

# Understanding How Early Childhood Music Education is Perceived by Parents



by  
**Robert Devlin**  
**Joshua Moy**  
**Julianna Ziegler**

# Understanding How Early Childhood Music Education is Perceived by Parents

An Interactive Qualifying Project  
submitted to the faculty of  
WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Bachelor of Science

by  
Robert Devlin  
Joshua Moy  
Julianna Ziegler

Date:  
14<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Report Submitted to:

Professor Jianxin Xu  
Hangzhou Dianzi University

Professor Cao Haiyan  
MEIYU Music and Dance International Institute

Professor Joseph Sarkis and Professor Hansong Pu  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

*This report represents work of one or more WPI undergraduate students submitted to the faculty as evidence of a degree requirement. WPI routinely publishes these reports on its web site without editorial or peer review.*

## **ABSTRACT**

While there have been numerous studies showing the positive impact of Early Childhood Music Education (ECME) in both China and the United States, there are far fewer researching parental opinions on the matter. Our Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP) aims to gather data on how parental opinions are formed surrounding these music programs and what factors increase enrolment. Our team conducted interviews with educators and parents of enrolled children, as well as distributed a survey that got over a hundred parent responses. Our study compiles the strongest, most common factors affecting their opinions and decisions. The results suggest that when parents are aware of how rewarding music is to a young child's development it generally increases participation in ECME programs. Though, considering a majority are not aware of the cognitive benefits, it seems most families attend based on other factors, such as cost and the chance to socialize.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank our team members Haoyang Hu (Harry), Jiangguo Chen (Felix), Jinli Zhang (Zip), Tian Shen (Helen Shin), Yonghui Guo (Charles), and Yubo Chen (Alex) from the Hangzhou Dianzi University (HDU). Without their help this project would not have been able to be completed. Working with all of them was an absolute pleasure.

The authors would like to acknowledge HDU Team Leader Jinli Zhang (Zip), whom we communicated with the most and who help facilitate a lot of the collaboration between the WPI and HDU teams. Special thanks to the main English speaker on the HDU team, Yubo Chen (Alex) who functioned as the translator, without whom we would have struggled much more with the language barrier.

The authors would like to thank our IQP advisors Professors Joesph Sarkis and Hansong Pu, who helped keep our team on track with weekly meetings and advice. Their guidance was essential to our project's outcome.

The authors would like to especially thank our Sponsor the *MeiYu Music and Dance International Institute* for funding and inspiring our project. We thoroughly enjoyed researching our topic of Early Childhood Music Education, and hope our sponsor enjoyed their first year as a IQP sponsor and continues to fund the Hangzhou Project Center as we think future cohorts would benefit from continued research and work on this topic. It is one of a kind at WPI and it certainly has a lot more scope that could be covered by future project teams.

An additional thanks to Professor Jennifer Rudolf for encouraging cohort bonding and cultural experiences. And to our ID2050 professor, Grant Burrier, who jumpstarted our project structure and provided an optimistic outlook to our virtual project experience.

## AUTHORSHIP PAGE

Julianna Ziegler

Julianna led the team's communication by scheduling, organizing, and facilitating almost every daily team meeting along with weekly advisor meetings and weekly meetings with team members from Hangzhou Dianzi University (HDU). Julianna also led the team's outreach efforts by writing emails and correspondence to many locations in order to distribute our mass survey including local schools, day cares, and music studios. Within this report, Julianna outlined, organized and delegated the sections of the report. She also authored a few portions of the report including the Results of the interviews. Additionally, Julianna edited many sections of the paper including the Abstract and the Introduction.

Joshua Moy

Joshua led the team's research into the benefits of ECME for the Background and Literature Review as well as doing the initial analysis on the survey results. Joshua also co-authored the interview questions with Robert and worked with him to translate them. Joshua also worked with Robert to write the survey questions and translate the HDU survey questions as needed for the English survey. Within this report Joshua authored many portions of the paper including the Abstract, Background and Literature Review, Results (Interviews), Conclusions and Recommendations, Appendix. He also edited many sections of the paper including the Survey Analysis, Recommendations, and Background and Literature Review. Joshua also helped conduct the interviews with professionals along with Robert and Julianna.

Robert Devlin

Robert led the team's research into music pedagogy in the United States and China as well as parents' opinions in the United States and China. Co-authoring the interview questions with Joshua, Robert also helped with translating and adapting the HDU survey into English. He also worked to set goals and keep the team on schedule. Within this report, Robert helped significantly on the initial outline and organization of the report template and was the main author of the Background and Literature Review section, as well as the survey portion of the Results section. He also worked significantly on the Conclusions and Recommendations.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	i
AUTHORSHIP PAGE .....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	iv
TABLE OF FIGURES .....	vi
TABLE OF TABLES .....	vi
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	vii
Literature Review .....	vii
Methodology .....	viii
Findings .....	viii
Final Recommendations .....	x
CHAPTER 1: Introduction .....	1
Our Sponsor and Early Childhood Music Education .....	1
The Research Question .....	1
CHAPTER 2: Background and literature review .....	2
Benefits of Early Childhood Music Education .....	2
Psychological Development Findings .....	2
Neurological Development Findings .....	3
Pedagogy of Early Childhood Music Education .....	4
Chinese Pedagogy .....	4
American Pedagogy .....	5
Parental Opinions and Expectations .....	6
Opinions in China .....	6
Opinions in the United States .....	7
CHAPTER 3: Methodology .....	9
Archival Research .....	9
Data Collection .....	10
Field Location and Schedule .....	11
Data Analysis and Ethical Considerations .....	11
CHAPTER 4: Results .....	12
Surveying Parents .....	12
Parents' Experiences .....	13
Parental Knowledge .....	14
Parents' Choices .....	16
Surveying In China .....	18
Interviews .....	19
CHAPTER 5: Conclusions & Recommendations .....	21
Challenges Faced .....	22
Recommendations .....	21
Summary of Findings .....	22
Conclusion .....	23
REFERENCES .....	25

APPENDIX A: American Survey .....	27
APPENDIX B: Survey Results .....	37
APPENDIX C: Chinese Survey and Results.....	52
APPENDIX D: Parent Interview Questions .....	65
APPENDIX E: Professional Interview Questions.....	66
APPENDIX F: Sponsor Interview Questions .....	67

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1: Parents' Likert Scale agreement on various statements about ECME .....	14
Figure 2: Agreement of parents on beneficial ECME statements presented to them. ....	16
Figure 3: Reasons parents did not pursue ECME (multiple options could be selected) .....	17
Figure 4: Factors that influence parents' choice of ECME institute (multiple options could be selected).....	18

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Survey Population Demographics .....	12
---	----

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In our Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP), we sought to answer the Research Question, “What do parents know about Early Childhood Music Education and what factors increase parental support for this programming?” Instilling music in new-borns, toddlers, and pre-schoolers has extraordinary benefits towards their development. We hope to gain insight on parental knowledge of these classes and the research behind them. We gauged opinions both in China and in the United States via video interviews and surveys. Research is conducted with both countries as to what factors increase support for Early Childhood Music Education (ECME) as well as what people know about ECME may be different depending on the country observed. Our research is compiled into this final project report paper. The main components being background research, that describes previously developed benefits of early music classes and interviews, an online Survey and the data collected from 140+ Parents of young children comparing data from the US and China, and Suggestions for our sponsor, giving advice and recommendations for moving forward.

### **Literature Review**

During our Interactive Qualifying Project, we read and compiled ideas from multiple studies and literature surrounding Early Childhood Music Education. We prioritized three main schools of thought: Existing research on the benefits of ECME, Pedagogy in China and the United States, and Parental Opinion in both countries.

We found research looking at ECME benefits through a psychological and behavioural lens. It was found to promote many things such as functional, symbolic and game based play that is key in cognitive development. It has also been found to improve tonality and rhythm which are important for language and speech recognition. We also found research looking at ECME benefits through a neurological lens. In these studies, it was found that the brain networks for music and speech are the same, indicating the direct link between ECME and language learning. Furthermore, ECME was tied to increased size in certain parts of the brain and even the “Mozart Effect”, where those who had musical experience scored higher on intelligence tests.

Early Childhood Music Education is sometimes taught in similar ways in China and the United States, though it is different in some ways. From our limited research we found that ECME in China has two major problems. A lack of trained teachers means that many do not understand the process or importance of ECME. Pressures from parents on academic subjects means that many preschools will ignore music education or focus too heavily on certain aspects, such as specific instruments. Contrastingly, ECME in the US did not seem to have these same issues. Within preschools and music studios music education focused on fun and the basics is common. The main issue we found American music education was availability due to cost.

Our third topic of background research was focused on gaining a basic understanding of parental opinions surrounding ECME. From our research we found that in China, parents are

often very goal oriented and utilitarian towards extracurriculars. Many parents in China have expectations for children to learn an instrument as part of their music education. Contrastingly, in the United States parent expectations were very different. Americans thought that enjoyment should be the most important goal in ECME, closely followed by factors like music appreciation or development. There is little to no expectations for children to learn a musical instrument at a young age.

## **Methodology**

We focused on three data collection methods. First was that we developed our archival research, see the literature review section, which allowed us to cite data, archival ideas, and information, such as case studies. It also inspired many of the questions we used for our survey. Second were our video interviews, these were done with Chinese parents in Hangzhou which helped get in depth insight into their opinions. We personally interviewed three early childhood music educators, which enhanced our understanding of classrooms in the US and in China. Lastly was our survey which was sent to American and Chinese parents. This allowed us to collect data on a larger number of people.

We completed a few parent interviews in Hangzhou, China. These were conducted by the HDU students. These interviewees were parents of students that attend classes from our sponsor's music institute. We, the WPI student teams, conducted the professional interviews. Interviews were recorded on video or over zoom. For the survey version sent to Americans, Qualtrics was used, while the Chinese version went through the website 'wjx.cn'.

During our project we had some ethical considerations. Demographic information was collected so the surveys were completely anonymized. Taking videos of interviewees required their consent so we made a consent form. The videos will not be kept after the project.

The HDU team wrote the main questions of the survey due to their communication with the sponsor. The American Survey mirrored the HDU survey almost exactly. We used a combination of different survey question types, including multiple choice and Likert scale questions. We also used text entry questions as needed

We interviewed three educators from different schools. Two American educators from Kindermusik and Music Together, and our sponsor who teaches at the MeiYu Music & Dance Institute. We had questions about parents, teaching methods, changes, and influence. These interviews allowed us to get a different perspective on parents' opinions on ECME. The professionals have known many parents who have taken their classes, giving us decades of insider knowledge to incorporate into our report.

## **Findings**

What experiences do parents have with ECME?

Most common classes were parent-child classes and music-dance classes. Mean age of starting classes was a little over one and a half years old. A large majority of children were not learning an instrument. Majority of respondents went to ECME once a week. Around 75% of parents cited participating and wanting to participate in classes. Respondents who have not taken any ECME classes were very unlikely to be recommended music education, nor know many children around them who do participate.

What do parents know about ECME?

Only 35% of those not taking ECME were aware of its specific benefits, while over 87% taking ECME knew about these benefits. Over 90% of parents taking ECME describe how learning more about ECME benefits could impact their future decisions. Of those not participating, only 70% said they were aware of specific benefits. Both groups surprisingly shared what specific benefits they were knowledgeable about. Most parents had never heard of the specific education methods, but the least unknown was the Suzuki method.

Reasons for participating in ECME, or not.

Location was the top reason parents choose a music education institute. All factors for choosing a music education institution were relatively popular with teaching philosophy and teaching effectiveness being cited less as a reason. Interestingly, a vast majority of respondents said they pursued ECME to cultivate musical literacy. The most popular skill or instrument parents wanted children to learn was singing. The biggest reason parents chose not to pursue ECME was cost and then time/travel constraints. Majority of parents said they would potentially spend less than \$100 per month on ECME

American Professional Interviews

Kindermusik with Miss Molly Ziegler: Her classes study steady beat and small percussion instruments. Kindermusik offers foundations of learning, that grow with the child. Most people don't understand the benefits or don't care about them.

*“Especially in this country we don't pursue it as long, and in actuality that's not really a problem because music goes with you, that steady beat goes with you, just to enjoy life and in my opinion that's what my classes offer, that this will stick with them” – MZ*

Music Together with Julie Holston: Two common reasons for pursuing ECME that we did not consider that came up during the interview were socialization and fun. Many parents do not know much about the benefits coming into classes, but they soon learn how it affects their child and it convinces them to stay. Music Together stresses more musicality like instrument demos and harmony in their songs.

Chinese Professional Interview – Sponsor

Mei-Yu Music & Dance with Cao Haiyan: Parents send their children to ECME classes so their children can learn to appreciate music a (very common response in our surveys). Word of mouth is important for getting parents to start ECME classes for their children. Location is a factor that can often be a problem for parents.

## **Final Recommendations**

### Community Outreach

In research, surveys and interviews we found many of parents simply didn't understand what ECME was. Our recommendation is to try and increase community outreach for both parents and children so that more people understand, and consequently go to ECME. To do so we had two recommendations: Host a relatively regular, free walk-in or open-house class where parents can stop by to gain an understanding of what ECME is and your program. Work with preschools near the school to present your program as a guest speaker to help get children interested in music.

### Video Recommendations

We were unable to make a promotional video due to language difficulties, time constraints, and inexperience in video making. Even from the limited video interviews of the HDU students many parents provided good talking points and ideas, but it would have been difficult to make a video. We recommend basing the video off selected quotes from parents rather than just a compilation of interviews. Using the quotes as a specific case study example and then further explaining the science or methodologies behind it.

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## Our Sponsor and Early Childhood Music Education

Our sponsor is the Hangzhou branch of the MeiYu Music & Dance International Institute. They are a private teaching organization with multiple locations, with our direct sponsor located at the Hangzhou Branch. They have many music education opportunities for children up to six years old. They follow an education philosophy which focuses on teaching children about music through engaging mind and body through a mixture of singing, dancing, acting, and learning instruments. They are one of countless institutions that teach Early Childhood Music Education (ECME) in China.

