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The Attributions of Students' Achievement Motivation According to Their Musical Abilities and Skills in Music Education

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ABSTRACT

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Attribution theory, Motivating factors, Magnitude of motivation, Musical skills

Purpose: The research analyzes the relationship between musical skills and the attribution of success that students make to the factors and magnitude of achievement motivation. Methodology: the study used Asmus' measuring consisted of two scales: Motivating factors questionnaire which measured the importance demographic factors: effort, background, classroom environment, influence on music and musical abilities; and Magnitude of Motivation questionnaire, which investigated the degree of motivation of students with regard to self-concept of ability, personal dedication to music, attitude towards music school and music in comparison to other activities. A total of 139 students aged 15-18 from the high school of music "Prenk Jakova" in Pristina were surveyed.

Findings: The results show significant statistical differences in the attribution of success to motivational factors (effort, background, classroom environment, influence on music and musical abilities) in addition to the effort factor. On the other hand, the results show that there are significant differences in the attribution of students' success to the magnitude of motivation (self-concept of ability, personal dedication to music, attitude towards music school and music in relation to other activities) only to attitude towards music school and music in relation to other activities. Implications for Research and Practice The research implies that students with a good level of musical skills attribute more motivational factors (background, classroom environment, influence on music and musical skills) to their learning achievements, in contrast to students with meaningful musical skills and moderate musically, but not in the factor - effort. It also implies that students with good musical ability are more likely to attribute their success according to the magnitude of motivation to attitude toward music school and music in relation to other activities, in contrast to students with considerable musical ability and moderate musical ability.

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Introduction

Musical ability reflects the concepts of an individual's musical talent. There is whole scientific evidence of assessing and measuring perceptual capacities such as the physical aspect of sound, listening capacities, imagining music without actual sound stimulation, remembering previous musical experiences, and intellectually evaluating musical form and offering appreciation and motivation (Ramón & Plaza, 2020). Therefore, the current study correlates students' musical abilities and skills with their attribution of motivational factors and motivational magnitude.

Motivation is an internal state that arouses, directs and maintains behavior (Woolfolk, 2010). Research shows that 30% of musical achievements can be explained by the effect of motivation, especially when it comes to different areas of musical practice (Asmus, 1986). "Motivation has an integrative function in the sense that, by directing activities towards a specific goal, it unites all processes as well as personality abilities essential for achieving the chosen goal in the framework of musical success" (Bogunović, 2010). The experience of teaching music at the teachers' college shows that students who want to excel and become competent teachers invest more effort in mastering musical tasks and practicing musical skills.

When talking about learning music, it is usually understood that music is chosen and learned by those who want to. However, if adolescents and adults in order to acquire professional competences for teaching music in the classroom have to learn music, the motivation to learn music becomes a very important issue for music teachers in the study for future teachers because students, in addition to competences in different areas of education, should also acquire competence in music. Referring to this context, students attribute the assessment of success or failure in music education to internal and external factors such as motivating factors and magnitude of motivation according to the scale of Asmus' measuring instrument Measures of Motivation in Music (Asmus, 1986). These achievements are attributed to the level of musical abilities and skills that the students acquire (moderate musical abilities, significant musical abilities and good musical abilities).

The current research analyzes and reflects the potential differences of motivating factors and magnitude of motivation according to the musical abilities and skills that the students have in the high school of music in Pristina, Kosova. It also looked at the factors that influenced students' motivation to learn music during music education in their secondary music classes. Specifically, this study had two objectives: (1) to present potential differences in motivational factors: effort, background, classroom environment, influence on music and musical abilities according to the level of students' musical abilities and skills; and (2) to show potential differences in the magnitude of motivation in terms of self-concept of ability, personal dedication to music, attitude towards music school and music in relation to other activities according to the level of students' musical abilities and skills.

