Values, Belonging, and Motivation in the Twenty-First-Century Music Classroom

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Abstract: Understanding and accepting diversified musical styles often touches on an ethical need to recognize, respect, and eventually accept people who are different from oneself. Achieving these goals relies on a value-based education. Moreover, research confirms that while values reflect on an individual's character, they can be developed through education and experience, thus placing an added dimension within the responsibility of teachers' training programs. This paper suggests social values that music educators may bring to their profession, and demonstrates pedagogic methods which enable them to function as social agents within formal and informal educational settings, grades 1–12. The paper concludes with a call for further research designed to elucidate the pedagogical methods that impact on fostering the value of *belonging* and the contribution of *belonging* to the long-term development of children's musical interests and competence, as well as to their general wellbeing.

Keywords: values in music education, belonging, *Mediated Learning Experience*, Instrumental Music Education

Background

Israel's multicultural society seeks to express and secure a place for a variety of diverse cultural traditions. Working toward supporting the coexistence of people from both East and West, Israel strives to preserve its citizens' original customs and traditions while also creating a common culture. The will and need to achieve these objectives are evident in many aspects of Israeli life, as for example when examining the varied repertoires performed in Israel's concert halls, festivals, and local media. Understanding and accepting diversified musical styles often touches on an ethical need to recognize, respect, and eventually accept people who are different from oneself. Achieving these goals, therefore, requires a value-based education. This paper suggests social values that music educators may bring to their profession, and demonstrates how these values enable them to function as social agents within formal and informal educational settings, grades 1–12.

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Music Education in Israel

Despite a nationwide consensus regarding the value of music education (Portowitz, et al. 2010), music does not appear as a compulsory subject within the national school curriculum. As an elective subject, most principals choose general music education for their youngest students: 90 percent of children in grades 1–2 receive music lessons, after which the numbers progressively decline. During recent years, the Ministry of Education has promoted music education in Israel's elementary and high schools. Thus, today, close to 13,000 pupils in 242 elementary schools in 47 cities receive music lessons. In high school, approximately 4,100 students in 136 nationwide programs choose music as a subject for their matriculation exams.[1] While these numbers have substantially increased over the past five years, much remains to be done to bring music education to greater numbers of children.

In addition to general music education, the Ministry of Education also supports instrumental music education in the schools. In 2003, recognizing the artistic and social benefits of these lessons, the Music Division of Israel's Ministry of Education, in collaboration with conservatories and local authorities, initiated instrumental music education programs nationwide. These programs, referred to as *Model Music Communities*, provide instrumental music education for elementary school children. Working primarily within large and small homogeneous and heterogeneous groups of wind and strings players, the programs engage children of diverse cultural traditions who otherwise would not have access to a music education. Many of these children later enroll in local conservatories where they receive individual music lessons. Today, more than 22,400 students, aged 6 to 18, study in 68 nationally recognized conservatories (31 conservatories were accredited in 2017),[2] and many more children study in institutions that are not yet officially recognized by the government. These programs aim first and foremost to inculcate their students with a love for music and, thereafter, to identify and refer the more motivated/talented students to continue their music education in conservatories.

While these programs are in great demand, they suffer from a dire lack of well-trained music teachers. Among the large numbers of immigrants from the former USSR who arrived in Israel during the 1990s, many were qualified musicians and music teachers who were hired to teach music in the schools. Today, however, there are fewer immigrants arriving in Israel and many of the teachers who currently fill these posts have retired or are approaching retirement age.

Striving to preserve what has been created, and to prepare for future expansion, the Ministry of Education initiated an academic music education teachers' training program

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[1] Personal communication with Anat Dor, Music Division, Ministry of Education, 2018.
[2] Personal communication with Anat Dor, Music Division, Ministry of Education

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that specializes in instrumental music education.[3] The objective of this initiative was to train versatile musicians, who would be qualified to deal with the many issues confronting twenty-first-century educators.

While instrumental music education departments have existed for over two hundred years in universities and colleges in the United States, many of them are currently revising their curriculums in response to recent global developments.[4] Thus, for example, the growing numbers of immigrant children who attend local schools has required educators to include more diverse styles and repertories in their history courses. Moreover, a growing awareness of the extramusical cognitive, social, and personal skills that may be developed while studying music has encouraged educators to develop pedagogic methods that explicitly address these skills (McPherson & Hallam 2009; Tunstall & Booth 2016).