In ECME, children are taught about the basics of rhythm, singing, speech, music, and motion. This is done through activities such as dancing to a beat to learning how to sing simple songs. These classes have a variety of benefits for children from aiding the development of speech processing to phonological awareness. While we did study these benefits in detail before starting our project, we decided to study something that comparatively had less research done on it: what influences parents' decisions on ECME and how much do the benefits matter to parents if they know about them at all.

## The Research Question

What do parents know about Early Childhood Music Education and what factors increase parental support for this programming?

To answer this question, we used a combination of surveys and interviews allowing us to get multiple perspectives on what impacts parent choices regarding ECME. We conducted the same survey in both China and America to get a combination of perspectives on this topic. We attempted to get video interviews from parents of music students that partake in classes taught at the MeiYu institute, in order to get more in-depth responses to our questions. On top of parent responses, we wanted a more professional look at the research we were conducting, and therefore turned to three educators of early childhood music classes.

This research would not have been possible had it not been for the collaboration between our team partnering with six students from the Hangzhou Dianzi University (HDU). Our partners from HDU helped us carry out any research we had to conduct in China and helped us translate our interview questions and survey to cohesive Chinese. They also led the communication between our teams and our sponsor's point of contact.

This report will begin with our background research on previous studies surrounding three main schools of thought; The benefits of ECME, how it is taught in China and the United States, and parental opinions in both countries. Afterward, we will specify our methods used to complete our research goals. Then we take time to go over the results of those studies. Finally, we will present our recommendations for the MeiYu Music & Dance Institute along with our key findings.

## CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Early Childhood Music Education is a topic that is well recognized but generally not known about in depth. Our research – and by extension literature review – focused on gaining a deeper understanding of this topic in the context of our sponsor and research question. One important aspect to consider within our research was the need for context in terms of both China and the United States. Throughout our IQP process we established three main themes to our research; understanding the benefits of ECME, understanding how ECME is taught – and what the classes are like, and understanding how parents perceive ECME.

### **Benefits of Early Childhood Music Education**

In our research, one school of thought stresses the benefits of Early Childhood Music Education in a variety of areas from brain development to speech processing. This information is likely to be a critical component in building parental support for ECME if we can demonstrate the long-term, positive impacts of this approach. As such, gaining a concrete understanding of the benefits ECME can provide to brain development is key. Within the literature we looked at there were two prominent avenues of research on the benefits of ECME, the neurological and psychological.

#### Psychological Development Findings

Sources that took a psychological approach tended to be more focused on the developmental and social changes within children who participated in ECME. As Barbara Andress (1986) explains in her article, it is important to consider Jean Piaget's theories of cognitive and play development and how ECME can be appropriately used in the context of these theories. According to Piaget - a psychologist who set the groundwork for understanding childhood learning - engaging in play development is the most important part of a child's cognitive development. Piaget discusses three kinds of play for children: functional play where the child repeats an action, symbolic play with words and images, and games that have rules. While there are other methods, music education is cited as one of the most easily applicable - especially to make fun - ways of fulfilling these three types of play and promoting cognitive development within children. This is result further confirmed by Niland (2009), who found that play based ECME can be a powerful tool in teaching children about music and allowing them to access the benefits that come with ECME.

A more specific example might be that discussed by Burton & Taggart C. (2011) - language acquisition. A critical component of childhood education, the book analyses one specific case study about children who learned music from a young age. It found that music can help in the learning of language to develop rhythm and tonality - two important building blocks of speech. Furthermore, music can be used to introduce play into learning. Introduction of new vocabulary or ideas concepts was found to be more effective in maintaining student engagement and retaining knowledge when implemented as a rhyme or song. In a similar sense, another source,

Muthivhi (2019), found a link between ECME and increased acquisition of reading skills. Muthivhi was unsure of why this link existed but the benefits to language and speech development are also covered by Eccles et al (2021). Specifically, it notes benefits to phonological awareness and early literacy. These findings are thought to be the case because both literature and music use signs and symbols to communicate meaning. Children who participated in ECME also showed enhanced pitch and reading distinction abilities (Moreno, 2008), and increased literacy development when learning English (Paquette, 2008) further showing the benefits of ECME to speech development.

### Neurological Development Findings

Contrastingly, sources that take a neurological approach focused more heavily on understanding the brain development that occurs due to Early Childhood Music Education. As an example, related to the previously discussed relationship between music reading development, it was found that they both use the same neural mechanisms to process information for phonemes of speech and notes of music (Eccles 2021).

The benefits to phonological awareness are further covered by Moritz (2012), who found that children in ECME had a wider array of phonological awareness skills than children who did not participate. The study also describes the OPERA hypothesis, which suggests that the brain networks for speech and music auditory processing overlap. This overlap aids speech development through the teaching of precision of performance/recognition of words, emotion and motivation, repetition of shared ideas, and the cognitive focus required to process speech. It is thought that when these concepts are taught, it forces the brain to function with higher precision which benefits both musical and speech processing (Patel, 2011).

Similarly, Dana Strait (2012) specifically found that children who learned how to play an instrument were better at understanding speech in environments with distracting noise. The author notes that the parts of neural function that enable musicians to understand speech better in distracting listening environments underlie language development and could be useful tools for educators working with children that have a learning deficiency because of language difficulties.

Another source provides a more comprehensive overview of ECME research (Burton & Taggart, 2011). The study finds there is comparatively far less research on early childhood music education benefits when compared to the benefits of music education within adults. Even with the limited number of studies the authors found a significant neurological difference between musicians and the control group. As an example, "those who started training [music] before the age of seven years exhibited increased corpus callosum size", or a portion of the brain.

Music instruction has been found to increase general intellect, with visual-spatial skills having a more significant effect than seen with verbal skills. Since 1993 this tendency has been called the "Mozart effect" and numerous studies have re-analysed and tried to replicate similar results. One such study was Hetland (2000) who found that music education could slightly improve specific cognitive tasks. However, others still question the accuracy and result of these studies.

As Smith & Lounsbury (2009) describe, it is difficult to credit the observed results only to ECME. Could for example a physical education class - that could be just as likely to fulfil Piaget's requirements of play - show similar results? Simply the act of spending more time in a classroom environment might be a cause.

## **Pedagogy of Early Childhood Music Education**

In this section we will cover methodologies and issues surrounding ECME in both the US and China. In order to properly compare between the United States and China we need to gain a background understanding of ECME pedagogy in the two countries. Rather than focusing on specific teaching styles that can vary widely across the two large countries; we focused on the broader methods, availability, and issues. Due to language barriers, were limited to sources available and searchable in English.

### Chinese Pedagogy

In Chinese education one of the most prominent features is competitiveness. Incredible importance is placed on academic achievement by society and especially parents. As Chen-Hafteck & Xu (2008) describe that even for pre-schoolers, gaining admission to primary school frequently necessitates passing an entrance exam. Education in China heavily favours exams to determine academic ability, and the competition for schools starts very early. This competitive nature creates an interesting split within how ECME is taught, where in many schools it is seen as an afterthought while others over emphasize music education to a detriment of the students. As Leu (2008) explains, some schools - particularly private ones - attempt to fulfil expectations on children by implementing ECME in a way that Americans may find overly rigorous and difficult. As an example, the author describes how there are many music programs where children as young as three are expected to learn instruments. Contrastingly, in many places ECME is seen as an afterthought, taking away time from a child's academic study. In these places, many teachers were unqualified to teach ECME.

Even after major education Chinese reform in the early 2000s - where the government opened previously traditional music education laws - ECME was left up to the individual teacher's discretion, causing "the teaching practices of preschools in China [to] vary greatly among different schools in various regions"(Chen-Hafteck & Xu, 2008). Some teachers were excited about the policy and adapted it quickly, while many others were untrained in ECME and did not understand it's importance. Similarly, Leu (2008) describes how "If music exists in such schools, it is usually taught by classroom teachers who are not necessarily well trained," describing the problem of qualified teachers within ECME. Even in more general education more than half of kindergarten teachers had no professional training(Jiaxiong, 2015). Unlike what is generally common in the US, teachers are not specifically trained to teach young children, let alone teach ECME specifically.

Consequently, Riley (2013) wrote an example of how an expert in ECME could provide "lessons modelling the reform themes and conducting teacher-training workshops". The case study is an

example of how ECME can greatly vary depending on the qualifications of the preschool teacher - with the quality being particularly bad in rural and poor areas. Riley describes how many teachers in these rural areas had not been formally trained to teach children, let alone specifically music education.

Chen-Hafteck & Xu (2008) likewise considered Hong Kong and how it enacted an extensive curriculum policy trying to implement a more western play centred and individualistic approach. Despite allocating millions of dollars in incentives towards the programs, the program was considered a failure. Their study describes how “In school children have little music instruction, as they have to spend a lot of time studying”.

When considering ECME methods within China a clear desire for reform within the government can be seen; however, the reform movements quickly become impractical due to the constant academic pressure to succeed and teachers who are often unqualified to teach ECME. These factors can often lead to two extremes: very intensive goal-oriented programs where the enjoyment of a child is often ignored; or an unpopular afterthought where the music education is mostly ignored.

### American Pedagogy

Just as understanding Chinese pedagogy is important it is equally important to take a comprehensive look - beyond our limited personal experiences - at how music education is taught in the United States. Surprisingly, early childhood music education proved to be relatively similar in the two countries.

The largest difference between the US and China is the prevalence of music education within the existing preschool or kindergarten systems. Unlike in China teachers in the US are often expected to be professionally trained. Furthermore, kindergarten and preschool are not only seen as academically important but also developmentally and socially important. As such American teachers are far more likely to bring music and ECME into the kindergarten and preschool classrooms with 78% of schools reporting weekly music related activities (Nardo,2006). These activities include singing, dancing or playing along with music.

While the availability of music is important, understanding how ECME is taught is almost equally so. Nardo (2006) likewise discusses the most common goals of schools. Most schools were found to utilize ECME as a tool to enrich the classroom or promote creativity. Contrastingly, musical concepts and skill development was generally considered less important – only major goals in 12% and 13% of schools respectively. Overall ECME within American preschools appears to be both more available and better quality than in comparable Chinese schools.

Just like within China, preschools and general early schooling is only one part of understanding how ECME is taught within the countries. In the US preschools can often prove to be too costly or have bad hours for many parents. The national center for education statistics estimates only around 50% of preschool aged children are in school. Unfortunately, the other main method of

ECME – music studios – shares similar restrictions. There is a wide variety within these institutions, but many can likewise be cost or time prohibitive for parents.

One important distinction within the music studios is the prevalence of national brands. These are organizations who design specific music lessons and curriculums that the music studios utilize for teaching ECME. The existence of these organizations means that in many locations, music education is more uniform and higher quality than otherwise. Overall, early childhood music education in the United States is widely available and generally decent – but not freely available to all. Compared to China the US seems to have significantly less of a problem with unqualified teachers and an unenthusiastic culture.

## **Parental Opinions and Expectations**

Another important topic for our project is parental opinion - and establishing how parents within the two countries view ECME. Parental opinion can easily be swayed by many aspects including those discussed previously in the literature - the methodology within classes could easily impact a parent's opinion, and likewise having knowledge of the developmental benefits ECME brings. Particularly within private ECME - like our sponsor - parental opinion is one of the core aspects that influences how successful overall early childhood music education can be. With such a young target age demographic it would be impossible for children to participate themselves. Without parents liking the program or finding value in it there would be no students. Likewise, the age group means that even the results of the class are more subject to opinion - with the focus of ECME often not being on tangible music skills but rather the less immediately obvious brain and social developments. With a large portion of our project centered around understanding parental opinion we researched similar previous studies as a groundwork for our own surveys and interviews.

### Opinions in China

To understand the independent variables that shape parental perception for our own future surveys we looked for sources discussing parental opinions and expectations within China. To that end we were able to find two main sources that would be applicable, Leu (2008) and Bi (2011). In both sources they describe how while ECME is seen as important by many parents, they tend to be more utilitarian, valuing only certain musical activities - especially learning an instrument.

As Leu (2008) describes, "Taiwanese parents believe the activities in which their children engage should be goal oriented". The study further describes how goal-oriented learning can be detrimental to young children, with this type of education often ignoring the critical aspect of enjoyment. Similar beliefs are also mirrored within China. Bi (2011) - a survey on conditions of preschool music education within China - found that the value of ECME was not lost on Chinese parents. 53.7% of Chinese parents with young children thought that preschool music education influenced intelligence and morals. Similarly, 39.6% of parents thought that it can help develop good behaviour. Despite these results, the study was concerned with too utilitarian a view on

the issue. Citing how “69.3% of total [parents] will ask their children to learn to play instruments” and other survey data the authors believed that music education’s utilitarianism may make it difficult for children to enjoy – and later succeed in music, instead stifling children’s original musical interest.

While the two sources focus on separate countries and research methods - with Leu (2008) focusing on systems theory and Bi (2011) focusing on analysing survey data in China - they came to a very similar conclusion about parental opinion on ECME: While valuing ECME, parents focus too much on the utilitarian and goal-oriented aspects.

### Parental Opinions in the United States

It proved surprisingly difficult to find reliable sources that analysed American parents’ perception on ECME. We were only able to find one source, Koops (2007), that directly discussed parent’s opinions of ECME within the United States. Unfortunately, the study was extremely narrow in scope - focusing interviews with 5 parents of children already enrolled in music education. In order to add further context and understanding we decided to also look at two studies from the somewhat culturally similar Australia and United Kingdom, Savage (2015) and Pitt (2017).

Through all three studies the parents surprisingly shared similar reasons for participating in ECME. The most common of these was fun and enjoyment. As Koops (2007) describes, “parents noted their children’s enjoyment of musical activities, enjoyment of interacting with their own parents, the parents’ enjoyment of interacting with their child or children, or parents’ delight at seeing and hearing musical progress of their own child/children as well as other children.” Similarly, Pitt (2017) found that parents give fun a mean of 9.4 as a reason for participating in music. (Where 10 is very important). For all three studies parents highly valued their children’s enjoyment. If a child doesn’t like classes, the parents were very unlikely to continue.

Other reasons parents gave included socialization, developmental benefits, and music appreciation. In terms of socialization the first key portion is children socializing with other young children. For those not in school it can be very hard to find friends and peers. The only realistic way to do so is through parents being friends with other parents or through group activities. Classes like ECME or even sports are good examples of this situation. Similarly, ECME is a good method of socialization for parents as it lets parents meet and talk to other parents.

