International Journal of Research Studies in Education
2023 Volume 12 Number 9, 1-10

Assessment of the music performance skills of the NLPSC BCAED students

Hipona, Marlon T. ✉
Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College, Philippines (mthipona@gmail.com)

Received: 20 September 2023 **Revised**: 10 February 2023 **Accepted**: 20 October 2023
Available Online: 20 October 2023 **DOI**: 10.5861/ijrse.2023.70

ISSN: 2243-7703
Online ISSN: 2243-7711

OPEN ACCESS

Abstract

This study examines the musical competencies of third-year Bachelor of Culture and the Arts Education (BCAED) students at North Luzon Philippines State College. It focuses on their proficiency in reading music notes and playing the guitar, utilizing the solfeggio method for assessment. Music education's significance in fostering musical responses, creativity, and cognitive development is emphasized. The study highlights the importance of music education, which helps in promoting musical responses and enjoyment through public participation in singing, listening, rhythmic play, and creative expression. Moreover, music education aids in developing skills such as mental development, concentration, and patience while also promoting cultural and aesthetic development. The study concludes that music education, particularly instrumental playing, helps in physical growth and coordination, and musical experience can "fine-tune" the brain's auditory system. The study employs a pre-experimental one-shot pretest design, combining individual and group observations. A rubric is utilized to evaluate students' performance and provide structured feedback. The 22 participants, enrolled in music subjects, are assessed through a questionnaire containing 60 items covering knowledge and technique areas.

Keywords: music education, Solfeggio, culture, music performance, reading music, apprenticeship, musical experience, self-confidence

Assessment of the music performance skills of the NLPSC BCAED students

1. Introduction

Whoever can sing can play ~ An old saying observed in Naples Conservatory

Bachelor of Culture and the Arts Education (BCAED) is one of North Luzon Philippines State College's fields of specialization, searching for the concepts and foundations to define its relationship to other scholarly disciplines. Creative human expressions shown in dance, drama, and music are learned and crafted. Finishers of this program can be employed as a teacher in the: K12 for Music and Arts, Special Programs for the Arts (SPA), Arts and Design Track for Grades 11 and 12, Core subjects in Grades 11 to 12 related to Arts, Culture, and Arts Coordinator at all levels in the educational system, and Positions relating to culture and arts such as tourism offices in the LGU's, museum and art galleries, and creative industries.

Many countries have rich cultures; tourists continually draw the customs, traditions, music, art, and food. According to Arthur Asa Berger, "*culture*" derives from a French term "*Colere*" means to tend to the earth and grow, or cultivation and nurture. Also, De Rossi states, "It shares its etymology with several other words related to actively fostering growth." Religion, food, language, marriage, and music encompasses culture and is different worldwide. It is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, containing language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music, and arts.

The researcher focused on music as part of the culture. Being a music major pushed his idea to study the performances of the students of BCAED about how they are inclined in the discipline. The "solfeggio" will be used to measure their performance in reading notes and music intonations, while the guitar will measure their instrumental capability. According to Blethen (1953), music education aims to see how many ways and areas educators can promote musical responses and enjoyment through public participation in singing, listening, rhythmic play, and creative expression, building a background of musical skill only as it fits into each area, not as a separate entity of study.

Villagracia's (2008) study states that reading music is as enjoyable as language reading. Reading a piece is the ability to translate a system of formal arrangements of abstract symbols into meaningful patterns of sounds and movements. Reading music is a source of happiness and a stance for growth and advancement in being able to solidify the component of pitch, melody, harmony, rhythm, dynamics, forms, and timbre. Music is visual and auditory. Reading pieces is part and parcel of the total music program. Baragwanath (2020) talks about apprenticeship, journeyman, and craftsman. An individual undergoes training with a maestro as a beginner to be included in the rank of an apprentice. Upon completing a training period, an apprentice typically becomes a journeyman: a skilled practitioner employed by another. This word comes from the French "journee," signifying "paid daily." They are known as the "Jack of all trades, master of none" in English. Therefore, a journeyman must join a guild to rise to the rank of master craftsman and complete a masterpiece that the master will approve. If he failed, he would likely be a journeyman forever. Most musicians in the eighteenth century learned their trade by serving the church to be professional journeymen and not maestros. Unlike Domenico Scarlatti, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Johanne Sebastian Bach, and his sons, most professional musicians sing at religious institutions to learn music.

