



Exploring Motivations of Parents in Enrolling Children in Extracurricular Music Activities - A Systematic Qualitative Review

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ABSTRACT

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Aim: This systematic review investigates the influence of extracurricular music activities on the emotional and social development of primary school students, with particular attention to the growing trend of parents enrolling their children in such activities. **Method:** This "craze" surrounding extracurricular music lessons warrants a detailed examination of parental motivations, the nature and extent of this trend, and its implications for both music education and social development. The review also considers the psychosocial factors that may shape attitudes towards after-school music instruction. The preliminary literature review was conducted using the following

search terms across ProQuest, Scopus, Web of Science, and ProQuest Dissertations & Theses: "music*" combined with "training," "instruction," "education," or "practice," and "child*" or "adolescent* Psychology." **Results:** The findings suggest that parental values regarding music education may be influenced by factors such as children's autonomy, enjoyment of music, aspirations for a musical career, development of aesthetic appreciation, and personal achievements. **Implications:** To support children's development and to create effective curricula and teaching methods, it is crucial for parents, psychologists, and policymakers to acknowledge the diverse needs and values across different cultural contexts. Educators and decision-makers must understand the importance of fostering supportive learning environments to maintain students' academic motivation and engagement. Promoting student well-being and academic success requires clear guidance, individualized support, and opportunities for interaction with peers and teachers. This review underscores the need to grasp the intricate factors affecting students' motivation and involvement in both academic and extracurricular activities.

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Introduction

Research focusing on socialization processes within the home has been instrumental in advancing our understanding of primary school students' cognitive development and achievement over recent years. Evidence consistently demonstrates that parental influences positively impact student performance, attitudes, behaviour, and learning outcomes (Asmus, 2006). The home environment plays a crucial role during the early stages of musical development, much like it does in other aspects of primary school students' growth (Pomerantz, Grolnick, & Price, 2005). Students form adaptive attitudes, beliefs, and expectations regarding their musical abilities from an early age, shaped through interactions with their parents (Renwick, 2002). Parents play a vital role in ensuring that their children continue to progress in all areas of education, a role that is particularly pronounced in music education, which is characterized by high expectations (Busroh & Khairo, 2023; McPherson & Davidson, 2006).

Despite the significance of this role, there have been relatively few studies examining how parents contribute to their children's musical development. However, a growing body of literature in educational and developmental psychology explores how parental involvement influences children's success (Bravo, Vieira, & Ferrer, 2022; McPherson & Zimmerman, 2002). This contrasts with the previous assertion and highlights the complexity of the dynamic interactions among parents, teachers, and students in instrumental instruction (Crech & Hallam, 2003; Hussein et al., 2022). The existing model addresses these interactions from a systems perspective, offering a framework for understanding specific types of behaviours and communications between educators, parents, and students within the context of instrumental music classes. This article aims to present a model that elucidates the fundamental types of interactions between parents and children that impact music learning. By integrating insights from educational and developmental psychology with knowledge from the field of music, this model seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of these interactions. This perspective is particularly valuable as it helps to delineate the various forms of parent-child relationships and the "profound environments" that arise independently of or alongside formal and informal music learning practices.

Role of the Home Environment in The Early Development of Music

A child's musical development is fundamentally shaped by the home environment, making it a critical factor in the early stages of musical learning. Within this context, parental involvement is pivotal, as parents serve as the primary influencers and facilitators of their child's musical education. By actively engaging in musical activities – such as playing instruments, singing, or simply listening to music – parents provide their children with valuable opportunities to explore and participate in music, fostering their curiosity. The presence of musical instruments, recordings, and educational materials in the home further enhances this learning experience, allowing primary school students to engage in hands-on discovery and experimentation. This exposure can stimulate their creative potential and curiosity.

Conversely, the family's attitude toward music significantly affects the child's engagement. Positive reinforcement and encouragement from family members, especially

those who are recognized musicians, create a supportive environment conducive to the development of musical skills. Conversely, a lack of support or negative attitudes toward music can impede a child's desire to engage with musical activities. A child's perceptions and experiences of music are significantly shaped by the home environment, where music either plays a central role or merely serves as background ambiance. Whether music is actively integrated into family routines or remains a peripheral presence, it is ultimately the home environment that determines the trajectory of early musical development. This environment provides the foundation upon which primary school students first encounter music and subsequently build the basis for lifelong musical interest and engagement.