ECME is also cited by parents as helping a child’s sense of who their parents are. As Koops (2007) describes, parents thought an important aspect of these classes was for children to experience a situation with parents but where they are not necessarily the leaders. For most young children parents are almost always the ones in charge, ECME and other classes like it provide a unique social perspective that children could lack when going into school. ECME providing unique social situations for kids and parents was rated as one of the more important reasons parents participated in ECME.

Another commonly cited reason parents pursued ECME was to instill a sense of music appreciation. As one parent in Savage (2015) states “I want them to have an appreciation. I think its quite important. I hope they grow up with music as part of their lives”.

In the three studies, music appreciation did not mean learning an instrument or any specific music but learning the basics and setting a foundation. In both Koops (2007) and Savage (2015) Parents generally were described as leaving that decision up to what their child is passionate about. Instead, they hoped to set a foundation so that they would be able to pursue this option in the future. This is an important distinction to make because comparatively Chinese parents had a strong desire for children to learn an instrument as part of ECME.

The final major reason cited by parents who participated in ECME was for the future benefits. This reason ties in with the previously discussed benefits ECME can provide. Parents want their children to succeed in both school and general life. ECME can help give children a head starts in many learning categories.

Interestingly in Pitt (2017) developmental benefits are described as the least important major factor for parents but by far the most important for teachers and practitioners. The study does not go into depth for why this result exists, only citing how teachers were overwhelmingly more positive on the statements “music helps children’s overall learning” and “parents learn about child development by attending music groups”. While this discrepancy could be caused by any number of factors one likely influence is how aware parents were of the overall benefits ECME provides. As such is an important statistical difference that our group should consider during our work.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

We are trying to determine how to market Early Childhood Music Education, by researching and identifying parents' opinions and knowledge of ECME in both the United States and China; what the differences are, and why parents send their young children to music classes. Data was collected from both countries as different factors may affect parents' opinions on ECME in different cultures. We used individual interviews with parents who attended our sponsor's classes to gain an in-depth qualitative look at their views and used surveys to find common views that are held on ECME in China and the United States. We also interviewed professionals in the field of ECME as well as our sponsor to get a different perspective on what influences parents' opinions on ECME. This chapter provides more details on these methodologies.

### **Archival Research**

Our first method of data collection was archival research on ECME within both the United States and China. Specifically, our literature review focused on three main aspects of research, as seen in the background chapter. These topics were chosen to gain a good background understanding of our project. Archival research has the unique advantage of utilizing professional and more extensive work to ground our findings and recommendations in previous scholarly evidence. As we conducted archival research, the ideas we found inspired our own methods and the information we found made its way into the literature review. The archival research we did also inspired some of the questions we used for our survey which can be seen in Appendix A.

### **Video Interviews**

Video Interviews with parents became the content for our video, one of the deliverables for this project. These interviews were done with Chinese parents as well as American professionals in the field of Early Childhood Music Education. As a sample set, we interviewed parents with children taking classes through our sponsor though we were able to get some interviews with parents from a kindergarten in Hangzhou. Referenced in Appendix D, they were semi-standardized interviews focused on gaining insight on parent ECME opinions and our sponsor.

Interviews have the advantage over other data collection strategies as they allow for more depth within specific case studies and small groups but can be very time consuming and difficult to organize. We focused on getting a larger number of shorter interviews to get a more comprehensive sample set as the interviews were semi-standardized. We also interviewed professionals to get a different perspective on what may affect parents' opinions on ECME – see Appendices E & F. These interviews were conducted with both American professionals and our sponsor in China to get perspectives from both countries.

### **Surveys**

Surveys with parents who sent their young children to music classes as well as those who have not helped us gather more sizable amounts of data on parent ECME opinions. Compared to the interviews, the survey is more inclusive and focused on parents' opinions more generally in Hangzhou and the United States.

We obtain a broad understanding for why they did or did not send their children to ECME classes, their expectations, and their wants or requirements. The surveys were written as a collaboration between the WPI team and the HDU team, resulting in English and Chinese survey versions.

Surveys have the advantage of allowing us to collect data on a larger number of people but in return offer less depth than personal interviews. We attempted to distribute the surveys through day cares in Worcester, but we were not getting enough responses, so we distributed them through Facebook groups, WPI staff, and music institutes to get a more substantial number of responses. As a result of this, there is some bias in the data given these sample populations.

## **Data Collection**

The parent interviews were conducted by the HDU students who contacted parents and asked them if they would like to do an interview about ECME. If they consented, an interview was scheduled with the HDU students.

During the interview, the parents were asked questions about why they chose to send their child to ECME classes, what they were expecting to get out of it for their child, and what sort of programs they were looking for (See Appendix D)

Notes were taken during the interviews, but they were also recorded so we could go back and review to get more data for analysis as needed. The interviews also allowed for video clips for the final video which was one of the deliverables of this project. The interviews were transcribed for analysis. To do this, both parties needed computers with microphones of some sort and the interviewer's computer needed the ability to screen record. These interviews would eventually be cut into a video as one of the deliverables and the data we gather will be visualized in graphs where we may have some of the most common responses on them and how frequently they came up.

For interviews with professionals, we conducted the interviews ourselves over the internet and virtually them as well. These clips are not used in a video but are an important part of our research.

For the surveys of American parents, we used Qualtrics while surveys of Chinese parents used a Chinese survey website (wjx.cn). Since almost all urban Chinese people have access to the internet the easiest method to reach them was through an online survey.

## **Field Location and Schedule**

Since we were unable to be in China a significant portion of the data had to be collected by the HDU team. Some interviews were prescheduled video interviews, but others were at our sponsor location. The WPI team gathered the data on American parents through surveys distributed in Worcester and other places in the United States as well as interviews with American professionals in the United States.

## **Data Analysis and Ethical Considerations**

For surveys we mostly used varying kinds of multiple-choice questions that could be easily translated into a spreadsheet, though some of the questions had manual entry options that we had to analyze manually. As a result of using survey data, we performed some statistical analysis through MATLAB, Excel, and Qualtrics itself. Visualizations of our data can be found in tables or pie charts with the results of our survey. Since we are not looking at any change over time, line charts or bar graphs were less applicable. We used visualizations such as a Venn diagram to compare the US and China.

We sometimes ended up having information about which ECME program a person's child attended, their age, their location, and their face. We also used the recordings of interviews for the final video, so they had to consent to the usage of that footage before the interview. The collection of this information specifically had to be transparent to the participants and the data had to be destroyed after the project.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

After collecting over 150 survey responses and conducting three interviews, we compiled the common responses of our survey and important quotes from our interviews in the following sections. Major findings are summarized based first on our data collection methods and then the research questions posited. These questions include: Understanding parental knowledge on ECME, The experience of parents with ECME, and what drives parent choice.

### Surveying Parents

As discussed in the methodology section, we utilized an online survey to gauge opinions in both the United States as well as China. The goal of the surveys was to gain an understanding of how a more general population felt about ECME. As such, the target demographic of our survey was parents of young children – or customer base of the MeiYu Institute and any similar ECME institutions. Specifically, we focused on understanding three main questions: What is the experience of parents with ECME, what parents know about ECME, along with the reasoning to why parents chose to participate – or not.

Our group worked on the survey for the United States. Based off the survey rough draft the HDU group had completed, it was finalized in Qualtrics and then distributed around week 4 of the IQP. At first, we spread the survey by sharing it with local daycares and music studios. This proved to be a very slow method of collecting responses, so we continued to try other options. The two methods that ended up providing most of our responses were sharing the survey with WPI faculty and on a few ECME groups Facebook. In the end our survey had 73 responses, due to these methods, however the responses ended up very skewed – likely not a good representation of the general population. Particularly the data of our survey population is unusual due to how highly educated it is as well as the prevalence of ECME. Illustrated in Table 1, almost all respondents had a master’s degree or above. Furthermore, around 75% of respondents participated in ECM, greater than the average population. While these are not inherently problematic factors they need to be considered in our recommendations and analysis of the data.

**Table 1: Survey Population Demographics**

	Survey Population Demographics			
	Yes	No		
Participation in ECME	55 (75%)	18 (25%)		
Respondant Music Experience, Rated from 1 - 10	Mean: 4.66			
	Parent	Grandparent	Other	
Respondants Role	72 (99%)	0	1 (1%)	
	Highschool	Associates Degree	Bachelors Degree	Masters Degree or Above
Respondants Education	1 (.014%)	8 (11%)	27 (37%)	36 (49%)

## Parent Experiences

The first survey goal was to gain an understanding of parent experiences with early childhood music education. To evaluate this issue in a relatively thorough method, we had a set of nine survey questions related to it. The full survey can be found in Appendix A, while the results are in Appendix B.

One interesting topic within the survey is the population that has not participated in ECME. This group – unsurprisingly - had very little experience with ECME. As will be discussed later in this section, word-of-mouth communication and advertising is often a critical way parents learn about ECME. Despite this finding, 88% of this group of respondents had never been recommended music education. Furthermore, 58% of these parents described how almost none of the children they know participate in music education. These factors are indicative of one important theme we found within our analysis: the social aspect of ECME. When people do not have any experience in ECME it is most common for their friends and those around them likewise to not participate.

For the population that has participated in ECME we focused on gaining an understanding of what type of experience they had – including knowing what classes were most common, how often people went, and instruments used. From these questions we found that the most common types of classes were parent-child classes followed by music and dance classes.

In contrast to our background research only two respondents cited learning ECME in school, but this was likely a surveying error as we did not include school as an option, and those responses were part of our “other” choice.

The mean starting age of students in ECME was slightly over a year and a half old for our population set. This result is unsurprising and generally matches our interviews and background research. Overwhelmingly we found that students were not learning any specific instruments within ECME. The most popular instrument children learned was piano, but with only 6 responses. Again, these responses make sense and generally match what we heard in our interviews with teachers.

Most of the survey population participated in music education once a week. Surprisingly there were respondents who participated every day. The final topic of experience we had within our survey was the participation of parents within the classroom. This ended up being a commonly discussed topic within our interviews, so it is likewise important to contrast this with the survey results. From the survey responses it was found that slightly under seventy percent of parents participated in ECME with their child, while close to 75% of respondents wanted to participate in these classes. This result once again shows parent-child class popularity. The result can tie in with the theme of socialization through parents wanting to spend time with their children.

Overall, this portion of the survey matched what we had expected. The responses and experiences of both parents who have done ECME and have not are similar to what our professional interviewees described as well as what we learned in background research.

## Parental Knowledge

The next critical question we sought to answer with our survey was what parents know about ECME. Specifically, we hoped to gain an understanding of how much parents knew about the benefits surrounding ECME. To do so we first had respondents evaluate statements about ECME on a Likert scale.

Out of our statements, the vaguest “Music education can have a noticeable influence on children” was the most agreed upon item. Over 91% of respondents somewhat agreed or strongly agreed. While the statement isn’t inherently positive it does illustrate how a large majority of parents see music education – and by extension ECME – as not being worthless or a waste of time.

This result is further backed up by the very positive responses of two other statements. As illustrated in Figure 1, the majority of parents agreed that music education can have a strong impact on both academic performance as well as sociability. While this is a question that could easily be influenced by our population bias -specifically our 75% majority of respondents participating in ECME - the complete lack of negative responses on the academic performance statement indicates that it is likely not the case. While these statements are indirect and generally vague, their very positive evaluation can be used to show how parents do recognize the potential impact ECME can have. This itself is important as people who do not think music education can have an impact will likewise not believe in any specific benefits.

