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Parents' Motivations in Facilitating Children to Instruments'
Learning

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Declaration

I, *Lin Xiao Yan*, hereby confirm that this research report (entitled *Parents' Motivations in Facilitating Children to Instruments' Learning*) is my own work under the supervision of Professor Leung Bo Wah, and it has not been submitted previously for examination to any tertiary institution.

Signed _____

Date 8th May, 2017

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Parents' Motivations in Facilitating Children to Instruments' Learning

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Abstract

More and more parents in Hong Kong nowadays facilitate their children that are studying in primary schools to learn instruments for different purposes. This study investigated motivations and tendency of these parents and tried to find the connection between motivations and their background. Fifty parents completed the questionnaires about their motivations in facilitating their children to learn instruments in five different aspects including intrinsic and extrinsic values. Six interviews with parents of different background were conducted to have an insight into their attitudes and thoughts. Findings show that most participants pay more attention to intrinsic value and utility value rather than attainment value and cost. They also have a strong expectancy in children's instruments' learning. Hong Kong is a highly competitive city. Parents and schools always pay much attention to academic performance and music thus is always regarded as an 'useless' subject for the main purpose of it is for pleasure. Therefore, it is difficult for music teachers to promote the cultural value of music. Only a little students choose music as their future studies and most of them are with a rooted idea infused by their parents that music can help them being admitted to the universities or provide more job opportunities for in Hong Kong, getting a good job is much more important than understanding the culture. Compared with the active attitude and the number of parents who facilitate the instruments' learning in primary level, it is paradoxical and parents seem to always emphasize the utility value of music. It is not a bad condition as long as teachers can make a good use of this seemingly contradictory phenomenon. Teachers can help parents to recognize the real value of music by learning parents' motivations and thoughts in detail. Teachers will be able to have a better understanding of parents' expectations of teachers as well. At the same time, it will be easier to promote music in school education, which is the most important place to promote cultural education.

Key Words

parents, children, motivations, instruments' learning

Introduction

Nowadays, many primary schools' students in Hong Kong are asked to learn instruments by their parents. The motivations of parents are varied from intrinsic value to extrinsic ones (Dai & Schader, 2001). Moreover, with the development of projects "Instrumental Music Training Scheme" which is organized by Music Office and "One Student One Instrument scheme", there was an increasing number of students that were asked to learn instruments. The original purpose was good. It could help students to have an integrated development. However, it had a conformity effect which can be probably explained by the characteristics of Hong Kong that it is a highly competitive city (Leung & McPherson, 2011) and parents are afraid to lose at the starting line. Besides, it is believed that by learning instruments, students can enter a better school. Therefore, students were requested to study hard so that they may get elite school's offer. McPherson and Yu-Wu (2005) stated that students had great interests in music than other subjects. However, in nowadays, they seemed to hate learning instruments (Burak, 2014) and might hate music class in the future. This research is going to investigate this situation in Hong Kong about different motivations of parents who send their children to learn instruments regularly and their attitude towards five different aspects in motivation.

Problem Statement

Personal aspect

There are many researches about teachers' or students' motivations of music learning, which are important factors in the class (Angeline, 2014). However, to know about parents' motivations and why students learned instruments is also important for a

pre-service music teacher. Whether it was for their interests or they were forced to do can make a massive difference. Learning about students' thoughts and interests can help them to have a better understand about music and provide some ideas to teachers when preparing the music lessons (Jones & Skaggs, 2016).

Social aspect

Since the project “One Student One Instrument” is popular nowadays, a lot of parents facilitate their children to learn instruments. To learn the details about their motivations can improve the project as well as the development of students. If being forced to learn an instrument he/she does not like, students may hate music as a result. (MacIntyre, Potter & Burns, 2012). Some parents just followed others to send their children to learn instruments. To investigate parents' real motivations can also help them to rethink about it, make them pay more attention to their children's music learning (Liu, Bond, Guan, Cai, Sun, Yu & Wang, 2015). Considering of different families' background, the “Instrumental Music Training Scheme” project can provide much more chances for students to learn instruments. However, parents may think little of the project since it costs less money to learn instruments. It is hoped that after doing the interview, there will be less blind followers and more real thinkers in the society. They should take charge of their children's development. They cannot just randomly pick up an instrument and asked their children to become an expert.

Academic aspect

Choi, Tse, So, and Yeung (2005) did a research about parents' perception on instruments' learning and regard it important to do a further research about their reason on facilitating their children to learn instruments. After learning about the

benefits including intrinsic and extrinsic ones of music and parents' focuses, music teachers can think about their own focuses if they care about intrinsic or extrinsic benefits (Burak, 2014). Vagi (2014) believed that though most music teachers are supposed to focus on the intrinsic values on students, some of them still pay more attention to the utility benefits like their merit-pay. If teacher can apply the theoretical knowledge in the class to change the class from utilitarian to aesthetic, the quality of music class will be improved (Cogdill, 2015).

Practical aspect

Learning about parents' motivations can help teachers to have a better cooperation with them to teach students. There may be different understanding about the benefits of learning instruments from teachers and parents but it is important for them to reach an agreement with each other and work hard together to improve the development of students. Thus it become important to make good use of the benefits including intrinsic and extrinsic ones so that parents may willing to cooperate with the teachers. Students may get both benefits at the same time if there is a good cooperation. There is a qualitative research saying that parents' support is important to children (Froiland, 2015). Besides, parents' ideas will affect children's choices in many aspects (Schleef, 2000). Though this research was not about music, they may have some common points. It can be suggested that parents' supports play an important role in children when they are learning instruments. Parents can support students in both mentally and materially that can lower down children's pressure when learning instruments, which is helpful for his/her learning.

Literature Review

Expectancy-value theory

According to Campell and Scott-Kassner (2002), motivation is something that increase vitality of one's activity and different people may be motivated by different kinds of motivations like intrinsic or extrinsic motivations. This research is going to apply for the "Expectancy-Value theory" to analyze parents' motivations. This theory suggested that people will make decision according to one's expectancy and the value of the mission (Franken, 2007). People will be motivated by intrinsic incentives and extrinsic ones including expectancy, attainment value, utility value and its' cost (Wigfield & Eccles, 1999).

Motivations of parents in Hong Kong

It is said that a person will be motivated to do somethings because of individual's thoughts/emotions or money/honor (Ferguson, 2000). Parents in Hong Kong seem to be highly motivated to facilitate their children to instruments' learning (Leung & McPherson, 2011). It is interesting that though the parents from other countries like U.S.A also indicate that music makes people smarter, rarely of them will request their children to learn instruments, like in Hong Kong, (Sue & Okazaki, 1990). Apart from intelligence, parents regard music as a key to get more job opportunities (Sue & Okazaki, 1990). It seems that most of the parents in Hong Kong in nowadays pay much more attention to extrinsic benefits than intrinsic benefits. On the other hand, some researchers believed that some of them still regard the intrinsic benefits as the most important motivation. Motivations of parents are also important for students as their choices will be influenced by their parents (Leung & McPherson, 2010).

