ATTUNED TO ENGAGEMENT

THE EFFECTS OF A MUSIC MENTORING PROGRAMME ON THE AGENCY AND MUSICAL ABILITY OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

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Contents

Abstract

This paper presents interim quantitative findings from phase two of the Youth Music Mentors (YMM) Programme. Evaluation tools were embedded in the programme and participants were asked to complete self-assessment scales of musical ability, knowledge of music opportunities and three measures of agency (feeling respected, able, and in control) at the beginning and end of the project. Paired sample tests indicated a significant increase across all scales, with particularly strong effects observed for increased musical ability, knowledge of musical opportunities and the combined measure of agency. In addition, results are presented showing engagement levels and exit routes of early leavers, these latter results indicate that early leaving does not necessarily imply a negative exit route from the programme. All results are considered in the context of the theoretical design of the programme, i.e. increasing agency and encouraging greater levels of active citizenship amongst disengaged children and young people. These preliminary findings suggest the aims of the programme are being achieved, whilst reiterating the need for continued research investigating the effects of mentoring programmes, and music mentoring specifically.

Introduction

In the autumn of 2006, Youth Music was invited to submit a proposal for a music mentoring programme as part of the Government's Respect Agenda. The bid was successful, securing £666,324 via the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to manage and deliver a programme of activity between 2006 and 2008. In 2008, Youth Music was successful at securing a further £999,000 to deliver phase two of the music mentoring programme, from April 2008 to March 2011. This paper presents interim findings (April 2008-March 2010) based on the quantitative evaluation tool from phase two of the Youth Music Mentors programme.

Youth Music has also commissioned a team of external consultants to evaluate the programme, who are due to submit their final report in April 2011. The wider evaluation will be based on both quantitative and qualitative methodologies; however the focus of the current paper is to present the first findings from the quantitative tool, embedded in the programme.

The aim of the programme is to improve the life chances of young people in challenging circumstances through music based mentoring. The programme is therefore structured around five main objectives:

- To deliver high quality music based mentoring provision for young people in challenging circumstances
- To provide links to high quality music making experiences
- To engage and train inspirational music mentors appropriate to the needs of the participants
- To provide young people with opportunities that will develop their resilience, social and emotional skills, and enable them to lead successful and fulfilling lives
- To help motivate and prepare young people for routes into education, employment or training

For phase two (i.e. the current phase), Youth Music identified 14 delivery organisations for the programme, these are; Artworks (Bradford), Audio Active (Brighton), GMMAZ (Manchester), Leeds City Council (Leeds), Music 4U (Hull), Nottingham Music Service (Nottingham), Future Projects (Norwich), REMIX (Bristol), Sound Connections (London) Sound Futures (Birmingham), Sounditout (Birmingham), Southend YMCA (Southend), Forest of Dean Music Makers (Forest of Dean) and Plymouth Music Zone (Plymouth).

Sound Connections in London subcontract a further eight delivery partners, these are; Drake Music (Hackney 1), Eclectic Productions (Southwark 1), First Musical Academy (Newham 1), Fluent Music (Tower Hamlets 2), Futureversity (Tower Hamlets 1), Hoxton Hall (Hackney 2), Key Changes (Camden), Kinetika Bloco (Southwark 2) and Rolling Sound (Hackney 3 and Newham 2).

Music-based mentoring uses music as the common ground to develop a relationship with a mentee in order to support them in making significant changes in knowledge, behaviour and thinking. Through this process, the music mentor supports the individual to achieve on a musical as well as social level.

Mentoring is goal focused and music mentors use a personal learning plan in order to set and monitor musical and personal goals with their mentees. The research and evaluation processes are embedded in the project as a framework around which to reflect on progress as part of the mentoring work.

Each delivery partner identifies twenty young people in challenging circumstances per year to benefit from one-to-one mentoring for a minimum of 10 sessions within a music-making environment. The mentoring must be aimed at children and young people aged 11 to 25 who require particular support and should not be seen simply as extra musical tuition.

Children and young people (CYP) in challenging circumstances are defined by Youth Music as those who are often marginalised by society, vulnerable, may be hard to reach, or have fewer opportunities.

Mentoring

Mentoring is a well established practice across many fields and disciplines. The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation currently reach over 3,500 mentoring and befriending projects throughout England, across a huge variety of contexts, with a number of different aims.