Opinions of Parents on Various Music Education Statements

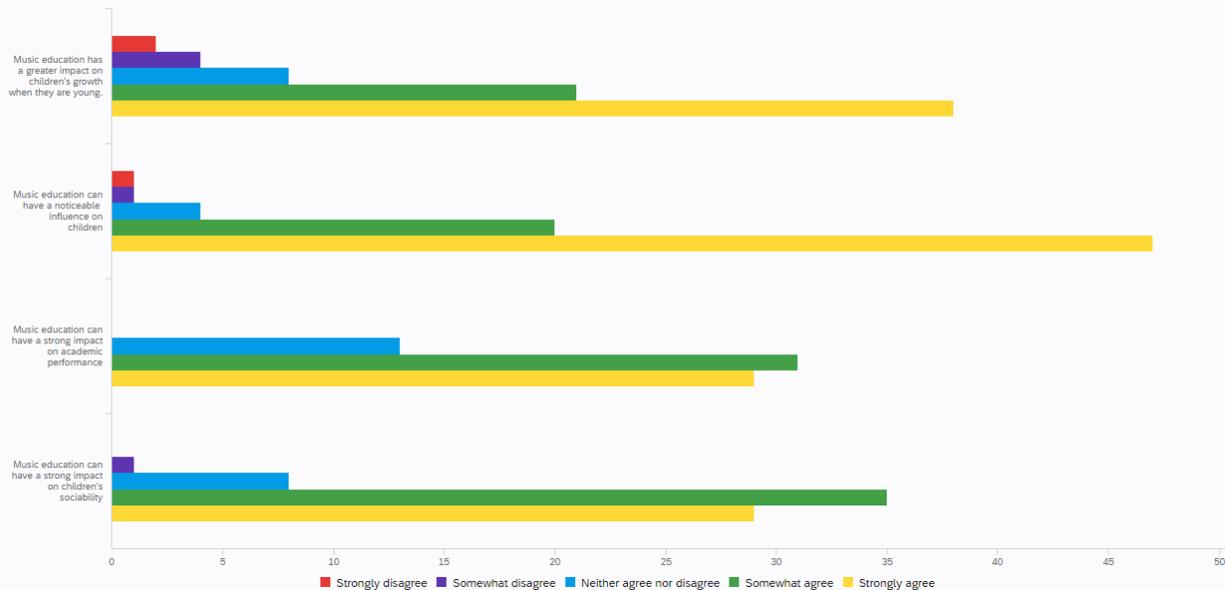


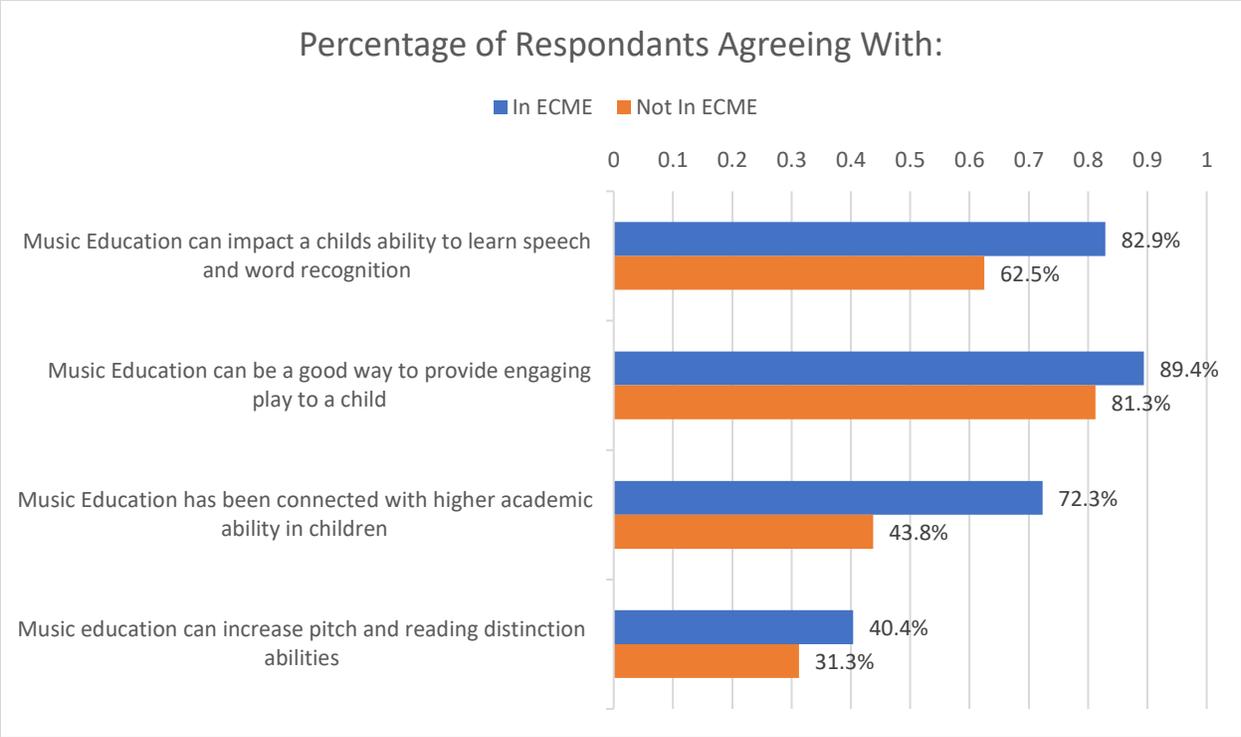
Figure 1: Parents’ Likert Scale agreement on various statements about ECME

To further understand parent ECME knowledge we focused on the specific benefits. To start, we asked all parents “Are you aware of the developmental and neurological benefits early childhood music education can have for your child” as a simple yes-no question. Among parents not in ECME only 35% answered yes to this question. However, for those taking ECME, 87% answered yes. These results illustrate how parents who don’t participate in ECME are less, or at least believe they are, knowledgeable about the benefits ECME can have.

The issue with this question is we cannot tell why there is such a discrepancy. Do parents learn the benefits of ECME as part of taking the classes? Or are those who already know about the benefits the ones who seek out and participate in ECME? It is likely a mix of both, but without proper follow-up questions we cannot be sure. A third possibility, however, is an overspecification of our question. Parents not in ECME might simply not have realized the benefits they have heard of counted as “developmental and neurological”.

This possibility comes up due to our second main question for evaluating parental knowledge. In the question parents were to select which statements they had heard of. As illustrated in Figure 2, we had an interesting case with the data as even among the parents not in ECME a large majority had heard of some statements. The percentage of people who have heard about engaging play as well as speech and word recognition directly conflicts with the findings of the previous question.

Our group can think of two main reasons this could be caused: bad survey design where parents misunderstood the questions, or a surface level understanding. This would be where parents might have heard of these benefits but not any specific details and felt they did not know enough about it. The surface level understanding parents might have is particularly important to consider in relation to how our sponsor and other ECME institutes advertise.



**Figure 2: Agreement of parents on beneficial ECME statements presented to them.**

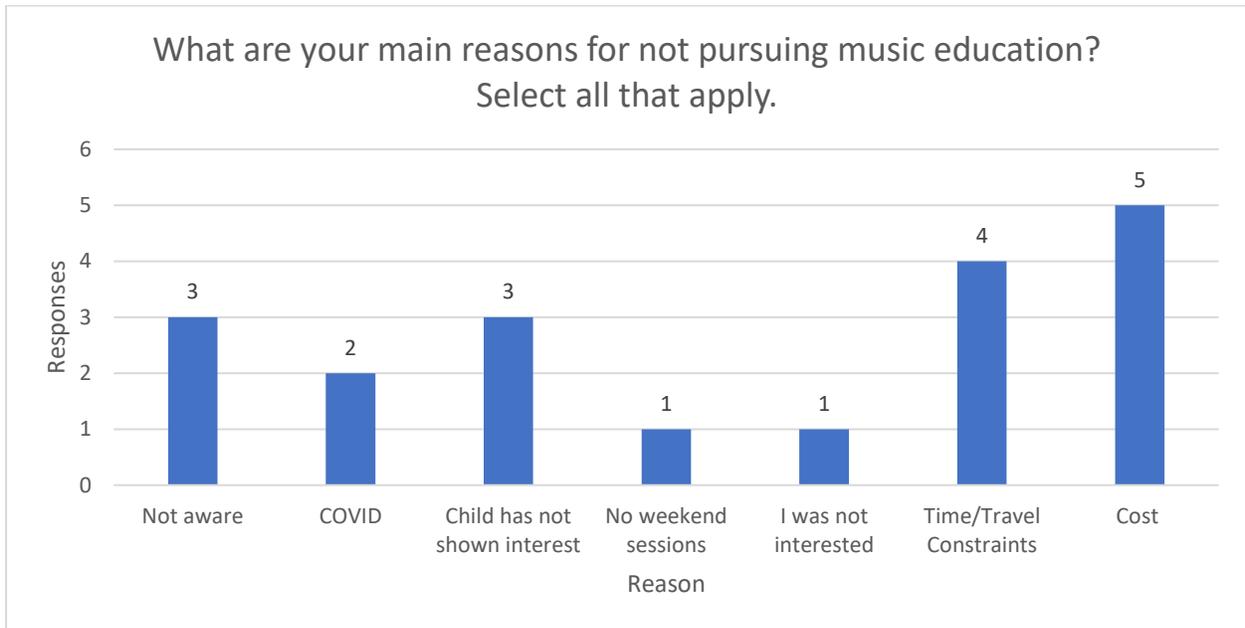
Parent Choices

The final goal of our survey was to gain an understanding of why - or why not – parents choose to participate in ECME. We focused primarily on what potential factors that influence a parent’s choice in participation as a direct form of market research for the sponsor using the HDU survey.

This portion of our survey – as well as previous portions - was to provide context and contrast to the IQP about ECME in America. To do so we first asked why parents choose to not participate in ECME.

As shown in Figure 3, parents were asked to select their main reason for that choice. Overall, the results matched what we had expected from the research and interview process. Cost, then time constraints were the main provided reasons. The issue with this question, however, is poor survey design. We neglected to provide a good comprehensive list of options, and two somewhat common ones illustrated below – lack of awareness and COVID – were not listed and instead gathered from the fill-in data. Furthermore, this portion of the survey had less than 20 respondents, and even the most common answer was only 5, so these results are likely not representative of average. Despite these factors it is still an interesting data set in understanding parents' reasonings. Particularly, over 15% of parents said the biggest reason was not being aware, despite it being a fill in response and not a listed option (which likely biased people away from it).

The other question we asked parents not in ECME was what they might potentially spend on it. Most of these responses were the minimum option, under \$100 per month. This result matches the background archival research with the cost being the most common constraint. It was interesting however that the results showed prevalence of other options. Even among parents who do not have a child in ECME, 5% said they would spend up to \$500 per month. This might be simply an anomaly with the low population or could indicate the high value some parents give towards ECME, despite not pursuing it.



**Figure 3: Reasons parents did not pursue ECME (multiple options could be selected)**

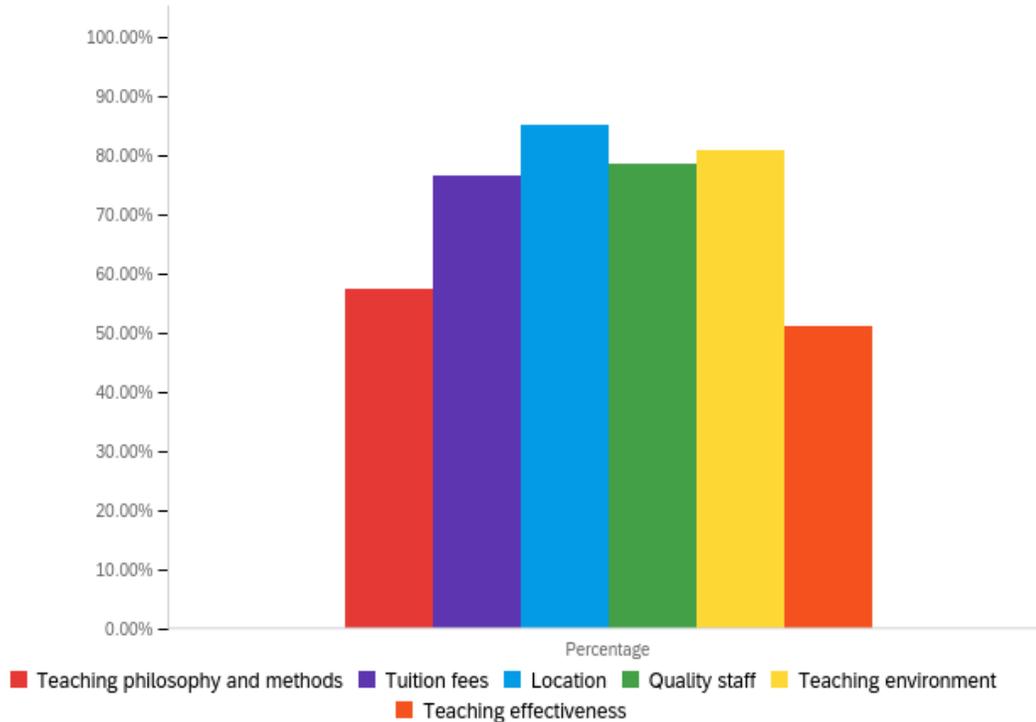
For parents with children in ECME we first asked why they choose a specific music education institute. They selected which factors influenced their choice, as shown in Figure 4. Matching what we found through our interviews, the most common response was location. Most towns are likely to have one or two ECME institutions, so parents will often go to the closest. Other than location, it is interesting to note how parents thought the teaching environment was more important than teaching effectiveness or philosophy.

Besides these factors this portion of the survey was focused more on ECME as a whole than specific institutions. When asking parents why they send their children to ECME, a majority of responses was to cultivate musical literacy -followed by other. This result was unexpected and generally did not match our previous findings and research, where factors like fun and socialization were commonly mentioned.

This is again likely a survey design problem because we did not even include these factors as options with no fill in section. As such, this specific question likely have almost no value when analyzing it but may be important when comparing to the similarly flawed Chinese survey.

Finally, we asked what musical skills parents wanted their children to learn. The most popular choice was singing followed by piano. This again generally matched our background and interviews and is interesting to understand what parents expect out of ECME.

Factors that influence parent choice of those in ECME, in percentage of the overall responses



**Figure 4: Factors that influence parents’ choice of ECME institute (multiple options could be selected)**

### Surveying In China

Surprisingly, the survey performed by the HDU team had similar results the WPI team US survey (Appendix C). Even the Chinese survey demographics ended up being similar to the US due to how the survey was distributed through school and in collaboration with the sponsor.

. A majority of Chinese parents were educated and planning to or already pursuing music education. Within our first critical question, parental experience with ECME, there were again surprisingly similar results. Factors like what age children should receive music education, selection of instruments played and what types of education parents had heard of all were similar. The only outlier was how practically all parents wanted to participate in music classes with their child, compared to a majority in the US.

This pattern continues when considering what parents know about ECME. Chinese parents agreed equally as much, if not more in many cases, about the benefits to education and social development ECME can provide.

The biggest differences between the two surveys appeared when looking at parent choices and expectations. Like our research and interviews suggested, a far greater number (almost 50%) associated ECME with instruments. Likewise teaching concepts, faculty, and the effectiveness of teaching proved to be more prominent factors in influencing parent choice than the common factors in the US like location, fees, and environment. The most and least popular factors ended up being basically flipped between the two surveys. This contrast is particularly interesting as it is one of the few major ones within the surveys and is likely influenced by a wide variety of factors. Things like cultural differences, translation discrepancies, or even the urbanization of Hangzhou compared to Massachusetts could be impacting these results.

Like in the US, cost and time proved to be the two major reasons against ECME and even potential spending on ECME matched – a majority of parents spending less but with a noticeable minority choosing the most expensive option. Overall, it was fascinating to see how similar the results of the two surveys were despite the many differences in where and how they were performed.

## **Interviews**

We conducted three interviews with ECME professionals with two in the United States and one being in China (our sponsor). As a result, our interview results will be slightly biased towards a perspective from the United States. These interviews were semi-standardized and had a consistent set of questions that we asked all three professionals (see Appendices E & F). We sought to get a different perspective on what influences parent ECME opinions, one from a group of people who have interacted with many parents in this field. The three professionals we interviewed were Molly Ziegler from Kindermusik, Julie Holston from Music Together, and Cao Haiyan from the Meiyu Music and Dance Institute (our sponsor).

