



## Article

# Interactive therapeutic music skill-sharing in the West Bank: An evaluation report of project Beit Sahour

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### ABSTRACT

Interactive therapeutic music skill-sharing projects are becoming more widespread, yet there exists little research into the areas of trainees' motivations and transfer of skills, aspects that seem vital if the projects are to achieve their goals of upskilling employees and benefitting clients. Project Beit Sahour (2012 – ongoing) aimed to equip teachers and social workers with skills to run such groups in their workplaces. This paper provides an evaluation of the project that took place in the West Bank in two mainstream schools, with particular emphasis on trainee motivation, training programme quality and subsequent use and embedding of knowledge and skills. In order to evaluate the training programme, a series of questionnaires were devised and administered at specific times during and after training. Reports were also requested from the schools involved to obtain further information regarding the areas of evaluation. The paper offers an overall summary of findings, and makes recommendations regarding future areas of investigation in projects of this nature.

### KEYWORDS

music; therapeutic; skill-sharing; schools; motivation to learn; instrumentality; transfer; skills

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## INTRODUCTION

The training of musicians and non-musicians in interactive therapeutic music-making by music therapists is now becoming an established practice in parts of the world where access to music therapy is non-existent or severely limited (Margetts, Wallace & Young 2013). This evaluation project concerns such a project designed and delivered by Music as Therapy International (MasTInt) in the West Bank. For the purposes of this evaluation report, it should be stated that the term *interactive therapeutic music-making* describes a music programme where the music group leader engages in joint music-making with their clients. Activities are selected and devised for their potential to reach therapeutic goals selected by the project recipients in tandem with the project organisers and trainers.

MasTInt is a UK-registered charity whose primary activity consists of providing therapeutic music skill-sharing training led by music therapists in such areas. It was set up in 1995 when the first such skill-sharing project took place in Romania. Since 2009, a broader international remit was added to the charity's mission, with projects being initiated in the West Bank, Georgia and Rwanda. In addition to their international portfolio, the charity runs an interactive music-making course in the UK each year. This seeks to train early years' practitioners in using music to support children's learning and development. Many of their international projects take place in areas of ongoing or past conflict. Staff teams in settings such as care homes and schools are equipped with skills and materials to run interactive music programmes addressing the psychological, educational and emotional needs of children. The charity has developed its own six-week training model which allows for a two-person team of a music therapist and assistant (musician or music therapist) to work with local partners and develop a sustainable interactive therapeutic music programme. Importantly, although the charity has worked in a variety of different countries and settings, each programme is bespoke. Detailed discussion of the aims and objectives of local partners before the training begins, as well as a week of observation on-site equip the training team with information regarding which therapeutic activities may be of use, and which therapeutic approach will be fit for purpose. A training programme is then devised on-site, with a resource booklet being prepared for the trainees after the initial six-week stage of the project is over. Staff are then supported by email, online meetings and newsletters once the six-week

project has ended. Reports are requested on a six-monthly basis, with the potential for follow-up visits by the original team, other trainers or more local professionals to further develop staff skills.

In the past 15 years, an increasing amount of evidence, mainly focussing on case studies, describes the value of using music therapy in war-torn or conflicted areas. Sutton (2002), amongst others, has edited a book where an interesting overview of work in areas such as Northern Ireland, South Africa, and Bosnia-Herzegovina is provided. Pavlicevic (2002), for example, writes about her work as a music therapist in South Africa. She describes the complexity of living in a society where it is not necessarily the sudden, frightening outburst of a single violent act, but rather the constant rumbling backdrop of conflict to everyday life that is just as traumatic and unsettling. In this context, she writes movingly of a traumatised child being able to summon a sense of self and revivify their inner *Music Child* through music therapy sessions. In the same edition (Sutton 2002), Lang and McInerney (2002) have also written of music therapy work with the organisation War Child in Bosnia-Herzegovina. They report the importance of creating a safe, containing therapeutic environment to facilitate positive outcomes from music therapy sessions. They see the music-making process as vital to clients being able to safely explore and re-experience difficult feelings resulting from traumatic events in their lives. The non-verbal properties of music-making seemed particularly important, as sometimes clients "simply did not have the words to say what was clearly expressed through the non-verbal medium of music" (Lang & McInerney 2002: 172). Equally, Nicholson, (2014), a music therapist working with traumatised clients in Rwanda for *Musicians Without Borders*, sees the value of the individual music therapy sessions he offers. He believes music therapy provides the opportunity to connect non-verbally in the moment, sharing emotional experiences with another creatively and authentically. Another music therapist, Shrubsole (2010) has described her clinical work in post-conflict Uganda, focussing on the importance of shared aspects of culture as well as the impact of a language barrier. She also references the importance for clients of sharing aspects of their emotional experiences non-verbally in a safe therapeutic space.

Although therapists' approaches may differ, the body of work referenced above describes the ability of music therapy to provide a facilitating environment in which traumatic experiences can be safely explored, and damaging patterns of

behaviour addressed. This has led music therapists to infer that these populations can benefit from music therapy.

