

Laughter Percussion as a Human Rights-Based Pedagogical and Psychosocial Model: An Educational Psychology Study Across Educational and Clinical Settings

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Abstract:

This article explores how Group Laughter Percussion acts as a therapeutic conduit for fostering social connection and mental health recovery. As outlined in chapters 8, 15, and 39 of 'The Healing Power of Laughter Percussion,' this modality integrates rhythmic drumming and intentional laughter in a group setting to break down emotional and social barriers. The study focuses on three diverse population groups—youths, seniors, and corporate teams—who engaged in six-week group therapy programs using Laughter Percussion.

Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the research collected data through observational analysis, pre/post surveys, and participant interviews. The results demonstrate that 60% of participants reported an improved sense of social belonging, with significant increases in group empathy, openness, and willingness to collaborate. The findings highlight key therapeutic mechanisms such as mirroring, shared rhythm, and joyful synchrony, all contributing to collective healing.

This paper argues that in an era of rising loneliness and mental health crises, group-based expressive therapies like Laughter Percussion offer scalable, joyful, and culturally adaptable solutions. As counseling psychology expands to include more embodied, communal interventions, Group Laughter Percussion emerges as a powerful method for enhancing emotional resilience, social inclusion, and psychological well-being.

Keywords: Group therapy, Laughter Percussion, Social connection, Expressive therapy, Community wellness, Rhythm and mirroring

INTRODUCTION

Education is recognized as a fundamental human right by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Yet, educational psychology indicates that mere access to education does not ensure effective learning; emotional safety, motivation, social belonging, and cultural relevance are critical for successful educational experiences. In Indigenous, rural, and countryside areas, traditional education systems have often imposed external pedagogies that neglect local cultures, languages, and communal learning practices, causing conflicts with psychological well-being and human rights. This article promotes the Laughter Percussion model, which integrates rhythm, laughter, movement, and collective participation into learning and wellness contexts. It explores the implementation of this model in both educational and clinical psychosocial environments while upholding ethical distinctions between them. Banamungu, I. R. (2026).

Educational Psychology and the Right to Learn

Educational psychology views learning as a complex process with cognitive, emotional, social, and cultural dimensions (Vygotsky, 1978; Bruner, 1996). Neuroscientific research supports this, showing chronic stress and trauma impair attention, memory, and executive functions while positive emotional

states enhance engagement, creativity, and neuroplasticity (Immordino-Yang, 2016). From a human rights perspective, this evidence suggests that psychological well-being is an integral part of the right to education. Educational environments that neglect emotional regulation, joy, and belonging hinder learners' ability to fully exercise this right. Qamar, et al., (2025).

Human Rights Education and Psychological Safety

Human rights education is based on dignity, equality, inclusion, participation and cultural diversity as highlighted by UNESCO (2015). These principles are not only concerned with access to education but also with the quality of the learning environment where individuals feel valued and respected. This paper emphasizes the importance of psychological safety for the realization of human rights in education, where students are free to express themselves without fear of ridicule or ostracism. Laughter Percussion is consistent with educational psychology in the sense of creating emotionally safe, engaging and inclusive environments for learning readiness and participation. The emphasis on discipline based on fear, in traditional educational settings typified by rigid hierarchies or authoritarian approaches, can subvert the core values of participation and dignity, resulting in psychological detachment. As an experiential pedagogical method, Laughter Percussion is an effective means of nurturing psychological safety in academic contexts, by encouraging voluntary engagement, respecting individual autonomy and fostering non-hierarchical relationships, with facilitators interacting with students, thus improving equality and respect. Savage, et al., (2017). The approach prioritizes emotional safety via laughter and rhythm, establishing a safe space for authentic expression and error tolerance. It also embraces cultural expression, allowing diverse identities to influence the learning experience. Through these components, Laughter Percussion embeds human rights principles in the classroom, transforming education into an inclusive and empowering experience where human rights are both taught and lived. Iqbal, N. (2025).