Mentoring amongst young people in challenging circumstances has been established for some time. The Conservative administration developed a national youth mentoring scheme in 1993 (the Mentoring Action Plan as part of the Youthstart initiative), and mentoring was at the heart of the Labour administration's social policy throughout the 2000s (the establishment of the Social Exclusion Unit within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 1999 highlighted a commitment to youth exclusion issues and advocated mentoring as a key method in tackling the issue).

Whilst mentoring has been identified by government as a useful tool in dealing with social exclusion and encouraging participation amongst children and young people, it is also acknowledged that the evidence base assessing the effects of mentoring projects is mixed. The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation commissioned an evidence review in 2007 which concluded that the most effective mentoring schemes are those that have a strong theoretical foundation and are clear about the changes they are hoping to achieve and with whom, whilst also recognising the potential limitations of mentoring schemes (Philip and Spratt, 2007). Other key findings from the review included:

- There are a wide variety of approaches to mentoring, often within the same project or programme, therefore the extent to which children and young people are receiving the same intervention should be acknowledged

- There is limited evidence that mentoring schemes reduce re-offending rates or likelihood of offending amongst children and young people in the youth justice system

- Results are stronger that mentoring can encourage participation in employment and traning through clearer access routes and changes in attitude

- There is some evidence that mentoring improves reintegration and developing social capital but this is strongest where there is additional work to improve the structural conditions experienced by children and young people

- Mentoring schemes are more effective when participation is voluntary rather than coercive

- Mentoring is generally not linear, it shifts and changes throughout the process of engagement. Positive and negative outcomes can be achieved at different stages of the process

- Mentoring schemes focusing on younger children to improve educational achievement are not conclusively effective

- There is strong evidence that mentoring can improve attitude and behaviour and lead to greater civic involvement where these opportunities are provided

This last finding is particularly relevant to the current paper. Youth Music Mentors was developed in response to the Labour administration's Respect Agenda, launched in 2006. The particular items from the Respect Agenda that Youth Music Mentors responded to were those relating to engaging children and young people in positive activities, improving attitudes to education, training and employment, and strengthening communities by increasing engagement and responsibility.

Whilst the Respect Agenda and the Social Exclusion Unit were both discarded by Labour towards the end of their administration, the specific agenda items mentioned above remain central to the current Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition's social policy, particularly 'Big Society' ideology. Civic responsibility and engagement are at the core of the Big Society agenda. Launching the initiative in July 2010, the Prime Minister, David Cameron, stated that central to the Big Society is creating a climate that allows people to "feel both free and powerful enough to help themselves and their own communities" . Localised schemes that encourage active participation and engagement amongst children and young people therefore reflect this ideology, at least in theory.

There is limited explicit theoretical foundation to the Big Society policy, however it clearly relates to a number of complementary ideas that have shaped social policy for young people in modern liberal democracies for some years. The suggestion that individuals should be empowered and able to take action that affects their local communities is central to the discourse of the 'Third Way' which has been analysed and critiqued for some time (notably by Giddens (1998) and Levitas (1998)). The greatest departure of the Big Society from Third Way ideology is the decreased involvement of the state in financially supporting community schemes from a centralised source (whether regionally or nationally), and instead looking for additional assistance to be provided by philanthropy, volunteers and the private sector.

Despite the changing source of funds for projects looking to increase community engagement, the fundamental needs of children and young people to be able to engage in their communities remains the same. Active citizenship (where citizens are involved in their communities and societies) is a pre-requisite for social action.

Active Citizenship

Active citizenship has become a key political term in modern liberal democracies. Young people in particular are encouraged to be active citizens through formal education (in citizenship classes), and informally through schemes encouraging community participation and development. The basic theory of active citizenship is that in addition to their entitlement to a number of rights, citizens have an associated series of responsibilities to their communities and society (Marinetto, 2003). Social responsibility is about how individuals relate to the groups of people they regularly encounter (in a small sense this could be the immediate family or neighbours, on a broader scale it is about relating to communities, or thinking about how individual action will impact on society at large). The most common understanding of active citizenship therefore suggests that rights should only be earned by citizens being socially responsible.

A common perception is that responsibilities associated with citizenship are mainly political; that by encouraging young people to think about social issues they are more likely to engage in the political process and vote. Whilst engagement in local and national party politics may be one way in which young people choose to be active, responsibilities should be considered as active involvement in any social setting. Whether active citizenship takes the form of establishing a local music workshop, attending a local music workshop, or attending a performance, the 'active' part comes from the motivation to do something, to be involved. People cannot be actively responsible unless they are motivated to be active in the first place.