It is the case, however, that in some of these and other geographical areas, access to music therapy as a form of intervention is severely limited. This lack has given rise to individuals and organisations such as MasTInt offering interactive therapeutic music-making training projects to local staff in response to a perceived need by training recipients. Although some projects offer qualitative evaluative insights on the efficacy of such training programmes, what is still lacking is a systematic evaluation on the extent to which training is transferred and sustained in the long-term (Coombes 2011). In addition, there is a distinct lack of research into the motivations and expectations of trainees themselves and on the extent to which they believe the training programme is relevant and useful for them. Exploring trainees' motivations and expectations has the potential to support sustainability of training (Coombes 2011), particularly as they were found to be consistent predictors of training effectiveness and transfer (Colquitt, LePine & Noe 2000).

Conceptualised as “a specific desire of the trainee to learn the content of the training program” (Noe 1986: 743), motivation to learn has been found to be central to the success of training (Colquitt et al. 2000). Research to date has shown that motivation to learn matters before, during and after training and it should be promoted throughout the learning process (Salas, Tannenbaum, Kraiger & Smith-Jentsch 2012). Within the literature on motivation to learn the construct is conceptualised as either the amount of effort trainees are prepared to put into learning the training materials (Noe 1986), or as a function of Vroom's (1964) expectancy model (Baldwin & Karl 1987; Mathieu, Tannenbaum & Salas 1992). Whilst one approach considers motivation as a way of gauging how trainees view their participation, the other approach highlights the importance of expectancy of outcomes. Within this framework, instrumentality is particularly powerful in predicting training outcomes, as trainees make instrumentality-based calculations when analysing exchanges with the organisation and when thinking about the anticipated consequences of participating in training (Tharenau 2001). More specifically, instrumentality is concerned with job or career related benefits, and pivotal to the decision-making process is the question of what purpose the training will serve and whether this purpose is likely to be met (Chiaburu & Lindsay 2008). This paper seeks

to explore aspects of such a training programme, MasTInt's Project Beit Sahour, that was delivered in two schools in the West Bank. It uses data gleaned from questionnaires and reports to examine trainees' motivations to attend the programme and their expectations of the course, as well as the efficacy of the programme itself. The main questions the evaluation was set to address were as follows:

- To what extent are trainees motivated to attend the training programme?
- To what extent do trainees perceive the training programme to be instrumental and beneficial to their work or career?
- How satisfied were trainees with the training programme?

In addition to these questions, an overarching objective of this evaluation was to gauge transfer of skills post-training. With this in mind, data concerning embedding and confidence of using the newly acquired skills and perceived benefits to work practice were gathered and reported in this paper.

It should be mentioned here that we acknowledge the influence of factors such as 'outsider' professionals working in an unfamiliar culture and other aspects of this work in which cultural difference plays a large part. This evaluation has not investigated these areas in any detail, choosing instead to focus on data gathered from the questionnaires and reports. It should be noted, however, that MasTInt projects do take these issues seriously, and endeavour to consider such matters with great care and sensitivity.

## BACKGROUND

Project Beit Sahour is located in the West Bank in a small town close to Bethlehem. Due to the prevailing political situation there is a continual threat of military and civilian violence. Regular incursions by the Israeli military and situations that constantly challenge economic, social and educational stability mean the area is in a state of high tension. Teachers and social workers working in this environment face daily challenges associated with stress and anxiety. The schools involved in this project report high levels of students exhibiting acting out behaviour in classrooms and at home.

Some evidence suggests that Palestinian children regard positive school-based experiences and educational achievement as providing the

potential to offer emotional resilience associated with their living conditions (Qouta 2004). Evidence such as this and reports from Project Bethlehem (Coombes 2011) led the schools involved in Project Beit Sahour to contact MasTInt to explore the possibility of such a training project being offered to their staff.

This training programme was a joint initiative between MasTInt and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Holy Land (ELCJHL), a German-based Christian organisation which runs three co-educational schools in the West Bank, and one in Jordan.

## THE TRAINING CONTEXT

In September 2012 a team of two music therapists travelled to Beit Sahour, a small town in the West Bank adjacent to Bethlehem to deliver the above training programme to staff at two different schools. For the purposes of this paper and to ensure anonymity is respected, they will be referred to as Schools 1 and 2.

School 1 is based in the heart of the old part of Beit Sahour, a town of some 13,000 inhabitants located to the east of Bethlehem. Situated amongst the winding streets, the school is very much a part of the local community. Indeed, it was first established there in 1901. It is co-educational, and typically had a population of approximately 520 pupils at the time of the training, ranging from 4 to 18 years of age. Many of the students' parents also attended this school, and a significant number of the teaching and support staff are also former pupils. It has 30 educators on its staff list. Pupils are 80% of the Christian faith with the remaining 20% being Muslim.

In comparison, School 2 is situated on the outskirts of Bethlehem and Beit Jala, a neighbouring (almost contiguous) town, high up on a hillside. It is a new school, having been established in 2000. It is also co-educational, and had a typical population of 310 pupils at the time of the project with 31 educators in its staff team. The pupil base for this school is drawn from a less homogenous community than that of School 1 with a more evenly balanced mixture of Christian and Muslim families. Some pupils live in the neighbouring refugee camps while others are located in private homes in Beit Jala or Bethlehem.