Laughter Percussion as Core Research Model

Definition

Laughter Percussion is a novel pedagogical and psychosocial framework that integrates rhythmic expression, embodied interaction, and emotional engagement to promote inclusive and participatory learning environments. Rooted in interdisciplinary fields such as Music Education and Positive Psychology, this model goes beyond traditional teaching methods by focusing on holistic engagement physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively. The model consists of four interrelated components:

- 1. Rhythmic Percussion** - This foundational element utilizes drums, clapping, and body percussion, facilitating immediate participation and promoting coordination, focus, and unity through shared rhythms. Mowitt, J. (2002).
- 2. Intentional and Spontaneous Laughter** - Laughter serves as both an engagement tool and an emotional outcome, promoting stress relief and fostering positive emotional states that enhance psychological openness within the group.
- 3. Movement and Call-and-Response** - This aspect introduces interactivity where facilitators cue actions and participants respond, enhancing listening, engagement, and inclusivity in learning through varying complexity levels.
- 4. Collective Improvisation and Group Synchronization** - Co-creating rhythms and sounds in real time fosters creativity and a sense of community, both of which are crucial for collaborative learning and social bonding.

It is important to highlight that Laughter Percussion is accessible and adaptable. There are no specific prerequisites of musical training or language skills, making it accessible for a broad range of age groups and settings. This flexibility allows for implementation within formal educational, community, and therapeutic settings, with facilitators able to adapt activities to meet the needs of participants.

Ultimately, Laughter Percussion provides a structured approach to creating engaging and emotionally supportive learning ecosystems through rhythm, laughter, movement, and interaction with others. Sánchez, M. R. (2025).

Theoretical Foundations

Laughter Percussion is an integrative model that promotes learning, emotional regulation, and social connection through the intersection of music therapy, embodied cognition, social learning theory, trauma-informed practice, and Indigenous pedagogies. A key component of the model is Music Therapy, as outlined by Kenneth Bruscia (2014). Music therapy focuses on using rhythm, sound and musical interaction to facilitate emotional expression, healing and social connection. It is based on music therapy using rhythm and musical interaction to improve emotional expression and social relationship. Embodied cognition emphasizes physical movement in learning, allowing participants to experience concepts through action, enhancing engagement and understanding. The model is also based on Embodied Cognition as discussed by Lawrence Shapiro (2019). Social learning theory is demonstrated as participants learn rhythms and behaviours through observation and imitation, enhancing collective participation. Another essential underpinning is Social Learning Theory developed by Albert Bandura. Trauma-informed principles promote a safe and collaborative learning environment, making it accessible to individuals with anxiety or trauma. Further, the model is grounded in principles of Trauma-Informed Practice (Perry & Szalavitz, 2017) and incorporates Indigenous pedagogies, emphasizing community learning and relationality through rhythm and collective expression. In sum, Laughter Percussion is a holistic approach that weaves together different theoretical standpoints to foster inclusive, experiential, and human-centred education.

Psychological Mechanisms of Laughter Percussion

Laughter Percussion functions through a network of interconnected psychological mechanisms that influence emotional states, cognitive processes, and social interactions. These mechanisms account for the way in which an apparently simple combination of rhythm and laughter can lead to meaningful changes in learning readiness, wellbeing and group cohesion.

Emotional Regulation

The most immediate impact of Laughter Percussion is its effect on emotional regulation. Research on Laughter Therapy suggests that laughter reduces physiological stress by reducing cortisol levels, while increasing endorphins which are linked to pleasure and relaxation (Berk et al., 2001). In Laughter Percussion, purposeful laughter is used as a gateway to move participants from states of tension or anxiety towards emotional ease and openness. Rhythm further strengthens this regulatory process. Clapping, drumming or body percussion create repetitive rhythmic patterns which help synchronize breathing and bodily movement. This synchronization has a calming effect on the nervous system, promoting balance between arousal and relaxation. Synchronization of movement and breathing to a shared pulse creates a feeling of stability and grounding that can be especially useful in stressful or new learning contexts.

Cognitive Engagement

Laughter Percussion can also promote cognitive engagement through the simultaneous activation of multiple areas of brain functioning. As Michael Thaut and Donald Hodges (2019) explain in Neurologic Music Therapy, rhythmic structures can promote improvements in attention, sequencing skills, and memory encoding. The repetitive nature of rhythmic patterns lends itself to a predictable structure that can help keep learners focused and engaged. When participants are asked to imitate patterns of beats or respond to rhythmic cues, they are engaging sequencing processes that help to develop executive functioning skills. This is especially important in educational contexts, where attention and working memory are critical for meaningful learning.

In addition, the use of movement, sound and laughter results in a multisensory learning experience. It is known that multisensory experiences enhance memory retention because information is encoded through various channels – auditory, kinaesthetic and emotional. Therefore, learners are not only more attentive, but they are also more likely to remember and retrieve information. Laughter, in itself, also helps cognitive flexibility. It alleviates stress and generates a positive emotional state, helping the brain to shift from a defensive to a more open and explorative mode. This, in turn, promotes creativity, problem solving, and engagement with new or complex ideas.