Parent-Teacher-Student Interactions

Recent discussions have highlighted the complexities inherent in the relationships among tutors, students, and parents within the context of instrumental or academic instruction. These dialogues aim to elucidate the dynamics that influence outcomes for each party involved. Consequently, the interactions among parents, teachers, and students have been shown to significantly impact each participant. Each party brings unique and indispensable contributions to musical education. In this context, parents, as partners in their children's music education, play a crucial role in supporting, encouraging, and reinforcing the knowledge and skills acquired during formal lessons.

In this context, teachers serve as guides and mentors, responsible for imparting knowledge, skills, and information to students who receive individualized instruction. Conversely, students are active participants in their musical education, engaging with both their parents and teachers to navigate their musical journey. Recent discussions underscore the importance of effective communication, mutual respect, and aligned goals among all parties within the learning environment. Achieving harmony among these elements contributes to a more fulfilling and productive learning experience. Enhancing instrumental instruction involves understanding and addressing the interactions between students, teachers, and parents, thereby resulting in more enriching and beneficial musical experiences for all involved.

Children's Extra-Curricular Participation

Recent research has documented a significant rise in children's participation in extracurricular activities (Dunn, Kinney, & Hofferth, 2003; Larson et al., 2004). Extracurricular activities are typically defined as organized, formal pursuits outside the standard school curriculum, characterized by regular, scheduled meetings designed to foster the development of specific skills (Clegg, Stevenson, & Willott, 2010; DeMoulin, 2002; Fredricks & Eccles, 2006). Extracurricular activities are structured, organized pursuits outside the regular school curriculum, designed to help children develop specific skills through regular, scheduled meetings (Dunn et al., 2003). Extracurricular activities, such as language programs, music classes, and sports, are outside the academic curriculum and offer students structured, supervised environments with positive adult and peer interactions (Clegg et al., 2010; Larson et al., 2004). Researchers in this field emphasize the positive outcomes associated with students' participation in extracurricular activities, highlighting their role in providing primary school students with valuable social

connections. Research shows extracurricular activities promote positive traits like perseverance, reflection, responsibility, and reliability (DeMoulin, 2002). These traits have been linked to favourable academic outcomes, including increased educational aspirations, higher grades, and improved school engagement (Mahoney, Cairns, & Farmer, 2003). Additionally, involvement in extracurricular activities is considered an indicator of psychological and social competencies, such as higher self-esteem and interpersonal skills, as well as lower levels of depression, due to the opportunities these activities provide for developing social skills through diverse interactions with adults and peers (Barber, Eccles, & Stone, 2001; Franks, 2022).

Factors Influencing Extracurricular Participation

A student's involvement in extracurricular activities can be influenced by a range of factors. Research indicates that aspects of a student's family background, such as childcare arrangements, parental employment status, and the family's socioeconomic status (SES), are significant determinants (Capizzano, Tout, & Adams, 2000; Zhao, Yusof, & Hou, 2023). The ability and willingness of parents to enrol their children in extracurricular programs and manage their participation – such as handling childcare and transportation – are often affected by the affordability of these activities. Specifically, the financial resources of families are critical in determining extracurricular participation (Mahoney et al., 2005). Studies have shown that higher-income families are better positioned to cover educational fees and purchase necessary equipment, such as musical instruments and sports gear (Capizzano et al., 2000). This is because families with greater financial resources are more likely to afford these expenses (Barnett & Weber, 2008; Bhatti, Alyahya, & Alshiha, 2022; Djou, Ntelu, & Hinta, 2023).

- **Parental Aspirations and Values:** Parents' personal beliefs, values, and goals regarding their children's overall development can significantly influence their decision to enrol their children in extracurricular music activities (Jodl et al., 2001). Parents who prioritize a well-rounded education, value creative skills, or emphasize musical proficiency are more likely to seek out such opportunities for their children.
- **Perceived Benefits for Child Development:** Parents may be motivated to enrol their children in extracurricular music activities, which are not part of the school curriculum, due to the perceived benefits these activities offer for primary school students' cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development (El Masri & Suliman, 2019). They may believe that exposure to music enhances academic performance, creativity, self-confidence, discipline, and social skills.
- **Interest and talent recognition:** Parents may choose to enrol their children in extracurricular music activities based on their children's demonstrated interest, enthusiasm, or talent in music (Barnett & Weber, 2008). They might view these opportunities as a means for their children to further explore and cultivate their musical abilities, thereby nurturing their potential talent.
- **Peer and Societal Influences:** The decisions parents make regarding their children's participation in extracurricular activities can be influenced by various factors, including peer influence, social networks, and societal expectations (Cochran & Davila, 2016).
- **Parent-Child Relationship and Communication:** Moreover, the quality of the