A total of 10 trainees, 5 from each school, took part in the training programme; 8 being teachers and 2 social workers. The majority of participants volunteered to take part with 3 being chosen to attend by their managers. All trainees but one were

females. The teachers worked in different areas within the curriculum. The average age of trainees was 35, with the youngest being 24 and the oldest being 47.

## DELIVERY OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

Table 1 displays the timeframe of the training programme and of data collection. The first week (Week 1) was a settling-in period for trainers and trainees. This helped trainers identify needs and devise the bespoke training programme. Trainers spent time observing classes and meeting staff. They also ran one experiential music group for staff. In subsequent weeks (Weeks 2-5) the project team ran daily interactive therapeutic music groups of pupils, with each group receiving a weekly session. One trainee would sit in on a designated group, assuming more responsibility for leading the group week by week. Trainees worked with or observed the same groups during this time. Weekly staff group training sessions were also arranged where principles of music therapy were introduced. The final week (Week 6) was a time when trainers prepared the booklet that was left for trainees to use post-training.<sup>1</sup>

## EVALUATION METHOD

Evaluative data were gathered by the use of questionnaires and evaluation reports. Three questionnaires were administered in total to each participant and evaluation reports were requested at two different time points post-training. The timeframe in which these were administered is displayed in Table 1. As can be seen, the first questionnaire was administered at the end of the first week of the project. It included measures of demographics (age, gender) and background variables related to the job. It was designed to tap into trainees' perceptions of instrumentality of the training programme and motivation to learn the new material (see Appendix for measures). Each trainee was allocated a unique number that was entered on

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<sup>1</sup> To obtain a copy of the booklet which provides an overview of the therapeutic principles applied and activities used, please contact Elizabeth Coombes.



Timeframe of training	Brief Description of Training / Monitoring Process	Data collection
Week 1	Observation of setting, initial musical experiential group, meeting trainees, devising timetable.	Questionnaire 1 administered at end of the week.
Week 2-5	Interactive therapeutic music groups led by trainers with trainees participating. Training workshops held.	No data collection.
Week 6	Trainees lead interactive therapeutic music groups. Final workshops held. Booklet of activities prepared and distributed.	Questionnaire 2 administered at the end of the week.
5 months post-training	No training activity.	Evaluation reports requested from schools.
6 months post-training	No training activity.	Questionnaire 3 administered.
13 months post-training	No training activity.	Evaluation reports requested from schools.

**Table 1: Structure of the training programme and data collection**

the questionnaire to ensure anonymity of the data and this number was used in subsequent questionnaires. All items asked participants to indicate on a scale from 1 to 5 how much they disagreed or agreed with statements. All questionnaires were collected by the project team or leader.

The second questionnaire was administered at the end of the 6-week training programme. It re-examined instrumentality and motivation and also included measures of satisfaction with training. This was assessed through rating five statements related to satisfaction with the trainer (e.g. *“the trainer gave me specific guidance as to how I could improve”*), and four statements designed to tap into satisfaction with the training materials and methods (e.g. *“Taking part in the pupils’ music sessions was the most useful part of training”*).

The third questionnaire was administered six months after the training ended. It focused on the extent to which trainees transferred the newly acquired skills to the job, the usefulness of the booklet provided and whether they felt that the training was useful for managing behaviour and emotions of children in the classroom. Space for qualitative comments was provided throughout the questionnaire to enable trainees to put additional information with regards to their satisfaction of training.