Knowing where the syllables fall reveals the underlying structure of the melody: its punctuation, rhythm, and cadence points. Apprentice musicians turned singers and instrumentalists would learn several ways to realize basic patterns of syllables (solfeggi) like the different "traits of vocalization," stitching them together to create an extended melody. According to Lucy Green (2017), "informal music learning practices" are ways young musicians

develop creative skills utilizing cultural osmosis grounded on listening and copying. The pre-industrial method of making music does not rely on classroom models. Singing solfeggio allowed students to experience melody as a kind of language and acquire fluency through experience rather than conscious learning.

Music is an art. Involvement in the arts promotes character, self-discipline, sensitivity, and creativeness. Bastein (2005) stated that playing musical instruments is one of the best outlets for one's feelings. Playing skill does not need a pre-requisite to sing. It is possible for a person to play an instrument but cannot sing well. Playing in an orchestra, band, rondalla, and piano requires reading the notes. Anderson and Lawrence (2001) stated that the ability to play a musical instrument is directly related to a student's physical growth and coordination. Bagangan (2000) also revealed that music learning among children, primarily instrumental playing, promotes mental development, concentration, and patience. It also developed self-confidence aside from its significant contribution to cultural and aesthetic development. Wong et al. (2007) represent a new way of defining the relationship between the brain. They suggest that musical experience can improve one's ability to learn tone languages in adulthood, and the level of musical expertise plays a role in the degree of activation in the auditory cortex. In their study, experience with music at a young age, in effect, can "fine-tune" the brain's auditory system. "Increasing music experience appears to benefit all children -- whether musically exceptional or not -- in a wide range of learning activities".

Tracing the origins of the word guitar helps show how many cultures influenced the development of the instrument. The Old Persian word "*sihtar*" became the Greek word "*kithara*." Tar means string in Persian, and several stringed instruments have the word "*tar*" in the name. A *kithara* is like a lyre and is portable. This word "kithara" led to the Latin "cithara"; in the Andalusian dialect of Arabic, the word is "*qitara*." Sometimes when the Moors ruled France but were eventually expelled and proceeded to Spain, the Spanish word "*Guitarra*" appeared. This became "*guitar*" in English, "*guitar*" in French, "*chitarra*" in Italian, and "*gitarre*" in German. Thus, the derivation of the instrument started in Persia and Greece – essentially the same places that Western civilization started – and followed the development of European culture and learning. (French, 2012).

According to Provost (1997), learning to perform is never too early. Teachers must remove the notion that a student must be playing for several years before considering performance. Since performance is as much a skill as note reading, developing it at the same pace and time as other basic skills is essential. In developing this skill, we must remember that performance in the fundamental stage must provide positive reinforcement for the student.

1.1 Research Objective:

To identify the music performance skills of the BCAED Students that need to be enhanced.

- What is the profile of the BCAED students of NLPSC?
- What is the level of music knowledge and techniques in playing the guitar?
- What is the relationship between the respondents' profile and their music competency?
- What is the difference between the music knowledge of the respondents as to their profile (Gender, Age, and Units earned in music)?

1.2 Research Questions:

- What are the respondents' profiles in terms of personal, age, gender, education, music experiences, music background, and ownership?
- What is the level of music knowledge, and playing competencies of the respondents with regards to their profile?
- Is there a significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and their music competencies?

- Is there a significant difference between the music knowledge of the respondents as to their profile (Gender, age, and units earned in music)?

2. Methodology:

Locale of the Study - This study was conducted at the North Luzon Philippines State College, Candon City in the school year 2022-2023. The North Luzon Philippines State College offers Bachelor of Culture and the Arts as a program in the College of Teacher Education. In this study, the 22 third year BCAED students were taken as respondents. They were enrolled in the music subjects of the program as a requirement in their course. The test was administered to them to determine if they have gained knowledge and skills in music reading and playing.