Many studies have illustrated how positive, self-determined action has benefits for individuals' psychological well-being and social development (Ryan and Deci, 2000), but motivation is the key factor in people taking action in the first instance. Active citizenship is as much about being motivated to take action and the opportunity for action, as it is about responsibility and resultant community development.

According to Ryan and Deci (2000), there are three conditions that facilitate self-motivated action. The first is that people feel able to take part in something (i.e. that any activity doesn't feel too difficult or insurmountable). The second is that there are mechanisms in place that allow or facilitate the activity. The third is that people feel they are choosing to take part and are in control of their involvement. If these three conditions are satisfied then people will be motivated to be active. Obviously there are some actions that do not require such self-motivation (e.g. when people are forced to do things by law or at the risk of punishment); however Ryan and Deci argue that self-motivated, or self-determined, action leads to psychological wellbeing and social development. This provides an explanation for how voluntary mentoring schemes can have positive results for attitude and behaviour, which are both cognitively linked to psychological wellbeing. Participating in a mentoring activity, therefore, can facilitate self-determined action and increased civic engagement.

This theory suggests that in order for children and young people to be active citizens, they must feel competent, be given opportunities to engage, and feel as if they are in control of their decisions. If this is the case, then social development is increased (which has a positive effect on communities and societies), and psychological wellbeing is improved (making the individual healthier and more likely to continue self-determined activity).


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Music Making and Active Citizenship

Hallam (2009) highlighted many personal and social benefits young people can get from music making. She cites studies such as Broh (2002) who showed that young people participating in musical activity in schools interacted more with their parents and teachers, and their parents interacted more with each other. This led to increases in self-esteem for the young people and increased motivation for action (i.e. increased musical activity). This increase in motivation also led to higher attainment in other academic subjects. Pitts (2007) showed how involvement in an extra-curricular musical performance increased young people's social networks, and sense of belonging. These young people dedicated themselves to the activity despite the constraints on their time, indicating that the benefits of their self-motivated actions were enough of an incentive to remain socially active.

Hallam also discusses how these outcomes can be particularly effective amongst groups of children and young people who are experiencing challenging circumstances. Spychiger et al. (1995) showed how increased music making in schools led to greater social cohesion, more positive attitudes about the self and others, and better social adjustment. The strongest differences were observed amongst those children deemed to be the least engaged and have the lowest academic ability. Costa-Giomi (2004) also showed how the benefits of piano tuition (i.e. improved self-awareness, increased self-esteem) were strongest for children from the poorest backgrounds.

These studies show how the time, effort, dedication and collaborative work required in active music making create a number of benefits for individuals and the people around them, particularly increased wellbeing and social engagement. The key factor underlining all of these observations is the motivation required to instigate and continue involvement in the musical activity. When children and young people start to feel better about themselves, increase their social networks and learn skills of use across their lives, they are more inclined to continue being involved in an activity; i.e. to be active citizens.

An important point to remember, as discussed above, is that children and young people can only become actively involved if they are able to do so. This comes from their perception of being able to get involved, networks and agencies that provide opportunities for them to get involved (or allow them to set up the structure to do so), and the feeling that they are in control of their involvement.

As highlighted by Philips and Spratt (2007), research on the effects of mentoring has shown that results are most strongly observed for positive attitude and behavioural change and increased engagement. The Youth Music Mentors programme was therefore designed to improve attitude, behaviour and engagement, demonstrated through observed changes in active citizenship and increased musical ability.

Research Questions

The literature on mentoring, active citizenship and intrinsic motivation framed the evaluation design of the Youth Music Mentors programme. As stated above, the full evaluation is due to report in April 2011, therefore this paper will address three main research questions at the interim stage of phase two:

- What are the characteristics of the children and young people who have participated in the programme?
- What effect has the Youth Music Mentors programme had on mentees' musical ability, behaviour, attitude and engagement?
- What reported differences exist between those mentees completing the programme and those leaving the programme early?

Method

Youth Music ensured that monitoring and evaluation tools were embedded from the beginning of phase two of the programme. All project co-ordinators and mentors were provided with tools to record baseline and follow-up data on mentees, along with training on how these tools should be administered.

The quantitative evaluation tool was entitled 'Track Record' and was designed to be completed either by the mentee directly, under the supervision of their mentor, or by the mentor on behalf of the mentee. The baseline Track Record tool consisted of seven basic profile questions (age, geographical location, sex, education/occupation status, ethnicity, musical preference, and music making status). There was also five measures of musical ability and agency, which were organised around a visual 'record' where mentees could mark their responses on a scale of 1(low) to 8(high), these questions were:

- How do you rate your musical ability at the moment?
- How much do you know about opportunities to progress your music making?