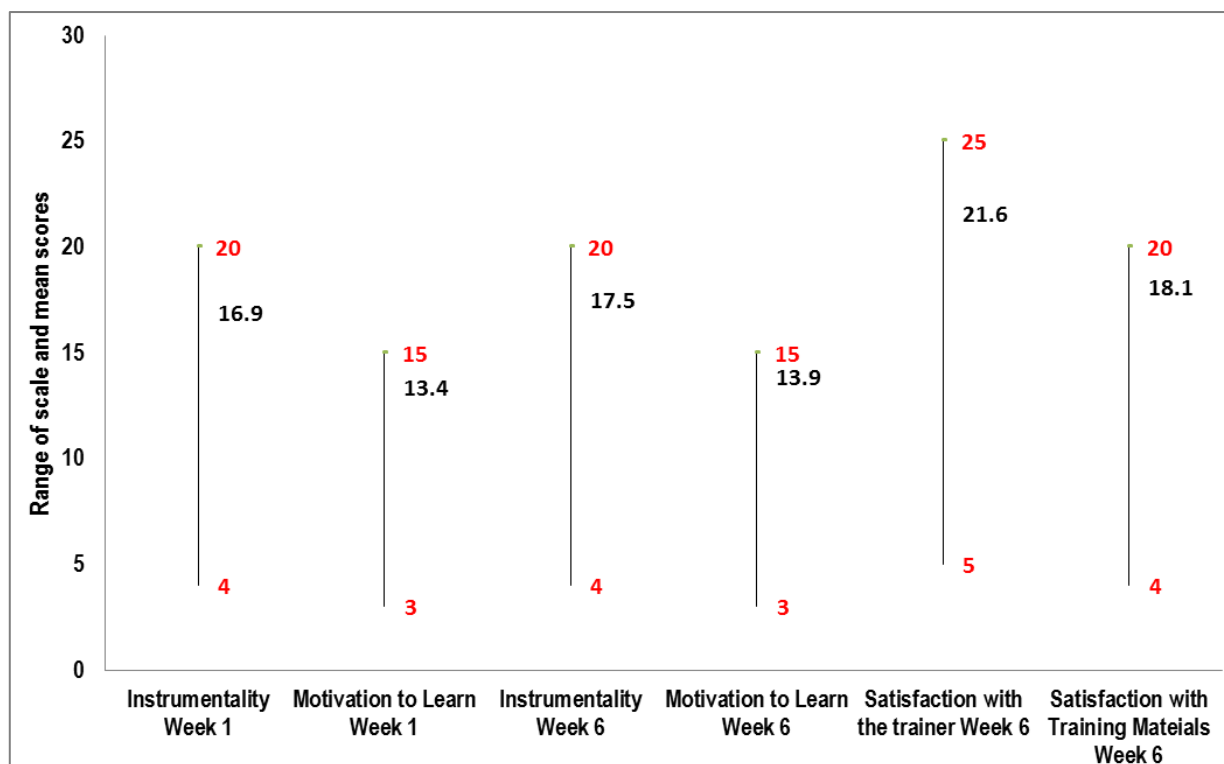
Reports were requested five months and thirteen months post-training, to ascertain whether trainees were running interactive therapeutic music groups, and if so, to explain their aims in using them, and how often they had managed to run them. They were also asked to report a brief case study on a group or an individual and to note any challenges they had experienced. This aspect of Project Beit Sahour is common to all MasTInt projects.

## RESULTS

To recap, the purpose of this paper is to report the findings in relation to the motivations and expectations of trainees, as well as their satisfaction with the six-week training programme. In addition, it seeks to report the findings on the extent to which the newly acquired skills were transferred and embedded in everyday practice. Analyses of the evaluation data were therefore conducted in the following way.

## ASSESSING MOTIVATION AND SATISFACTION WITH TRAINING

To assess trainees’ levels of motivation and perceptions of instrumentality at the start and at the end of the six-week training course, and to ascertain their satisfaction with the programme, the mean scores were calculated for each scale in questionnaire 1 and questionnaire 2 (i.e., Week 1 and Week 6 of the training programme, see Table 1 above). To accomplish this, scores of the four instrumentality items, the three motivation to learn items, the five satisfaction with trainer items, and the four satisfaction with training materials items were added to form an overall score for each participant. Participants’ scores were then added in order to calculate a mean score for the group and this score was then compared to the lowest and highest possible score that could be obtained for each scale.



**Figure 1: Range and mean scores for instrumentality, motivation to learn, and satisfaction with training**

Figure 1 displays the highest possible score and the lowest possible score one could obtain on the instrumentality, motivation to learn, and satisfaction with training scales. It also shows the mean scores for the group. Given that the lowest possible score is 4 and the highest possible score for instrumentality is 20, results suggest that as a group, trainees scored above average on instrumentality at the start of training (Mean = 16.90 at week 1) and also at the end of the training programme (Mean = 17.50 at week 6). Similarly, with the lowest possible score being 3 and the highest possible score for motivation to learn being 15, Figure 1 shows that, as a group, trainees scored above average on motivation to learn at the start and at the end of the training programme (Mean = 13.40, 13.90, week 1 and week 6 respectively). This suggests that, on average, trainees were excited about attending the training course and were prepared to put effort into it, at the start and also at the end of the six-week training period. They also perceived the training to be relevant for their job and that it was likely to provide them with useful skills.

Figure 1 also shows that trainees were highly satisfied with the training course (as measured in week 6). With the lowest possible score of 5 and highest possible score of 25, as a group, trainees scored above average for satisfaction with the trainer (Mean = 21.60). Trainees were also highly

satisfied with the training materials. With the lowest possible score of 4 and highest possible score of 20, a mean score of 18.10 suggests that they were satisfied with materials used such as the booklet, and the pupils' music sessions.

Qualitative comments provided by trainees at the start and the end of the six-week training course (questionnaires 1 and 2) reveal that staff from both schools felt they might find the training useful. However, there were some interesting differences between the schools in terms of expectations. Staff from School 1 had pupil-oriented goals such as assisting pupils in lessons and with concentration, while those from School 2 were more self-oriented, hoping to gain new skills. For example, one person hoped to learn how to release their own stress, which was not a primary goal of the programme. The second questionnaire revealed additional differences between the schools. School 1 staff were highly complimentary about the trainers, and commented that they could use their newly acquired skills with shy or hyperactive students. In contrast, School 2 staff comments focussed largely on the lack of time trainees had to undertake the training programme and to continue to use it. One person did not feel they would be able to continue to use these skills, while another felt that a teacher wholly dedicated to this work was required. This suggests that although the quantitative data indicate satisfaction with

training, trainees from School 2 may have been more reluctant about the training and the extent to which they can apply it.

