Musical Creativity: How Belief Systems Encourage or Inhibit Creative Activities in Music

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Introduction
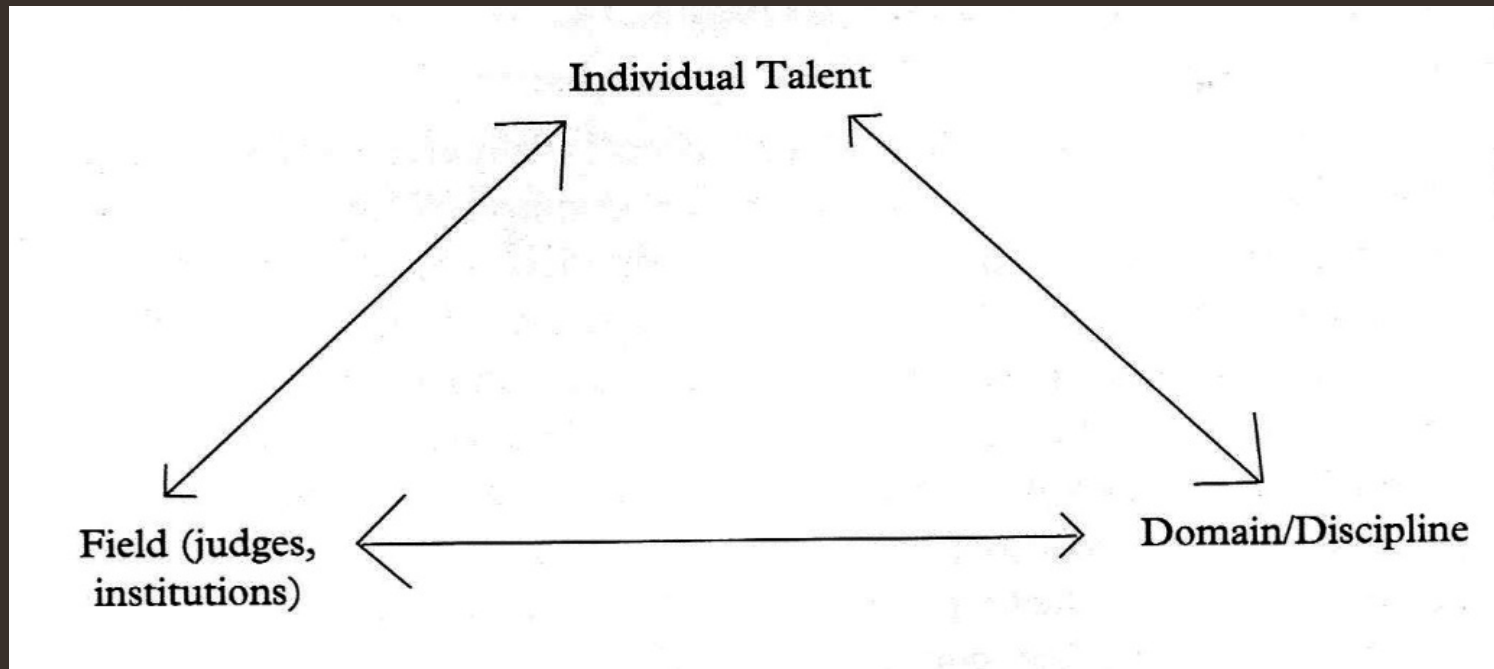
❖ Musical Creativity

❖ Cultural Contexts

❖ Gender Constructions

❖ Summary

❖ Implications for Music Therapy

What is musical creativity?

