**The Role and Influence of Performance in School Music Programs: A Grounded Theory**

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In the article *The Role of Influence of Performance in School Music Programs: A Grounded Theory,* Marshall Haning (2021) observed several school music programs of different levels. Haning noticed that large performing ensembles tend to be the primary focus in music education programs in the United States and that stakeholders have an expectation that music programs should put on public performances. Performing ensembles are most prevalent in music education programs, especially secondary programs, which changes the teacher’s role as an educator.

Haning (2021) notes that performing is a prevalent practice in the lower grades and can be seen in the way that the standards are structured and developed. The practice of performing is most commonly assessed rather that topics that focus on musical concepts or creativity. However, this remains to be the focus even outside of large ensemble classes. Haning, through observations, interviews, and data collection found that most educators preferred to teach courses that focus on traditional performance, notation, and music reading. To guide his research Haning posed the following questions 1) What role do performances play in school music programs? 2) How are music teachers’ pedagogical decisions informed or influenced by their efforts to mount performances? 3) What other aspects of the music teaching-learning process are influenced by efforts to mount performances, and what form does this influence take? (you need quotes and a page number)

Haning (2021) discusses grounded theory as a paradigm to develop new empirical theories that are grounded in the data that are collected. Grounded theory is flexible yet comprehensive. Theoretical sampling, an ongoing process, informs the different types of data that are sought by the researcher and participants. These different elements of grounded theory design allow the researcher to obtain large amounts of data to better inform the study. The data collected came from an elementary teacher, a middle school teacher, and a High School teacher who all came from diverse backgrounds.

Participants in the study provided personal data, which were used in the analysis and interpretation (Haning, 2021). The data collection process happened several ways: initial and follow-up interviews, documents and artifacts, journals, and focus group interviews. The diverse number of data sources provided richer and more detailed attributes to the final theory. Participants were observed over a three-month period allowing Haning to observe methodology, conceptual transitions, and teaching styles. Haning used a comparative method to focus the analysis of his words and actions. However, this caused a deviation in the study.

Haning (year) found that performances in school music programs interacted with diverse teaching-learning elements. He presented five major themes that illustrate the roles of performances: community expectations, student motivation, time management, teaching strategies, and teacher views of performance. Each theme presents specific details as to why and how performance fits into the program and its importance to the educator.

Student motivation was also identified in this study (Haning, 2021). This discussion came about because students in the ensembles expect to see tangible results and visual accomplishments. In other words, the purpose of these programs and ensembles is to perform publicly, demonstrating the quality of the program, and not only about personal accomplishments. Additionally, sharing these accomplishments with others such as the community, stakeholders, parents, and other family members was expected. Performances are ways that these large ensembles can demonstrate the group’s success as well. These successes can also provide positive and excellent experiences for the students.

Teachers in the student expressed that they feel like they do not have enough time to teach music basics because of the constant focus on each performance (Haning, 2021). The educators in this study also discussed that community and parent expectations of performances can keep them from doing their job in its full capacity. With the development of quality performances, the expectations were higher for more quality performances, thus taking more time away from teaching the basics of music. Haning (2021) also mentions in his observations, and his participants did as well, that a quality program will stimulate and foster student motivation.

Haning (2021) concludes that if schools were to make a shift in the paradigm of class offerings, they may be able to better foster and serve the needs of teaching music basics. Classes such as electronic music and songwriting may better fulfill these needs through application. The final product of student work can be through showcase performances or online galleries. Haning concludes that this may also increase student interest, enrollment and motivation.

References

Haning. (2021). The Role and Influence of Performance in School Music Programs: A Grounded Theory. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 69(1), 85–104. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022429420953118