

Investigating the psychological and sociological impact of music learning on learners from low-income backgrounds



**Tshwane University
of Technology**
We empower people

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Introduction

The Community School Recorder Programme, situated in Tembisa, South Africa, is a significant community music initiative. Operating within a local not-for-profit school, which offers quality education for learners from low socio-economic backgrounds and vulnerable communities, the recorder programme is dedicated to advancing musical education among learners. A key focus is ensuring that this education is accessible and of high quality, irrespective of the learners' socio-economic backgrounds.

The programme's roots trace back to the researcher's endeavour aimed at identifying sustainable teaching methods and instruments. In 2021, the initiative took a significant step forward with Yamaha providing recorder training to all staff members. This strategic move allowed educators to familiarise themselves with the instrument, facilitating a more effective transfer of musical skills to the learners.

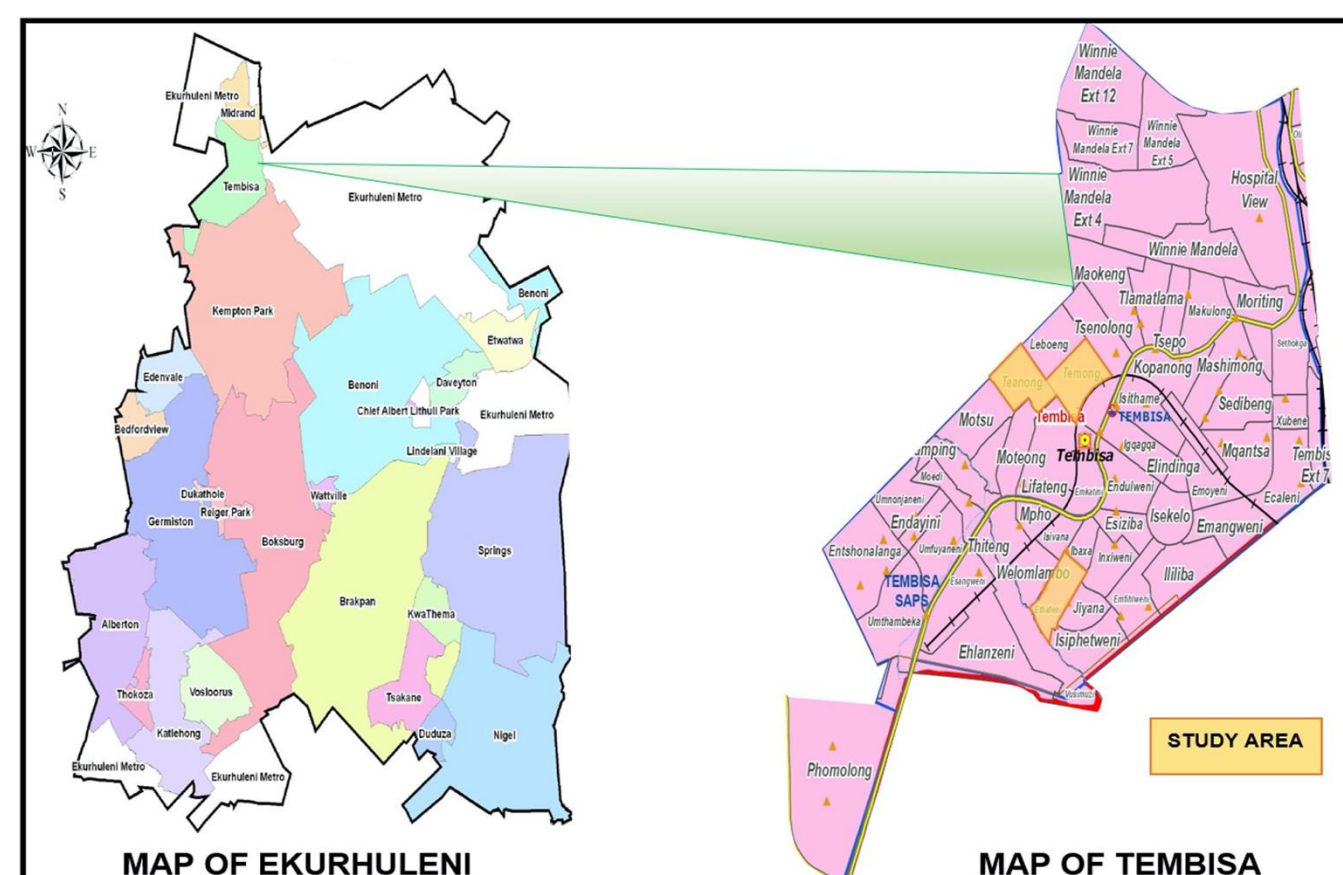
Background

Population stats: SA (63 million) – unemployment 32%, 73% access to piped water, 85% access to electricity.