And

Thinking about your life in general, how much do you agree with the following statements:

- I feel listened to by the people around me
- I feel I make decisions that are good for me
- I feel like what I do and say will make a difference to my life

These three questions were designed to measure individual agency across key motivational factors (feeling respected, able and in control), as well as to be combined into one overall agency score.

In addition to the questionnaire administered to the mentee, the mentor was asked to provide details of the mentee's 'At Risk' status (excluded from school, at risk of being excluded from school, in pupil referral unit, young offender, at risk of offending, learning disabled, mental health problems, physically disabled, sensory impaired, other special needs, refugee, traveller, looked after, economically disadvantaged).

Mentors were instructed to administer a follow-up questionnaire at the end of the mentoring relationship which contained the same five measures of musical ability and agency described above, alongside a further four questions designed to allow the mentees to reflect on additional skills they may have developed (co-operation, punctuality, respect and expression).

An additional form was supplied to record details of mentees leaving the programme early. Mentors were asked to provide the reason for leaving, any perceived benefits to the mentee and a measure of the mentee's engagement in the programme.

Project coordinators were responsible for collating data and uploading it to an online collection service hosted by social research organisation 'Substance'. These data were then passed to Youth Music for analysis, which was conducted by the author using Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

This repeated measures design allows for baseline and follow-up scores to be compared and the distance travelled to be measured. A control group was not identified for this research; therefore it is not possible to fully attribute observed changes directly to the mentoring intervention. However, the questions were worded in such a way that mentees were encouraged to reflect on the effects of the programme in their response.

Whilst the theoretical background, objectives, training, suggested duration and delivery processes are encouraged to be identical in each delivery context, there are differences in how the programme is delivered between partners. This makes it difficult to control for environmental factors that may alter the effects of the intervention between sites.

Findings

As of April 2010, data had been recorded for 419 individual mentees. 100 mentees had completed both baseline and follow-up Track Record tools (completers), 77 mentees had left the programme early (early leavers), with data remaining outstanding for a further 242 mentees. A large majority of this latter group remain engaged in the programme (at March 2010 when data were last submitted), although some may also be early leavers. These data will be updated in October 2010 and in April 2011 when repeat analysis will be conducted.

Completers

Table 1 presents the profile information for mentees completing the programme and providing both baseline and follow-up data (n=100).

Table 1 - Completer Profile Information

Profile Variables	%
Sex	
Male	72
Female	28
Age	
13-15	25
16-18	47
19-27	28
Ethnicity	
Asian Bangladeshi	5
Asian Indian	2
Asian Pakistani	1
Other Asian	2
Black African	12
Black Caribbean	20
Other Black	6
Chinese	1
Mixed	8
Other	1
White British	38
White Other	4
Education/Occupation Status	
At College	18
At Home	34
At School	40
At Work	3

Table 1 shows that the majority of completers have been male (72%) and that almost half of all completers (47%) have been aged between 16 and 18. Ethnicity is diverse compared to national averages with 38% of completers being White British. A large proportion of completers (40%) were at school during their involvement in the programme, with another large proportion at home (34%).

'At Risk' status was recorded for 72 of 100 completers, Table 2 shows the mentee at risk status (where 'Total Observations' is higher since participants can be in more than one category).

Table 2 – At Risk Status of Completers (n=72)

At risk Frequencies				
		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
At Risk Status	Economically Disadvantaged	39	31.5%	54.2%
	At risk of exclusion from school	10	8.1%	13.9%
	At risk of offending	9	7.3%	12.5%
	Mental ill health	14	11.3%	19.4%
	Excluded from School	8	6.5%	11.1%
	Pupil Referral Unit	1	.8%	1.4%
	Learning Disabled	11	8.9%	15.3%
	Looked After	4	3.2%	5.6%
	Traveller	1	.8%	1.4%
	NEET	2	1.6%	2.8%
	Other	8	6.5%	11.1%
	Other Special Needs	6	4.8%	8.3%
	Physically Disabled	1	.8%	1.4%
	Sensory Impaired	6	4.8%	8.3%
	Young Offender	3	2.4%	4.2%
	Young Parent	1	.8%	1.4%
Total observations	124	100.0%	172.2%	

Table 2 shows that over half the mentees for whom 'At Risk' status was recorded are economically disadvantaged (54.2%), a large proportion have poor mental health (19.4%), with other large proportions having learning disabilities (15.3%), being at risk of exclusion from school (13.9%), or at risk of offending (12.5%). Relatively few participants are young parents, physically disabled, or from the travelling community.