Implementing these changes has at times led to an upgrading in the status of the music teacher. Replacing a position of limited impact, today's music teachers strive to become proactive musicians and leaders, often entrusted with the personal development of their pupils and with the mediation of cultural and social interactions (Hallam 2015). Indeed, research confirms that while values reflect on an individual's character, values can be developed through education and experience (Schwartz 2014), thus placing an added dimension within the responsibility of teachers' training programs.

Values in Music Education

The contribution of values to the attainment of long-term goals of successful businesses has been recognized for many years. Thus, for example, the theories of McKinsey 7S framework,[5] Jim Collins Level 5 Leadership,[6] and Stephen Covi's 7 habits of effective

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[3] The Instrumental Music Education Department at the Givat Washington Academic College of Education, Israel, received initial accreditation in 2016. For a further description of this program see Appendix I.

[4] For example, the Department of Music Education at Madison University has recently undergone major revisions in their curriculum. Personal communication with Prof. Teryl Dobbs, head of the music education department.

[5] Developed in the early 1980s by Tom Peters and Robert Waterman, the basic premise of this model is that there are seven internal aspects of an organization that need to be aligned if it is to be successful. These factors are categorized as either "hard" or "soft" elements. "Hard" elements relate to management skills, and include, for example, the orderly follow-up management of strategy statements; organization charts and mechanisms of reporting. "Soft" elements, on the other hand, are less tangible and relate to interpersonal relations and shared values.

[6] Collins believes that the success of a company is determined by its leadership, and that great companies differ from good companies because of the quality of their leaders. After several years of research, Collins discovered that all of the great organizations that he studied were headed by what he called "Level 5 Leaders." These Leaders have a unique combination of fierce resolve and humility, and implement in their work core values, such as humility, responsibility, and passion, which enable them to develop skills that bring success to their companies.

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people,[7] all cite values as primary elements of professional excellence. Most striking, the Malcolm Baldridge Performance Excellence Program[8] includes an add-on list of core values, which they believe constitute the foundation for excellent institutions. Moreover, the Malcolm Baldridge Performance Excellence Program has found that these core values apply equally to excellent business, health, and education institutes. A list of these values is presented below (Figure 1).

BALDRIGE CORE VALUES and CONCEPTS
Click on any Core Value below to link to its description and role in achieving organizational performance excellence

BUSINESS	HEALTH CARE	EDUCATION
Visionary Leadership	Visionary Leadership	Visionary Leadership
Organizational and Personal Learning	Organizational and Personal Learning	Organizational and Personal Learning
Focus on the Future	Focus on the Future	Focus on the Future
Valuing Workforce Members and Partners	Valuing Workforce Members and Partners	Valuing Workforce Members and Partners
Managing for Innovation	Managing for Innovation	Managing for Innovation
Management by Fact	Management by Fact	Management by Fact
Focus on Results and Creating Value	Focus on Results and Creating Value	Focus on Results and Creating Value
Agility	Agility	Agility
Societal Responsibility	Societal Responsibility and Community Health	Societal Responsibility
Systems Perspective	Systems Perspective	Systems Perspective
Customer-Driven Excellence	Patient-Focused Excellence	Learning-Centered Education

Figure 1. Baldridge core values in business, health care, and education

I would now like to explain several of these values and demonstrate their relevance to music teachers' training programs.

Visionary Leadership[9] enables educators to direct their programs toward the realization of a given vision. This vision includes long-term goals, ethical behavior codes, long-term strategies, and ongoing curriculum development. In music education, this approach may entail coordinating and interconnecting different facets of a curriculum in support of a long-term goal, such as nurturing a love of music. In practice, this goal would

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[7] According to Covi, quality leaders are people who have a profound effect on others. To be effective, he suggests seven habits; all based on values, which include long-term vision, positive team-work, and renewal by education.

[8] The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award was established by the U.S. Congress in 1987 to raise awareness of quality management systems.

[9] Definitions for each of the values can be found at
http://www.baldrige21.com/Baldrige%20CORE%20VALUES.html.