Factors considered by parents in Hong Kong

Many parents believe that only talented person can learn the instruments successfully. Many parents ask their children to learn the instrument just because they believed their kids have a talent on it (Lowe, 2010). But what is the definition of gifted and even the statement is right or not are unknown. The relative point is that “practice makes perfect”. So, Stewart and Williamon (2008) believed that which one is the fact and which one will the parents choose to believe and how would those thoughts influence parents’ motivation is important to students. At the same time, choosing what kinds of instruments to learn is also unpredictable. How the parents are being influenced, what elements will they consider, whose opinion will they listen to are all the factors that will influence their children to learn music.

Stimulate intelligent development

Whether learning music will help children develop intelligence is still being discussed by many experts. Steele (2005) mentioned about some opposite opinions on the statements like “Mozart Effective” and he believed that factors were not enough when investigating the research. Besides, many researches agreed that music is essential in child’s growing process but in different aspects. One study showed that music may train one’s brain even if in the short-term (Stewart, Henson Kame, Walsh, Turner and Frith, 2003). Others believed that learning music will improve the school performance since their abilities will be trained when learning instruments (Wetter, Koerner & Schwaninger, 2009). Summa-Chadwick (2009) investigated the relationship between music and neuroscience and got a positive result. On the other hand, some believed that music only has the long-term effect and may influence students’ verbal memory, IQ as well as school performance (Ho, Cheung & Chan, 2003; Schellenberg, 2006).

Bilhartz, Bruhn and Olson (2000) believed that music did improve students' development both in music and non-music parts no matter in short-term or long-term training. Hallam (2010) did a research claiming that learning music has its own benefits including intrinsic and extrinsic ones and can develop young people in many aspects. No matter what statements have been proofed, parents in Hong Kong just keep sending their children to learn instruments.

Research questions

It is hypothesized that some parents facilitate their children to learn instruments because of the “Mozart Effect” and want their children to be smarter (Schellenberg, 2005). They believe that learning instruments can help developing children's intelligence. Some parents want to improve children's perseverance. But more children were sent to learn instruments just for a better school or better school performance (McPherson & Yu-Wu, 2005). Others just blindly follow someone or want their children to accomplish their own dream that they did not complete when they were young. Since it is much harder to learn the instrument they like in such ages, they may prefer to pin their hope on their children (Taylor & Hallam, 2008). However, many parents think little of the instruments study than other subjects and sometime may ask their children pay less efforts on music to save time for major subjects like English or Mathematics study (McPherson & Yu-Wu, 2005). They on the one hand hoping that learning instruments can enhance their kids' intelligence but on the other hand regarding music as a useless subject that may waste their kids' time (Liu, Bond, Guan, Cai, Sun, Yu & Wang, 2015). Therefore, it is uncertain that if parents will support students mentally and materially to learn instruments in any time. To learn about the motivations, music teacher can understand the current situation and parents'

expectations so as to better cooperate with parents to help students on their study. To investigate the motivations can also help the teachers to know clearly about parents' thoughts and may also help them to realize the importance of music as a subject in school.

Overall, this project was going to investigate: (1) the main motivation of parents' attitude towards instruments' learning and (2) the relationship between motivation and parents' background including gender, age, income and educational level, which are two main research questions in this paper.

Methodology

In this study, mixed methods research were applied in it which combined the way of qualitative and quantitative researches as well as their advantages (Bergman, 2008).

Quantitative research

A closed-questions questionnaire which is easier to code when analyzing the data (Wisker, 2009) was sent to parents and fifty parents have responded. The questionnaire was divided into six different aspects according to the "Expectancy-Value theory". The first part is the demographic information including participants' gender, age group, family income and their educational level. From the second part to the sixth part, participants were asked to indicate their perception of five elements from the theory (intrinsic, expectancy, attainment value, utility value and cost) through some statements from strongly disagree to strongly agree by using number 1 to 7 according to the 'Semantic differential scale' so that to have a more specific attitude of participants (Osgood, 1964). The questionnaire was designed based on its validity and reliability to make sure the effectiveness and reliability of the results, which can lead to a clear connection between motivations and background

(Berg & Latin, 2004). Before sending the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted to exam the reliability of the questions. Three students were asked to complete the questionnaire and provide advice. One student suggested to change the range of family income while other two students appreciated the original ones. Thus the questionnaire had not been changed. The Cronbach Alpha reliability was 0.78 (>0.5), which means it is reliable.

Qualitative research

Six representative parents from different background were asked to participate a semi-structured interview about their motivations facilitating their children to learn instruments. Wisker (2009) believed that the semi-structured open-ended interviews combine the advantages of the set questions and divergence so that the responses are easy to classified and some unconsidered ideas might be brought out. Some deeper questions were asked for in-depth data based on the Expectancy-value theory (Wigfield & Eccles, 1999). Questions from five different aspects were asked including reasons of facilitating instruments' learning; considering factors and expecting benefits when learning instruments; children's attitude about learning instruments; whether they have learned instruments and their attitude about it; the usefulness of learning instruments in society. Participants were also asked to share their experiences or stories to explore their attitude since some of them kept repeating similar answers, which would not revealing their real motivations if only by set questions. All interviews were audio-recorded and parents were told that all the information would be used for academic purpose only. Their personal information would be anonymous to protect their privacy.

After finishing the questionnaires and interviews, the data was collected and clarified into different parts for further comparison and analysis. Parents' motivations were compared by different demographic information. So conclusions can be drawn if there are some common points. There may have some brief ideas about parents' different motivations in learning instruments. From these, parents might learn the right attitudes and students can learn instruments with much more pleasure.

Research limitations

This research was not easy to get enough candidates since some people would refuse to express his real thoughts to strangers. Some parents did not want to express their real motivations due to the face. Thus, the questions of questionnaire and interview were important to get their real thoughts. Considering the method of the research, the result might not be representative but could bring out some valuable thoughts. The motivation of parents is mostly about intrinsic and utility value. It is paradoxical but might suit the situation in Hong Kong, a competitive and stressful society. The causes of the results will be discussed.

Results

Quantitative research analysis

Descriptive statistics

Participants included 15 males (30%) and 35 females (70%). The number of main age group (36-45) was 24 (48%), which was in close proximity to half of totality. The number of group 'older than 46' was 11 (22%), which was four less than people under 36. The family income was divided into three group including less than \$10000 (8%), \$10001-\$20000 (34%) and more than \$20000 (58%). Only two out of fifty (4%) had a

master degree or above while post-secondary is 42%. The majority group was secondary or below, containing 27 participants (54%).

Inferential statistic

The following table shows the means (standard deviation), medians and modes of five values. Five histograms provide a more intuitive results by transforming number to figure which may state some tendency among investigated parents.