Thembisa is one of three of the largest townships in South Africa located in Johannesburg. It was founded in 1957 to accommodate black South Africans during Apartheid.

Township facing high unemployment, crime, child abuse and poverty. Thembisa population - 511655 and unemployment rate (51-70%) Historically economically disadvantaged area with significant socio-economic challenges.

Rivers are polluted and drainage systems are blocked. Illegal dumping attracts flies that spread germs and poses serious health hazards to residents.



Nenguda, R. and Scholes, M.C., 2022. Appreciating the resilience and stability found in heterogeneity: A South African perspective on urban household food security. *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*, 6, p.721849. doi: 10.3389/fsufs.2022.721849

Nokuphila school serves learners from vulnerable communities
Providing quality education to vulnerable communities
Operating within a not-for-profit school
Addressing the need for accessible, high-quality music education
Focus on sustainable teaching methods and accessible resources

South African education challenges

Legacy of apartheid and its impact on education
Persistent socio-economic disparities

Socio-economic barriers in education

Limited access to resources and infrastructure
High student-to-teacher ratios.

Lack of extracurricular activities and enrichment programmes.

Impact on student engagement and academic performance



The need for music programmes

Extracurricular activities, particularly music education, play a pivotal role in holistic student development by addressing the gap in creative and cultural opportunities often missing in traditional curricula. Music education is crucial not only for enhancing cognitive skill, such as improved memory and attention but also for fostering social cohesion and teamwork through collaborative performances. Additionally, it boosts self-esteem by providing a platform for personal achievement and expression. By integrating music programs into schools, we ensure that students benefit from a well-rounded education that nurtures their intellectual, social, and emotional growth, bridging gaps and offering valuable opportunities for creative exploration.

Implementation strategy

Implementation
and Execution

Collaboration
with local schools
and community
organisations

Recruitment of
music instructors
and volunteers

Provision of
instruments and
educational
materials

Curriculum
design and lesson
planning



Expansion and growth of the programme

Scalability of the recorder music programme

Current Grade 4 groups progress and achievements

New Grade 3 group starting their recorder journey

Ongoing expansion of the program – additional instruments

Innovative sustainability model



Sustainability and innovation through collaboration

Funding model: CD sales to sustain and expand the program

Learners showcase talents at donor events

Raising awareness and securing financial support

Educational and cognitive benefits

Impact on learners

Improved academic performance and social skills

Enhanced cognitive abilities

Increased emotional resilience

Development of discipline and teamwork skills

Increased student engagement and enthusiasm

Enhanced community involvement and support

Success stories and testimonials from students and educators

Community impact

Building Community Cohesion

Strengthening community identity

Shared musical experiences among learners, educators and parents

Fostering a sense of pride and belonging

Successes and challenges

Implementation successes: Skills development, program expansion

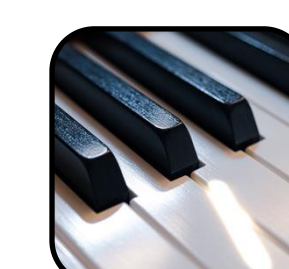
Challenges faced: Resource constraints, sustainability issues

Identifying and addressing potential obstacles: funding, resource limitations, and volunteer recruitment

Solutions and strategies implemented

Lessons learned and adjustments made

Research questions



What is the psychological impact of music learning on low-income learners?



What are the psychological benefits of learning music on low-income learners?



What are the social benefits of learning music on low-income learners?

The way forward

Future Directions and sustainability

Lessons learned from the programme

Engaging more community members and stakeholders

Plans for program expansion and scalability

Strategies for long-term sustainability: funding sources, partnerships, and community support

Vision for continued impact and growth in Tembisa and beyond



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