parent-child relationship and the dynamics of communication can significantly influence parents' decisions to enrol their children in extracurricular music activities (Tates & Meeuwesen, 2001). Parents may choose to engage their children in musical activities to strengthen their bond, share common interests, or support their children's aspirations.

- **Relevance of Social Identity:** The ability to view oneself as a musician and derive intrinsic value from participating in and showcasing musical skills has been linked to higher rates of continued involvement in school music programs (Sichivitsa, 2004) and enhanced self-confidence in children (Creech & Hallam, 2003). Our survey revealed that themes related to children's self-identity as musicians varied based on (a) the child's age, (b) their level of proficiency with their instrument, and (c) parents' perceptions of the development of this identity. Several parents positively responded when discussing their child's growing self-identity as a musician. For example, one parent noted, "Yes! He thoroughly enjoys sharing his experiences and discussing his future aspirations as a cellist," while another observed, "Indeed. She allows her music to reflect her emotions. Recently, she has embraced the festive Christmas spirit and devoted considerable time to Christmas music. She takes great pride in performing for her loved ones." Additionally, a parent mentioned, "Yes, she identifies as a musician... She recognizes music as one of her strengths." Another parent elaborated on how their daughter was integrating her music education from the String Project with her school curriculum on self-discovery.

At my daughter's school, where she is in 4th grade, there is a strong emphasis on understanding one's identity. Her class's unit on identity lasted over nine weeks, during which she engaged in numerous discussions and extensive writing about the concept of identity. In these activities, she explored her own identity as a musician. Feedback from several parents regarding their child's developing musician identity was mixed. Some parents questioned whether their child was still in the phase where playing an instrument was primarily a hobby or a social activity, or whether their child had yet to play long enough to develop the intrinsic motivation and commitment associated with identifying as a musician.

- **Contemporary Parenting:** Raising children entails a continuous and long-term commitment. Regardless of their backgrounds, parents universally wish for their children's lives to be smooth and successful (Baker & Barg, 2019). Beyond concerns about happiness, life satisfaction, and financial security, parents have specific attributes they wish their children to embody (Baker & Barg, 2019). Essentially, their goal is to nurture and shape their children into the individuals they aspire them to become. These aspirations are often referred to as "parental values."

The concept of 'values' encompasses subjective and personal perspectives related to economic and consumer behaviour within the broader context of human actions (Moore & Asay, 2012). Values significantly influence an individual's behaviour and cognition, serving as guiding principles that shape their actions across various situations (Moore & Asay, 2012). In particular, parental values play a crucial role in shaping behavioural patterns, reflecting cultural distinctions among socially and economically diverse groups. Parental values encompass the beliefs, behaviours, and attitudes of parents concerning

child development and progress, impacting their decision-making and judgments regarding their children (Tulviste, Mizera, & De Geer, 2012). These values evolve over time as individuals undergo social and psychological development, and they are integral to family dynamics (Bazheir, 2023; Brighouse & Swift, 2014).

Aim and Objective

This systematic review seeks to investigate the impact of extracurricular music activities on the emotional and social development of primary school students. It specifically examines the increasing trend of parents enrolling their children in extracurricular music lessons, often described as a 'craze.' The review will analyse parental motivations behind this trend, the extent and nature of its growth, and its implications for music education and social development. Additionally, it will explore the psychosocial factors that may shape attitudes toward after-school music lessons.

Materials and Methods

The PRISMA guidelines (Moher et al., 2009) were adhered to throughout the systematic review process. Initially, a comprehensive search was performed across ProQuest, Scopus, Web of Science, and ProQuest Dissertation & Theses databases. The search terms used included "music*" combined with "training," "instruction," "education," or "practice," and "child*" or "adolescent* Social Psychology." In addition to database searches, references from reviews, meta-analyses, and relevant empirical studies were also examined. The most recent investigation was completed in February 2024. Out of 65 studies, 6 met the criteria and were included in the meta-analysis as shown in Figure 1.

