A Case Study of Preservice Music Teachers' Attitudes of Classroom Management in Urban Music Classrooms

Jennifer Potter
Ph.D. Candidate, General Music Education
University of Kansas
Review of Literature

Preservice music teachers may not feel sufficiently prepared for future teaching positions with regard to classroom management (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Campbell & Thompson, 2007).

School setting can impact classroom management (Brown, 2004; Garrah, Cothran, & Kulinna, 2010).
Teachers might face challenges in urban settings including an appropriate understanding of cultural diversity and facilitating classroom management within cultural boundaries (Brown, 2003; Emmanuel, 2005; Weiner, 2003).

University programs might not be preparing teachers for the reality of the classroom as strategies that were successful for students in non-urban settings may not necessarily be successful for those in urban settings (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Gordon, 2002; Singiser, 2002).
The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes of preservice music teachers concerning strategies and preparation for classroom management in music classrooms in urban settings.
Research Questions

1. What attitudes do preservice music teachers have regarding classroom management in music classrooms in urban settings?

2. How do preservice music education students perceive their university classroom management preparation to be adequate for teaching in urban schools?

3. What particular preparation, including strategies, were addressed in the undergraduate music education program to prepare preservice music teachers for the urban music classroom?
Method: Design

Qualitative approach utilized to examine the attitudes of preservice music teachers towards classroom management in the urban music classroom and their perceived preparation for the urban setting, as well as strategies presented in their undergraduate music education degree programs.

Case study seemed most appropriate and centered on the underpinning themes of the attitudes and perceived preparation and strategies regarding classroom management in an urban setting.
Method: Participants

A purposive sample was selected consisting of preservice music teachers ($N = 9$) representing two Midwestern universities.

Males ($n = 6$) and females ($n = 3$).

Junior and senior music education students enrolled in the music education degree program at each university.
Method: Procedure

Instrument was a series of semi-structured questions based on some content in the Urban Teaching Intentions scale, Urban Education Perceptions scale, and Teacher Multicultural Attitudes scale (Lee, Eckrich, Lackey, & Showalter, 2010).

To ensure reliability, participants were involved in two separate interviews, each consisting of the identical set of 7 interview questions.
Method: Data Collection & Analysis

Participants were interviewed twice, over two months’ time, for 30 to 40 minutes.

Participants received executive summaries as a means of member checks.

Transcripts were read by the researcher and a second reader to establish inter-rater reliability at .90.

Data were analyzed by identifying common themes and patterns across the participants’ interview responses, employing analytic induction.
Results: Themes

1. Awareness of Students
2. Clear & Appropriate Expectations
3. Caring Learning Communities
4. Adapt Teacher Training
5. Personal Beliefs
Results: Themes & Patterns

Awareness of Students
• All students are different

Clear & Appropriate Expectations
• Routines & procedures

Caring Learning Communities
• Safe, positive, welcoming classroom
Results: Themes & Patterns

Adapt Teacher Training
- Foundational skills
- Urban field experiences

Personal Beliefs
- Background influence
- Anxiety
Discussion

• What attitudes do preservice music teachers have regarding classroom management in music classrooms in urban settings?
  • Participants had not yet experienced all three settings so they could not yet articulate differences

• How do preservice music education students perceive their university classroom management preparation to be adequate for teaching in urban schools?
  • Apprehension about applying foundational skills to an urban music classroom setting

• What particular preparation, including strategies, were addressed in the undergraduate music education program to prepare preservice music teachers for the urban music classroom?
  • Teaching students behavioral expectations utilizing preventative techniques
Conclusions

Follow-up studies
Student Teaching
First Year of Teaching
Include more universities

More urban field experiences and opportunities to practice classroom management strategies prior to student teaching.

Participants were thoughtful regarding skills already acquired and recognized potential future challenges.
References


