidenced to be true in the research where participants could be observed experiencing music elements and enjoyment through music-

making. These are summarised as follows: The learners could feel, internalise and experience music elements such as pitch, rhythm, chord progression, harmony, dynamics, and form of compositions, as well as to develop skills of creativity and improvisation. While the learners experienced musical elements, they ultimately improved their performance skills in music. The marimba ensembles' annual resounding success in Trinity Music College performance examinations bore witness to the impact of the pedagogy in general music (Warwick, 2008).

Through marimba ensemble performances, marimba band CD recordings, tours and marimba festivals, clear confirmation was provided to uncover the many benefits of introducing marimba pedagogy at Thornhill primary school. This pedagogy had an exceptional positive impact on music education in the community, both locally and abroad. The propagation of marimba music through such performances has certainly promoted and spread music education far and wide.

Marimba Repertoire

The marimba repertoire is currently tilting towards pop songs with which learners can easily identify. Although learners respond well to this type of music, some participants in the study proposed that the repertoire should strike a balance between pop and African traditional songs so that learners may preserve their cultural and African identity. In both the authors' view the African nature of marimba music should be preserved and taught to posterity so that the African identity and culture can live on. The forgotten and endangered African songs could be revived and conserved through this pedagogy. However, since our learners are living in diverse and dynamic societies, a balance may be struck only if

pop tunes are re-arranged into the African marimba style and its intricate rhythms.

Marimba Festivals

The marimba festivals at Thornhill School have shown to be an effective forum for learners to improve their music performance skills. Most music teachers attending the festivals have learnt new repertoire and styles, afforded through the marimba workshops and the final concert performances during the festivals.

Conclusion

The findings of this case study clearly revealed the significant positive impact that marimba pedagogy has had on the promotion of music education, the learners' psycho-social development, their musical and artistic growth and their life skills. The marimba pedagogy is worthwhile and therefore it is recommended for adoption by all schools in Botswana.

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