In our interview with the professionals, one common reason that came up frequently in the interview that we did not consider before was that parents often go to ECME classes to socialize with other parents and to give their children opportunities to socialize with other children. This reason did not appear in our survey results as only two respondents filled in the “Other” blank with socialization. This response may have occurred more frequently if it was an option that did not have to be filled in as text.

Another common reason that came up in the interviews was that many parents sign their children up for ECME classes for fun, both for their children and for themselves. This was another option we did not include as an option, but it was the most common write in response at about 9% of respondents that said they are/will have their child participate in ECME classes. If this survey was conducted again with “Fun” as an option, it may get more responses. Both

socialization and fun are factors that may have a more significant impact on parent ECME opinions and could warrant more study.

As for the benefits of ECME, Ziegler noted that parents quickly learn about the benefits after they start classes which convinces them to stay but many are unaware of these benefits before starting classes. This finding suggests that the benefits of ECME are not a significant factor in influencing whether parents choose to start ECME classes but may be a significant reason they continue.

Another factor that was discussed was whether having a musical background significantly affects parents' decisions on whether to send their children to ECME classes. Ziegler said that she did not believe it necessarily increase the likelihood of parents sending their children to ECME classes but that parents with a musical background did more quickly understand what was going on. This seems to match our survey results as most parents did not have a lot of experience in music, but most respondents did state that they sent their children to ECME classes. On this topic, Cao noted this to be true as well, as she said parents with a musical background will know that ECME classes are not just about learning instruments, especially not for younger children.

A factor that was discussed that did have a significant impact on whether parents sent their children to ECME classes though was location and cost. Ziegler said having a location even just five to ten minutes closer to a potentially interested parent will raise the appeal and Cao also said that location is a problem for many parents and causes them to not send their children to ECME classes. Kindermusik charges \$60-\$65 per month which includes classes as well as materials such as books. While most survey respondents who answered how much they would be willing to spend on ECME classes per month did choose less than \$100 per month, only eighteen people would have seen the question (those who said their children are/would not participate in ECME classes) with 11 respondents selecting less than \$100 per month.

Along these lines, both Ziegler and Holston noted that many people do not understand the benefits of ECME or do not care. These parents would rather send their children to sports programs like soccer or gymnastics as they are looking for classes to get their child moving, not realizing that many ECME classes involve movement and dancing. Some of these parents ask why they cannot just sing at home, even though that would lack the structure and patterns of an ECME class.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

In this final section we discuss our recommendations for the sponsor and any future IQPs, our challenges faced throughout this project, as well as our final findings from our interviews and surveys.

### Recommendations

When creating recommendations, we tried to focus on what would be both effective and achievable in getting more people to pursue ECME. From our surveys and interviews the biggest hinderance that appeared would be cost. However, we cannot simply recommend the sponsor lowering prices as it is something they would have already done if achievable. Furthermore, since we did not travel to China it was very difficult to gain and understanding of what was already being done and what could be possible. To do so, we had to utilize the sponsor's website and the interview with her.

As such, we came upon the general theme for our recommendations: *outreach*. Among the reasons people provided not knowing about ECME and children not being interested were two major factors. Furthermore, all three of our professional interviews cited how much more likely parents were to continue pursuing ECME if they understood it. We hope our recommendations for types of community outreach would be able to better inform parents on what ECME is, facilitate word of mouth advertising through the community, as well help interest children in music.

The first recommendation would be to hold open houses or free walk-in classes. These would be specific prescheduled days where parents and children could stop by and watch, or even participate, in an ECME class. From our understanding, the MEIYU Music and Dance International Institute already offers free trial classes, but we believe open house days could also be beneficial. Having a specific day and time would allow the event to be somewhat promoted by the sponsor, or even by parents themselves. Furthermore, it would lessen the commitment and barriers for the parents as they would simply need to show up to see what ECME is about.

Our second recommendation might not be possible, but we believe it could have an important impact. This recommendation is to bring the MEIYU program directly into preschools and kindergartens. In the US it is common for schools to have guest speakers who do a presentation on a topic the teachers and curriculum wouldn't normally cover. From our limited background research, we found that music classes in Chinese preschools or kindergartens were generally uncommon. From our perspective this could be a problem as children with no early exposure to music are far less likely to pursue it. We recommend working with schools that do not have music education to serve as a guest speaker. Even as little as a 1–2-hour presentation could be enough to spark a musical interest in children.

Our final recommendation is for future IQP groups that would further pursue this topic. As mentioned in the challenges we were unable to create the video we originally planned due to a variety of factors, but mostly due to communication. Originally our plan for the video was to compile clips of interviews with parents. This proved to be impossible as it relied on the HDU students being able to subtitle the interview videos so that we could properly edit them while still making sense. While this type of video may work, it proved far too time consuming for our group. Instead, we recommend using quotes and selected pieces of interviews within an overall script. A script could be written in English then translated and read out in Chinese. This would comparatively minimize the amount of video editing required as well as help make a more professional product. Furthermore, a proper script could allow the video to address topics other than just parental experiences - like the science behind ECME, or even something as simple as describing what ECME is.

## **Challenges Faced**

One of the biggest challenges we faced was trying to communicate effectively with the HDU team and our sponsor since both were in very different time zones than we were and some of the HDU team did not speak English. This resulted in us holding meetings in the early morning for us so we could manage to talk to the HDU students and sponsor at a reasonable hour for both parties. It also meant that any form of communication was likely to have a multiple hour delay as people worked at different times. To get around the language barrier, we used online translation tools to translate to Chinese and back to English. We also spoke more to the HDU students who did speak English so they could more effectively pass the message on to the rest of the HDU students.

Our other main challenge proved to be creating a video. Originally planned to be for the sponsor based around Chinese parent interviews, it was a significant underestimation on the difficulty and time required.

## **Summary of Findings**

Within our findings there were a couple trends that we felt were of particular importance to take note on. Appearing in both our interviews and surveys, they illustrate significant aspects of our research

The first main theme we found is a lack of understanding from some parents, specifically those who haven't taken ECME classes. Parents who have participated in ECME generally understood what it was, as well as its importance and benefits, but one of the major reasons given in the survey for not taking music classes was a lack of understanding. Unlike activities like sports classes, ECME is less intuitive in the benefits it can provide. As such parents are far less likely to consider ECME as an option if they never had any previous experience with it. This is particularly important to consider in China where widespread ECME are significantly newer than in the US. Similarly, both American professionals we interviewed stressed how important

the believed informing parents was. Uninformed parents were described as the hardest to get to come to classes as well as the least likely to come back.

The second critical trend we found within our results was the importance of socialization in two separate ways. Socialization was a factor we largely did not consider at the start of this project, not even including friends and meeting people as an option for why parents pursued ECME. In general, it's indicative of how our perspective on ECME classes has changed. Based on the surveys and interviews, we found a large majority of people don't look at ECME just for how it can benefit their child but as an activity. Doing something together with their child, both the child and parent having fun, and meeting other children and parents were all aspects of ECME classes that we generally failed to consider within our survey and interview designs.

Besides these factors, the other important aspect of socialization is how it is used in advertisement of music studios. This is an aspect we did consider but were still surprised by its prevalence. At least for our interviewed professionals, a significant portion of their clients came from word of mouth. They advertised but it was also common for someone to come in just from a friend's recommendation. Presence Facebook and other social media sites was critical. Likewise, our survey had a strong correlation between being recommended ECME by someone and participating in ECME. The prevalence of word-of-mouth advertising and parent's understanding can also likely be linked together. The less intuitive nature of ECME means that people – and especially parents – are probable to trust their friends or family member's word an advertisement.

The final main aspect of our findings to specifically consider is the role instruments. Tying in with parents' parents lack of understanding, instruments are critical to ECME but also not the focus. As we found in all three of our interviews instruments of some kind are almost always used in ECME classes, where they are used to supplement the teaching of basic music ideas and learning. This is specifically important as it a very common misunderstanding parents have is that the goal of these classes is to simply start learning an instrument earlier. This expectation was described in our interviews as being a hinderance to teaching and often ruining a child's passion for music. As the surveys illustrated, it is far less of an issue in the US, but nearly 50% of Chinese parents believed music education should include learning instruments and was a major issue discussed in our interview with the sponsor.

## **Conclusion**

The factors that most affected parents' decisions on whether to pursue ECME were the cost and location of an institute as well as the chance to socialize with other parents. They were also more likely to pursue ECME in the interest of fun or cultivating musical literacy rather than trying to get their children to learn an instrument. Many parents were not aware of the specific benefits of ECME, but many respondents still sent their children to ECME classes suggesting that the benefits of ECME are not a significant factor in why parents pursue ECME. However, upon being presented with the benefits of ECME, many parents agree that the benefits exist.

Overall, this study could help the MEIYU Music and Dance International Institute with steps in marketing their school and understanding their customers.

## REFERENCES

- Acker, A., & Nyland, B. (2020). Chinese Preservice Teachers Engaging with Children Through Music, Their Story. In *Adult Perspectives on Children and Music in Early Childhood* (pp. 83–97). Springer International Publishing. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57698-1\\_5](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57698-1_5)
- Andress, B. (1986). Toward an integrated developmental theory for early childhood music education. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 86, 10–17. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40317965>
- Bi, Yujuan. 3rd ed., vol. 4, Canadian Center of Science and Education, 2011, pp. 105–108, A report of survey on conditions of preschool children's family music education. <https://eric.ed.gov/?q=%22early+childhood+music+education%22&pg=2&id=EJ1066530>
- Burton S, Taggart C. (2011). Learning from young children research in early childhood music. MENC, the National Association for Music Education (U.S.). *R&L Education* <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/wpi/detail.action?pq-origsite=primo&docID=737233>
- Eccles, R., van der Linde, J., Roux, M. L., & Swanepoel, D. W. (2021). The effect of music education approaches on phonological awareness and early literacy: A systematic review. *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, 44(1), 46+. [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A657581082/PROF?u=mlln\\_c\\_worpoly&sid=bookmark-PROF&xid=cd025912](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A657581082/PROF?u=mlln_c_worpoly&sid=bookmark-PROF&xid=cd025912)
- Hetland, L.(2000). Listening to music enhances spatial-temporal reasoning: evidence for the 'Mozart Effect.' *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, vol. 34, no. 3/4, University of Illinois Press, pp. 105–48, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3333640>.
- Leu, J. C.-Y. (2008). Early childhood music education in Taiwan: An Ecological Systems Perspective. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 109(3), 17–26. <https://doi.org/10.3200/aepr.109.3.17-26>
- Li F, Xu L. (2015). Research on the european and american music education mode and the corresponding influence on the chinese native music education. *International Conference on Information in Education, Management and Business* <https://www.atlantis-pess.com/article/25838783.pdf>
- Lily Chen-Hafteck & Zhuoya Xu (2008) Pulling the River: The Interactions of Local and Global Influences in Chinese Early Childhood Music Education, *Arts Education Policy Review*, 109:3, 9-16, DOI: 10.3200/AEPR.109.3.9-16
- Moreno, S., Marques, C., Santos, A., Santos, M., Castro, S. L., & Besson, M. (2008). Musical training influences linguistic abilities in 8-year-old children: More evidence for brain plasticity. *Cerebral Cortex*, 19(3), 712–723. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cercor/bhn120>
- Moritz, C., Yampolsky, S., Papadelis, G., Thomson, J., & Wolf, M. (2012). Links between early rhythm skills, musical training, and Phonological Awareness. *Reading and Writing*, 26(5), 739–769. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-012-9389-0>
- Muthivhi, A. E., & Kriger, S. (2019). Music instruction and reading performance: Conceptual transfer in learning and development. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, 9(1). [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A591369283/PROF?u=mlln\\_c\\_worpoly&sid=bookmark-PROF&xid=c57efe13](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A591369283/PROF?u=mlln_c_worpoly&sid=bookmark-PROF&xid=c57efe13)

- Niland, A. (2009). The power of musical play: The value of play-based, child-centered curriculum in early childhood music education. *General Music Today*, 23(1), 17–21.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1048371309335625>
- Paquette, K. R., & Rieg, S. A. (2008). Using music to support the literacy development of young English language learners. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 36(3), 227–232.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-008-0277-9>
- Patel, A. D. (2011). Why would musical training benefit the neural encoding of speech? the opera hypothesis. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2011.00142>
- Riley P (2013) Curriculum reform in rural China: an exploratory case study. *Research and Issues in Music Education* 11(3) <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1015690>
- Smith N, Lounsbery M. (2009) Promoting physical education: the link to academic achievement. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance (JOPERD)*, 80(1) 39-43.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2009.10598266>
- Strait D, Parbery-Clark A, Hittner E & Kraus N. (2012). Musical training during early childhood enhances the neural encoding of speed in noise. *Brain and Language*, 123(3), 191-2001  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0093934X12001617?via%3Dihub>

## APPENDIX A: AMERICAN SURVEY

All data provided in this survey will be anonymized and used for academic purposes only.

What age is your child?

What is the gender of your child?

Male

Female

Prefer not to say

What is your education level?

Some Highschool

Finished Highschool

Associates Degree / Some College

Bachelors Degree

Masters Degree or above

What is your experience in music?

0      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

0 : No Experience

10 : Professional Experience



Who is the child's primary caretaker(s)?

Parent

Grandparent

Other

Evaluate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Music education has a greater impact on children's growth when they are young.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The goal of early music education should be to learn an instrument	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music education can have a noticeable influence on children	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music education can have a strong impact on academic performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music education can have a strong impact on children's sociability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Have you heard of the following music education methods?  
Select all that apply.

- Orff Approach
- Dalcroze Method
- Kodály Method
- Suzuki Method
- I am not aware of any of these music education methods

Has or will your child participate in early childhood music education (Any form of music education before age 6)?

- Yes
- No

Has anyone recommended music education to you or your child?

Yes

No

What are your main reasons for not pursuing music education?  
Select all that apply.

My child was not interested

I was not interested

Time or travel constraints

Cost

Other

How much would you potentially spend per month on music education?

Less than \$100

\$100 - \$200

\$200 - \$500

Above \$500

What percentage of children do you know participate in a form of music education?

Above 50%

30-50%

10-30%

Below 10%, almost none

Are you aware of the developmental and neurological benefits early childhood music education can have for your child?