## ASSESSING TRANSFER OF SKILLS AND SUSTAINABILITY

One of the main objectives of the evaluation was to ascertain the extent to which the training was embedded and used in everyday practice and this was assessed by analysing the answers to questionnaire 3 (six months post-training) and by examining qualitative comments not only in this questionnaire, but also in the two evaluation reports (five months and thirteen months post-training). One of the trainees did not return the third questionnaire and data were therefore available for 9 of the 10 trainees. Figures 2 to 4 offer a summary of the answers provided in questionnaire 3 by trainees.

Figure 2 displays trainees' responses to questions related to confidence and usability of the newly acquired skills six months post-training. As can be seen, all but one trainee felt confident to use the skills and found the booklet to be useful. With regards to usage of interactive therapeutic music groups, five of the trainees either agreed or strongly agreed that they use the skills on a weekly basis.

In Figure 3, trainees' answers to questions relating to how helpful the training was for them in the management of children's emotions in groups and in the classroom are reported. As can be seen, all but one trainee either agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of the training course they felt better able to respond to children's emotions. They were less certain of the extent to which children participating in interactive therapeutic music groups are better at managing their emotions.

In Figure 4, trainees' answers to questions relating to how helpful the training was for them in the management of children's behaviour in groups and in the classroom are reported. As can be seen, all but one trainee either agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of the training course they felt better able to respond to children's behaviour. Again, they were less certain of the extent to which children participating in interactive therapeutic music groups are better able to manage their behaviour.

The qualitative comments noted by trainees in questionnaire 3 (see Table 2) and in the evaluation reports provide examples as to practical activities and how the skills acquired during the training programme were used in everyday practice. Interestingly, staff from School 1 offered almost twice the number of comments as those elicited

from School 2. There were many positive comments from School 1 trainees, including those relating to feeling upskilled, feeling able to transfer skills from small groups into whole classes and seeing a difference in pupils' confidence. One person reported being able to use elements of the training at home with their own children. School 2 trainees, in contrast, mainly provided comments on their satisfaction with training, but less about the extent they used it in their work. As can be seen in Table 2, they mentioned issues such as a suitable room being needed, the programme needing a structure and a dedicated timetable, and only one comment was made about usability, stating that they could use some activities in whole classes.

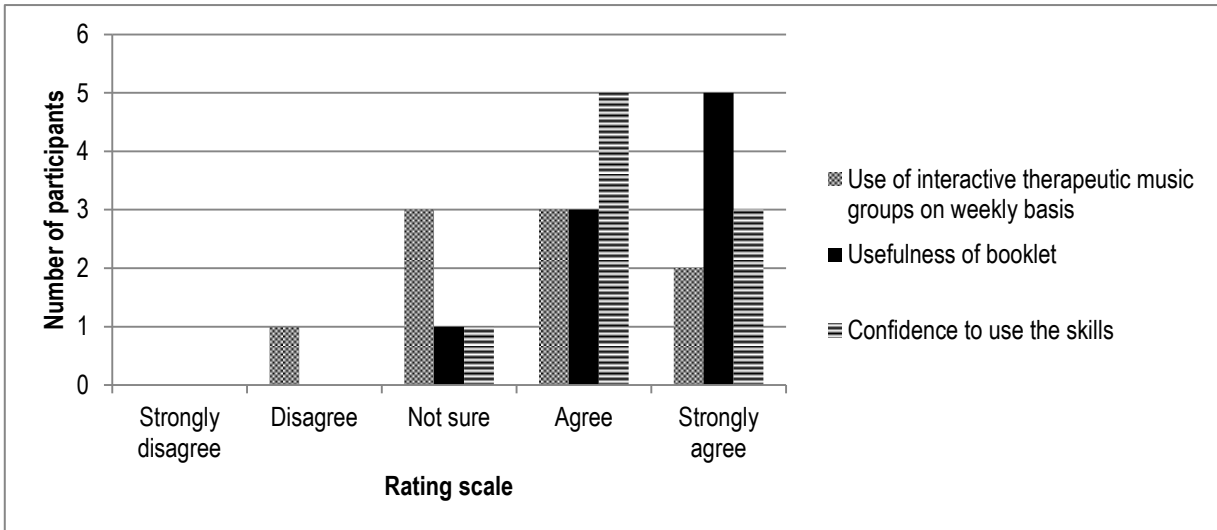


Figure 2: Participants' reporting of confidence to use the new skills, usage of skills, and usefulness of booklet post-training