Literature Review

The key determinant of an individual's achievement, according to attribution theory, is his perception of the cause of success or failure, which will depend on his approach to the task in future (Asmus Jr, 1986). Weiner (1986) analyzes achievement attributions in relation to three key dimensions: location of the cause (internal or external location), stability of the cause (stability or instability) and controllability (possibility or impossibility of control). If

we apply the basic principle of attribution theory to music education, we can assume students' beliefs about the causes of success and failure on a musical task. Research into the attributions of pupils and students in the context of music education in primary, secondary and tertiary education has shown that they cite numerous traditional and non-traditional attributions when explaining their achievements in music, and the most frequently cited attributions are those relating to ability and effort (Hendricks, 2016). Students change their attributions as they get older (Asmus, 1985). Younger students are more inclined to believe that their musical success depends on practice, while this belief changes as they grow up into attitudes that attribute musical success to ability. Asmus Jr (1986) concludes that teachers at all levels should encourage students to adopt effort-related attributions in order to be motivated to put in more effort and thus become competent in music.

According to Asmus (2021) learning music cannot happen without motivation, so if an individual does not want to learn about music, he or she will not. The skilled teacher is able to manipulate the learning situation to encourage students to participate in the learning experience and retain the skills or content that are part of it. When a music teacher possesses the ability to do this fluently and efficiently, while maintaining a focus on the learning that needs to be accomplished with all groups of students, he or she is considered a master teacher.

He further emphasizes that "Motivation's 20 percent share in achievement is very important because it can be manipulated by the teacher ... Other comparably important factors to achievement ... are usually not under the control of the teacher" (Asmus, 2021, p. 5). Asmus (2021) further analyzes several scientific articles and concludes some broadest claims about music to motivate students, namely that music:

- can provide experiences that encourage students to attend school;
- can provide learning tasks that are inherently interesting;
- allows production of individual creative work;
- provides a secure, supportive environment;
- provides identification with a social group through ensemble participation;
- provides for self-expression;
- can act as both a stimulus and reward for learning;
- is a powerful learning reinforcer;
- can be an effective means of emotion and communication; and
- it makes the school experience more appealing.

Asmus (2021) relying on theories of motivation in music learning points out that results from a wide variety of motivation literature from research and common practice are clear in suggesting that teaching efforts should lead to the development of intrinsic motives to promote future striving and achievement at a learning task. The learning situation, the teaching strategies employed, and the feedback provided the learner can all be useful in promoting intrinsic motivation.

Asmus (2021) emphasizes the important role that musical material plays in motivating students and for stimulating and guiding research efforts appears to be in three ways: first, in identifying the major motivational elements in music achievement; to affect teacher-controllable elements in learning situations on motivation; and to facilitate the process of motivation development and modification. It is not expected that this will be the final model for achievement motivation in music. However, the model does provide a base for

understanding the role of motivation in music learning and has important ramifications for music teaching and learning research (Asmus, 2021). In this direction are also the findings of Hurley (2021), who "posits that many cultural factors influence the child's beliefs and perceptions regarding a myriad of activities".

On the other hand, the results of the research of Burak (2019) indicate that while the self-efficacy of the participants in musical abilities and music teaching does not show meaningful difference by gender, it does show meaningful difference according to the year they are in at school. According to the regression analyses, the important variables predicting perceived musical ability are music teaching self-efficacy, having previously played an instrument, and currently playing an instrument. However, the variable of music teaching self-efficacy is predicted meaningfully only by musical ability self-efficacy.