No

Yes

What benefits have you previously heard about or are knowledgeable about? Select all that apply.

Music education can impact a child's ability to learn speech and word recognition

Music education can be a good way to provide engaging play to a child

Music education has been connected with higher academic ability in children

Music education can increase pitch and reading distinction abilities

Other:

Could knowing more about these benefits impact your decisions in the future?

Yes

No

What type of music education? Select all that apply.

Parent and child music classes

Learning an instrument

Story based music classes

Music and dance classes

Other:

At what ages has your child received music education?

What instruments has your child learned to play? Select all that apply.

Piano

Guitar

Violin

Recorder

Flute

Drums

Other:

None

How often does your child receive music education?

Biweekly / Monthly

Once a Week

Multiple Times a Week

Every Day

Do you participate in your child's music classes?

Yes I participate

No I do not participate

Do you want to participate in your child's music classes?

Yes I want to participate

No I do not want to participate

Which teaching methods are best for your child?

One on one classes

Group classes

Parent-child classes

What do you think of the music education available in your area?

Good

Average

Needs improvement

What services do you want the music education institute to provide? Select all that apply.

Free courses

Lectures by education experts

Music studio

Parent-child courses

Observe your child's classes

Other:

What factors influence your choice of music education institution?

Select all that apply.

Teaching philosophy and methods

Tuition fees

Location

Quality staff

Teaching environment

Teaching effectiveness

Why are you sending your child to music education classes?  
Select all that apply.

To cultivate musical literacy

To obtain a certificate

To be able to perform

To be accepted to a professional arts school in the future

Because other people were doing it

Other:

What kind of musical skills or instruments do you want children to learn? Select all that apply.

Piano

Vocal (Singing)

Music Theory, Sight Singing, and Ear Training

Composing

Other musical instruments

Other:

Are you aware of the developmental and neurological benefits early childhood music education can have for your child?

No

Yes

What benefits have you previously heard about or are knowledgeable about? Select all that apply.

Music education can impact a child's ability to learn speech and word recognition

Music education can be a good way to provide engaging play to a child

Music education has been connected with higher academic ability in children

Music education can increase pitch and reading distinction abilities

Other:

Could knowing more about these benefits impact your decisions in the future?

Yes

No

## APPENDIX B: SURVEY RESULTS

### Question 1 (only some data shown)

---

4

5

7

8 months

22 months

5

3

4

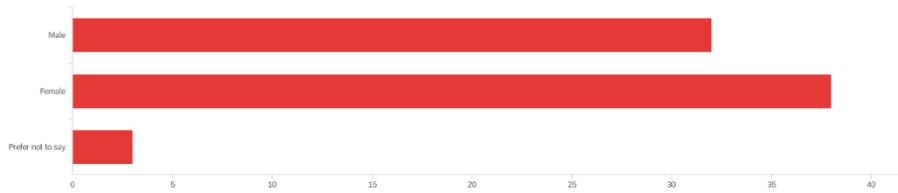
5

1

## Question 2

Q2 - What is the gender of your child?

Page Options ▾



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What is the gender of your child?	1.00	3.00	1.60	0.57	0.32	73

## Question 3

Q3 - What is your education level?

Page Options ▾



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What is your education level?	2.00	5.00	4.36	0.73	0.54	72

## Question 4

Q4 - What is your experience in music?

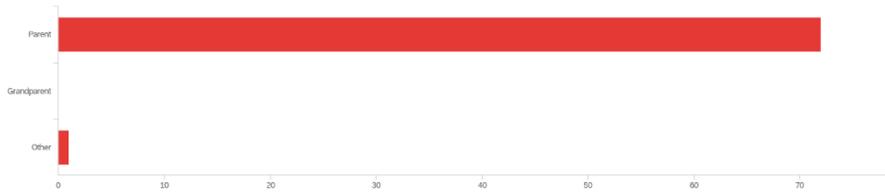
Page Options ▾

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	0 : No Experience 10 : Professional Experience	0.00	10.00	4.66	3.02	9.10	71

## Question 5

Q4 - Who is the child's primary caretaker(s)?

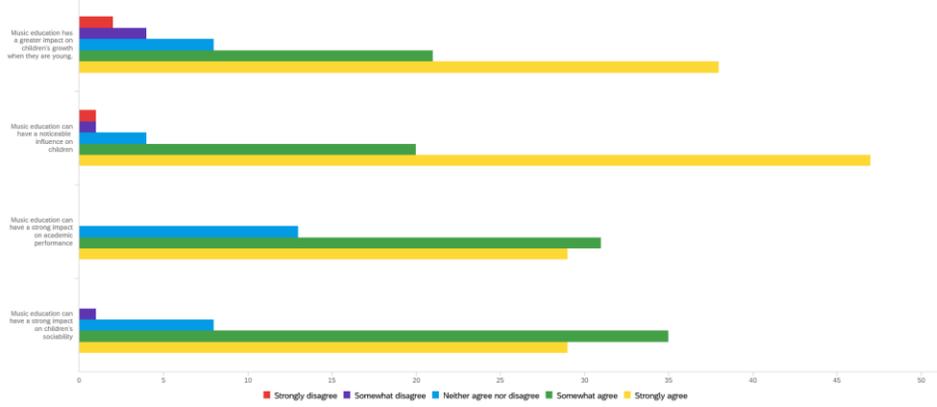
Page Options ▾



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Who is the child's primary caretaker(s)?	1.00	3.00	1.03	0.23	0.05	73

## Question 6

Opinions of Parents on Various Music Education Statements



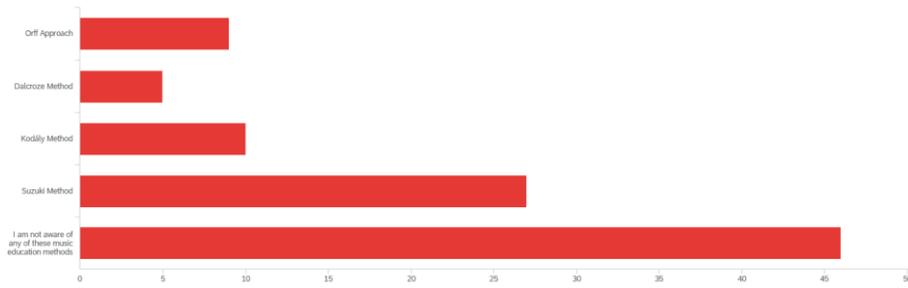
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Music education has a greater impact on children's growth when they are young.	1.00	5.00	4.22	1.02	1.05	73
2	The goal of early music education should be to learn an instrument	1.00	5.00	2.44	1.07	1.15	73
3	Music education can have a noticeable influence on children	1.00	5.00	4.52	0.78	0.61	73
4	Music education can have a strong impact on academic performance	3.00	5.00	4.22	0.73	0.53	73
5	Music education can have a strong impact on children's sociability	2.00	5.00	4.26	0.70	0.49	73

#	Field	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Total
1	Music education has a greater impact on children's growth when they are young.	2.74% 2	5.48% 4	10.96% 8	28.77% 21	52.05% 38	73
2	The goal of early music education should be to learn an instrument	20.55% 15	36.99% 27	23.29% 17	16.44% 12	2.74% 2	73
3	Music education can have a noticeable influence on children	1.37% 1	1.37% 1	5.48% 4	27.40% 20	64.38% 47	73
4	Music education can have a strong impact on academic performance	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	17.81% 13	42.47% 31	39.73% 29	73
5	Music education can have a strong impact on children's sociability	0.00% 0	1.37% 1	10.96% 8	47.95% 35	39.73% 29	73

## Question 7

Q7 - Have you heard of the following music education methods? Select all that apply.

Page Options ▾

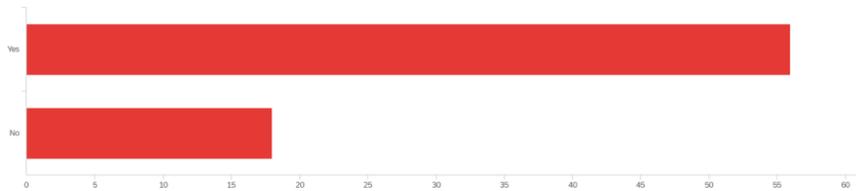


#	Field	Choice Count
1	Orff Approach	9.28% 9
2	Dalcroze Method	5.15% 5
3	Kodály Method	10.31% 10
4	Suzuki Method	27.84% 27
5	I am not aware of any of these music education methods	47.42% 46
		97

## Question 8

Q8 - Has or will your child participate in early childhood music education (Any form of music education before age 6)?

Page Options ▾



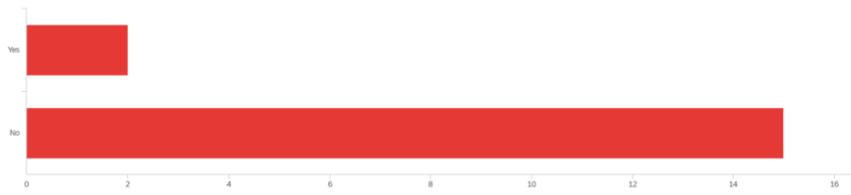
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Has or will your child participate in early childhood music education (Any form of music education before age 6)?	1.00	2.00	1.24	0.43	0.18	74

This question determines which set of questions the respondent gets with one set for answering yes and one for answering no.

## Question 1 (No)

N1 - Has anyone recommended music education to you or your child?

Page Options ▾

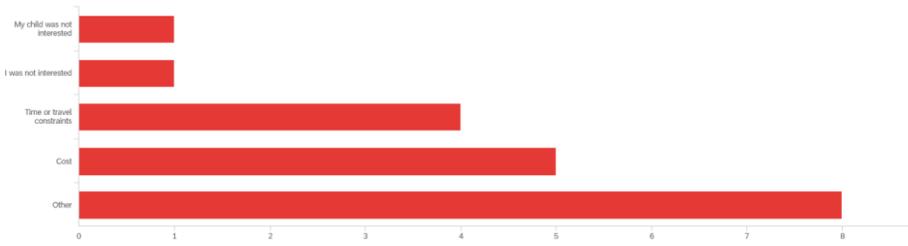


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Has anyone recommended music education to you or your child?	1.00	2.00	1.88	0.32	0.10	17

## Question 2 (No)

N2 - What are your main reasons for not pursuing music education? Select all that apply.

Page Options ▾



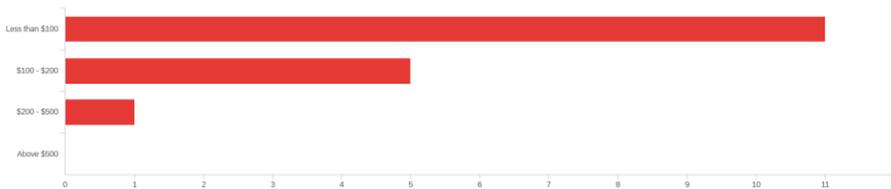
#	Field	Choice Count
1	My child was not interested	5.26% 1
2	I was not interested	5.26% 1
3	Time or travel constraints	21.05% 4
4	Cost	26.32% 5
5	Other	42.11% 8
		<b>19</b>

Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

## Question 3 (No)

N3 - How much would you potentially spend per month on music education?

Page Options ▾

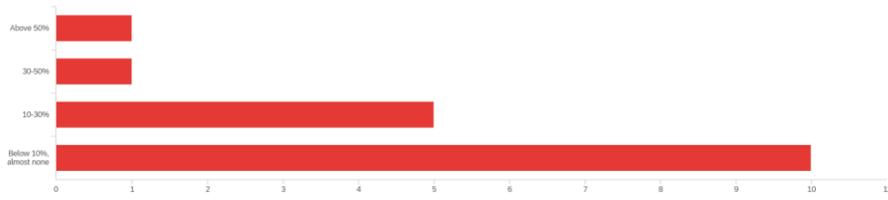


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	How much would you potentially spend per month on music education?	1.00	3.00	1.41	0.60	0.36	17

## Question 4 (No)

N4 - What percentage of children do you know participate in a form of music education?

Page Options ▾

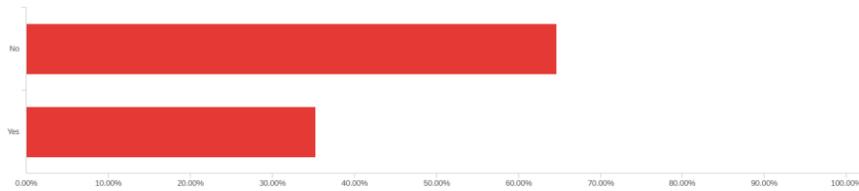


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What percentage of children do you know participate in a form of music education?	1.00	4.00	3.41	0.84	0.71	17

## Question 5 (No)

N5 - Are you aware of the developmental and neurological benefits early childhood music education can have for your child?

Page Options ▾

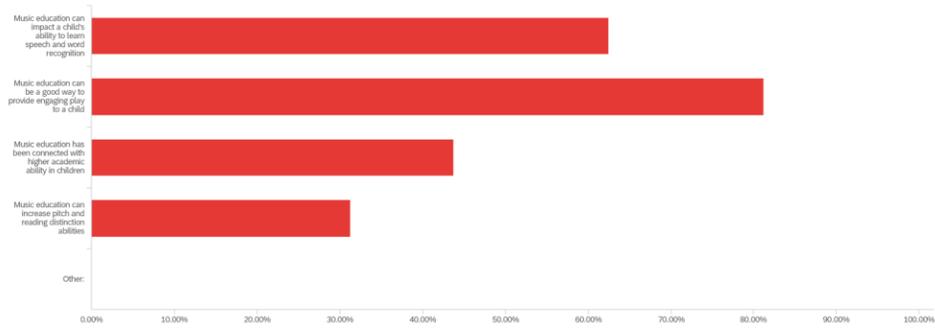


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Are you aware of the developmental and neurological benefits early childhood music education can have for your child?	1.00	2.00	1.35	0.48	0.23	17

## Question 6 (No)

N6 - What benefits have you previously heard about or are knowledgeable about? Select all that apply.