In order to reduce the dimensions, related categories were recoded into five broader 'risk' categories; Ability Challenges (physically disabled, sensory impaired, learning disabled, other special needs), Economically Disadvantaged, Educationally Excluded (at risk of exclusion, excluded, in pupil referral unit, not in education, employment or training), Criminal Risk (young offenders and at risk of offending) and Risk of Exclusion (rurally isolated, traveller, young parent, looked after, mental ill health). The frequencies for these variables can be seen in Table 3 (as with the first calculation, participants can be counted in more than one category). The total number of recorded at risk categories remains the same (n=72).

Table 3 – Recoded At Risk Status of Completers

At Risk Recoded Frequencies - Completers				
		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
At Risk Recode	Educationally Excluded	21	17.6%	29.2%
	Ability Challenges	21	17.6%	29.2%
	Risk of Exclusion	19	16.0%	26.4%
	Criminal Risk	11	9.2%	15.3%
	Other	8	6.7%	11.1%
	Economically Disadvantaged	39	32.8%	54.2%
Total observations		119	100.0%	165.3%

Table 3 shows that Economically Disadvantaged remains the largest category (54.2%), followed by those with Ability Challenges (29.2%) and those who are Educationally Excluded (29.2%), those at Risk of Exclusion are the next highest proportion(26.4%), followed by those at Criminal Risk (15.3%) and Other (11.1%).

Paired sample t-tests were run in order to test for any significant change in musical ability or active citizenship. Paired sample t-tests are a way of investigating whether two results from the same sample are significantly different after an intervention, in this case the provision of music mentoring. The test indicates whether the difference is related to the intervention (the alternative hypothesis) or whether it just down to chance (the null hypothesis). The results can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4 – Paired Sample T-test for change in Musical Ability and Agency

Paired Samples Test						
		Paired Differences				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Agency BL – Agency FU	-2.442	-1.590	-5.693	94	.000
Pair 2	Musical Ability BL – Musical Ability	-1.323	-1.019	-8.638	98	.000
Pair 3	Music Opportunities BL – Music Opportunities	-2.061	-1.698	-11.276	97	.000
Pair 4	Feel Listened To BL – Feel Listened To	-1.061	-.685	-5.603	98	.000
Pair 5	Feel Make Decisions BL – Feel Make Decisions	-.694	-.320	-3.686	97	.000
Pair 6	Feel Make Difference BL – Feel Make Difference	-.680	-.368	-4.319	96	.000

Table 4 shows a statistically significant improvement in scores for musical skill, knowledge of musical opportunities, and separate and combined measures of agency. The strongest effect size was for knowledge of musical opportunities (r=0.75), followed by self-assessed musical ability (r=0.66). The combined score for overall agency had a large effect size (r=0.51), although the separate items had only medium effects (I feel listened to by people around me (r=0.49), I make decisions that are good for me (r=0.35) and I feel like what I say and do will make a difference to my life (r=0.40). This suggests that the strongest effects of mentoring have been an improvement in knowledge of opportunities to make music, actual musical ability, and increased levels of overall agency (i.e. feeling involved, engaged and in control). The smaller effect size of the individual items on the agency scale could be a result of varied interpretation, since some mentors reported that mentees were not all clear on what was meant by individual items.

As overall proportions, 74% of mentees noted an improvement in musical ability (i.e. moved in a positive direction on the repeated measure scale), 79% of mentees noted an improvement of their knowledge of opportunities to make music in their areas. 66% of mentees say they feel listened to more, 59% say they feel they make better decisions for themselves and 51% feel like they have more control of their lives.

In addition to the agency and musical skills questions, participants were asked at the end of the programme to reflect on and score additional skills, the results can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5 – Completers Additional Skills Gained

	N	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance
		Statistic	Std. Error		
Learned to work with others	92	6.21	.142	1.363	1.858
Turned up on time	93	5.80	.178	1.717	2.947
Respect others views	93	6.69	.118	1.142	1.304
Express them-selves	91	6.68	.134	1.281	1.642

Table 5 indicates mean scores (out of 8) of 6.2 for learning to work better with people, 6.7 for being able to express themselves, 6.7 for respecting other people's views, and 5.8 for turning up on time. This indicates that completers felt they had developed useful skills as a result of their involvement in the programme; most strongly, respect for other people's views and opinions, closely followed by the ability to better express themselves. There were no significant differences in mean scores between those in different challenging circumstances.