Table 1. Descriptive statistic of five values.

	N	Mean(SD)	Median	Mode
Intrinsic value	50	5.225 (.989)	5.250	5.00
Expectancy	50	4.875 (1.008)	5.000	5.00
Attainment value	50	4.485 (1.000)	4.500	4.50
Utility value	50	5.285 (.946)	5.500	5.75
Cost	50	4.420 (.840)	4.500	4.50

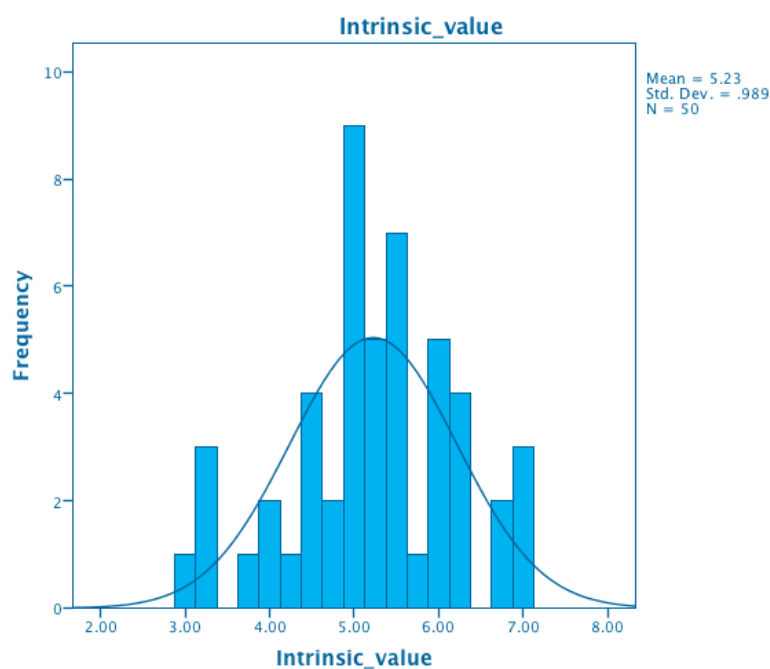


Figure 1 Descriptive statistic of Intrinsic value

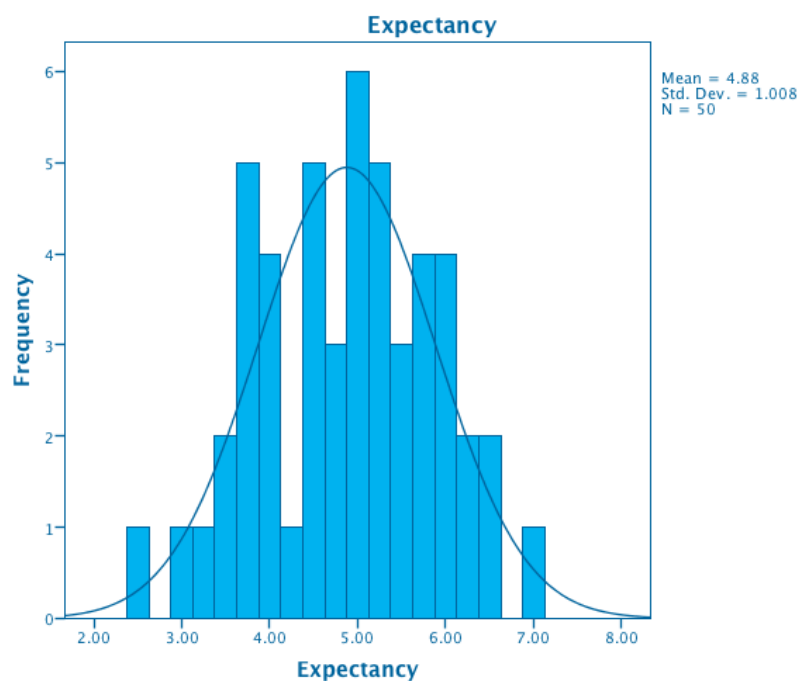


Figure 2 Descriptive statistic of Expectancy

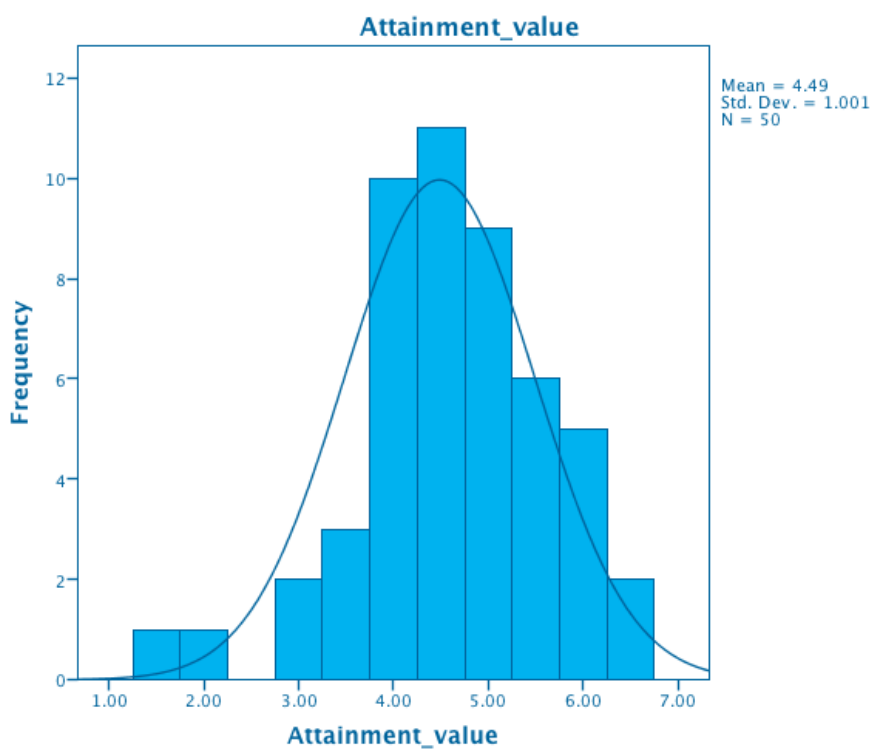


Figure 3 Descriptive statistic of Attainment value

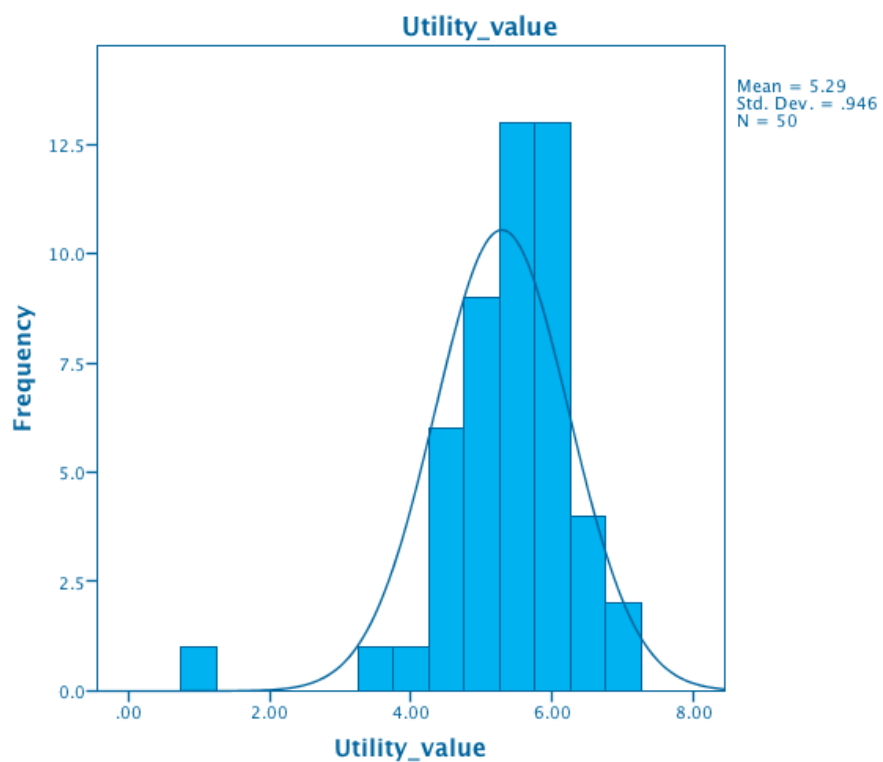


Figure 4 Descriptive statistic of Utility value

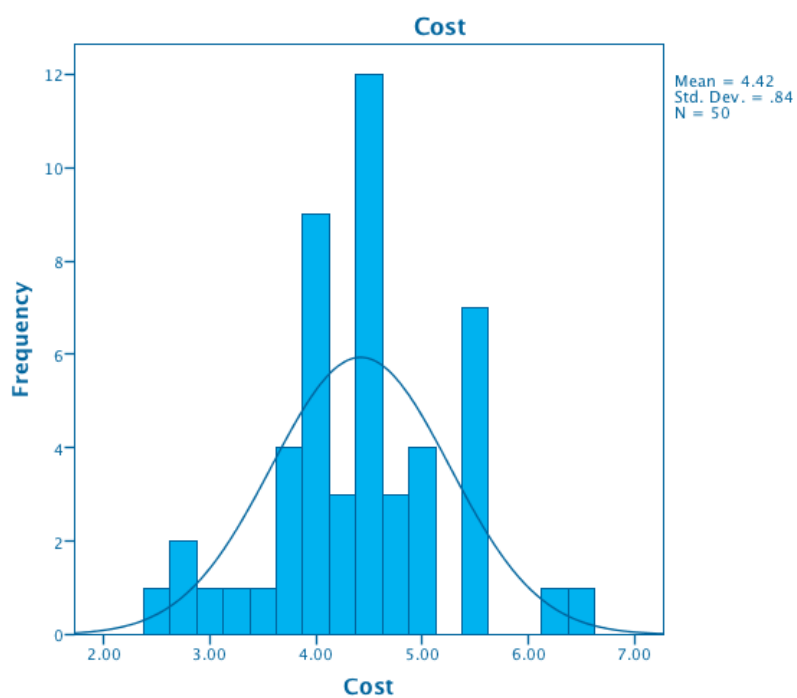


Figure 5 Descriptive statistic of Cost

According to table 1, as 4 is the middle point in the scale, it can be deduced that parents had positive attitude among five values for all the means, medians and modes of them exceeds 4. Compared with each other, intrinsic value and utility value seemed to had a higher status among parents than the rest. The number of utility value was the highest in all three parts and mostly concentrated at number six according to Figure 4. The mean of expectancy is lower while its mode is equal to intrinsic value's. It can be recognized that its statistic had a wider distribution. With the table and figures, it could be concluded that parents had a high motivation in instruments' learning while they paid more attention to utility and intrinsic value rather than the cost and children's attainment. Though the number of participants were far from enough, some conclusion could be drawn to investigate parents' motivations in a way.

To investigate the date more intensively, one-way ANOVA had also been used to analyze the possible connection between five different aspects of motivation (intrinsic value, expectancy, attainment value, utility value and cost) and background (gender, age group, family income and educational level).