Research design - This study used the pre-experimental one-shot pretest research design. It assessed the music competencies of the 22 respondents. Descriptive-evaluative research design will be employed in this investigation. According to Baht (2017), descriptive research is the collection of data describing some phenomenon, such as close-ended scales, open-ended survey questions, observation, and interviews. It is a method describing the characteristics of the population and focuses on the "what" of the research subject. The research aims to evaluate or measure the results against some known or hypothesized standards.

Individual and group observations were conducted to determine the techniques for playing the guitar. This was done before the interview and practical test. A predefined guideline determined the musical dimension of the respondents. It provided information to improve their performance and a window on how they learn. Respondents will become aware of what they need to work more and improve. Information about their performance comes timely and positively; eventually, work and strive to cultivate them.

Reliability means that scores accurately represent students' knowledge or skill level. Validity is an assessment that accurately measures what is to be measured. A rubric is prepared to measure a student's performance on an assigned task. It adds objectivity to the assessment process and provides a written description of the achievement levels to help students explore how to become proficient. It is written documentation of student achievement for accountability purposes.

Population and Sample - The 3rd Year BCAED students will be the study's respondents and will be asked about their music competencies. The activity is recorded for documentation for future references. The same method is used in the techniques of playing the guitar. The rubrics will be the basis for identifying their strengths and weaknesses and eventually be used to analyze the result of the study. The test result for knowledge and playing technique was classified into three categories namely, not competent, competent, and very competent corresponding scores. The knowledge aspect covered the fundamentals and the elements of music: rhythm, melody, expressive elements, harmony, and texture. The playing and handling technique for the guitar is also included as the second aspect of the test.

Data gathering tool - A questionnaire was administered to gather the needed data for the study. There are 35 items multiple choice questionnaire for the knowledge area and 25 items for the techniques. Thus, a total of 60 items will be used for the respondents. The questionnaire will be given to the respondents in a single session while the competency on music performance will be done and performed twice with one-week interval.

Table of Specification

Topics	Number of Items
1. Fundamentals of Music	10
2. Rhythm	5
3. Melody	5
4. Expressive Elements	5
5. Harmony	5
6. Form	5
Total	35

Techniques

Topics	Number of Items
1. Articulation	4
2. Strumming	4
3. Fingering	4
4. Tuning	4
5. Posture	4
6. Holding	5
Total	25

Data Analysis - The data gathered were managed, processed, tallied, and classified. Frequency counts, computation of percentages, and rank were used to describe the music profile of the respondents. The level of music competencies on the knowledge-based test was analyzed using the following 3-point rating scale:

Score range	Score	Verbal description
23 - 35	3	Very competent
13 – 22	2	Competent
0 -12	1	Not competent

The table was used to determine the student's competencies in each part of the knowledge test. For instance, if the test is 5 points and a respondent got a score of 2 then it is competent (knowledgeable) in the element.

No. of items	Weighted mean range	Verbal description
5	1 – 1.66	Not competent
	1.67 – 2.33	Competent
	2.34 – 5	Very competent
10	1 – 1.32	Not competent
	3.33 – 6.67	Competent
	6.68 -10	Very competent

Students' level of competence in handling techniques was based on the following scale.

Score	Weighted mean range	Verbal description
3	2.33 – 3	Very competent
2	1.67 – 2.32	Competent
1	1 – 1.66	Not competent

To test and to determine the respondent's level of competency in playing technique, the average weighted mean was computed. The significant difference between the respondents' test was determined with the t-test and this was tested at .05 and .01 level of significance respectively. Respondents were asked by the researcher to play specific chords to test their competence.

Statistical Tools - The researcher will use different statistical techniques to analyze the data acquired to establish the study's relevance.

- The respondents' profiles will be determined using frequency counts and percentages.
- The Pearson correlation test will be utilized to establish the significance and legitimacy.
- The SPSS will be used as a measuring tool to make the statistical outcomes of the investigation easier to understand.