Page Options ▾

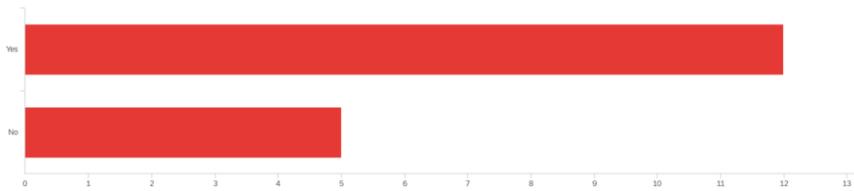


#	Field	Choice Count
1	Music education can impact a child's ability to learn speech and word recognition	28.57% 10
2	Music education can be a good way to provide engaging play to a child	37.14% 13
3	Music education has been connected with higher academic ability in children	20.00% 7
4	Music education can increase pitch and reading distinction abilities	14.29% 5
5	Other:	0.00% 0
		35

## Question 7 (No)

N7 - Could knowing more about these benefits impact your decisions in the future?

Page Options ▾

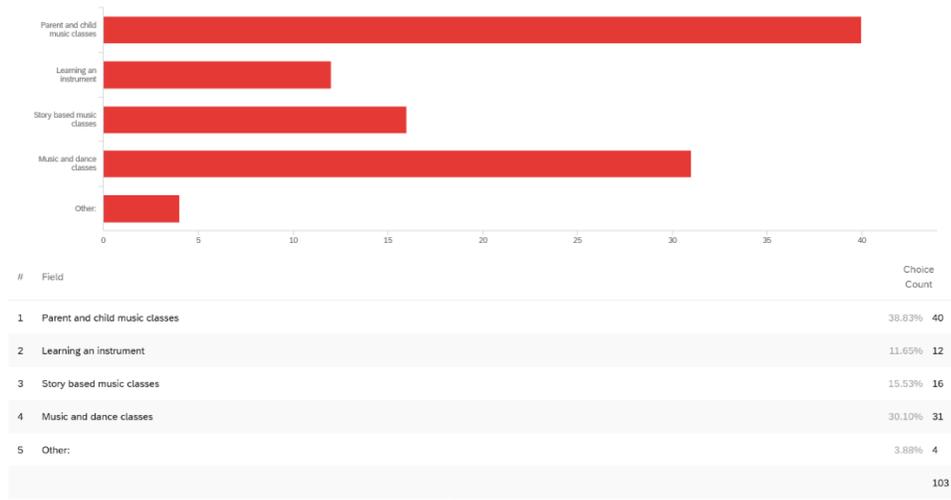


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Could knowing more about these benefits impact your decisions in the future?	1.00	2.00	1.29	0.46	0.21	17

## Question 1 (Yes)

Y1 - What type of music education? Select all that apply.

Page Options ▾



## Question 2 (Yes) (only some data shown)

2- to present

5-8 months

Starting at 6 months

5

Since 1 (1-4)

1-5

9months - 2.5 years

6 month-2yr

4, 5

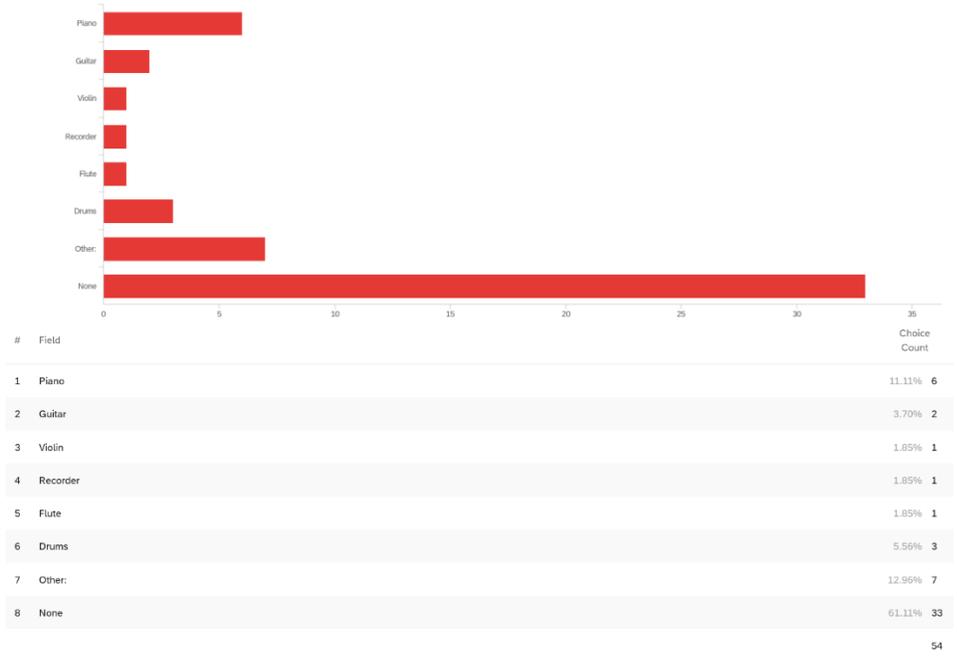
2 and on

From birth

**Question 3 (Yes)**

Y3 - What instruments has your child learned to play? Select all that apply.

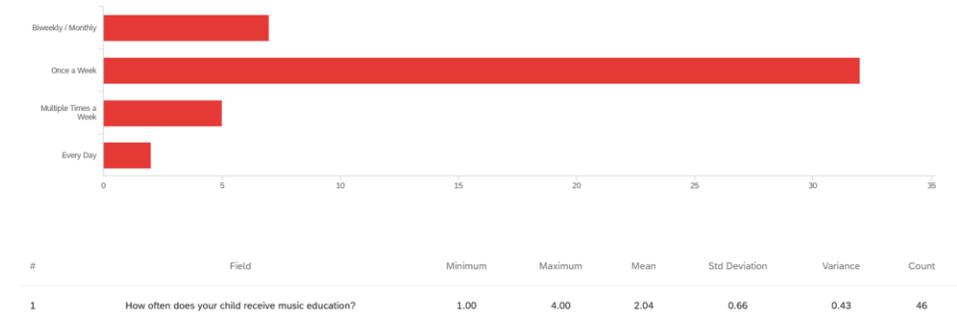
Page Options ▾



## Question 4 (Yes)

Y4 - How often does your child receive music education?

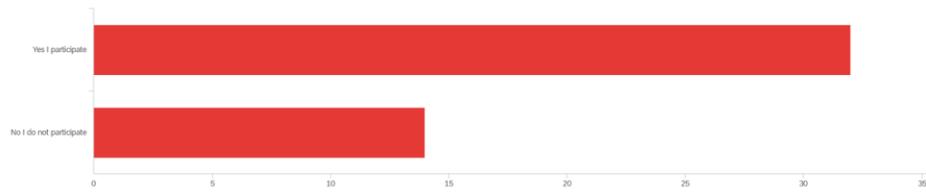
Page Options ▾



## Question 5 (Yes)

Y5 - Do you participate in your child's music classes?

Page Options ▾

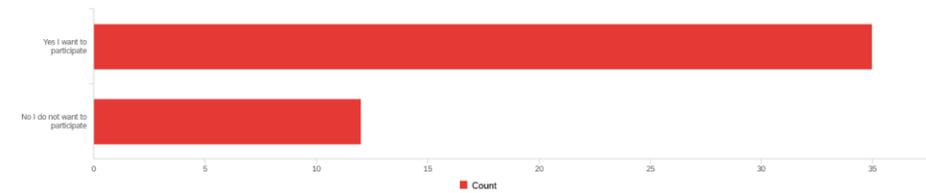


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Do you participate in your child's music classes?	1.00	2.00	1.30	0.46	0.21	46

## Question 6 (Yes)

Y6 - Do you want to participate in your child's music classes?

Page Options ▾

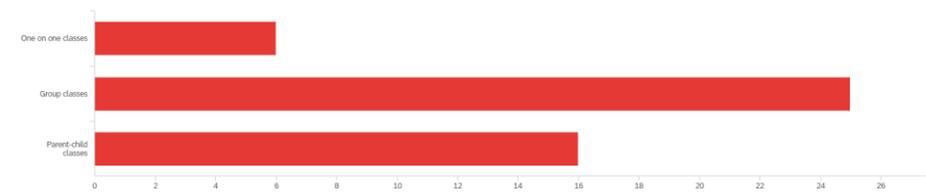


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Do you want to participate in your child's music classes?	1.00	2.00	1.26	0.44	0.19	47

## Question 7 (Yes)

Y7 - Which teaching methods are best for your child?

Page Options ▾

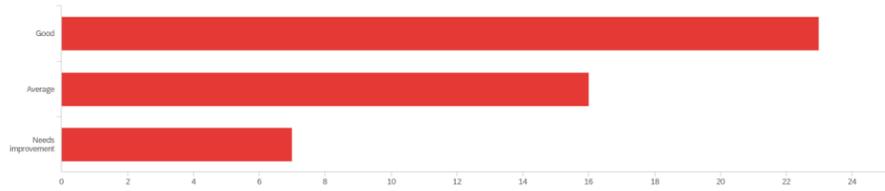


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Which teaching methods are best for your child?	1.00	3.00	2.21	0.65	0.42	47

## Question 8 (Yes)

Y8 - What do you think of the music education available in your area?

Page Options ▾

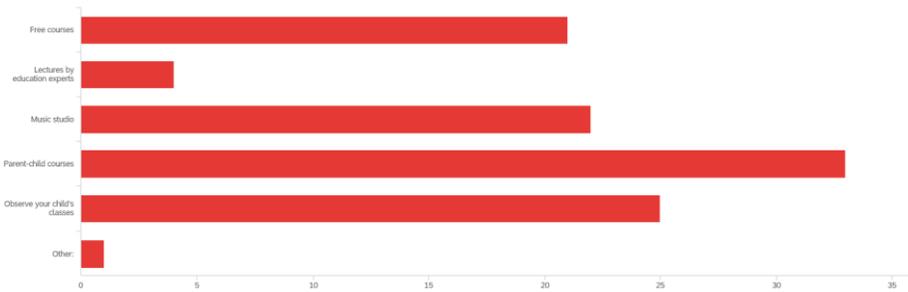


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What do you think of the music education available in your area?	1.00	3.00	1.65	0.73	0.53	46

## Question 9 (Yes)

Y9 - What services do you want the music education institute to provide? Select all that apply.

Page Options ▾



#	Field	Choice Count
1	Free courses	19.81% 21
2	Lectures by education experts	3.77% 4
3	Music studio	20.75% 22
4	Parent-child courses	31.13% 33
5	Observe your child's classes	23.58% 25
6	Other:	0.94% 1

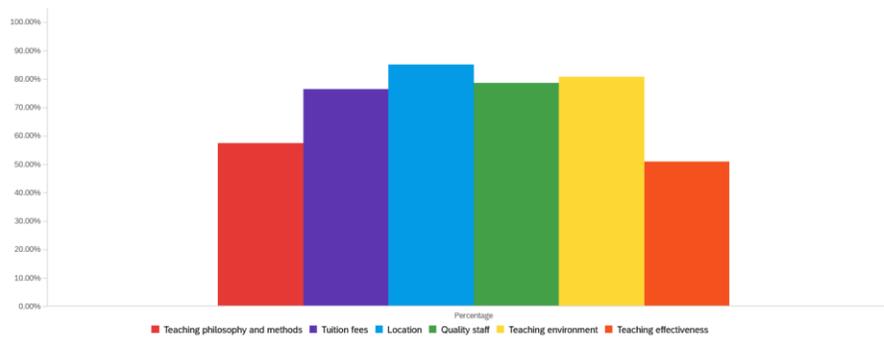
106

## Question 10 (Yes)

Y10 - What factors influence your choice of music education institution? Select all that apply.

Page Options ▾

Factors that influence parent choice of those in ECME, in percentage of the overall responses

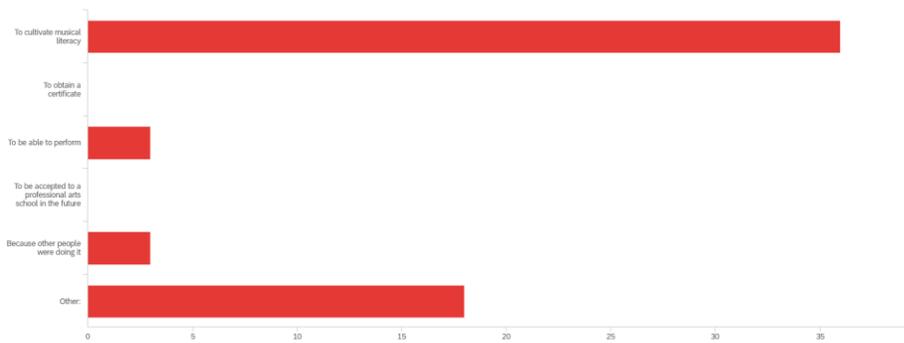


#	Field	Choice Count
1	Teaching philosophy and methods	13.37% 27
2	Tuition fees	17.82% 36
3	Location	19.80% 40
4	Quality staff	18.32% 37
5	Teaching environment	18.81% 38
6	Teaching effectiveness	11.88% 24
		202

## Question 11 (Yes)

Y11 - Why are you sending your child to music education classes? Select all that apply.

Page Options ▾

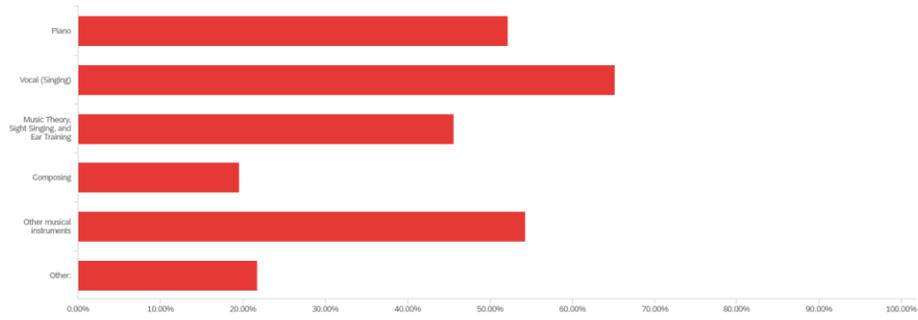


#	Field	Choice Count
1	To cultivate musical literacy	60.00% 36
2	To obtain a certificate	0.00% 0
3	To be able to perform	5.00% 3
4	To be accepted to a professional arts school in the future	0.00% 0
5	Because other people were doing it	5.00% 3
6	Other:	30.00% 18
		60

## Question 12 (Yes)

Y12 - What kind of musical skills or instruments do you want children to learn? Select all that apply.