According to table 2, all of parents' gender, family income and educational level have no significant difference with motivations. In contrast, the age is the only factor that has significant difference with intrinsic value, expectancy and attainment value. The age group was divided into three group. Parents who are older than or equal to 46 years old held a very positive attitude in intrinsic value. Compared with attainment value, they also had a high motivation about expectancy. Parents under 35 years old held an average attitude towards three values while parents between 36 to 45 had a lowest motivation in all three parts.

Table 2. Results of One-way ANOVA.

Variables	Gender (1=male, 2=female)			Age Group (1= \leq 35, 2=36-45, 3= \geq 46)			Family Income (1= \leq \$10000, 2=\$10001-\$20000, 3= $>$ \$20000)			Educational Level (1=secondary or below, 2=post-secondary, 3=master degree or above)		
	n	M	<i>p</i>	n	M	<i>p</i>	n	M	<i>p</i>	n	M	<i>p</i>
Intrinsic value	1=15	5.483		1=15	5.367		1=4	5.250		1=27	5.232	
	2=35	5.114		2=24	4.844		2=17	5.574		2=21	5.107	
				3=11	5.864		3=29	5.017		3=2	6.375	
	Total	5.225	.230	Total	5.225	.012*	Total	5.225	.185	Total	5.225	.226
Expectancy	1=15	5.017		1=15	5.133		1=4	5.125		1=27	4.796	
	2=35	4.814		2=24	4.510		2=17	5.013		2=21	4.857	
				3=11	5.318		3=29	4.759		3=2	6.125	
	Total	4.875	.521	Total	4.875	.040*	Total	4.875	.628	Total	4.875	.200
Attainment value	1=15	4.733		1=15	5.017		1=4	4.438		1=27	4.324	
	2=35	4.379		2=24	4.156		2=17	4.677		2=21	4.560	
				3=11	4.477		3=29	4.379		3=2	5.875	
	Total	4.485	.255	Total	4.485	.029*	Total	4.485	.630	Total	4.485	.095
Utility value	1=15	5.333		1=15	5.350		1=4	5.813		1=27	5.398	
	2=35	5.264		2=24	5.135		2=17	5.206		2=21	5.143	
				3=11	5.523		3=29	5.259		3=2	5.250	
	Total	5.285	.816	Total	5.285	.515	Total	5.285	.510	Total	5.285	.659
Cost	1=15	4.383		1=15	4.650		1=4	4.500		1=27	4.389	
	2=35	4.436		2=24	4.208		2=17	4.147		2=21	4.440	
				3=11	4.568		3=29	4.569		3=2	4.625	
	Total	4.420	.842	Total	4.420	.227	Total	4.420	.258	Total	4.420	.922

* $p < .05$

This diversity might be explained by different understanding of music since people from different age group might have diverse interpretations in many things and thus they would have different expectations on their children.