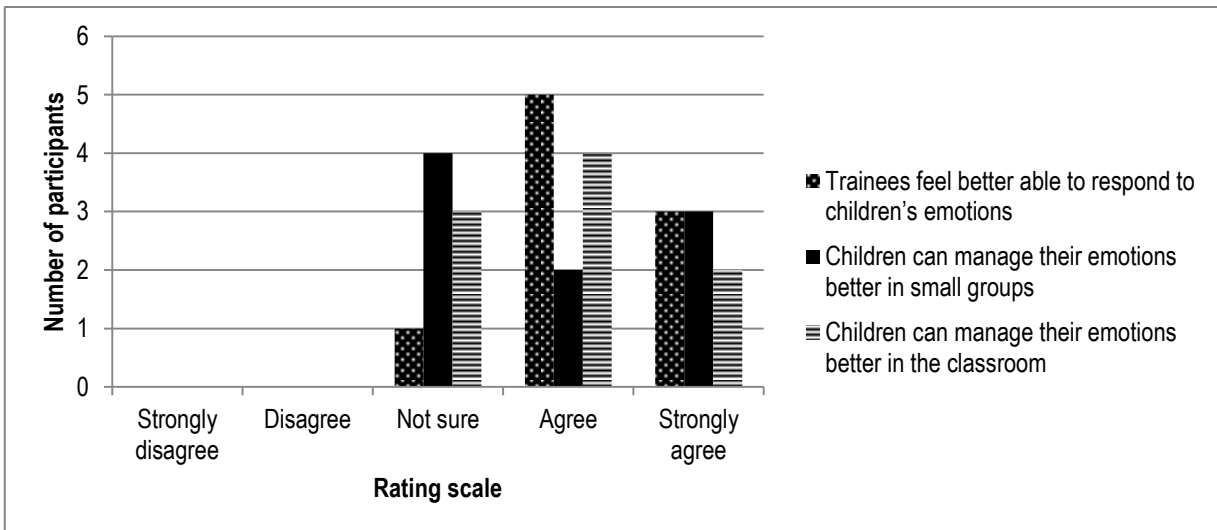


Figure 3: Participants' reporting of how helpful the training was for them in management of children's emotions

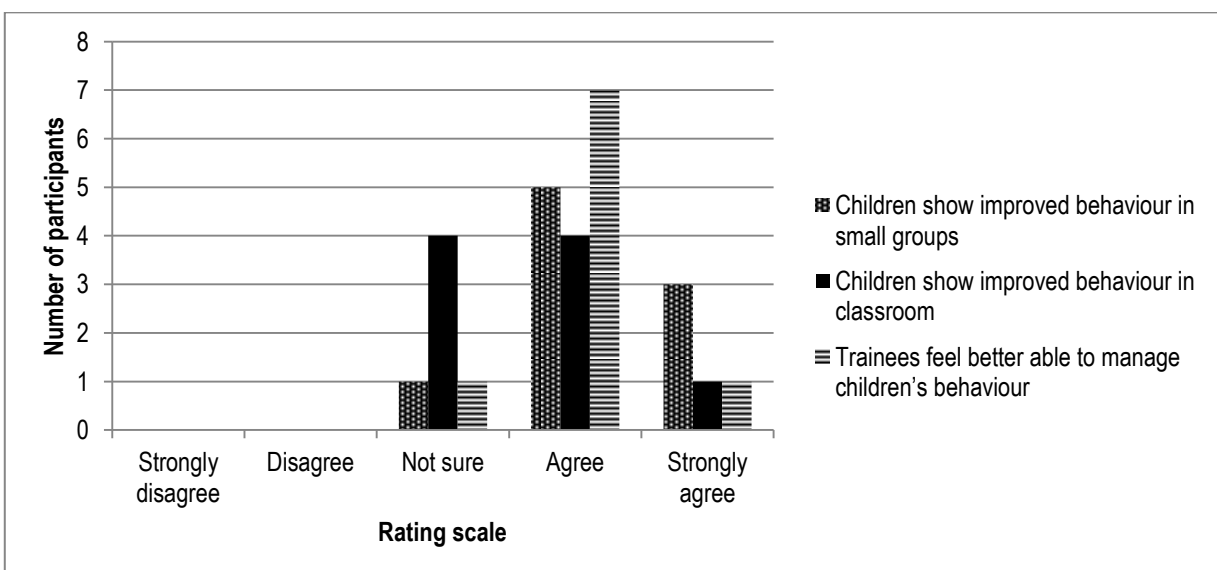


Figure 4: Participants' reporting of how using the newly acquired skills helped improve children's behaviour



**School 1:**

- We are limited in time so we must plan the program carefully
- Encouraged students' confidence
- Helped generally with younger children
- Concentration
- Instead of everyone doing the same thing at the same time, there were many different things going on in the group. This made it different from anything else they had experienced. They could show themselves at their best here even if they were weak in other subjects
- I now have more ability to control hyperactive students
- New skill to do job in a better way
- I realised it was better to have the hyperactive children and the shy children in different groups. They improved more in this way
- It helped me at home with my small children
- I used musical activities with whole classes
- Used to refocus children during lessons, e.g. making music with pens, etc.
- Used techniques to change the mood in classes

**School 2:**

- The programme needs structure and organisation
- It needs a dedicated teacher
- It needs a special time of day
- We need a special room for the music as therapy groups
- Experiential groups were good to release stress personally
- It helped me in my work/hobby as singer/musician
- I use it in class activities, calming down students
- I expected the course would be hard but I found it easy

**Table 2: Comments provided by trainees reflecting transfer of skill six months post-training (questionnaire 3)**

## Evaluation reports; Five months post-training

### School 1

To summarise the report, it stated that the children enjoyed these sessions and were eager to have more. The staff had discovered some pupils had musical talent, and also that their ability to stay on task in the music groups and classes increased. The team talked about the pupils developing their

own ways of playing the instruments. One person stated:

“We think that the students' behaviour has changed because the music really is a wonderful way to interact with the students”.

