

Beyond the Rehearsal Routine: Investigating Adolescent Mood and Motivation in Secondary Music Ensembles

Lindsay Weiss, Teachers College, Columbia University

525 West 120th Street, Arts & Humanities Department, Box 139/ New York, New York 10025
www.tc.academia.edu/LindsayWeiss law2150@tc.columbia.edu

The purpose of this study was to investigate how adolescent music students reported the quality of their band classroom experience by measuring their mood and motivation during three different instructional activities typical in band pedagogy (Rosenshine, Froehlich, & Fakhouri, 2002). The three instructional activities (tasks) were: 1) warm ups; 2) “start and stop” rehearsals, and 3) full “run-throughs.” The participants ($n=220$) were high school students enrolled in one of two band classes in a school district in Southwestern Pennsylvania. The students completed adapted experience sampling forms (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2000) after each task during two, consecutive band classes. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. A one-way ANOVA and post-hoc tests were calculated to determine if there were significant relationships between the different instructional activities and quality of student experience. The statistical results were interpreted and reported through “Flow Theory” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), which explains that the challenges of the instructional activity and the skill set possessed by the individual student will result in one of four conditions: *boredom* (low challenge, high skills); *apathy* (low challenge, low skills); *anxiety* (high challenge, low skills); or *flow* (high challenge, high skills).

The adolescent band students reported varying degrees of boredom during warm-ups and full “run throughs” and apathy during the “start and stop” rehearsals. The findings of this study are based on student opinions of the tasks themselves and not an evaluation of their band director’s quality of teaching. The findings of this study support the notion that secondary music teachers should consistently evaluate if their pedagogical approaches are matching up with the specific interests and needs of the individual student musicians in their ensembles (Mark, 1998).