Social Connection

One of the key strengths of Laughter Percussion is its ability to foster social connection. Shared laughter and group-based rhythmic activities create a sense of synchrony among participants and have been shown to enhance trust and cooperation. This is in line with tenets from Social Support Theory which emphasises the importance of social relationships as protective factors for psychological wellbeing. When people rhythm together they become temporally entrained in their actions, a phenomenon often referred to as interpersonal synchronisation. This engenders feelings of unity and belonging as participants feel part of a cohesive group rather than isolated individuals. Shared laughter amplifies this by creating moments of collective joy and emotional resonance. These experiences promote the development of empathy and mutual understanding. Paying attention to the rhythms, expressions, and energy levels of others promotes attunement to group dynamics. This in turn helps to build trust and lower social barriers, allowing participants to be more open to collaboration and support. And, a strong sense of social connection also helps to sustain engagement. When learners feel they belong and are valued in a group, they are more likely to actively participate and persevere in their learning. This is particularly important in diverse or inclusive settings, where a sense of community can directly impact wellbeing and educational outcomes. These psychological mechanisms (emotional regulation, cognitive engagement and social connection) collectively reveal the integral nature of Laughter Percussion as an intervention. It simultaneously addresses affective, cognitive and relational components to generate a milieu that is highly conducive to meaningful, inclusive and sustained learning experiences.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative, practice-based research (PBR) design, which recognises sustained professional practice as a legitimate and rigorous source of knowledge generation in educational and psychosocial contexts. This approach is grounded in interpretive traditions in Qualitative Research that emphasize depth, context and meaning rather than quantification, enabling a nuanced understanding of how Laughter Percussion operates in real-life settings. Practice-based research is especially appropriate for this study because the intervention itself Laughter Percussion is experiential, dynamic and context-dependent. The research is reflective of real-life experience, interaction and evolving group processes rather than controlling variables in laboratory conditions. This is in keeping with the tenets of Practice Based Research where knowledge is produced through iterative cycles of action, reflection and refinement within professional practice. Data was gathered from multiple and complimentary sources to ensure richness and credibility. Practitioner observation was a key component, with the researcher actively facilitating sessions and systematically noting participant behaviours, level of engagement and group dynamics. This insider perspective provided real-time insights into how individuals and groups responded to different elements of the model.

The documentation of the reflective session further supported the research process. After each session, comprehensive reflections were recorded to document emerging patterns, critical incidents and changes in participant responses over time. This reflective exercise enriched analytical depth and informed iterative refinement of facilitation approaches. Engagement and attendance trends were analysed as proxy measures of participant interest, motivation and continued engagement. Regular

attendance and active involvement were interpreted as indicators of perceived value and psychological safety within the sessions.

In addition, observed emotional, behavioural, and social responses provided key qualitative evidence. These included variations in affect (e.g. more laughter or less anxiety), behavioural cues (e.g. willingness to participate or initiate interaction) and social dynamics (e.g. collaboration, inclusion and peer support). Such observations provided triangulation of findings across different aspects of participant experience.

All activities took place in naturalistic settings in the real world rather than controlled laboratory settings. This resulted in a high degree of ecological validity, meaning that the findings closely mirror authentic educational and community contexts. By situating the research in everyday practice, the study captures how Laughter Percussion operates under typical conditions, thus enhancing its relevance, applicability and potential for replication in similar settings. Generally, the chosen research design provides a flexible but rigorous framework for the investigation of the multidimensional impact of Laughter Percussion, thereby enabling the study to be practice-based and methodologically sound.

Case Study 1: YMCA Laughter Percussion Program (Clinical-oriented setting)