3. Analysis of the Data

Table 1 represents a list of the respondent's demographic profile, units earned, their experiences about music, participation, instruments, and ownership. The table displays the frequency and percentage of various profile factors for a group of students. The elements included are Age, Gender, Units Earned in Music, Music Experiences, Music Instruments, and Instrument Ownership. Four categories are represented under age: 20, 21, 22, and 23. The frequency and percentage of students in each age category are displayed. This shows seven students are 20 years

old, representing 31.80% of the entire group. Gender has two types defined: Male and Female. The frequency and percentage of students in each category are displayed and the table reflects 10 male students that represent 45.50% of the whole group. Units Earned in Music has one variety: All 22 or 100% of the respondents in the group have earned nine units in music. Three categories are represented under Music Experiences: Band, Choir, and None. The table displayed that seventeen students participated in choir, representing 68% of the group—also, three categories under Music Instruments: Guitar, Wind, and None. The frequency and percentage of students in each class are displayed wherein eight students plays the guitar, representing 32% of the group. Finally, Instrument Ownership has two categories represented as Borrowed and Owned. The frequency and percentage of students in each class in the table displays that 15 students borrowed their instruments, representing 68.18% of the group.

Table 1

Respondents profile as to age, gender, units earned in music, music experience, music background, and ownership

Profile Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
20	7	31.80
21	10	45.50
22	4	18.50
23	1	4.50
Gender		
Male	10	45.50
Female	12	54.50
Music Experiences		
Band	2	8.00
Choir	17	68.00
None	3	12.00
Music Instruments		
Guitar	8	32.00
Wind	4	16.00
None	10	45.50
Instrument Ownership		
Borrowed	15	68.18
Owned	7	31.82

Table 2 presents the respondents range of music knowledge, where their competence in the different areas was described and classified verbally.

Table 2

Competency on the music knowledge

Areas	NC	C	VC
Fundamentals of Music	0	5	17
Rhythm	1	4	17
Melody	2	12	8
Dynamics	3	5	14
Harmony	10	12	0
Form	0	18	4

The table above shows the frequency of students who fall under different categories of knowledge areas in music. The classes are Fundamentals of Music, Rhythm, Melody, Dynamics, Harmony, and Form. The types are further broken down into three levels of proficiency: Non-Competent (NC), Competent (C), and Very Competent (VC). Five students were Competent, and seven were classified as Very Competent under Fundamentals of Music. In Rhythm, only one student was classified as Non-Competent, four students were classified as Competent, and seventeen students were Very Competent. Under Melody, two students are recorded Non-Competent, twelve are Competent, and eight are Very Competent. Five students were Competent, and fourteen were Very Competent under Dynamics. While in Harmony, ten students are known as Non-Competent, and twelve students are Competent. Last in Form shows that eighteen students are Competent, and four as Very Competent.

The table provides a snapshot of the distribution of student proficiency in each of the six knowledge areas of

music. NC represents students who have yet to achieve competency in that knowledge area, C represents students who have completed a basic level of competency in that knowledge area, and VC represents students who have achieved a high level of competency in that knowledge area. It is good to note that most of the respondents are very competent (**VC**) in the fundamentals of music, rhythm, and dynamics. Also, most of the respondents remains competent (**C**) in melody, harmony, and form. While few remains not competent (**NC**) in rhythm, melody, dynamics, and harmony.

Table 3 exemplifies the music competency of the respondents according to their music knowledge. It reflects the number of items that have been answered and rated. The weighted mean and verbal description were utilized to acknowledge their music knowledge competency.

Table 3

Music competency

Areas	No. of Items	WM	VD
Fundamentals of Music	10	7.55	VC
Rhythm	5	3.91	C
Melody	5	3.00	C
Dynamics	5	3.68	C
Harmony	5	1.64	NC
Form	5	3.09	VC

The table on the previous page shows the number of items and students' proficiency levels in different knowledge areas of music. The categories are Fundamentals of Music, Rhythm, Melody, Dynamics, Harmony, and Form. The types are further broken down into two levels of proficiency: Weighted Mean (WM) and Verbal Description (VD). Fundamentals of Music have ten items, and the average Weighted Mean score is 7.55, with a Verbal Description level of Very Competent (VC). Weighted Mean (WM) represents a student's skill or ability level in a given area, while Verbal Description (VD) represents a student's level of proficiency in articulating that knowledge. The table provides information about students' average Weighted Mean score and Verbal Description level in each of the six knowledge areas of music. The corresponding categories have five items each: Rhythm, with an average Weighted Mean score of 3.91, Melody's 3.00, and Dynamics's 3.68, all with a Verbal Description of Competent (C). On the other hand, Harmony showed a score of 1.64, while form presented an average score of 3.09, both with a Verbal Description level of Very Competent (VC).