The effect size tells us how strong the finding is in real terms (i.e. not just statistics); the closer the r statistic is to 1, the stronger the effect.

Early Leavers

The profile data of the 77 early leavers is detailed in Table 6.

Profile Variables	%
Sex	
Male	68
Female	32
Age	
13-15	28
16-18	54
19-27	18
Ethnicity	
Asian Bangladeshi	2
Black African	10
Black Caribbean	5
Other Black	2
Mixed	12
White British	64
White Other	6
Education/Occupation Status	
At College	13
At Home	35
At School	23
At Work	3
Other	8

Table 6 shows that the early leavers were demographically similar to the completers, with a slightly higher proportion of White British participants. The proportion of early leavers in challenging circumstances are presented in Table 7 (n=55).

Table 7 – At Risk Status of Early Leavers

At Risk Recode Frequencies – Early Leavers				
			Responses	Percent of Cases
			N	Percent
At Risk Recode	Other	4	3.4%	7.3%
	Economically Disadvantaged	46	39.3%	83.6%
	Educationally Excluded	24	20.5%	43.6%
	Ability Challenges	10	8.5%	18.2%
	Risk of Exclusion	10	8.5%	18.2%
	Criminal Risk	23	19.7%	41.8%
Total	117	100.0%	212.7%	

Table 7 shows that early leavers were more likely to be in a risk category than completers. A high proportion (83.6%) of early leavers were economically disadvantaged, a large number (43.6%) were educationally excluded and a higher proportion were at Criminal Risk (41.8%) than completers. Smaller proportions were observed for those with Ability Challenges (18.2%), those At Risk of Exclusion (18.2%) and those in Other risk categories (7.3%).

When mentees left the programme before 10 sessions, mentors were asked to note down an estimate of how engaged they were in the programme (from 0, not at all engaged, to 8, fully engaged), why they left (as far as the mentors were aware) and any benefits the mentee might have got from their involvement. Figures 1-3 show these observations for the 77 early leavers.

Figure 1 - Leaver Engagement Level (n=77)

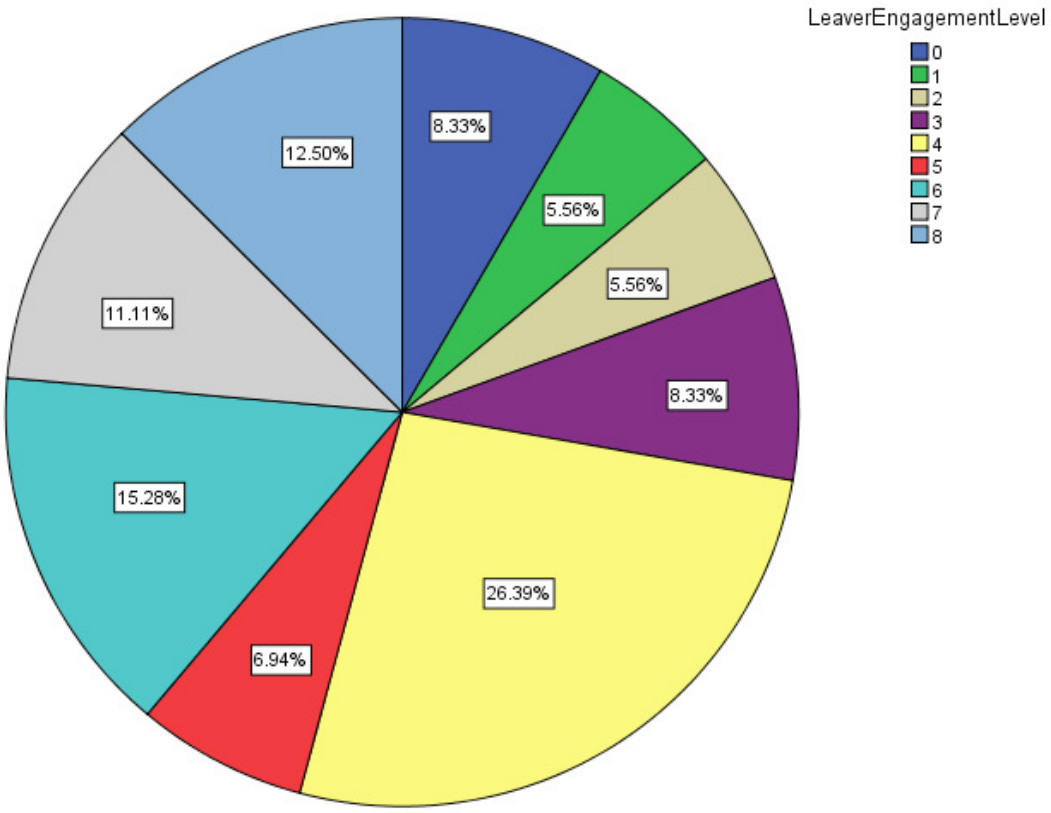

Figure 2 - Leaver Reason (n=77)