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be reflected in the need to align interconnections between academic, performance, and professional training courses.

The following three values: *Focus on the Future*, *Focus on Results*, and *Systems Perspective*, ensure that an educational program puts into practice its visionary goals. They accentuate the need for reliable assessment systems, which provide feedback with regard to both short- and long-term accomplishments. The SWOT assessment tool[10] (SWOT Analysis) serves as an example of a comprehensive assessment tool that has been employed successfully in numerous music education programs.[11]

Valuing Workforce Members and Partners* and *Societal Responsibility address the need to nurture relationships between staff members and create outreach partnerships. Promoting partnerships among peers and with students enables multiple voices to contribute to decision-making processes. Most important, such partnerships enable music teachers to engage pluralistic societies, cultures, and frames of mind.

Societal Responsibility—Music education programs offer numerous venues of action that promote this value. Thus, this value encourages music educators to develop outreach, community involvement, and to work in physical, cultural, and/or socioeconomic peripheries. As mediators of cultural pluralism and respect for diversity, these teachers foster a sense of belonging between the students and their surroundings. Indeed, instrumental music education provides an ideal vehicle for developing social, team-working skills (Hallam 2015). Moreover, there is some evidence for the development of increased empathy in children through musical participation. Rabinowitch and colleagues (2013) found that children aged 8–11 who engaged in musical games that encouraged musical interaction and working together creatively, did better in the empathy measures.

*Agility***; *Innovation*—Even in the earliest stages of managing a new program, there are numerous occasions where flexibility and innovation serve as meaningful values. Thus, for example, negotiating with incoming students and/or with the college, often requires mental flexibility and quick responses. While introducing changes in response to given situations may occasionally imply a lack of consistency, and even disorder, recognizing the validity of these values enables people to listen, reassess a situation, and provide innovative solutions.

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[10] This tool enables a department to review its Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. The SWOT tool provides a means for reflection, learning, and seeking opportunities for innovation.

[11] See for example the SWOT analysis of music education in schools sponsored by the Australian society of music education, 2017.
 http://musicinaustralia.org.au/index.php?title=SWOT_Analysis_of_Music_Education_in_Schools_-_2017. Accessed 3 May 2018.

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Promoting the Value of *Belonging*

One particular value that appears to be closely related to successful music experiences is *Belonging*. Psychologists and educators today regard "belonging" as one of the strongest and most basic needs of the human race. While a sense of belonging motivates individuals to develop their innate talents and address difficult challenges, a lack of belonging seriously impairs cognitive and social development, and may result in mental illness. In recent research, brain scans have shown that feelings of exclusion register in the brain as actual physical pain (Tunstall & Booth 2016, 67).

These findings should not surprise us. Indeed, the overwhelming impact of social media reflects a deep need for belonging, as reported by Evan Asano, 4 January 2017: "Astonishingly, the average person will spend nearly two hours … on social media everyday.… Currently, total time spent on social media beats time spent eating and drinking, socializing, and grooming."[12]

Unfortunately, addictions to social media often result in further alienation from true human contact. While this situation affects all people, research confirms that minority groups suffer most from social alienation (Osterman 2000). Recognizing that today's schools are not adequately addressing these problems, educators worldwide seek to introduce initiatives that foster communication skills and enhance multicultural understanding in their classrooms (Robinson 2001). Encouraged by research results confirming that extramusical skills may be developed within musical settings, music educators are particularly interested in maximizing the contribution of formal and informal music education to promoting children's feeling of belonging.[13]

Among various didactic approaches that aim to enhance social skills, Reuven Feuerstein's *Mediated Learning Experiences* (MLE) offers a powerful didactic tool.[14] Feuerstein's theories originated after World War II as a means of helping disconnected people reconstruct their lives. Today, this theory is used to engage and promote minority

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[12] https://www.socialmediatoday.com/marketing/how-much-time-do-people-spend-social-media-infographic. Accessed 8 April 2018.