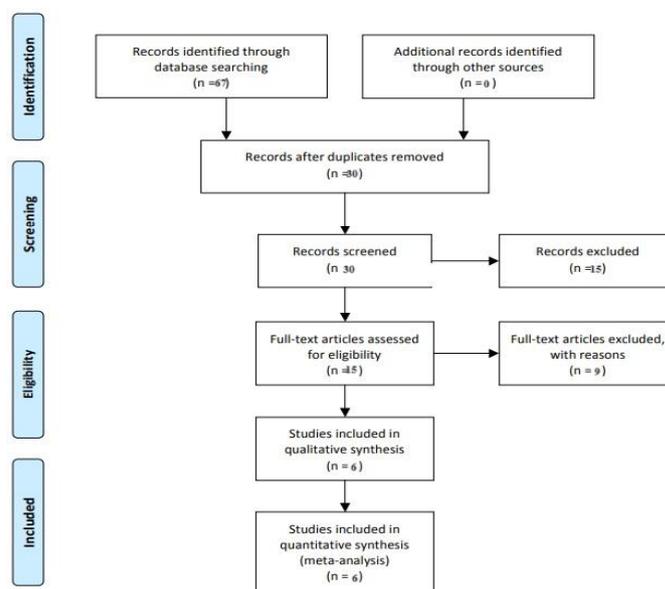


Figure 1: PRISMA Flowchart.

Results

The findings are structured as follows: (1) A model of academic motivation incorporating latent change scores; (2) A bivariate latent change score model examining the relationship between academic motivation and participation in extracurricular activities; (3) Descriptive statistics for the motivational scales and extracurricular activity items; and (4) A final model that integrates socio-demographic factors with rates of change in academic motivation and support for extracurricular involvement (Pomerantz, 2006).

Learning Experience

Skill Development: Learning to play a musical instrument improves students' cognitive abilities, such as memory, attention, and problem-solving skills.

Discipline: Regular practice schedules foster discipline and time management skills in students.

Creativity: Engaging with music nurtures creativity and self-expression in students as they explore various melodies, rhythms, and styles.

Collaboration: Participation in ensemble groups or bands enhances teamwork and collaboration skills among students.

Sense of Achievement: Mastering a new piece or technique boosts students' self-esteem and fosters a sense of accomplishment.

Stress Relief: Playing music can act as a stress relief and emotional outlet, assisting students in managing their emotions effectively.

Joy and Fulfilment: Music has the power to evoke strong emotions, bringing joy and fulfilment to students as they connect deeply with the art form.

Persistence and Resilience: Overcoming challenges in learning an instrument fosters persistence and resilience in students, teaching them to persevere through difficulties.

Parents' Motivation to Sign Up

Perceived Benefits: Parents are motivated to enrol their children in extracurricular music lessons because of the perceived cognitive, emotional, and social benefits associated with such activities.

Long-Term Development: Parents acknowledge the long-term developmental benefits of musical education, including improved academic performance and expanded future career opportunities.

Cultural Value: Some parents consider music an essential element of their cultural heritage and seek to instil in their children an appreciation for and active participation in it.

Socialization: Parents may also appreciate the social benefits of music lessons, recognizing that these activities offer their children opportunities to engage with peers who share similar interests.

Overall, extracurricular musical instrument lessons can significantly enhance students' overall development, emotional well-being, and family dynamics, making them a favoured option among parents seeking enriching experiences for their children.

Academic Motivation and Participation in Extracurricular Activities Bivariate Latent Change Score Model

As in the previous section, we applied a series of models and sequentially constrained the following parameters: the mean of extracurricular activities, the mean latent change score for extracurricular activities, the variance of the latent change score, and the covariance between the mean latent change score and participation in extracurricular activities (Pomerantz, 2001).

Final Model with Socio-Demographic Variables

In the final set of models, we examined the relationships between the rates of change in extracurricular activity support and motivation with the age, gender, and educational attainment of the students' parents (where females were coded as -0.5 and males as 0.5). Consequently, we extended the previous model by incorporating six additional covariances (Tan et al., 2021). Probability ratio tests were then conducted to assess whether these associations held across all samples. Non-significant factors were subsequently removed (Woody, 2021). The primary objective of this review was to understand how parents valued their children's academic aspirations and involvement in extracurricular activities relative to perceived challenges. We selected a sample of parents from Chinese and European countries (Shih & Yi, 2014). To gauge the perspectives of Chinese and Portuguese parents regarding their children's academic motivation and engagement in extracurricular activities, we conducted a pre-test and post-test survey (Eccles, 2005).