Qualitative research analysis

Six parents shared their attitude and thoughts according to their own situation. Ideas varied from one to another. Findings are presented from five parts: (1) the purpose of facilitating children to learn instruments; (2) whether they believe that learning instruments will stimulate intelligence; (3) whether they would meddle children's practicing hours; (4) if the decision of facilitating instruments' learning would be

affected by the experience of learning/not learning instruments and (5) do children really have interests in learning instruments. Their thoughts would be quoted with a letter representing the interviewees.

The purpose of facilitating children to learn instruments

The original purpose of music is to make people happy (Wade, 2013). Some parents mentioned about child's future and they believed that music can enlighten people. Some of the purposes were intrinsic, others were utility value and attainment value. Parent A wished "there will be at least one instrument that can accompany my children's growth and they can still play the instrument after they grow up."

Parents stated that people are stressful in nowadays and hoping music can help their children to relax. Parent B hoped her children "can express their feelings and release tension by playing music because people are having a lot of pressure in life nowadays."

Another scholar believed music enhance generic ability (Chui & Wong, 2016). Parent E paid attention to "build the artistic accomplishment" and parent F focuses on "mastering a variety of talent".

Believe that learning instruments will stimulate intelligence or not

According to Hallam (2010), music can develop young people in many aspects. Some parents believed music can promote the intellectual development. Moreover, there was one parent who believed in it and regarded it as the reason to facilitate her child to learn instrument. Parent F verified that "this is one of the reasons why I facilitated my daughter to learn instruments."

On the contrary, some parents thought music can help children develop some abilities. Parent D believe that “learning instruments will improve the ability of study”. Others believed that “It can train the concentration (parent A).” “It may be helpful to intellectual development. But I think it is more helpful to cultivate their emotional quotient (parent B).”

Regarding their ideas, it seems that not every parent believe music can make people smarter. However, it is clear that each parent has expectation on children’s development after learning music including intelligence or their characteristics.

Whether meddle children’s practicing hours

It is important for children to practice instrument if they want to master it. However, parents would pay less attention to it because of different reasons. Parent B stated that “I meddled and prompted them to practice the piano because of teacher’s requirement. But I did not prompt them to practice the violin”

There was one parent believed that after child understand the importance of practice, there was no need to meddle the practicing hours: “After that she knew that practice hard can overcome the difficulty and I did not meddle her.”

Some parents seemed to know the importance of practice, but would not execute the plan. Parent D claimed that she would “planned the practice time for child but always failed to execute”. Parent F stated that “No but I will find someone to accompanied with her and correct her problems. It depends. If there is an exam, I would ask the teacher come as many as possible”.

On the other side, as the only one who have learned instruments, parent A emphasized on practice: “They might consider twice are enough but it was not in parents’ and teachers’ opinions.”

According to the experience of learning/not learning instruments

As mentioned above, there was only one interviewee have learned instrument. However, there was one parent thought little of the experience. Others on the contrary believed that it would play an important role when they facilitate children to learn instruments. Parent A wanted her children to have fun like she did when learning instrument because she “got much fun when learning the piano. I want to inherit this kind of experiences so that they will feel fun when they are able to play the music they like”.

And parent C wanted them to complete her own ideals of learning instrument: “I have a stronger willing to facilitate my children to learn instruments because I have not in my childhood.”

Do children have interests

When begin to learn instruments, some parents would ask children’s interests while others did not. It is important to know whether children like the instrument since it is easier to lose interests or give up if they do not like the instrument. Therefore, talking with children can learn their interest in a way and might reduce the possibility of abandon. Some parents would also focus on some realistic factors including the instruments price or teaching resources. Parent A would “considered their interests and resources”. Parent E would “considered the size of the instrument and child’s preference. The final result was decided by both of us”.

It was mentioned by interviewees that children may lose interest when lack of fulfillments. It might be explained why most children would like to give up at the beginning level. Some instruments are really hard to master the basic skills. If there was no encouragement or force at that time, children would likely to lose

self-confidence and thus lose interests. It is the key point as many children gave up learning instrument and many parents did not know what to do. Knowing about this idea, parents would be able to think of some ways which can give children fulfillment. Parent D believed that “child’s interests will be deducted by hard practice and boring learning.” Parent E stated that her son lost interest because “he was unfulfilled”. Parent F proofed that children “felt fulfillment after competition or performance.”

Discussion

Misunderstanding of music

Though there are plenty of research indicated that learning music has positive influence on children, the real effect of music on children’s development has not been proofed. According to the interview, many parents facilitate children to learn music for many reasons except for leisure or cultural inheritance. Besides, parents did not know much about music or instruments’ learning while expecting their children can become an expert. They did not want to spend much time on practicing and some of them believed that would waste children’s studying time. However, with the little understanding of instruments’ learning, parents still seem to believe that music has countless advantages on their development including intrinsic and extrinsic ones (Choi, Tse, So, & Yeung, 2005).

Besides, parents would be affected by contemporaries (Chen & Wong, 2014). On the one hand, if their friends talked about the benefits of instruments’ learning, most of them would not doubt the validity and started thinking about facilitating their children to learn some instruments. On the other hand, Parents would felt nervous when others send their children to learn new things while they do not. They would probably send

children to learn the same thing as soon as possible without learning any details of the thing.

Furthermore, they get the priorities mixed up. According to the research, parents regard intrinsic value as one of the most important factors when learning instruments. It is true that music may help people relax in some way (Schippers, 2010). However, since it is believed that students can get into an elite school or a good company by learning instruments, many parents spend much in instruments' learning for utility purposes but at the same time, they overlooked the position of music among school subjects since music has little exam (Leung & McPherson, 2010).

Paying attention to utility

The results of questionnaire and interview had same idea that parents were mostly thinking of intrinsic value and utility value. In the interview, though parents did not talk about their motivations, it could be elicited from their examples and stories. This phenomenon might be explained by the special historical reasons and current social situation of Hong Kong.

From the results it can be seen that many parents are older than 35, which means that they were born in or before 1980s and has experienced the development of Hong Kong at that time. As the development of economy in 1980s, many talents came to Hong Kong and got a good job. The government at the same time pay more and more attention to talent cultivation. Meanwhile, many workers provided cheap labour without any safeguard (Liu, 1987). Therefore, they would be the first to be affected when there were economic crises. However, by learning professional knowledge, they might change their position (Lui, 2014). They can become rich through study. Therefore, they may have a belief that learning can make one's life better. Only if

getting into the university, one can have a better job in the future. Thus, it is easy to understand why parents are highly motivated in facilitating instruments' learning if they believe that it can help their children to get into a university.

