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Leaving Out the Little Ones: The Rate of Music Training in Pre-Kindergarten Teachers in Pennsylvania

This quantitative study is an examination of pre-kindergarten schools throughout the state of Pennsylvania. The purpose of this study is to determine what (if any) musical training/education pre-kindergarten educators receive. This ongoing research hopes to answer the questions:

(1) What is the music education training among pre-kindergarten teachers in Pennsylvania? (2)

How many musically trained educators teach at each pre-kindergarten center in PA? and (3) How

often is music instruction delivered in pre-kindergarten programs in PA? A digital survey

consisting of no more than 25 questions will be sent to a random sampling (N=100) of pre-

kindergarten schools throughout Pennsylvania. Potential participants will be selected using the

database of preschool centers accredited by The National Association for the Education of

Young Children. Using a five-point Likert-Type scale, the researchers will collect data which

will show evidence (or lack thereof) of musical training. Upon receipt of completed surveys,

data will be analyzed using a Pearson Chi-Square test to determine if the results are statistically

significant. This research hopes to show the importance of music education for both the students

in pre-kindergarten programs, and the educators who establish and run these important curricular

institutions.

Discussion

This research is in-progress. At this point the digital survey has been created using SurveyMonkey © via www.Surveymonkey.com, and participants have been identified. All research participants are Child Development Associate (CDA) certified to teach Pre-Kindergarten. By using Google Chrome on a Dell laptop, a sample of 100 Pre-K facilities were identified using google search. Upon IRB approval, the next step in this research is to email the participants a link to the digital survey. All research questions are quantitative and answers will be reported using a five-point Likert-type scale. The teachers will be given a seven day time allotment to complete the surveys. Upon submission of the completed surveys, data will be analyzed using a Pearson Chi-Square test to determine if the results are statistically significant.

Although this research is in progress, review of the literature indicates most teachers previously studied have reported success in using music in their classrooms. According to a study by Nardo, Custodero, Persellin & Fox (2006), 31% of teachers include musical goals and objectives within their lesson plans with varying frequency, and almost every pre-school teacher studied includes some sort of music making in their curriculum. Teachers who have a background in music are more likely to initiate music making within the classroom (Hewitt and Thompson, 2006).

Although this research is proving beneficial, one question for further research has emerged: Do some Pre-K teachers have a music major or minor?