[13] A recent research project demonstrated that while minority group children often fail in scholastic activities, many of them are blessed with a natural talent for music. This became evident when in pre-test scores of a music assessment, 34.6 percent of children of migrant workers attained high scores, as opposed to a norm of 16.7 percent of high achievers among the general society. See Portowitz, et al. 2017, and E. Gordon, *Music Aptitude and Related Tests: An Introduction.*
https://giamusicassessment.com/pdfs/About%20Music%20Aptitude%20and%20Related%20Assessments.pdf. Accessed 10 April 2018.

[14] Feuerstein received the Israel Prize, Israel's most prestigious acknowledgment of scholarly excellence and contributions to Israel's society, for his work in developing and implementing the theories of *Structural Cognitive Modifiability* and *Mediated Learning Experiences.* For a more detailed discussion of the breadth and depth of his work, see http://www.icelp.info/media/358282/-Ch.-2.-SCM-MLE.pdf. Accessed 4 October 2018, and R. Feuerstein (1990).

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groups, alienated youth, and individuals with special needs, and has been translated into more than twenty languages. The main objective of *Mediated Learning Experiences* is to establish closely matched and synchronized human interactions designed to improve communication skills. Only when channels of communication are open and functioning does it become possible to facilitate wellbeing and a sense of belonging among alienated individuals.

Feuerstein enumerates twelve types of interaction that define a *Mediated Learning Environment*, of which the first three are universal and mandatory (see Appendix II). These universal interactions, when applied within a music classroom, foster feelings of belonging in significant ways:

1) *Focusing and reciprocity* ensures that the partners in the learning contexts feel involved and part of a working team. Their tasks are synchronized, and well understood. Such interactions occur, for example, in group listening exercises or group performances;

2) *Transmitting meaning, excitement, and relevance* nurtures a positive inclination toward differentness. Such mediation occurs, for example, when coming into contact with unfamiliar musical heritage. This type of mediation ensures that all participants feel respected and accepted, and encourages individuals to listen to music that may seem very strange at first;

3) *Expanding the learning process beyond the immediate* fosters imaginative and associative thinking, and enables students who find it difficult to express themselves verbally to convey their musical understanding in nonverbal modes of communication (for example, through graphic representations, kinesthetic motions, or performing on an instrument).

Supplementing these three universal parameters, an additional nine parameters of mediation are contingent upon specific situations. The twelfth parameter, mediating feelings of belonging, focuses on social inclusion. Thus, for example, children partaking in El Sistema music programs consistently cite playing with friends, and working together as families in orchestras and choirs, as the number one feature that attracts them to the El Sistema programs (Booth 2016, 108). Similarly, Gerry Sterling, director of the Harmony Music program for at-risk children in Lambeth, London, describes the music experiences of his participants, saying: "The ensemble is where we live, learn, know each other, have arguments sometimes, and learn to compromise. It's really the key to our whole program. It's at the heart of everything" (Booth 2016, 120).

Reflecting on connections between musical expressivity and social development, Booth further explains:

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When a person actively engages with a musical masterpiece, she or he gains access to a new kind of participation in *human feeling*. When people co-create the world of a masterpiece with others, they begin to practice communicative complexity together. When young people co-create the world of a masterpiece, its emotional depth becomes a part of how they learn to experience life. And when young people do this consistently, their capacity for empathic connection widens, and together they can begin to co-create a new world for themselves. (Booth 2016, 153)

Susan Hallam's inclusive meta-review of research strongly supports these insights (Hallam 2015). Summarizing the social skills developed in group instrumental settings, Hallam emphasizes social bonding and feelings of inclusion, especially among low ability, disaffected pupils and refugee children. Indeed, research confirms that the more frequent the engagement in social musical activities are, the more socially included children feel. In addition, group music making offers opportunities to engage in wider cultural experiences and explore new ideas that encourage multicultural tolerance. On a more personal level, children participating in these groups were found to develop qualities of cooperation, pro-social behavior, and collaborative learning. All of these skills depend on positive social relationships and the development of trust and respect among the participants (Hallam 2015; 2012). Feuerstein's *Mediated Learning Experiences* provides a particularly effective pedagogic tool for creating environments conducive to implementing these goals.