Virkkula (2020) conducted a qualitative study and examined 62 Finnish conservatory popular and jazz music students. The study concluded that commitment to challenging performance projects with professional musicians motivated the students to try their best to develop their musicianship. Teachers who promoted the view that students can succeed in music if they put in the effort and practice diligently were more likely to find acceptance of such a view because it coincided with the idea that practicing will make the student a better musician and produce results (Susic & Benic, 2017). On the contrary, those teachers who promoted ability in relation to attributions suggested that there were innate characteristics that only some possess that enabled them to be good musicians (Alexander, 2015). If a competitive atmosphere was created in classes or teachers reward students for achievements that did not merit the effort invested, they will adopt internal-immutable ability attributions (Alexander, 2015) that are generally accepted in society when talking about musical achievements because they are directly associated with musical giftedness. Such attributions are not favorable for music education, and considering the psychological repercussions of the teacher's actions in teaching music, one should think about the direct and indirect messages that are sent to pupils/students by shaping the teaching process and teaching climate. On the other hand, musical ability is simply the ability to feel and distinguish differences in sounds. Individual perceptual capacities are present from birth (Foti, 2020).

Methodology

Research design

This study utilized a quantitative and descriptive research design that examined the degree of motivation of students with regard to self-concept of ability, personal dedication to music, attitude towards music school and music in comparison to other activities. The study employed the theoretical principles of Asmus' Measures of Motivation in Music which used two scales: Motivating factors and Magnitude of motivation. The descriptive statistics helped understand the magnitude of achievement motivation of students.

• Sampling and population

The population of the research comprised teenagers aged 15-18 years from the high school of music "Prenk Jakova" in Pristina, Kosova, where a total population of 139 students was surveyed. The students for the survey were randomly selected, that is, we surveyed entire classes that were

available. After processing the results, it turned out that 59% of them are female versus 41% male; about 70% lived in urban areas versus 30% in rural areas; over 83% owned a musical instrument versus 14.9% who declared that they did not own musical instrument. The students were in different classes by the selection of the instrument they have chosen or the musical branch. The third and fourth grade students were mainly surveyed who participated in formal and informal music groups both within the school system and outside in social activities.

• Research instrument and procedure

In our research, we used Asmus' measuring instrument Measures of Motivation in Music, which consisted of two scales: Motivating factors and Magnitude of motivation. In the first part, as indicators of musical success or failure, the Motivating Factors questionnaire measured the importance an individual attached to factors: effort, background, classroom environment, influence on music and musical abilities. In the second part, with the Magnitude of Motivation questionnaire, we investigated the degree of motivation of students with regard to self-concept of ability, personal dedication to music, attitude towards music school and music in comparison to other activities.

Data analysis

The measurement characteristics of the questionnaire were checked. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient is around 0.90. For the statistical processing of the results, descriptive and inferential statistical operations were used, such as numerical and percentage frequencies, as well as one-way ANOVA t-test for potential differences in means and standard deviation.

Results

The socio-demographic characteristics of students were relevant to the research of Asmus (2021), Hurley (2021) and Burak (2019). Hence, in the current research, we choose gender, place of residence and possession of a musical instrument, as demographic characteristics. It turned out that 59% of them were female versus 41% male, about 70% lived in urban areas versus 30% in rural areas, over 83% owned a musical instrument versus 14.9% who declared that they did not own musical instrument.

However, after processing the data for the distribution of the variables in the sample, students were distributed according to their achievements in the musical educational process and the structure of their pedagogical files. It was found that 34.5% showed genuine musical skills and dexterity, 36% had significant or average musical ability, and 29.5% with moderate musical ability (See Table 1).

Table 1Respondents' level of musical abilities and skills

	Frequency	Percentage
Moderate musical abilities	41	29.5
Meaningful musical skills	50	36.0
Good musical skills	48	34.5
Total	139	100.0

On the other hand, after processing the data from the questionnaire about the level of motivation of students in music education, it was found that 56 of them or 40.3% had an average level of motivation, while 48 students or 34.5% showed a low level of motivation; and 35 students or 25.2% having high level of motivation (Table 2).

 Table 2

 Level of motivation according to music skills

		Le	Level of Motivation			
		Low	Medium	High	Total	
Musical skills	Moderate Musical Abilities	22	13	6	41	
	Meaningful Musical Skills	20	17	13	50	
	Good Musical Skills	6	26	16	48	
	Total	56	48	35	139	

After the conclusive statistical analysis for the potential differences in the level of motivation depending on the music skills of the students, Table 3 and Figure 1 reflect the levels of music skills according to the average motivation. Accordingly, F=14.846 with sig=.000 (p<0.01) we find that there are significant differences in the level of students' motivation during music education in the cemetery from their music skills in this research.