Table 4

Playing competency

Areas	No. of Items	WM	VD
Articulation	4	1.48	NC
Strumming	4	1.58	NC
Fingering	4	1.41	NC
Tuning	4	1.32	NC
Posture	4	1.83	C
Holding	5	1.68	C

The table shows the number of items and students' proficiency level in different areas of playing competency in music. The sites are Articulation, Strumming, Fingering, Tuning, Posture, and Holding. The items are further broken down into two levels of proficiency: Weighted Mean (WM) and Verbal Description (VD). The following have four items each except holding with five things. The Weighted Mean score in each area are as follows, Articulation, 1.48, Strumming, 1.58, Fingering, 1.41, and Tuning 1.32, all with a Verbal Description level of Non-Competent (NC). On the other hand, Posture makes a record of 1.83 while Holding has an average Weighted Mean score of 1.68 both with a Verbal Description level of Competent (C). The respondents playing competency reflected that they are confident (**C**) in posture and holding but are not confident (**NC**) in showing articulation, strumming, fingering, and tuning. Weighted Mean (WM) represents a student's skill level or ability in a given area of playing competency. In contrast, Verbal Description (VD) represents a student's level of proficiency in articulating that knowledge. The table provides information about students' average Weighted Mean score and Verbal Description

level in each of the six areas of playing competency in music. It shows that students in this study have generally yet to achieve capability in these areas of playing competency.

Table 5

Level of significance between profile and music competency

	Knowledge	Rhythm	Melody	Expression	Harmony	Form
Gender	-0.032	0.100	-0.287	0.256	0.052	.534*
Age	0.302	0.050	0.116	0.068	-0.117	0.338
Music Experience	-0.108	-0.175	0.067	0.068	-0.389	-0.218
Music Background	.433*	-0.008	-0.088	0.165	0.148	0.074
Instrument Ownership	-0.011	0.134	.512*	0.055	0.069	-0.053

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 above shows that gender and form are positively correlated to each other with .534 correlations. Since majority of the respondents are female, it may imply that female respondents have a higher music competency in terms of form. Likewise, music background and knowledge are positively correlated to each other recording a .433 correlation. It implies that those who have higher music background has higher knowledge in music. Furthermore, instrument ownership is positively correlated to Melody with a correlation of .512. It may imply that ownership of an instrument may record a higher result in melody.

Table 6

Level of significance between profile and playing competency

	Articulation	Strumming	Fingering	Tuning	Posture	Holding
Gender	0.184	0.399	0.196	0	0.111	-0.244
Age	-0.035	-0.083	-0.194	-0.047	0.117	0.31
Music Experience	0.21	0.107	0.234	0.219	0.304	0.391
Music Background	.529*	0.354	0.402	.575**	.691**	0.373
Instrument Ownership	0.21	0.4	0.145	0.329	.517*	0.014

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The table shows the correlation coefficients between different factors and the six areas of playing competency: Articulation, Strumming, Fingering, Tuning, Posture, and Holding. The factors included in the table are gender, age, music experience, music background, and instrument ownership. Table 6 shows that Music Background is positively correlated to Articulation, Tuning, and Posture with a correlation of .529, .575, and .691, respectively. It may imply that the higher the music background, the playing competency in terms of articulation, tuning and posture of the respondents is also developed. Moreover, Music ownership is positively correlated to posture with .517 correlations. It may imply that instrument ownership will greatly affect posture.

A positive correlation coefficient indicates a positive relationship between the factor and the area of playing competency, meaning that as the factor increases, so does the level of competency in that area. A negative correlation coefficient indicates a negative relationship, meaning that as the factor increases, the level of competency decreases.

The table shows that Gender has a positive correlation with Strumming (0.399) and a negative correlation with Holding (-0.244). Age positively correlates with Posture (0.117) and Holding (0.31). Music Experience has positive correlations with all six areas of playing competency, with the highest correlation coefficient being with Holding (0.391). Music Background has positive correlation coefficients with all six regions of playing competency, with the highest correlation coefficients being Posture (0.691**) and Fingering (0.402). Instrument Ownership has positive correlation coefficients in four out of six areas of playing competency, with the highest correlation coefficient being Strumming (0.4).