Focus on Product:

❖ The ability to produce work that is novel and appropriate

❖ Creativity is determined by the judgment of others

Focus on Process

❖ Musical creativity is an activity that takes place within a specific cultural value system

❖ It can include Listening, Performance, Improvisation, and Composition

❖ Defining musical creativity is not important

    ❖ *which* music

    ❖ from *what* social system

    ❖ *who* participates

East Asian Regions Influenced by Confucianism

❖ Four Areas that encourage conformity:

  ❖ Education

  ❖ Family System

  ❖ Hierarchical Social Relationships

  ❖ Benevolence

❖ Patriarchal Gender Roles

(Kyung Hee, 2007)

❖ Music in Sub-Sahara Africa

 ❖ Creation of music is a circular, spiral process

 ❖ Creative process is communal, even though some creators are seen as having an inherited, divine gift

 ❖ Must be grounded in tradition to be accepted

 ❖ Certain genres are restricted by gender

 ❖ Generational conflict between traditional and post-colonial concepts of creativity

(Mans, 2012)

* Venda traditional music, South Africa

  * Communal, participatory music-culture

  * Everyone is expected and encouraged to participate in performance, improvisation, and composition

  * Participation in some rituals is restricted by gender and marital status

  * New music arises from group improvisation

(Hill, 2012)

- Pre-1970s Suyá ceremonial music, Brazil

  - Communal, participatory music-culture

  - Who performs what, when, and how depends on social group (gender, age, marital status, name group)

  - New songs comes from the spirit world

(Hill, 2012)

❖ Conimeña festival music, Peru (Aymara-speaking)

❖ Innovation is highly valued because it gives a community group a competitive edge

❖ New ideas come from collective brainstorming

❖ Women are excluded from playing instruments and therefore are excluded from composing

(Hill, 2012)

❖ American post-revival folk music

❖ Old-time music subculture:

❖ Participatory and egalitarian

❖ Historic authenticity about *product*

❖ New music is discouraged, especially by "outsiders"

❖ Singer-songwriter subculture:

❖ Division between listeners and composer/performer

❖ New music comes from the sensitive individual

(Hill, 2012)

❖ Finnish contemporary folk music

   ❖ Strong focus on every person's right to be creative

   ❖ Authenticity is about *process*, not *product*

   ❖ New music comes from everyone of all ages

(Hill, 2012)

Western Classical Music Culture

- Hierarchical, with distinct divisions of labor between listeners, performers, and composers

- Belief that only some people have musical talent

- Only specialists with specific training and institutional support are encouraged to compose

- Focus on the canon of works by male European composers

(Halstead, 2007, Hill, 2012)

- Personality
  - Gender Traits: Nature or Nurture
  - Traits associated with high levels of creativity are coded as masculine
- Motivation
  - Intrinsic versus Extrinsic Motivation
  - Lack of role models affects motivation
  - Lack of opportunity affects motivation
- Environment
  - Domains

Summary:
Cultural Factors affecting Musical Creativity

❖ Cognitive resources (intelligence, knowledge, particular styles of thinking)

  ❖ Socioeconomic status

  ❖ Education

  ❖ Conformity versus innovation

  ❖ Beliefs about creativity

(Lubart & Sternberg, 1998, Pfenninger & Shubik, 2001)

❖ Conative resources (personality, motivation)

❖ Gender socialization

❖ Accessible role models

❖ Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

(Lubart & Sternberg, 1998, Pfenninger & Shubik, 2001)

❖ Environmental conditions

❖ Affluence

❖ Opportunity

❖ Domains

❖ Social Status

❖ Insider/Outsider

❖ Age

❖ Class

❖ Sex

(Lubart & Sternberg, 1998, Pfenninger & Shubik, 2001)

Implications for Music Therapy

"Through making people aware of their belief systems and how they may encourage or inhibit creative thinking, we can empower them to make choices for an environment that nurtures creativity" (Kyung Hee, 2007, p. 28-29).

Considerations:

- ❖ Personal characteristics of those involved
- ❖ Environment conducive for development of creativity
  - ❖ Resources
  - ❖ Time
  - ❖ Emotional Environment
- ❖ Creative Process
  - ❖ Levels of Structure
  - ❖ Modeling
- ❖ Creative Product

(Odena, 2012)

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