 Table 3

 Differences in averages of motivation in music education depending on music skills

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	f	Sig.
Moderate musical abilities	41	17.41	5.390	.842		
Meaningful musical skills	50	20.32	3.223	.456	14.846	.000
Good musical skills	48	21.77	2.512	.363		
Total	139	19.96	4.168	.353		

More precisely, the difference lies in two groups, and in the first group, good musical skills with M=21.77 (SD=2.51) and meaningful musical skills with M=20.32 (SD=3.22) are listed, in contrast to the second group moderate musical abilities with M= 17.41 (SD=5.39). this suggests that students with good and meaningful musical skills are more motivated during music education, compared to students with moderate musical skills in this research.

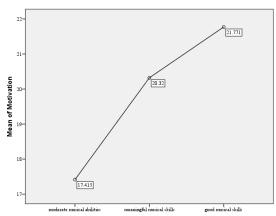


Figure 1: Level of motivation according to musical skills

Referring to the data from the socio-demographic characteristics of the students, as highlighted above, based on Asmus (2021), Hurley (2021) and Burak (2019), we further analyze the impact of the three demographic factors of gender, place of residence and possession of a musical instrument, on the level of students' motivation during musical education. The analysis continues with the linear regression coefficient (Table 4) for the influence of group factors (gender, place of residence and possession of a musical instrument) on the level of students' motivation during music education.

Table 4Linear regression values for the influence of group factors (gender, place of residence and possession of a musical instrument) on motivation during music education

N	Aodel	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
	1	.131a	.017	019	4.493	.478	.698
a. Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Rezidence, possession of a musical instrument							

Referring to F=.478 with sig=.698 (p>0.05), it was evident that socio-demographic characteristics together as group factors (gender, place of residence and possession of a musical instrument) do not influence or determine the level of motivation of students during music education in this research.

The **first objective** of the current research was to present the potential differences in motivational factors, which comprised effort, background, classroom environment, influence on music and musical abilities (according to the first scale of Asmus' measuring instrument Measures of Motivation in Music), and based on the level of students' musical abilities and skills of the above analysis. Hence, Table 5 reflects the averages of ANOVA analyses for the five factors showed the potential of the level of musical abilities and skills in the students.

Table 5Motivational factors according to students' musical abilities

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	f	sig.
	Moderate musical abilities	41	3.37	1.178		
Effort	Meaningful musical skills	50	3.64	1.156	1.182	.310
EE	Good musical skills	48	3.75	1.263	1.102	.510
	Total	139	3.60	1.202		
pu	Moderate musical abilities	41	3.59	1.224		
noı	Meaningful musical skills	50	4.02	1.134	7.065	.001
Background	Good musical skills	48	4.44	.823	7.063	.001
Ва	Total	139	4.04	1.113		
ent ent	Moderate musical abilities	41	3.41	1.245		
roo ii	Meaningful musical skills	50	4.22	.840	17.131	.000
Classroom	Good musical skills	48	4.54	.651	17.131	.000
en,	Total	139	4.09	1.028		
_	Moderate musical abilities	41	3.49	1.186		.000
Musical	Meaningful musical skills	50	4.22	.737	18.121	
Mus abiï	Good musical skills	48	4.56	.580	16.121	
	Total	139	4.12	.951		
	Moderate musical abilities	41	3.56	1.285		
ffect fo music	Meaningful musical skills	50	4.22	.864	10.307	000
Affect for music	Good musical skills	48	4.48	.743	10.307	.000
	Total	139	4.12	1.036		