The table also shows that factors such as gender, age, music experience, music background, and instrument ownership may influence different areas of playing competency to varying degrees. However, it's important to note that correlation does not necessarily imply causation and further research would be needed to establish any causal

relationships between these factors and playing competency.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

Based on the tables provided, music ownership and knowledge are moderately effective in the study. The "Profile Factors" on the table shows that 31.82% of the respondents' own instruments, which could suggest that they have more opportunities to practice and develop their musical skills. While in the table for "Knowledge Areas," the respondents' knowledge in the different areas of music show that their knowledge on harmony is strongly correlated with their musical background. The result suggests that a solid music background will positively impact students' understanding of harmony. However, it is essential to note that music ownership and knowledge are just two factors contributing to a student's music competency. Other factors, such as music experience, posture, and fingering, are also essential and should be considered when developing a comprehensive music education program.

Based on the objectives of the study, the following recommendations can be made:

- Strengthen the music education program of the BCAED students of NLPSC, particularly in the areas identified as needing enhancement.
- Develop a comprehensive training program that addresses the specific music knowledge and technical skills needed for guitar playing.
- Consider the respondents' profiles, such as gender, age, music experience, music background, and instrument ownership, in designing the music education program to better cater to their needs and preferences.
- Further investigate the differences in music knowledge among the respondents based on their profile, such as gender, age, and units earned in music, to develop more targeted interventions to improve their music competency.

5. References

Gjerdingen, R. (2022). *The Solfeggio tradition: A forgotten art of melody in the long eighteenth century Nicholas Baragwanath.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Bhat, A. (2018). Descriptive research: Definition, characteristics, methods, examples, and advantages. *QuestionPro*. Retrieved from https://www.questionpro.com/blog/descriptive-research/

Blethen, E. (1953). Music education versus Solfeggio. *Music Educators Journal*, *39*(4), 62. https://doi.org/10.2307/3387688

Conestoga news, events and announcements. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://blogs1.conestogac.on.ca/news/2008/05/woodworking_centre_of_ontario.php

Das, S. (2022, March 10). Tips to maintain proper guitar posture and avoid common mistakes. *EnthuZiastic*. Retrieved from https://enthu.com/blog/guitar/proper-guitar-posture/

descriptive, evaluative research design - Search. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.bing.com/search?q=descriptive+evaluative+research+design&cvid=9f99a5f36565491491a529edb31ec4d1&aqs=edge.1.69i59i450l8...8.170971j0j4&FORM=ANAB01&PC=U531

Eremenko, V., Morsi, A., Narang, J., & Serra, X. (n.d.). *Performance assessment technologies for the support of musical instrument learning*. Retrieved from https://repositori.upf.edu/bitstream/handle/10230/44130/eremenko_CSME2020_perf.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Rodriguez, R. C., & Marone, V. (2021). Guitar learning, pedagogy, and technology: A historical outline. *Social Sciences and Education Research Review*, *8*(2), 9–27. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5784696

Hamlin, P. (2017, September 11). Music assessment strategies. *SmartMusic*. Retrieved from

https://www.smartmusic.com/blog/music-assessment-strategies/

Pappas, S., & McKelvie, C. (2021, December 15). *What Is Culture? Definition of Culture.* Retrieved from https://www.livescience.com/21478-what-is-culture-definition-of-culture.html

Provost, R. (n.d.). *Rethinking guitar pedagogy*. Retrieved from https://www.cglib.org/wp-content/uploads/cglib.org/Musicology/Rethinking%20Guitar%20Pedagogy.pdf

Research Finds Musical Training Can "Tune" the Auditory System: Northwestern University News. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.northwestern.edu/newscenter/stories/2007/03/music2.html#:~:text=The%20study%2C%20which%20will%20appear%20in%20the%20April

University, V. S. (n.d.). *Bachelor of Culture and Arts Education - VSU Main Campus*. Retrieved from https://www.vsu.edu.ph/undergraduate-degree-programs/1991-b-of-cultural-arts-education-information