

# The Influence of Social Intelligence on Effective Music Teaching

Jay Juchniewicz

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of social intelligence on effective music teaching. A panel of music education experts, comprised of music education faculty members and music supervisors from large county public school systems, were asked to list up to five teachers and their schools from “exemplary programs” and up to five teachers and their schools from “more challenging programs” for each of the areas of band, chorus, orchestra, and general K-12 public school music programs. The top five most frequently listed teachers from each category within each area of music were selected, resulting in a total of 40 teachers ( $N = 40$ ). Each of the 40 teachers was administered the *Interpersonal Perception Task (IPT-15)*, a performance-based instrument that assesses an individual’s ability to “decode” information perceived in human interaction and an accurate way to assess a level of social intelligence within individuals. Additionally, 12 teachers, randomly selected from the original group of 40 teachers, agreed to participate in the videotaping of their instruction. These 12 teaching excerpts were viewed by 84 external evaluators, comprised of equal number of inservice music educators ( $n = 42$ ) and undergraduate preservice music teachers ( $n = 42$ ). External evaluators were asked to (1) rate the overall effectiveness of the teacher for each teaching excerpt on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = *not effective at all* to 7 = *highly effective*) and (2) list the main attribute that influenced their evaluation of each teaching excerpt.

Results showed that “exemplary” teachers scored higher than “challenged” teachers on the *IPT-15*. However, these differences were not significant. No significant differences were found between the experienced music educators and undergraduate preservice music teachers

when evaluating the overall effectiveness of music teacher participants. Additionally, the external evaluators concurred with the recommendations of the panel of music education experts, rating teachers identified as “exemplary” or effective significantly higher than teachers labeled as “challenged” or ineffective. The majority of attributes that influenced external evaluators’ ratings of overall teacher effectiveness were social, constituting over 85% of all responses. Further, with the exception of one teaching excerpt, the percentage of effective and ineffective social attributes reflected the teacher’s overall effectiveness ratings given by the external evaluators. All teachers who demonstrated effective social skills were perceived as effective teachers. *Ineffective Classroom Management* was the most cited attribute as rationale for why teachers were rated as ineffective. Effective communication skills, including both categories of *Effective Instructional Communication* and *Effective Non-instructional Communication* were the most frequently cited attributes for “exemplary” teachers. More specifically, *Effective Instructional Communication* constituted the highest percentage of attributes listed for six of the seven teachers rated effective by external evaluators. Implications for music educators and suggestions for future research are made.