Table 1

Empirical Research on the Choices and Benefits of Extracurricular Activities During Middle Childhood

Study	Country; Ethnic Group (%)	Research Focus	Type of EC	Measure of EC	Key Findings
Anderson et al. (2003)	United States	Relationships between children's EC Clubs or groups, volunteer work, pressure and parental support; the emotive experience of EC (joy, anxiety)	music, dance, school team sports, extracurricular sports, and other	On a questionnaire, students answered questions regarding the things they had done in the previous year.	1. A higher overall amount of EC in children was correlated with parental support. 1. In activities, parental support was inversely correlated with anxiety and favourably correlated with satisfaction. 2. The presence of parental pressure was a poor indicator of happiness.
Luo and Guan (2023)	Chinese	Relationships between children's involvement in extracurricular activities and family wealth; the influence of home and neighbourhood conditions on these relationships	Summer camps, church clubs or extracurricular activities, community centre activities, lessons, athletics, before- and after-school programs, and community groups	On a questionnaire, parents indicated whether or not their child has engaged in any activities over the previous year.	1. Compared to children from middle-class or affluent families, children from low-SES families were less likely to participate in EC. 2. The relationship between income and engagement was mediated by wealth in the neighbourhood and cognitive stimulation at home.
Dunn et al. (2003)	United States	Kind, range, and intensity of early childhood education; parental activities; parental objectives and ideal qualities for students, and how those qualities can be taught	Athletics, gymnastics, dance, music, art, theatre, safety, school clubs, youth organizations, scouting, and religious instruction	parent and child interviews	1. The most popular activity was sports. 2. A higher variety of EC was participated in by girls than by boys. 3. Parents believed that EC gave their kids the chance to enjoy themselves and be physically active while also helping them to acquire desirable traits (including social skills, discipline, and responsibility).

Epps, Huston and Bobbitt (2013)	United States; white (13), Native American (3), African American (55), Hispanic (29),	Students EC as a result of antipoverty interventions; EC's developmental patterns over time	Clubs, community centres, religious activities, sports instruction, and service	On a questionnaire, parents and children provided information regarding the scope and severity of EC during each wave of data collection.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students involvement in organized activities rose as a result of antipoverty intervention. 2. There were no differences in program effects between gender, age, or measurement time. 3. From early adolescence onward, EC grew and then decreased.
Jacobs, Vernon and Eccles (2005)	United States	Disparities in EC between genders based on the kinds, quantity, and range of activities; relationships between EC, task values, and perceived competence; parental support for EC	Team sports, individual sports, extracurricular activities, hobbies, music and drama, and academics	On a questionnaire, mothers reported the activity, duration, and frequency of their child's participation in various activities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Boys and girls engaged in distinct activities, with girls participating in a greater range of activities. 2. Participation in activities was linked to later assessments of one's own competence and morals. 3. In general, subsequent activity engagement was not predicted by early values and self-perceptions. primary school students who saw their mothers as valued adults were more likely to participate in and feel competent in those activities.
Yuan et al. (2021)	Chinese	Relationship between elementary school sport and music participation patterns and teenage activity engagement; the impact of teenage motivating ideas (self-concept of ability, interest) on this relationship	Sports, music	Students indicated how frequently they performed their musical instrument or participated in sports teams (ranging from "never" to "every day"). Young people indicated how many hours they practiced an instrument or participated in organized sports each week (ranging from "none" to "21 or more hours")	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adolescent motivational views were greater in highly active and persistently participating primary school students four years later than in their peer group. 2. Adolescent engagement one year later was favourably predicted by motivational views in elementary school. 3. As they grew older, children usually kept their interests in music and sports.

Discussion

Extracurricular music activities, both intramural and external to school, are crucial in shaping how children and their parents perceive personal growth, extending beyond mere musical proficiency. These personalized and face-to-face interactions play a significant role in influencing youth motivation. First, engaging with relatives in music activities fosters a sense of communal sharing, which aligns with key principles of social identity theory. When primary school students participate in group practices or performances, they often form connections with peers who share similar interests and objectives. This sense of unity cultivates intrinsic motivation among young individuals, as they derive satisfaction from contributing to a collective endeavour. Additionally, parents' perceptions of their children's involvement in these activities can also enhance feelings of kinship. This sense of belonging to a supportive community of families further strengthens parental encouragement and continued support for their children's musical pursuits.