The results reveal that there are significant statistical differences in the attribution of motivational factors according to the level of students' musical abilities, in attributes like background, classroom environment, influence on music and musical abilities factor with p<0.01, while for the attribute of effort factor there are no significant differences. The students with good musical skills M=4.44, SD=.823 attribute their success to the motivational background factor more than the students with meaningful musical skills M=4.02, SD=1.13 and moderate musical abilities M=3.59, SD=1.22. Also, for attributing success to the motivational factor Classroom environment, students with good musical skills M=4.54, SD=.651 are more likely to attribute it to students with meaningful musical skills M=4.22, SD=.840 and moderate musical abilities M=3.41, SD=1.245. For the attribution of success to the motivational factor Musical ability, students with good musical skills M=4.56, SD=.580 rather attribute it to students with meaningful musical skills M=4.22 SD=.737 and moderate musical abilities M=3.49, SD=1.186. As well as for attributing success to the motivational factor Affect for music, students with good musical skills M=4.48 SD=.743 rather than students with meaningful musical skills M=4.22, SD=.864 and moderate musical abilities M=3.56, SD= 1.285. It was also evident that students with good musical skills level attribute more motivational factors (background, classroom environment, influence on music and musical abilities) for their achievements in learning, in contrast to students with meaningful musical skills and moderate musical abilities.

The **second objective** of the research sought to show potential differences in the magnitude of motivation in terms of self-concept of ability, personal dedication to music, attitude towards music school and music in relation to other activities according to the level of students' musical abilities and skills. Table 6 provides the averages for the subscales of Magnitude of motivation according to the level of students' abilities and skills are presented with ANOVA t-test.

Table 6 *Magnitude of motivation according to students' musical abilities*

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	f	sig.
y self	Moderate Musical Abilities	41	171.42	36.926		.598
	Meaningful Musical Skills	50	165.40	22.325	.518	
Ability se concept	Good Musical Skills	48	172.09	24.701	.516	
₹ ,	Total	139	169.57	27.767		
1 ent	Moderate Musical Abilities	41	236.79	46.450		.789
Personal commitment	Meaningful Musical Skills	50	232.57	28.216	220	
ers	Good Musical Skills	48	238.75	32.934	.238	
COI	Total	139	236.05	35.471		
e s ool	Moderate Musical Abilities	41	348.25	52.714		.000
tude ards school	Meaningful Musical Skills	50	380.77	37.004	12.160	
Attitude towards music scho	Good Musical Skills	48	405.06	39.123	12.160	
t mu	Total	139	380.73	47.938		
Comparison of activities	Moderate Musical Abilities	41	498.87	225.480		
	Meaningful Musical Skills	50	516.08	240.812	4.699	.011
	Good Musical Skills	48	643.71	168.269	4.099	.011
್ರಿ ರ	Total	139	553.19	222.174		

According to the results in Table 6, we find that there is a significant difference in the magnitude of motivation in terms of attitude towards music school and music in relation to other activities according to the level of students' musical abilities and skills, even that p<0.01 for the first and p<0.05 for the second. According to the magnitude of motivation, students with good musical skills M=405.06, SD=39.123 attribute their success to attitude towards music school rather than students with meaningful musical skills M=380.77 SD=37.004 and moderate musical skills M=348.25, SD=52.714. While their success according to the magnitude of motivation is attributed to the comparison of activities rather students with good musical skills M=643.71, SD=168.269 in contrast to students with meaningful musical skills M=516.08, SD=240.812 and moderate musical skills M=498.87, SD=225.480.

It can therefore be concluded that students with good musical skills rather attribute their success according to the magnitude of motivation to attitude towards music school and music in relation to other activities, in contrast to students with meaningful musical skills and moderate musical skills.

Discussion

Referring to the results that 34.5% have real musical skills and abilities, 36% significant or average musical skills, and 29.5% having moderate musical skills, this result opens up other dilemmas referring to the fact that as a music school, students need to be selected with genuine musical abilities but close to 30% of them turn out to have limited musical abilities. According to Asmus (2021), it is the competition itself and the natural selection (skills) that appears during the student's musical education that makes significant differences in music skills.