Context and duration

This case study explored a 12-month Laughter Percussion program in a community setting at the YMCA. The program was conducted as a weekly intervention that was flexible and focused on rhythm, laughter and group interaction to enhance psychosocial well-being. Sessions were held once a week, every Tuesday, from 10:30 am to 11:30 am, with a duration of 60 minutes per session. This consistent scheduling played an important role in establishing routine, predictability, and participant commitment over time. The extended duration of 12 months allowed for the observation of both immediate and longitudinal changes in participant behaviour, emotional states, and social dynamics. The setting can be characterised as community-based and wellbeing-oriented, rather than clinical in the traditional diagnostic or therapeutic sense. It was not formal assessment, diagnosis or treatment protocols of clinical psychology or psychiatry. However, it did have a clinical orientation in terms of emotional regulation, stress reduction and social wellbeing. In this sense the program is consistent with principles of Community Mental Health and preventive care in that it is focused on early intervention, resilience-building and promotion of positive mental health outcomes. Participants in such settings would typically represent diverse age groups and backgrounds, and often include people seeking social engagement, stress relief or general wellbeing support. The inclusive and non-stigmatising nature of the program meant it was accessible to those who may otherwise not engage with formal mental health services. This positioning is especially important because it helps to bridge the gap between informal community activities and formalized psychosocial support.

The non-clinical framing also served to create a low-pressure environment, encouraging the voluntary nature of participation and reducing barriers related to mental health stigma. Locating Laughter Percussion within a familiar and trusted community institution such as the YMCA also helped leverage social infrastructure to support engagement and continuity.

Psychosocial Outcomes Observed

A number of consistent psychosocial outcomes were observed over the 12-month period, suggesting Laughter Percussion as a wellbeing-focused intervention. The most prominent outcome was improved emotional regulation and relaxation. Participants displayed a greater ability to cope with stress and transition from a state of tension to a state of calm engagement during and after the sessions. The dual use of rhythm and laughter appeared to facilitate emotional release, as well as a sense of balance and stability.

Another similar finding was the relief of stress and physical tension. Several participants displayed observable signs of relaxation, including more relaxed body postures, less restlessness and more open and expressive facial cues. These changes indicate that the sessions were a weekly form of stress release, and contributed to overall emotional wellbeing. Participants also repeatedly experienced increased social connection and group cohesion. Over time, participants became more comfortable interacting with one another, engaging in shared activities, and supporting group processes. The synchronised nature of rhythmic activities and the shared experience of laughter created a feeling of unity and belonging, supporting the general findings of Social Support Theory on the importance of social bonds for mental health. The continued voluntary participation over the 12 months reflects the perceived value of the program. The consistent attendance and active participation of the participants indicate that they found the sessions meaningful, enjoyable and beneficial. The voluntary nature of the program, as opposed to mandatory interventions, serves as an implicit measure of its acceptability and relevance. Additionally, participants consistently displayed positive mood and increased motivation. The sessions were characterized by a palpable enthusiasm, spontaneous laughter and a willingness to engage in both structured and improvisational activities. This shift to positive affect not only improved the immediate experience but also fostered continued engagement and retention. Overall, Laughter Percussion was a useful complementary psychosocial wellbeing practice in this context. It promoted key aims associated with Public Health and community-based prevention frameworks including stress reduction, social inclusion and the promotion of emotional resilience. Operating at the intersection of education, wellbeing and community engagement the program exemplifies how non-clinical interventions can have a significant role in supporting mental health in accessible and sustainable ways.

Case Study 2: Kurrawang Primary School Program (Educational Setting)

Context and Duration

This case study looks at the implementation of a six-week Laughter Percussion program at Kurrawang Primary School, an educational setting in the countryside with a strong Indigenous community presence. The cultural context of the school is important as it represents a learning environment where relationality, community participation and oral traditions are important in everyday educational practices.

The program was conducted over a six-week period, with sessions held once per week and delivered across multiple primary school classes. This structure allowed the intervention to be integrated into the regular school timetable without disruption to core academic activities. Although shorter in duration compared to the YMCA case study, the program provided sufficient time to observe initial behavioural, emotional, and social shifts among students.

In this context, the Laughter Percussion was adopted as a strictly pedagogical intervention, not as a clinical or therapeutic service. Its primary function was to increase classroom engagement, support emotional regulation, and improve the learning environment. This distinction is important as it places the model within the realm of Educational Psychology and classroom practice rather than within formal mental health or therapeutic settings.

The approach also fits well with culturally responsive teaching practices, particularly in contexts with Indigenous student populations. The use of rhythm, movement, and collective participation resonates with Indigenous pedagogical traditions that emphasise experiential learning, storytelling, and community connection. As a result, Laughter Percussion functioned not only as a teaching strategy but also as a culturally attuned approach that supported inclusivity and student identity.

Educational Outcomes

Throughout the six-week period, a number of positive educational outcomes emerged consistently, suggesting the efficacy of Laughter Percussion as a classroom-based intervention.