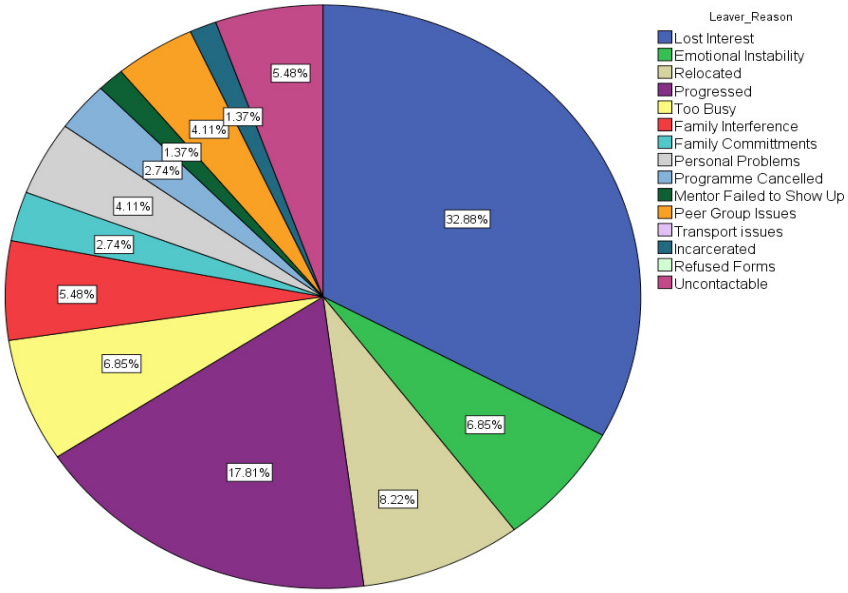

Figure 3 - Leaver Benefits from Programme (n=77)