Conclusions

While substantial progress has been made in expanding our understanding of the role of values in defining quality music education in general and group instrumental education in particular, looking toward the future, we seek additional answers to many questions. Thus, for example, we may ask: To what degree do our future educators need to balance between professional competence, shared values, commitment, and/or hard work? How can we ensure that our teachers remain exposed to continuous growth and vision-building opportunities, for themselves and for their pupils? Most important, we need further research that will deepen our understanding of the value of *belonging* within music education, and how best to achieve it. I would like to suggest a joint international longitudinal study designed to elucidate the pedagogical methods that impact on fostering the value of *belonging*. Hopefully, such a study will enable us to better understand the contribution of *belonging* to the long-term development of children's musical interests and competence, as well as to their general wellbeing.

Appendix I

The Instrumental Music Education Department at the Givat Washington Academic College of Education, Israel

Responding to the worldwide awareness of the social issues confronting twenty-first-century educators, and the need to train musicians to engage in group activities that also contribute to the cognitive, social, and personal development of their students, Israel's Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Council for Higher Education, initiated an academic teachers' training program that offers its graduates a B.Ed.Mus., specializing in Instrumental Music Education, K-12. The long-term goal of the program is to train music educators who are excellent musicians as well as devoted educators, capable of meeting the challenges that face our schools today. In keeping with recent research, which confirms that youth worldwide are motivated to study music and to engage in group activities within formal and informal educational settings (McPherson & O'Neill 2010), policy makers in the Council for Higher Education felt a need and responsibility to train musicians to work within group settings. It was my privilege to serve as the founder and first director of this department. The department, the only one of its kind in Israel, opened for registration in 2014 and received initial accreditation in 2016. Today, 100 percent of its first graduates work in full-time positions throughout the country, and especially in the periphery.

The curriculum offered in the program highlights social underpinnings. Students actively engage in processes of learning, which nurture three main pillars of knowledge: the academic, the scientific, and the pedagogic.[15] Moreover, students are encouraged to develop creative skills, synchronizing between material studied in different courses and drawing on their own perceptions. Thus, for example, in theory classes students compose short pieces based on the styles that they are studying in their history classes, and while studying conducting and arranging, the students compose and arrange pieces of their choice which are then performed by their peers.

The high value placed on group interaction stimulates a sense of belonging among the students (Kokotski & Hallam 2007). Whether participating in small or large group performances, these activities nurture a sense of comradeship that permeates the atmosphere of the entire program. Teachers act as role models, who interact and perform

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[15] Thus, for example, in addition to instrumental hourly private lessons, each student participates every year in *at least* one large body of performance (orchestra / big band / chorus), and one ensemble (chamber music, Jewish music, recorders, guitars, and jazz). The pedagogic courses specialize in group instrumental music education, training the future teachers to work within homogeneous and heterogeneous large and small groups. Finally, the scientific courses provide students with a broad base of knowledge gleaned from a variety of styles, including Western music, world music, jazz, popular music, Jewish and Israeli music, and Arab music.

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together with the students. Ensemble performances motivate the students to immerse themselves in making music way beyond the hours allocated to their private lessons and individual practice time, and often inspire them to continue playing together even after graduation. Thus, the group experiences provide students with opportunities to make friends, cooperate and work as part of a team, in and out of school. While similar benefits may be derived from belonging to other groups, the characteristics of musical groups provide important opportunities to develop a true sense of inter-reliance (Hallam 2015). It is our belief that these learning environments will encourage students to duplicate these experiences in their later work as teachers and leaders of music education programs.

Appendix II

R. Feuerstein, *Mediated Learning Experience* (MLE) Parameters

Universal Mediation Parameters:

    1) Intentionality/reciprocity

    2) Transcendence

    3) Mediation of meaning

Situational or Reinforcing Parameters:

    1) Mediation of a feeling of competence

    2) Mediation of regulation and control of behavior

    3) Mediation of sharing behavior

    4) Mediation of individuation and psychological differentiation

    5) Mediation of goal-seeking, goal-setting, goal-achieving, and goal-monitoring behavior

    6) Mediation of challenge—the search for novelty and complexity

    7) Mediation of the awareness of the human being as a changing entity

    8) Mediation of the search for optimistic alternatives

    9) Mediation of the feeling of belonging[16]

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[16] https://www.thinkingconnections.org/theory/MLE.shtml. Accessed 10 April 2018.

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