Regarding the level of motivation of students in music education, it was found that 56 of them or 40.3% have an average level of motivation, in contrast to 48 or 34.5% with a low level of motivation and 35 or 25.2% with a high level of motivation. In this regard, it is worth highlighting the findings of Asmus (2021) who, as a conclusion of the research, estimates that "the ability to change the learning situation to calculate a 20 percent increase in the factors that lead to achievement offers a strength of powerful in promoting musical learning, without, the students surveyed in our research are more than motivated during musical education and that their success is inevitable.

Accordingly, based on the findings, f=14.846 with sig=.000 (p<0.01), it was evident that there were significant differences in the level of students' motivation during music education in the symmetry based on their music skills in these analyses. Such analyzes are also found in Hurley (2021) where it was found that students who had family members gifted with musical skills, could teach them music, and therefore they have a higher level of motivation during musical education and vice versa. It turned out that the sampled students with music skills were more motivated during music education.

Likewise, with the result of f=.478 with sig=.698 (p>0.05) we found that the sociodemographic characteristics together as group factors (gender, residence and mastery of the musical instrument) did not affect the level of students' motivation during music education in this research. However, it is not consistent with the findings of Hurley (2021), which showed that residence or social circle as well as family conditions (possession of musical instruments) determined the level of students' motivation during musical education, but not their background. This was also a methodological limitation of the research due to the fact of the small number of the sample as a reason for the limited number of students in this school as well as the small number of high schools of music.

It was also found that students with good musical skills level attributed more motivational factors (background, classroom environment, influence on music and musical abilities) for their achievements in learning, in contrast to students with meaningful musical skills and moderate musical abilities. Asmus and Harrison (1990) and Asmus (2021) found that the reasons mentioned by students as causes of success in music were musical ability and effort. Students with high motivation placed more importance on effort, while students with low motivation placed more importance on musical ability. Three causal variables, affect for music, effort, and classroom environment, were significantly related to the magnitude of motivation and accounted for 37.7 percent of the magnitude variance. Hence, there were differences in the hierarchy of this research with that of Asmus (2021) due to the fact that latter research used a larger sample by surveying students from more schools. However, the students in the current research did not attribute their motivation to personal efforts (internal factors) but mainly to external factors, a fact that should be investigated and analyzed further in future research. This is also related to the recent finding that students with good musical skills rather attribute their success according to the magnitude of motivation to attitude towards music school and music in relation to other activities, in contrast to students with meaningful musical skills and moderate musical skills.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In addition to individual differences among students, motivation depends on the social environment and teaching climate in which music lessons take place. The social context made up of other students and the teacher can nurture internal motivation and result in satisfactory engagement for the acquisition and development of competences for teaching music, or it can suppress internal motivation in such a way that the student tries less and less and is increasingly dissatisfied. The results of this study showed that there are differences in the attribution of success that students make to motivational factors according to their level of musical abilities and skills that they possess or have acquired during education. Hence, it was concluded that students with good level of musical skills attributed more motivational factors (background, classroom environment, influence on music and musical skills) to their learning achievements, in contrast to students with meaningful musical skills and musically moderate, but not in the effort factor.

The results also revealed that there were differences in the magnitude of motivation where students attributed success depending on the musical skills and abilities they possessed, only the attitude towards music school and music in relation to other activities, but not the self-concept of the ability and personal commitment to the music. Thus, we found that students with good musical ability more likely attributed their success according to the magnitude of motivation to attitude toward music school and music in relation to other activities, in contrast to students with significant musical ability and moderate musical ability. To sum up, therefore, it is necessary to encourage students to develop the love and need for music, and get motivated by the influence of music. The students' perception and enjoyment can help them freely express and transmit their motivation to their audience. This should be the fundamental goal of any methodological approach to teaching music, regardless of whether one will one day be a musician or not.

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