Conversely, direct interactions with peers and instructors during real-time face-to-face music activities offer primary school students immediate feedback and validation, which are essential for motivation according to self-determination theory. This immediate reinforcement fosters a sense of competence and autonomy, encouraging students to persist in their musical pursuits. Similarly, when parents receive updates about their child's progress and instructors acknowledge their support with awards, it enhances parental motivation to further support their child's musical journey. Additionally, face-to-face music lessons provide students with opportunities to develop and showcase their musical identities. According to social comparison theory, individuals assess their self-worth by comparing their abilities and attributes with those of others. During group rehearsals and performances, primary school students observe their peers' progress, which serves as a benchmark for their own development. This comparative process motivates students to improve their musical skills and achieve higher levels of accomplishment.

Moreover, direct involvement in musical rituals plays a crucial role in the preservation of customs and traditions and contributes significantly to the formation of social identity. Through engaging in song and movement across various cultural contexts, primary school students develop an appreciation for and respect towards cultural diversity worldwide. This engagement helps them maintain an awareness of their own identity while recognizing their place within a larger community. Similarly, parents may experience a sense of pride as their children begin to value and embrace diverse musical traditions, which in turn reinforces their commitment to further enriching their children's musical experiences. This study highlights the universal principle of cultural differentiation in parenting approaches. Specifically, the parents in Guilin demonstrated a high level of engagement with their children's music education. They not only supported their children's involvement in music but actively participated in related extracurricular activities, such as school band rehearsals and solo performance recitals. The involvement of Guilin parents, including two mothers who were themselves involved in art production, underscores their deep appreciation for music. They created an immersive musical environment by attending lessons, supporting practice sessions, and participating in professional competitions or achieving instrumental grades. This proactive approach contrasts with the Tampa parents, who primarily concentrated on their child's psychological well-being and academic performance. Previous research has indicated that music training alone does not bridge cultural disparities, particularly when mothers lack a musical background (Comeau, Huta, & Liu, 2015).

In contrast, parents in Guilin rarely view music competitions or assessments as primary objectives for their children. Instead, they focus on sending their children to undertake remaining assessment tests as milestones in their music education. Notably, Tampa parents do not emphasize contests or structured assessments in their children's musical pursuits. This disparity may be influenced by differing social and cultural backgrounds. In China, there is a strong national pride and a system that encourages achievement through competitions, which are often considered in academic assessments for primary, secondary, and higher education (Bai, 2021). Art and sports competition results are integrated into entrance exams for various educational levels in China. Conversely, in the U.S., college applicants may receive bonus points for participation in art and sports competitions at the college level, but such competitions are generally not a part of elementary or high school assessments. Thus,

Chinese students experience a continuous cycle of competition from elementary through higher education (Bai, 2021). Consequently, parents in Guilin view extracurricular music training as an integral part of their children's development through competition and evaluations, reflecting a broader cultural emphasis on competitive achievement.

Lastly, Tampa parents fostered a family environment that provided both emotional support and cognitive guidance, contrasting with the approach in Guilin (Zdzinski, 1996). In Tampa, utilitarian and individualistic values were so prominent that parents chose not to engage in contests or focus on analytical grade assessments for their children. It is posited that Tampa parents prioritized avoiding what they perceived as burdensome and time-consuming aspects of competition, opting instead to emphasize core values and overall happiness in their children's lives. In contrast, Guilin parents were more involved, actively participating in their children's education and teaching them directly. This involvement was influenced by their beliefs, traditional Chinese cultural values, and the heightened parental attention associated with China's one-child policy.

Conclusion

Parental values, shaped by cultural perspectives, influence expectations for their children's success in music. Understanding these varied demands across ethnic backgrounds is crucial for creating effective educational plans and teaching methods. Extracurricular music activities, particularly face-to-face, play a significant role in motivating both children and parents, drawing on social psychological theories like social identity and self-determination. These activities foster a sense of belonging, provide validation, support identity development, and transmit cultural values. Addressing factors that lead to decreased academic engagement and interest in extracurriculars is essential for educators and stakeholders to support students' growth and overall performance.

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