Hong Kong is a score-center society which reserve the characteristics of traditional China (Leung & McPherson, 2011). Nowadays, as more and more students have the opportunities to get into schools, people has to leave no means untried for being admitted to schools because of the large population and limited resources. Though children might be too young to understand the phenomenon, their parents are much more nervous for all parents want their children have a better future life. Moreover, a student with a bad performance will make parents feel lose face, which is the most important thing to some parents in Hong Kong (Chui & Wong, 2016). Therefore, those parents would request their children to perform well for their face but not for children. Sometimes, they may ignore the needs of their children and ask them to fulfill their own false pride.

Conclusion

Although there were many researches about music or instruments' learning, there is little research that investigate on parents' perspective. However, the role of parents is just as important as teachers and students. Firstly, they offer material and mental support to their children when learning instruments. Secondly, their opinions are can help students to improve their development in comparison with others (McPherson & Yu-Wu, 2005). What's more, knowing parents' motivations can have a clearer idea about their expectations on students and teachers thus may improve the quality of the class. Last but not least, investigating the impact of parents' motivations on children

can help them build up a better relationship with each other and help them better developed.

There is a similar research about parents' perception of benefits of music to their children also investigated the motivation of parents and the results of the study shows that they pay more attention to cognitive and effective development as well as children's interests, which sounds close to the results of this research.

This research showed that parents in Hong Kong have a positive attitude towards instruments' learning in all five motivation values. Parents are highly motivated to facilitate their children to learn instrument and the most popular factors are utility ones. Parents claimed to pay equal attention to intrinsic values but some parents would only consider his/her own opinion and ignore children's thoughts when facilitating them to learn instrument. Furthermore, parents' attitude towards different values were according to their age. Different age group held a significant different attitude towards intrinsic value, expectancy and attainment value. They may ask their children to learn instruments for different reasons. These phenomena may because of the historical reasons and the development of Hong Kong, that parents may have a specific idea about getting into the universities and companies.

Recommendations

Learning instruments do help students' development in many aspects and the purpose of this research is not to stop children learning instruments. However, the most important thing is to know about the real value of music as well as students' real thoughts. As mentioned above, Hong Kong is a competitive society and there is no way to avoid it or change it in a short period. Nevertheless, since the impact from parents to children's learning beliefs are significant (Chen & Wong, 2014), parents

should set a good example so that children may learn from it. Parents should talk with children to learn about their feelings and try to regard the extrinsic values as auxiliary means.

Besides, it is necessary for parents to be educated because parents are the first teacher of their children and the behaviour of children would be affected by their parents in a large extent (Watkins, 1995). The government may advertise the importance of being educated and teach some basic theory about educating children by media including television, radio and newspaper. Society institutions including Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions, Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union and universities also can organize different kinds of activities like workshops or lectures to teach parents about children education. It is important for parents to learn about the right way to educate their children as well as to pay less attention to utility value.

A final and equally important point is that parents and teachers should have a consensus and work together so that children may grow up healthier both mentally and physically. It is hoped that parents and teachers may think carefully about the real purpose on facilitating children to learn instruments because teachers and parents may influence children's learning motivation. With the development of the society, people should pay more attention to intrinsic part of the culture. As for teachers, after knowing about parents' motivation, forms or content might be adjusted for a higher quality of the class.

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Appendices

Appendix 1-Interview transcript 1

Name of interviewee: A

Interviewer: Lin Xiao Yan(M)

M: Why do you facilitate your child to learn instrument?

A: **I wish there will be at least one instrument that can accompany my children's growth and they can still play the instrument after they grow up.**

M: What elements will you consider when you facilitate your child to learn instrument? Will you be influenced by others?

A: **I considered their interests and resources.** I already have the piano so I do not need to buy an extra one. I will not be influenced by others. Children will be influenced by mother though.

M: Do you think talent or effort is more important when learning instrument?

A: They are both important. But effort is the essential one which can lead to success.

M: What benefit do you expect that will bring to your child after learning instrument?

A: My original intention is they can have music accompanied. It will be the benefit if they can have fun instead of get some awards or have performances.

M: Do you believe that learning instrument will promote intellectual development?

A: I do not believe it will improve mental development, but **it can train the concentration.**

M: Do you worry about your child's study in school after learning instrument?

A: I think it will influence their study because learning instruments need time for practice. At the same time, the workload at school is heavy as well as tests, dictation, etc. Practice will reduce their study time.

M: Will you meddle your child's practicing hours of instrument?

A: I meddle their practice time because their awareness of the requirement and time are weak. **They might consider twice are enough but it was not in parents' and teachers' opinions.** Therefore, I required the stipulated number or time for them to practice.

M: Have you ever learned instrument? Do you think this kind of experience will influence your decision about letting your child to learn instrument?

A: I have learned the instruments and I believe it affected the decision. **I got much fun when learning the piano.** I played the piano to accompanied their singing before or I played some nursery rhyme they liked. **I want to inherit this kind of experiences so that they will feel fun when they are able to play the music they like.**

M: Do you think it important to learn instrument nowadays? In what aspects is it reflected?

A: It does not have many utility value for now. it is mainly about learning happily.

M: Does he/she like learning instrument? How did your child become interested in learning instrument?

A: They like the instruments. Before learning, they kept touching the keys of the piano. They wanted to learn the instrument because of mother's demonstration. But They soon lost interest at the beginning. Before competitions and grading tests, they practiced more and felt fun. They improved mastery of the instrument and increase confidence. They found it interesting when they were able to control one thing.

Appendix 2-Interview transcript 2

Name of interviewee: B

Interviewer: Lin Xiao Yan(M)

M: Why do you facilitate your child to learn instrument?

B: **I hope they can express their feelings and release tension by playing music because I think people have a lot of pressure in life nowadays.** I want my children have ways to enliven their life so I facilitated them to learn instruments.

M: What elements will you consider when you facilitate your child to learn instrument? Will you be influenced by others?

B: The primary factor is parents' opinion. Besides, we got a piano by chance and we have friend living in the same housing estate who can teach piano. So we facilitated them to learn the piano.

M: Do you think talent or effort is more important when learning instrument?

B: I think they are both important but effort is relatively more important.

M: What elements will you consider when choosing instrument? Will you consider your child's opinions?

B: Two children were interested in violin at the same time so they attend the school instruments class. I think one instrument is enough but their father wanted to meet their learning spirit.

M: What benefit do you expect that will bring to your child after learning instrument?

B: The most important thing is to help them express depression or have fun by singing or playing the instruments.

M: Do you believe that learning instrument will promote intellectual development?

B: **It may be helpful to intellectual development. But I think it is more helpful to cultivate their emotional quotient.**

M: Do you worry about your child's study in school after learning instrument?

B: It has positive influence because the experience that they get progress by learning one thing can be used on other activities like reading or studying.