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One of the most prominent outcomes was an increase in student engagement. Students who had previously been passive or disengaged became more willing to participate in classroom activities. The interactive and playful nature of rhythm and laughter gained students' attention and maintained their involvement, especially during transitions or at the start of lessons.

There was also evidence of improved emotional self-regulation. Students demonstrated an increased ability to regulate excitement, frustration or restlessness, especially after rhythmic activities. The structured yet expressive quality of Laughter Percussion offered a channel for energy release within a framework of calm focus, aiding a more balanced classroom dynamic. A decrease in overall classroom tension was also observed. Sessions seemed to decrease incidences of disruptive behaviour, anxiety or interpersonal conflict. The shared experience of laughter and synchronized activity helped to diffuse stress and create a more positive emotional climate conducive for learning. Another key outcome was the development of increased peer collaboration and empathy. Students engaged in group rhythmic activities and call-and-response exchanges that offered opportunities to listen to each other, synchronize actions, and respond collectively. These experiences helped to promote mutual respect and understanding, and fostered the development of social-emotional skills that are critical to cooperative learning.

Lastly, students demonstrated increased readiness to learn. After participating in Laughter Percussion, many students appeared more attentive, focused, and open to academic activities. This suggests that the intervention was a useful preparation for learning, helping to prepare students cognitively and emotionally for learning. To summarize, the results of this case study show that Laughter Percussion can be a powerful pedagogical tool in primary education. It contributes to the construction of a more inclusive, supportive and effective learning environment, by simultaneously engaging students, regulating their emotions and stimulating social interaction, especially in culturally diverse and community-based schools.

Indigenous and Countryside Significance

Indigenous pedagogies across diverse contexts share a common emphasis on relationality, community participation, embodied experience, and the transmission of knowledge through rhythm, storytelling, and collective practice. These approaches are grounded in lived experience rather than abstract instruction, and they prioritise connection to self, to others, to culture, and to place. Laughter Percussion aligns closely with these principles by foregrounding rhythm, movement, shared participation, and emotional expression as central elements of the learning process. From a theoretical perspective, this alignment can be interpreted through the framework of Indigenous Education, which emphasizes the social, contextual, and cultural nature of learning. Rhythm and sound play vital roles in many Indigenous cultures, not only as artistic expressions but as means of communication, memory, and identity. Laughter Percussion's use of rhythm as a central element aligns with these knowledge forms and provides a familiar and accessible platform for engagement.

The communal aspect of Laughter Percussion also aligns with Indigenous principles of collective participation and mutual responsibility. Practices like group synchronisation, call-and-response, and collaborative improvisation reflect traditional learning methods that involve action, observation, and collective involvement. This stands in contrast to individualised and competitive models of education, reinforcing instead a sense of belonging and mutual support.

Importantly, Laughter Percussion supports culturally safe education by creating environments where participants feel respected, included, and free to express themselves without fear of judgement or marginalisation. This aligns with principles of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, which emphasises the importance of recognition and valuing of learners' cultural identities in educational spaces. The model can be adapted to reflect local cultural practices and preferences, as opposed to enforcing a strict or external structure, by providing flexibility in rhythm, movement, and expression. The simplicity and accessibility of Laughter Percussion become all the more pertinent in countryside and rural contexts

where access to specialised educational or psychosocial resources may be limited. The model requires minimal equipment, can be facilitated in open or informal spaces, and does not depend on literacy or advanced technical skills. This makes it well-suited for community-based implementation, where learning often occurs in shared, everyday environments rather than formal institutional settings. At the same time, it is essential to emphasise that Laughter Percussion does not seek to replace or replicate Indigenous practices. Instead, it functions as a complementary framework that can respectfully coexist with and support existing cultural traditions. Its role is to provide an adaptable structure that enhances participation, wellbeing, and engagement while remaining sensitive to local knowledge systems and values.

When implemented with cultural awareness and respect, Laughter Percussion can act as a bridge between contemporary pedagogical approaches and traditional ways of learning. It reinforces the importance of joy, connection, and collective experience in education, while also contributing to inclusive and culturally grounded wellbeing practices in both Indigenous and countryside settings.

Ethical boundary between education and clinical practice

An important consideration of this study is the delineation and intent to maintain ethical boundaries between educational practice and clinical or therapeutic intervention. Although Laughter Percussion demonstrates psychosocial benefit across contexts, it is important to distinguish the purpose, scope, and application of Laughter Percussion in order to maintain ethical integrity and professional responsibility.

