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MED 764 Music Assessment

Assessment Project II: Attitude Assessment

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Music Competition Attitude Assessment

Introduction & Learning Objective:

This project serves as a measure of attitude on engaging in structured music competitions as part of musical practice and development. Below, the Table of Specifications can be referenced for content areas evaluated with examples of test items that fall into each of the areas, as well as whether or not each item is framed from the perspective of favoring competition or not. On the following pages of this project is the full Likert scale assessment measuring the underlying construct of attitude towards structured music competition. Following the sample test is a reflection upon the test creation process which includes methods for creating the test and any anticipated revisions of the tool if administered to participants.

Table of Contents

Table of Specifications

Below is the table of specifications outlining the content areas measured in the following attitude assessment. The assessment contains 30 Likert-scale items, 16 of which are designed to indicate the extent to which the participant favors competition, and 14 of which are designed to indicate the extent to which the participant does *not* favor competition, as displayed in the table. The participant does not receive points for answering questions, however their overall attitude is intended to be indicated as a result of their responses.

Content Area	Test Item	Favors Competition or Not? PRO = favors NO = does not favor
Motivation & Attitude	**#1.** *Seeing others receive rewards…* **#2.** *Recognizing only the teams or…* **#7.** *I enjoy competing regardless of…* **#8.** *Competition causes a great deal…* **#11.** *I find watching high achieving…* **#13.** *Losing in competition has…* **#17.** *Failure or loss makes me feel…* **#19.** *Performing under pressure…* **#21.** *I become envious of others…* **#23.** *Competition tends to bring out…* **#26.** *Competition is highly motivate-…* **#27.** *Competition demands memori-…* **#28.** *Competition is exclusionary of…*	PRO PRO PRO NO PRO NO NO PRO NO NO PRO NO NO
Process Over Product	**#4.** *The process of creating and…* **#5.** *Preparation for competitions…* **#6.** *The threat of failure hinders…* **#9.** *Having an enriching, education-…* **#12.** *Competition is about being…* **#18.** *Practicing for competitions…* **#24.** *I find great satisfaction in…*	PRO PRO NO PRO PRO NO PRO
Product Over Process	**#3.** *Achievement of high scores and…* **#10.** *Competition is about showing…* **#14.** *Competitions are a great…* **#15.** *Competition teaches that…* **#16.** *Winning should be the priority…* **#20.** *Students should want to…* **#22.** *Regardless of effort, receiving…*	NO PRO PRO NO PRO PRO NO
Creativity	**#25.** *Competitions restrict creativity…* **#29.** *Strict parameters challenge…* **#30.** *The stress of preparing for…*	NO PRO NO

16 "PRO" + 14 "NO" = 30 items total

Name _____   Date _____

Music Competition Attitude Assessment

Instructions: Using the scale below, please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding structured competition in music.

(1) = Strongly Agree
(2) = Agree
(3) = Neither Agree nor Disagree
(4) = Disagree
(5) = Strongly Disagree

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Seeing others receive rewards for their hard work brings me joy, even if I am not the one winning.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2. Recognizing only the teams or individuals who win is a motivator to work hard and be the best.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
3. Achievement of high scores and accolades is the determinant of who has and has not put effort into the competition.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
4. The process of creating and sharing with others is more valuable to me than the reward for creating, and competition provides a place for this to exist.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
5. Preparation for competitions fosters strong team bonding and builds discipline.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

6. The threat of failure in competition hinders the exploration and sharing of real art. (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

7. I enjoy competing, regardless of whether I win or lose, because I find it valuable to observe what other groups create. (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

8. Competing causes a great deal of unnecessary stress. (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

9. Having an enriching, educational experience is the most important aspect of musical competition. (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

10. Music competition is about showing others how good you or your ensemble are regardless of the rigor involved in getting there. (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

11. I find watching high-achieving groups or individuals perform to be extremely motivating. (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

12. Music competition is about being your best while also observing and learning from others. (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

13. Losing in competition has drastic effects on students and their peers. (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

14. Competitions are a great source of feedback that would not be received otherwise. (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

15. Music competition teaches students that status is more important than sharing art.

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

16. Winning should be the priority when preparing for a competition.

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

17. Failure or loss makes me feel less worthy as a person and musician.

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

18. Practicing for competitions is a drag because the gratification is extremely delayed.

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

19. Performing under pressure brings out the best in me and others.

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

20. Students should want to receive higher scores than all other competitors.

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

21. I become envious of others when they receive rewards or recognition for their hard work.

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

22. Regardless of effort, receiving second place means being the first loser.

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

23. Competition tends to bring out the worst in people.

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

24. I find great satisfaction in the process of achieving something together with my team, even if we do not win the competition.