M: Will you meddle your child's practicing hours of instrument?

B: I meddled and prompted them to practice the piano because of teacher's requirement. But I did not prompt them to practice the violin.

M: Have you ever learned instrument? Do you think this kind of experience will influence your decision about letting your child to learn instrument?

B: I have not learned any instrument and was regret about that. I believe it has impact on my decision about facilitating my children to learn instruments.

M: Do you think it important to learn instrument nowadays? In what aspects is it reflected?

B: I think it will help them a lot in their future life. It can help them stabilize their emotions. Music is a part of life and it is another language.

M: Does he/she like learning instrument? How did your child become interested in learning instrument?

B: They like using instruments to play songs they like and they would ask teacher to teach songs they are interested in

Appendix 3-Interview transcript 3

Name of interviewee: C

Interviewer: Lin Xiao Yan(M)

M: Why do you facilitate your child to learn instrument?

C: I think music is essential in life. Learning instruments as a child can develop their musical interests, build their willpower and cultivate their temperament.

M: What elements will you consider when you facilitate your child to learn instrument? Will you be influenced by others?

C: I considered their interests, the time and the venue

M: Do you think talent or effort is more important when learning instrument?

C: I think effort is more important

M: What elements will you consider when choosing instrument? Will you consider your child's opinions? Please give the example.

C: I let them get in touch with songs played by different instruments and asked them to choose. Parents' opinions also influenced their choices. I prefer Chinese music so I always played Chinese music at home. I also talked about Chinese music to guide them like praising the sound of GuZheng. I believe it may had a leavening influence.

M: What benefit do you expect that will bring to your child after learning instrument?

C: The most important benefit is to stimulate the spiritual and intelligent development. Second is to develop their interests. Learning instruments as a child will build up the basis of music, they will be easier to explore their potential in the future.

M: Do you believe that learning instrument will promote intellectual development?

C: I believe in it.

M: Do you worry about your child's study in school after learning instrument?

C: I do not worry about it. I believe she can balance two sides.

M: Will you meddle your child's practicing hours of instrument?

C: When my daughter began to learn the instrument, she felt difficult to play because her fingers were too short to play and she wanted to give up. I persuaded her to insist

so I set the practice time for her. **After that she knew that practice hard can overcome the difficulty and I did not meddle her.**

M: Have you ever learned instrument? Do you think this kind of experience will influence your decision about letting your child to learn instrument?

C: I have not. **I have a stronger willing to facilitate my children to learn instruments because I have not in my childhood.**

M: Do you think it important to learn instrument nowadays? In what aspects is it reflected?

C: I think learning instruments as a child is benefit to the development of spirit and intelligence. It is thus a long-term personal development. They are required to have tentacle of music even when they are doing a simple project since it is multi-agent development society nowadays.

M: Does he/she like learning instrument? How did your child become interested in learning instrument? Please give some examples.

C: Children have interests on learning instruments. They learn how to play Gu Zheng or Erhu actively. After they learned a new song or were able to play some difficult parts from the composition, they performed to family. They also study ways to play different keys by their own.

Appendix 4-Interview transcript 4

Name of interviewee: D

Interviewer: Lin Xiao Yan(M)

M: Why do you facilitate your child to learn instrument?

D: I facilitate my child to learn instrument to make her adult life colorful. She will be able to involve in any gathering.

M: What elements will you consider when you facilitate your child to learn instrument? Will you be influenced by others?

D: I considered child's interests. I will not be influenced by others

M: Do you think talent or effort is more important when learning instrument?

D: I believe that talent has little to do with learning. Children should study hard.

M: What elements will you consider when choosing instrument? Will you consider your child's opinions?

D: It is all about child's wishes.

M: What benefit do you expect that will bring to your child after learning instrument?

D: I hope that learning instrument will increase enjoyment of life and self-confidence

M: Do you believe that learning instrument will promote intellectual development?

D: **I think learning instruments will improve the ability of study.**

M: Do you worry about your child's study in school after learning instrument?

D: I do not think learning instrument will affect the study in school because I do not valued score.

M: Will you meddle your child's practicing hours of instrument?

D: **I planned the practice time for child but always failed to execute.**

M: Have you ever learned instrument? Do you think this kind of experience will influence your decision about letting your child to learn instrument?

D: I have not learned instrument so I want her to learn. I believe that it would be a great help to children if parents can play instruments.

M: Do you think it important to learn instrument nowadays? In what aspects is it reflected?

D: I think there is too much educational resources for children in nowadays. All parents are trying to provide different types of resources as much as possible because they worried about losing at the starting line. After they graduate from the university, they are going to face stronger competitors. Thus, it is good for the development of the society.

M: Does he/she like learning instrument? How did your child become interested in learning instrument?

D: She has little interest in instruments. She would be more interested after learning some complete compositions. Before learning the instrument, she admired people in the TV or in real life who can play instruments and wanted to try. On the beginning, she had interests but wanted to give up after a time. **I believe that child's interests will be deducted by hard practice and boring learning**

Appendix 5-Interview transcript 5

Name of interviewee: E

Interviewer: Lin Xiao Yan(M)

M: Why do you facilitate your child to learn instrument?

E: **I want them to build the artistic accomplishment**

M: What elements will you consider when you facilitate your child to learn instrument? Will you be influenced by others?

E: I considered child's preference; I will not be influenced by others

M: Do you think talent or effort is more important when learning instrument?

E: I think talent is much more important.

M: What elements will you consider when choosing instrument? Will you consider your child's opinions?

E: **I considered the size of the instrument and child's preference. The final result was decided by both of us**

M: What benefit do you expect that will bring to your child after learning instrument?

E: I want her to cultivate the temperament and build endurance

M: Do you believe that learning instrument will promote intellectual development?

E: I do not believe it

M: Do you worry about your child's study in school after learning instrument?

E: I do not worry about it.

M: Will you meddle your child's practicing hours of instrument?

E: Yes, I wanted to help her to build endurance

M: Have you ever learned instrument? Do you think this kind of experience will influence your decision about letting your child to learn instrument?

E: I have not learned but I think it has no influence.

M: Do you think it important to learn instrument nowadays? In what aspects is it reflected?

E: Not useful. Just for child's self-improvement

M: Does he/she like learning instrument? How did your child become interested in learning instrument?

E: He was interested at the beginning. He has learned the violin for three years and **he recently said he lost interest because he was unfulfilled.**

Appendix 6-Interview transcript 6

Name of interviewee: F

Interviewer: Lin Xiao Yan(M)

M: Why do you facilitate your child to learn instrument?

F: **I want her to master a variety of talent.**

M: What elements will you consider when you facilitate your child to learn instrument? Will you be influenced by others?

F: I considered that whether the instruments can help my daughter when she come to secondary school. I will not be influenced by others.

M: Do you think talent or effort is more important when learning instrument?

F: I think they are both very important.