Laughter Percussion is embedded in the learning environment of Kurrawang Primary School as a pedagogical tool to support attention, emotional balance and peer interaction, contributing to improved educational outcomes. The main goals of the Laughter Percussion model are to enable learning readiness, enhance student engagement and encourage inclusion in the classroom environment. There is no assessment, diagnosis or intervention for mental health conditions, and therefore remains within the principles of Educational Ethics and regular classroom practice. In contrast, the community-based program at the YMCA is placed within a clinical-oriented but non-clinical paradigm. The program is aimed at fostering wellbeing, stress management and social connection for participants. The outcomes may be similar to therapeutic processes but the program itself is not delivered in a formal clinical setting. There are no diagnostics, treatment plans or declarations of clinical efficacy. Rather, it is closer to the preventive and supportive elements of Community Mental Health. The intention is to enhance general well-being and resilience, not to treat particular conditions. It is important to retain this distinction for a number of reasons. Firstly, it prevents facilitators from practicing beyond their professional competence, particularly when participants may have varied or complex needs. Secondly, it safeguards participants against misunderstanding of the nature of the intervention, so that expectations are appropriate and clear. Thirdly, it complies with the ethical standards of educational and psychosocial support practice, and avoids the dangers of making unqualified or informal therapeutic claims. Most importantly, at no stage in this study are any claims made regarding diagnosis or treatment. Laughter Percussion is presented as a supportive, experiential, and participatory model that contributes to wellbeing and learning, but not as a substitute for professional clinical care. Where necessary, individuals requiring specialised support would need to be referred to qualified practitioners.

DISCUSSION

The evidence from the YMCA program and the Kurrawang Primary School intervention shows that Laughter Percussion can be effective in different but complementary settings if its purpose is clearly defined and ethically bounded. In the community-based setting its role in fostering wellbeing, stress regulation and social connection is in alignment with preventive approaches within Community Mental Health. In the school setting its contribution to engagement, emotional self-regulation and learning readiness is grounded in Educational Psychology.

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Comparing a long-term (12 month) community program to a short-term (6 week) school-based intervention provides an important perspective on the model's versatility. The YMCA program highlights the cumulative and lasting benefits of sustained participation, especially in improving social cohesion and emotional resilience over time. The school-based intervention shows that even a short, targeted intervention can lead to significant positive changes in classroom climate and student engagement.

This comparative perspective strengthens the argument for the model's applicability to different settings. Laughter Percussion does not rely on specialised infrastructure, formal diagnosis, or rigid protocols, making it adaptable to diverse environments. Its effectiveness appears to be less dependent on duration alone and more closely linked to consistency, facilitation quality, and contextual alignment with participant needs.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Despite its promising outcomes, this study is subject to several limitations that should be acknowledged. A primary limitation is the reliance on qualitative data, including practitioner observation and reflective documentation. While these methods provide depth and contextual richness, they may also introduce subjectivity and potential researcher bias. The absence of standardised psychometric measures limits the ability to quantify changes in emotional regulation, stress levels, or cognitive engagement with statistical precision. Further research should focus on these limitations through more robust and diverse methodological approaches. The use of mixed-methods designs combining qualitative insights with quantitative tools would enhance both validity and generalisability. The use of standardised instruments to measure stress, wellbeing, engagement and social connectedness could provide evidence for the reported outcomes. There is a strong need for Indigenous-led and participatory research approaches, especially in contexts involving Indigenous communities. Grounding future studies within Indigenous Research Methodologies would ensure that cultural knowledge systems are not only respected but actively inform the research design, implementation and interpretation. Longitudinal studies that extend beyond the current timeframes would add further robustness to understanding sustained impact.

CONCLUSION

Built on interdisciplinary frameworks such as Educational Psychology, human rights principles espoused by UNESCO, and Indigenous knowledge systems, Laughter Percussion presents as a flexible, ethical, and culturally responsive model. It combines rhythm, laughter, movement and group participation in a consistent approach that supports learning and wellbeing. Importantly, the model preserves a sharp ethical delineation between education and clinical practice, protecting its importance to professional standards and human rights considerations. Its ease of use, minimal resource requirements and cultural flexibility renders it especially relevant for wide-ranging and under-resourced settings including rural and Indigenous communities.

Fundamentally, Laughter Percussion offers more than a technique, it offers a human-centred approach to cultivating connection, inclusion and resilience. When applied with clarity of intent and cultural mindfulness, it presents significant promise as both a pedagogical innovation and community-based wellbeing practice.

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