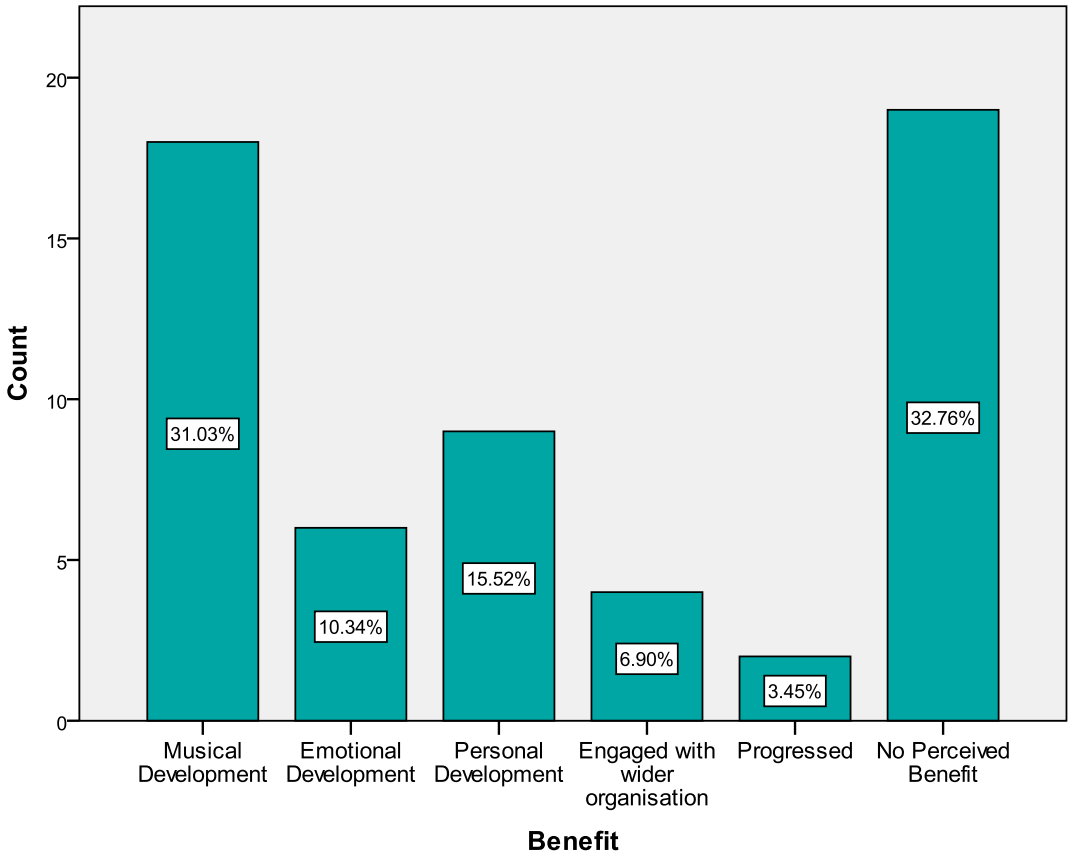

Figure1 indicates that early leavers were not judged unanimously as disengaged with the programme. 72% of early leavers were scored as 4 or above in engagement with the programme. Similarly, Figure 2 shows how the reasons mentees left the programme varied widely; around 18% progressed on to other programmes or education/employment opportunities before the end of the programme, around 8% relocated and were unable to remain in the programme due to geographical limitations. A notable proportion (32%) did lose interest in the programme and were unwilling to remain engaged, but that category is made up of only 24 people from a total sample of 177 (completers and early leavers). Finally, Figure 3 shows the perceived benefits that mentors noted for those leaving the programme early. From all early leavers, only 33% left the programme with no perceived benefits, the others ranged from musical development (trying out new instruments or performance opportunities – 31%), Personal Development (where mentors noted a change in the mentees behaviour or attitude – 16%), Emotional Development (where mentees experienced a boost in confidence or self-esteem – 10%), and wider engagement (7%) or progression opportunities (3%). These findings suggest that leaving the programme early does not preclude a positive experience or affect, a finding that is often overlooked in reporting on programmes of this type.

Discussion

The positive findings relating to the completers' development of musical ability and agency highlights how Youth Music Mentors is effective at encouraging behavioural change and active citizenship amongst mentees. Whilst this is an interim stage paper, the effect size is strong, especially for the development of knowledge of opportunities to make music, music making ability itself, and overall agency.

This combination of findings supports the work of Phillips and Spratt (2007), who noted strong evidence for behaviour and attitude change in mentoring programmes with disengaged children and young people. It also supports the findings of Hallam's (2009) review that music making can be particularly effective in re-engaging children and young people in challenging circumstances.

This paper is also rare in providing the profile data and Mentor-assessed outcomes on early leavers. Whilst recognising the potential bias of mentor's who might be fearful that their performance will be judged, the data that have been captured on the status of early leavers highlights the positive experiences that some encounter, and the overall high levels of engagement in the programme. Similarly, by acknowledging that some early leavers are progressing early in a positive direction is an important finding to acknowledge.

The significant increase in skills and agency also supports Ryan and Deci's (2000) theory of self-determined motivation leading to positive outcomes for individuals. By feeling more in control, and that they have more options to be included, young people are more likely to engage in positive social experiences. Other authors such as Ferguson (2006) have discussed the methodological difficulties of trying to measure and demonstrate changes in social capital or active citizenship, and it is hoped that the measures provided here make a useful contribution to these studies.

The basic theory being tested in this research is that increased activity, control and the ability to make informed decisions are prerequisites to active citizenship amongst children and young people. The positive results above demonstrate that the mentoring experience goes some way towards increasing children and young people's skills and agency, which can sensibly be considered a positive outcome for the programme. However, what remains to be seen (and will be considered fully in the ongoing external evaluation) is how the programme works to re-engage children and young people from a very diverse range of backgrounds and with a wide variety of needs. What cannot be addressed by this analysis is how the programme has been delivered differently across sites, or how music has been a tool of engagement for the mentors and mentees taking part. The positive result around increased expressive ability hints that the function of music in this programme is a crucial one, and that further work is required to identify what music, specifically, contributes to the programme and the experiences of the mentees.

Work is ongoing to ensure that these questions can be addressed and a repeat analysis of more complete 'Track Record' data will strengthen the power of the findings presented. The positive effect of music mentoring on children and young people's ability to be involved in their communities and society appears strong, and this should at least be tentatively celebrated.

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