M: What elements will you consider when choosing instrument? Will you consider your child's opinions?

F: I considered the price of the instrument and instrumental teachers. I asked my child if she like this instrument.

M: What benefit do you expect that will bring to your child after learning instrument?

F: I hope that learning instruments give my child's a great help when she come to university.

M: Do you believe that learning instrument will promote intellectual development?

F: **Yes, this is one of the reasons why I facilitated my daughter to learn instruments**

M: Do you worry about your child's study in school after learning instrument?

F: No, because she does not have time to practice without teachers.

M: Will you meddle your child's practicing hours of instrument?

F: **No but I will find someone to accompanied with her and correct her problems.**

M: what is the frequency?

F: **It depends. If there is an exam, I would ask the teacher come as many as possible.**

M: Have you ever learned instrument? Do you think this kind of experience will influence your decision about letting your child to learn instrument?

F: No, so I want my child to learn different kinds of instruments as many as possible.

M: Do you think it important to learn instrument nowadays? In what aspects is it reflected?

F: It is useful since many places need a musical certificate.

M: Does he/she like learning instrument? How did your child become interested in learning instrument?

F: **She felt fulfillment after competition or performance.** She learned the harp by chance. She showed her interests after she saw the instrument so we decided to learn that.

Appendix 7-Questionnaire


Questionnaire of Parents' Motivations in Facilitating Children to
Instruments' Learning
關於家長促進兒童學習樂器的動機問卷調查

Dear Parents, thank you for participating in this survey. This research is going to study the motivations of parents who facilitate their children to learn instruments. The data will be collected anonymously. All the information will be maintained confidentially. The results will be only used for academic research. Thank you again for fill out the questionnaire and provide useful information to help the research process smoothly.

親愛的家長：您好！感謝您協助填寫此問卷。此項研究的目的是了解家長促進兒童學習樂器的動機。此問卷將會以不記名方式填寫，所有資料將會保密，問卷結果僅供學術研究，不會作其他用途。再次感謝您利用寶貴的時間填寫此份問卷，使本研究得以順利進行。

Part 1: Demographic Information

第一部分：個人資料

Please circle  the most appropriate response
請圈出最合適的選項

1. Gender 性別: a) male 男 b) female 女
2. Age group 年齡組別: a) ≤35 b) 36-45 c) ≥ 46
3. Family income/month(HKD) 家庭每月收入(港幣):
a) ≤10000 b) 10001-20000 c) >20000
4. Educational Level 教育程度:
a) Secondary or below 中學或以下 b) Post-secondary 大專學歷
c) master degree or above 碩士或以上

Part 2

第二部分

The following questions ask about your motivations and attitudes about the instruments' learning. Use the scale below to answer the questions. Find the number between 1 and 7 that best describes you.

以下的問題將會詢問您關於樂器學習的動機及態度。請使用下方的量表在 1 至 7 中間圈出最符合您的數字。

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Very true
true of me						of me
完全不符合我						完全符合我

5. I think my child is interested in learning instrument.
我認為我的小孩對於學樂器很感興趣。 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. I think my child enjoys learning instrument.
我認為我的小孩很享受學樂器的過程。 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. I think my child likes playing instrument.
我認為我的小孩很喜歡彈奏樂器。 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. I think my child feels happy after learning instrument.
我認為我的小孩在學習樂器之後會感到快樂。 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. I believe that my child has a strong confidence to act well in school's music lessons.
我認為我的小孩有信心在學校音樂堂表現出色。 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. I believe that my child has a strong confidence to learn an instrument.
我認為我的小孩有信心能學好一種樂器。 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. I believe that my child has a strong confidence to be more outstanding than other children in learning instrument.
我認為我的小孩有信心在學習樂器方面比其他小朋友表現的更出色。 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. I believe that my child has a strong confidence to show his/her ability by learning instrument.
我認為我的小孩有信心透過學習樂器展示他的能力。 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. I think it is important to learn an instrument.
我認為學會彈一種樂器是重要的。 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. I think it is important to show my child's ability by learning instrument.
我認為透過學習樂器展示我小孩的能力是重要的。 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. I think it is important to get honour by learning instrument.

我認為我的小孩透過學習樂器而取得榮譽是重要的。

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

16. I think it is NOT important to pass the instrument's grade examinations.

我認為通過樂器等級考試是不重要的。

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. I believe that learning instrument can enhance intelligence and facilitate brain's development.

我認為樂器訓練能提升智力，促進大腦發育。

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

18. I think my child can learn useful knowledge during his instrument's learning.

我認為我的小孩在學習樂器的過程中能學到有用的知識。

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

19. I think learning instrument will help my child's future study.

我認為學習樂器對我小孩以後的學習有幫助。

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

20. I think learning instrument will help him with his career in the future.

我認為學習樂器對他以後的職業有幫助。

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

21. I choose the school instruments class because of its cheap tuition fee.

我選擇參與學校樂器班是因為其學費便宜。

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

22. I worried about my child's studying condition after learning instrument.

我擔心我的小孩學習樂器之後會影響他學習的狀態。

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

23. I worried about my child's time on studying other subjects after instruments' lessons.

我擔心我的小孩上樂器班會影響他學習其它科目的學習的時間。

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. I worried about the relationship between us if I force my child to practice instrument.

我擔心強制我的小孩練習樂器會影響我們之間的關係。

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Appendix 8-Interview Questions

1. Why do you facilitate your child to learn instrument?
您讓您的小孩學習樂器的原因是什麼？
2. What elements will you consider when you facilitate your child to learn instrument? Will you be influenced by others?
您在讓您孩子學習樂器時會考慮什麼因素？會否受他人影響？
3. Do you think talent or effort is more important when learning instrument?
您認為學習樂器天分更重要還是努力更重要？
4. When elements will you consider when choosing instrument? Will you consider your child's opinions?
您在選擇學習什麼樂器的時候會考慮什麼因素？是否會詢問孩子的意願？
5. What benefit do you expect that will bring to your child after learning instrument?
您希望學習樂器能為您的孩子帶來什麼好處？
6. Do you believe that learning instrument will promote intellectual development?
您是否相信學習樂器能促進孩子的智力發育？
7. Do you worry about your child's study in school after learning instrument?
您是否擔心學習樂器會影響孩子學校的學習？
8. Will you meddle your child's practicing hours of instrument?
您會否干預孩子練習樂器的時間？
9. Have you ever learned instrument? Do you think this kind of experience will influence your decision about letting your child to learn instrument?
您是否曾經學習樂器？您認為此種經歷會否影響您決定是否讓孩子學習樂器？
10. Do you think it important to learn instrument nowadays? In what aspects is it reflected?
您認為學習樂器在現代社會是否有用？主要體現在哪些方面？
11. Does he/she like learning instrument? How did your child become interested in learning instrument?
您的小孩喜歡學習樂器嗎？他是如何開始對樂器感到有興趣？