Some of the challenges were also indicated; these included how a number of pupils needed a lot of time to settle in the groups; in addition, other school activities meant it was sometimes difficult to hold groups regularly.

### School 2

In this report, some of the original teachers had facilitated a few groups. The report stated that:

“The students' behaviour is improving within the groups compared to how they were behaving within their classrooms”.

Staff do say, however, that they are struggling with timetabling and with children missing lessons.

## Evaluation reports: Thirteen months post-training

### School 1

The reports received in December continued to indicate positive outcomes, although again timetabling remained an issue. This time, extra aims were added into the programme by staff, including “to encourage the pupils” and “to develop mutual respect and broaden their horizons”. One teacher devised an activity where they themselves would “make a mistake” so the pupils could correct them. Another new game was to “show the pupils how it feels when they are noisy and don't listen”, leading to a discussion about the teachers' emotions. All teachers in the school felt that those involved in the groups showed improved behaviour and engagement. The social worker was also about to commence individual work with one pupil with a view to helping him join an interactive therapeutic music group. One teacher in the programme had left the school, but the social worker was training the new special needs teacher to take her place. In addition to this, a long-term volunteer was being given skills to assist with the groups and potentially facilitate one himself.

## School 2

By this time, one of the major challenges for School 2 appeared to have been overcome: a dedicated room for the therapeutic music-making groups. Teachers no longer run any of the interactive therapeutic music groups; these are wholly managed by the social worker. Instruments are stored in the therapeutic music room and used only for these sessions. The report states that pupils are developing their joint music-making through rhythmic cooperation, and this is helping to create a safe space to talk about feelings, to wait their turn and “relieve some creative energy using music as the model”. The school believes pupils are learning healthy ways to cope with negative feelings. In School 2, some aspects of the group sessions are devoted to non-musical activities so the tool is not solely music.

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this evaluation was to investigate trainees’ motivations to attend the Beit Sahour training programme and the extent to which the training programme met its objectives in upskilling trainees with sustainable tools they can use in the educational setting. To this end, results suggest that all trainees felt the training could be useful to them and were highly motivated to attend, and all indicated that the training had been of a high standard. Understanding the motivations and expectations of trainees proved useful in gauging the efficacy of the training. More specifically, the finding which indicated that motivation and instrumentality remained constant at the start and end of the six-week training programme is testament to the efficacy of the course. Variables, however, are highly malleable and tend to fluctuate as a result of experiences (Tombs 2013). Motivation and instrumentality tend to decrease when trainees are dissatisfied with the training programme; this was not the case here. Satisfaction was indeed high amongst trainees, with all agreeing that the training methods, the materials and the trainers were of a high standard. Thus, considering motivations and expectations as an outcome of training may be more powerful in assessing efficacy than only asking trainees to report their satisfaction. Motivations and good training experiences were therefore a feature of the data gathered, which are the bedrocks for sustainability and efficacy of training (Bhatti et al. 2014).

One of the key advantages of the current

evaluation study is the gathering of data at different points in time post-training, enabling examination of actual transfer and sustainability of new knowledge and skills. Qualitative comments provided in the post-training questionnaires and the evaluation reports indicated that some trainees seemed able to use the skills and training in a wider context than simply running interactive therapeutic music groups. They stated that they were using musical activities with whole classes, sometimes to refocus their pupils. Although this was not a primary goal of the training programme, it is an interesting finding and one that has the potential to broaden the remit of further training opportunities. It appears the training had given staff a different perspective on their roles in the school and, possibly, more confidence generally in their work. The reports, especially those from School 1, seem to support this, with staff stating they had made new discoveries about their pupils because they were working with them using music. There are also interesting comments made regarding staff developing and devising their own activities; this appears to show that the skills transferred are being applied in ways that fit the context. It may be argued, therefore, that rather than slavishly following the format demonstrated by trainers of small, interactive therapeutic music groups, skills are being generalised into the teaching programme of the school as well as being preserved in the small group format. Staff felt able to use their new skills in a wider context than simply small groups, demonstrating that transferability of skills is occurring. To this end, findings support previous literature on the usefulness of music in the management of behaviour in the classroom (Derrington 2011; Sutton 2002). It is important to note that no in-depth analysis of which particular activities or general therapeutic principles were considered most useful was undertaken in this evaluation. This might have been useful as it could have enabled any future training input to build on those aspects considered of greatest value to these particular settings. It would also have been helpful for the evaluators to have had clearer information regarding the workshop elements of the training programme. Documentation relating to precise teaching methods, including materials used, may have enabled a fuller examination of the efficacy of the methods deployed to impart technical knowledge.