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

25. Competitions restrict creativity by imposing strict requirements on performance.

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

26. Competition is highly motivating and encourages people to work hard.

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

27. Competitions demand memorization which is discriminatory and discouraging to students who learn differently.

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

28. Competition is exclusionary of students with special needs due to strict adherence to performance standards.

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

29. Strict parameters of competition challenge the student to show deeper creativity in order to stand out.

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

30. The stress of preparing for competition takes away from the more meaningful elements of musical practice.

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

Reflection

Assessment is a vital aspect of education that helps inform how teachers move forward with instruction in order to best help their students be successful. Some forms of assessment are more easily constructed conceptually, such as those which assess knowledge and skill, while others are little less transparent. Assessing attitude is, in my opinion, the most abstract and difficult form of assessment because the learning objectives are much harder to define . For this project, I have attempted to create an attitude assessment that deals with students' opinions on whether or not structured musical competition is an important part of music education. While, when it comes to knowledge tests, creating test items is done with the intent of discriminating those who really possess the knowledge and skills from those who do not, attitude tests instead must contain test items that are polarizing enough to provide us with a sense of the participants true values regarding the topic.

In this assessment, "structured" competition is referenced often and is meant to refer to competitive settings in which some sort of ranking system is utilized, specific criteria for winning are defined, and rewards for meeting those criteria at the highest level are given. There is some competition that occurs in the day-to-day of being a musician, so I think that assessing attitudes towards competition *without* making the distinction between the structured and unstructured would greatly blur the results of this evaluation. There are many philosophies as to whether or not engaging in structured competition as part of music education adds to or is a detriment to the student experience, and this assessment aims to assess the extent to which the participants view this as a positive or a negative.

After completing my first assessment project, the cognitive assessment, I learned a lot about the effectiveness of my approaches, which were both effective and ineffective

to varying extents. The biggest issues in that project ended up being in my test items themselves, and this was the result of my failure to define a learning outcome or underlying construct to be measured *before* creating the test items. With this in mind, I knew that in this second assessment project, my approach would have to be different. This time, I *began* with the underlying construct and built my test items with that as a reference. I still encountered great difficulty in making at least 30 items relevant to the learning objective, but creating the table of specifications, which made me consider the individual "content areas," forced me to revise at least half of the items to make them more appropriate to the purpose of the assessment. These test items were inspired by the pros and cons of competing including, but not limited to, that competitions provide strong bonding experiences and places for students to grow into disciplined team players while also contributing extra stress to a practice environment involving highly delayed gratification.

When it came to the formatting of this attitude assessment, I chose the Likert-scale format for its user-friendly nature. What I struggled with most in the formatting of the test itself once my items had all been created was knowing whether or not they should be ordered in a specific sequence. I was unsure of whether to group all items that favored competition together, or if it was better to leave everything intermixed. I ended up choosing the latter for fear that having too many questions in a row that either favored or did not favor competition might subliminally sway the participant's true opinion on the subject matter. I thought that, by leaving the items intermixed, participants would be more likely to remain true to their values rather than be coerced into thinking otherwise by the format of the test. Whether these concerns were valid or not, I am unsure, however this was what largely informed the formatting of this assessment.

If this test were to be administered to students, there are a few areas where I would anticipate revision of the items and format being necessary. Acknowledgements of all of these areas of potential revision are thanks to the results of my first cognitive assessment project which, by the end, demanded a desperate need for revision in terms of clarity, stronger test items, and less subjectivity. With this attitude assessment, I anticipate two major possible revisions: the first revision would be in regard to the items not appropriately assessing the underlying construct they are intended to assess. As I mentioned, creating the table of specifications forced me to reconsider how closely each item was actually getting at the learning objective at hand, so I am confident in the validity of these items this time around (obviously, this was a big issue in my cognitive assessment project and led to the need for heavy revision in order to improve overall validity of the test). The second revision that may be necessary would be in the formatting. If, for some reason, the way I decided to format the items turned out to be the less effective strategy, then I would reorder them to assess in more of a continuum, from strongly favoring competition to strongly opposing competition, and including everything else in between.