An interesting finding emerged from the data which indicated that the two schools differed in terms of trainees’ reporting on the usage of skills. More specifically, whereas trainees from School 1

provided rich comments about usage of skills, trainees from School 2 mainly focussed on resources and barriers to run the groups. The School 1 team reported that the training had helped them generally in their work. They also made other observations, such as the small groups being a place where “there were many different things going on in the group” which was a new experience for pupils who would normally expect to all be doing the same thing. It was also noted that the pupils “could show themselves at their best here even if they were weak in other subjects”. Such comments showed more insight into pupils’ needs and a more obvious development in the way the groups were being operated. It was also noted that School 1 were endeavouring to keep a larger team using these skills, and to maintain music as the only tool used in the groups. In contrast, School 2 only have one member of staff using interactive therapeutic music groups meaning that the programme would not be sustainable if this staff member were to leave or to cease running the groups. Comments from staff at School 2 reveal concerns regarding practicalities of running groups, with suggestions made such as a specific teacher being needed to undertake this work.

Given that trainees from both schools were highly motivated to learn and could see the benefits of attending the course, other factors may have played a part in leading to these differences. For example, within the literature on training in organisations, evidence now exists on the impact of the environment in which trainees work on the transfer of training (Bhatti et al. 2014). Many factors work against employees effectively transferring the new skills, particularly lack of support and opportunities provided by line managers and colleagues. At the time the project was delivered, aspects of organisational dynamics or environmental factors that may have played a role in the embedding of skills were not explored. Future projects could possibly consider gathering more information regarding the environment, staffing levels and management structure of the schools to give clear parameters as to what staff resources may be needed to embed the training into everyday practice in other projects.

Some limitations must be noted before drawing conclusions from this evaluation report. To begin with, it may be argued that findings are limited by the use of a small sample size. However, this sample size is typical of MasTInt training programmes. In addition, there is the potential for insider research and evaluation to compromise validity (Kvale 1995), though there are also

complex arguments for the usefulness of such work. Reed and Proctor (1995) identify various criteria relating to practitioner research in healthcare settings that can be generalised to insider-researchers in other settings. They state that such research may be focussed on aspects of practice in which the researcher has a high degree of involvement and therefore there is potential for changes in working practice to be effected as a result of the findings of the research. The voices of the participants hold great importance in such work; the relationship of the insider to the participants may in fact enable a higher degree of freedom and authenticity to be present in the data gathered. Others also suggest that insiders have access to a wealth of knowledge that can enrich and enhance the understanding of the data (Tedlock 2013).

Transfer and sustainability of skills were assessed by using self-report questionnaires. The limitation of such a method is well-documented in the literature (Coolican 2009) and future evaluation projects may add value by employing a multi-method approach. This may include obtaining reports from colleagues, line managers, and even the pupils themselves. Others may suggest conducting observational studies to observe daily activities of trainees. Evaluation of similar projects, in addition to continuing to monitor Project Beit Sahour, could be widened by using semi-structured interviews with staff to inform future input; not solely from MasTInt but also from other locally based professionals. Tierney (1996) argues that such interviews could add a richness to the data collected and an authenticity that could inform the support and development of this work. Though these techniques are powerful, they are extremely time-consuming and have ethical implications. For the purpose of this project, the most suitable technique for the participating schools and MasTInt had to be deployed.

Consideration should also be given to linguistic differences that may have affected the answers provided by trainees. The first two questionnaires were administered in English, and it was unclear as to how much of the questionnaire was fully understood. The final questionnaire was translated into Arabic, with the results being translated back into English once the questionnaires were returned. As the final questionnaire required more qualitative responses it was deemed appropriate to use Arabic, as staff may have felt more comfortable writing in their native language. It may be argued, therefore, that administering all questionnaires in Arabic might have given more qualitative answers and therefore provided a richer source of data.

## SUMMARY

Despite some study limitations, this evaluation has been able to meet its aims of examining the quality and efficacy of the training programme and to assess transfer of skills. The evaluation report of the training programme has given valuable insights into issues to be carefully considered when offering an interactive therapeutic music skill-sharing programme as outlined above. Whilst findings suggest that trainees were motivated and satisfied with training, post-training evaluation highlighted that transfer of skills was dependent on availability of resources and support post-training. One school maintained and used the skills more than the other and some possible explanations for this are offered. Future projects of this nature should consider the environment in which trainees work and the extent to which it will enable the use of skills in the long-term. In addition, future projects will benefit from an in-depth examination of the actual training to ascertain whether issues of transfer and sustainability may be associated with the delivery of training itself. Although the booklet provided some information in relation to this, no information was obtained regarding content of training sessions or workshop plans. This, together with data regarding use of specific activities by trainees, and data concerning which theoretical concepts trainees deemed most useful, may have given evaluators added insight as to whether the training could have been further refined to maximise relevance to each specific environment. Further evaluative work of this nature is required in order to fully understand the conditions and factors that can be leveraged during and after the training programme to improve transfer and sustainability of training.

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## APPENDIX

### Items comprising the measure of motivation to learn

1. I am excited to have the opportunity to learn new skills.
2. I will try and learn as much as I can during this training.
3. I am motivated to learn the material during the training.

### Items comprising the measure of instrumentality

1. This training will teach me how to work more effectively in my job.
2. I will learn new skills that will improve my general skill level.
3. This training will help me approach my work in a different way.
4. I do not understand how this training will help me work more effectively (Reversed).

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