Page Options ▾

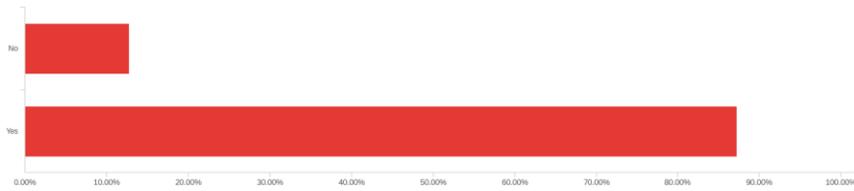


#	Field	Choice Count
1	Piano	24
2	Vocal (Singing)	30
3	Music Theory, Sight Singing, and Ear Training	21
4	Composing	9
5	Other musical instruments	25
6	Other:	10
		119

## Question 13 (Yes)

Y13 - Are you aware of the developmental and neurological benefits early childhood music education can have for your child?

Page Options ▾

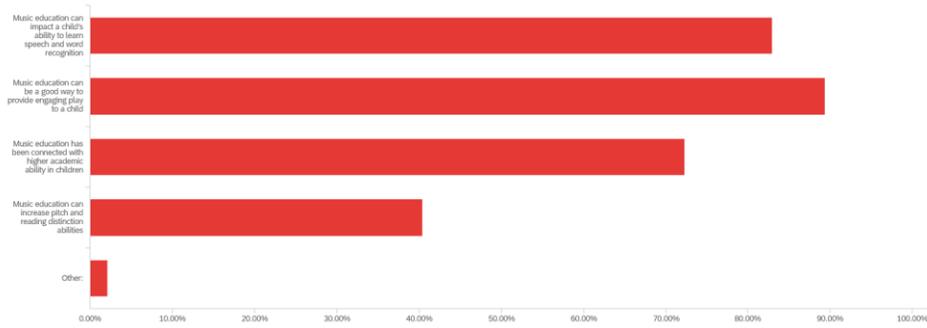


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Are you aware of the developmental and neurological benefits early childhood music education can have for your child?	1.00	2.00	1.87	0.33	0.11	47

## Question 14 (Yes)

Y14 - What benefits have you previously heard about or are knowledgeable about? Select all that apply.

Page Options ▾



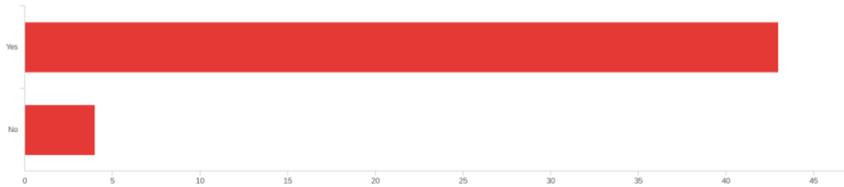
#	Field	Choice Count
1	Music education can impact a child's ability to learn speech and word recognition	39
2	Music education can be a good way to provide engaging play to a child	42
3	Music education has been connected with higher academic ability in children	34
4	Music education can increase pitch and reading distinction abilities	19
5	Other:	1
		135

Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

## Question 15 (Yes)

Y15 - Could knowing more about these benefits impact your decisions in the future?

Page Options ▾



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Could knowing more about these benefits impact your decisions in the future?	1.00	2.00	1.09	0.28	0.08	47

## APPENDIX C: CHINESE SURVEY AND RESULTS

### 音乐教育在早期对孩子的影响

您孩子的年龄是？（周岁）

How old is your child? (years old) [填空题]

填空题数据请通过下载详细数据获取

您孩子的性别是？

What is the sex of your child? [填空题]

填空题数据请通过下载详细数据获取

您的受教育程度是？

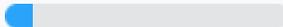
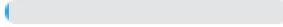
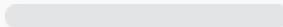
What is your educational level? [多选题]

选项	小计	比例
初中及以下 (Junior high and below)	11	 15.94%
高中 (High school)	5	 7.25%
大专 (college)	6	 8.7%
本科 (Undergraduate course)	38	 55.07%
硕士及以上 (Master degree or above)	9	 13.04%
本题有效填写人次	69	

您孩子的主要教养人是？

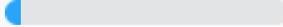
Who is your child's primary parent? [多选题]

选项	小计	比例
父母 (parents)	61	 88.41%

爷爷奶奶（外公外婆）【Grandma and Grandpa】	7	 10.14%
保姆（The nanny）	1	 1.45%
其他（other）	0	 0%
本题有效填写人次	69	

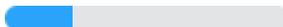
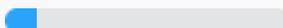
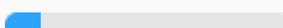
您是否认为音乐教育在早期对孩子的成长有较大影响？

Do you think music education has a great influence on children's growth in the early stage? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
是（yes）	65	 94.2%
否（no）	4	 5.8%
本题有效填写人次	69	

您听说过以下几种音乐教育教学法？

Have you heard of the following musical education methods? [多选题]

选项	小计	比例
奥尔夫音乐（Orff）	17	 24.64%
达克罗兹体态律动教学法（Dalcroze）	8	 11.59%
柯达依手号教学法(Kodaly)	8	 11.59%
铃木教学法（Suzuki Method）	9	 13.04%
以上都没听过（None of the above）	45	 65.22%
本题有效填写人次	69	

您是否计划在课外培养孩子在音乐方面的才能？

Do you plan to develop your children's musical talents outside of school? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
是 (yes)	50	72.46%
否 (no)	19	27.54%
本题有效填写人次	69	

您认为多大的孩子可以进行早期音乐教育？

At what age do you think children should be taught early music? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
0 - 1 岁 (year old)	13	26%
1 - 3 岁 (year old)	16	32%
3 - 4 岁 (year old)	13	26%
4 - 6 岁 (year old)	8	16%
本题有效填写人次	50	

您认为儿童的早期音乐教育就是学一门乐器吗？

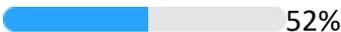
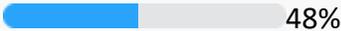
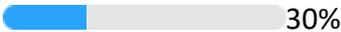
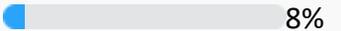
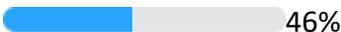
Do you think early music education for children means learning a musical instrument? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
是 (yes)	24	48%
否 (no)	26	52%
本题有效填写人次	50	

您希望培养孩子哪方面的音乐才能？（多选）

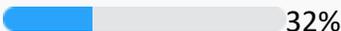
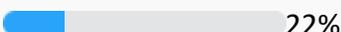
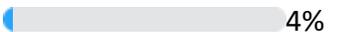
What kind of musical talent do you want to cultivate in your child ? (multiple choices) [多选题]

选项	小计	比例
----	----	----

钢琴 (The piano)	26	 52%
声乐 (Vocal music)	24	 48%
儿童乐理及视唱练耳 (Children's music theory and solfeggio)	15	 30%
作曲 (Composition)	4	 8%
其他乐器 (Other instruments)	23	 46%
本题有效填写人次	50	

您让您孩子接受音乐教育的期望是？(多选)

What are your expectations for your children to receive music education? (pops) [多选题]

选项	小计	比例
陶冶情操，培养音乐素养 (Edify sentiment, cultivate musical accomplishment)	49	 98%
参加考级，取得证书 (Participate in grade examination and obtain certificates)	16	 32%
具备在一般场合表演的能力 (Ability to perform in general occasions)	21	 42%
考取专业院校并取得一定艺术成就 (I was admitted to professional colleges and made some artistic achievements)	11	 22%
单纯跟风，看大家都报名了 (Just following suit. Look at others)	2	 4%
本题有效填写人次	50	

您的孩子接受音乐教育的时间是？

When does your child receive music education? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
无 (There is no)	13	 26%
0-1年 (0-1 year)	15	 30%
1-3年 (1-3 years)	7	 14%
3年及以上 (3 years or above)	15	 30%
本题有效填写人次	50	

您的孩子接受过哪些音乐教育？

What kind of music education have your children received? [多选题]

选项	小计	比例
吉他 (guitar)	12	 24%
钢琴 (piano)	18	 36%
电子琴 (Electronic organ)	13	 26%
鼓类 (Drum type)	9	 18%
笛子、箫 (The flute, flute)	6	 12%
琵琶、古筝 (Pipa, guzheng)	5	 10%
小提琴 (violin)	2	 4%
其他 (other)	18	 36%
本题有效填写人次	50	

您觉得您的孩子在接受过音乐教育后对学习成绩方面是否有积极影响？

Do you think music education has a positive impact on your child's academic performance? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
----	----	----

提升较大 (Ascension is larger)	12	24%
有一定提升 (There is some improvement)	27	54%
没什么影响 (It doesn't matter)	11	22%
有负面影响 (Have a negative impact)	0	0%
本题有效填写人次	50	

您的孩子在接受音乐教育后在性格方面是否更加外向？

Is your child more outgoing after music education? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
是，且影响较大 (Yes, and the impact is significant)	29	58%
是，影响较小 (Yes, the impact is small)	15	30%
否，对性格没什么影响 (No, it doesn't affect personality)	3	6%
否，让孩子变得更加内敛 (No, let the child become more introverted)	3	6%
本题有效填写人次	50	

您的孩子在接受音乐教育之后，在语言学习方面是否突出表现？

Does your child excel in language learning after music education? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
是，学习英语、语文等方面较为突出 (Yes, learning English, Chinese and other aspects are more prominent)	25	50%
是，对英语、语文等有一定影响 (Yes, it has certain impact)	17	34%

influence on English, Chinese, etc)		
否, 没有影响 (No, it has no impact)	8	16%
本题有效填写人次	50	

您的孩子接受音乐教育的频率是？

How often does your child receive music education? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
每天3小时以上 (More than 3 hours a day)	5	10%
每天1-3小时 (1-3 hours a day)	9	18%
每天0-1小时 (0-1 hour a day)	11	22%
每周学习2-3次 (Study 2-3 times a week)	15	30%
每月学习2-3次 (Study 2-3 times a month)	10	20%
本题有效填写人次	50	

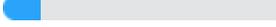
您是否愿意参与到孩子的音乐课程中？

Would you like to participate in your child's music lessons? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
愿意 (yese)	49	98%
不愿意 (no)	1	2%
本题有效填写人次	50	

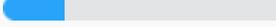
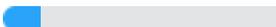
您认为以下哪种授课方式更适合您的孩子？

Which of the following teaching methods do you think is more suitable for your child? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
一对一授课 (One-to-one teaching)	20	 40%
小组课 (4-8人) (Group lessons (4-8 students))	23	 46%
亲子课 (Parent-child class)	7	 14%
本题有效填写人次	50	

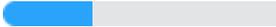
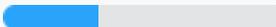
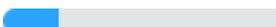
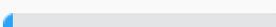
您更倾向为孩子选择哪种上课方式？

Which kind of class do you prefer for your children? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
每周1次 (1 times per week)	32	 64%
每周2次 (2 times a week)	11	 22%
寒暑假集中学习 (Study intensively in winter and summer vacation)	7	 14%
本题有效填写人次	50	

在保证教育质量及教育理念先进性的前提下，对于孩子的音乐教育，您所能接受的每月支出是？

On the premise of ensuring the quality of education and the advancement of education philosophy, what is your acceptable monthly expenditure for children's music education? [单选题]

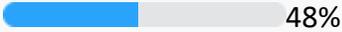
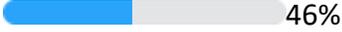
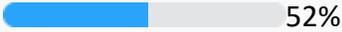
选项	小计	比例
0-500元 (yuan)	16	 32%
500-1000元 (yuan)	17	 34%
1000-2000元 (yuan)	10	 20%
2000-5000元 (yuan)	2	 4%
5000元以上 (yuan)	5	 10%

本题有效填写人次	50	
----------	----	--

影响您选择音乐培训机构的因素有哪些？（可多选）

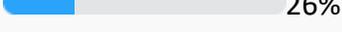
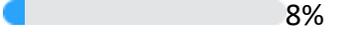
What are the factors that influence your choice of music training institution? (Multiple options)

[多选题]

选项	小计	比例
教学理念和方法 (Teaching concepts and methods)	33	 66%
学费 (The tuition fees)	24	 48%
地理位置 (The geographical position)	23	 46%
师资力量 (faculty)	28	 56%
教学环境 (Teaching environment)	17	 34%
教学效果 (The teaching effect)	26	 52%
本题有效填写人次	50	

您认为本市的儿童音乐教育发展情况怎么样？

What do you think of the development of children's music education in this city? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
一般 (general)	33	 66%
挺好 (Very good)	13	 26%
还在起步阶段, 不够规范, 不够专业 (It's still in its infancy, it's not standardized, not professional)	4	 8%
本题有效填写人次	50	

您希望音乐培训中心提供哪些服务？

What services do you want the music training center to provide? [多选题]

选项	小计	比例
课程免费体验 (Free course experience)	35	 70%
教育专家讲座 (Lectures by education experts)	19	 38%
音乐沙龙 (Music salon)	20	 40%
亲子课程 (Parent-child curriculum)	17	 34%
学习观摩 (Learn to inspect)	20	 40%
其他 (other)	7	 14%
本题有效填写人次	50	

您觉得音乐教育对孩子还有哪些明显影响？

What other obvious effects do you think music education has on children? [\[填空题\]](#)

填空题数据请通过下载详细数据获取

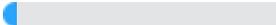
您孩子没有接受音乐教育的主要原因是什么？

What are your main reasons for not pursuing music education? Select all that apply. [\[多选题\]](#)

选项	小计	比例
孩子不感兴趣 (The child was not interested)	6	 31.58%
我不感兴趣 (I'm not interested)	1	 5.26%
时间上的问题 (Time issues)	8	 42.11%
金钱上的花费 (Money spent)	9	 47.37%
其他 (pther)	3	 15.79%
请填写	0	0%
本题有效填写人次	19	

您身边接受过音乐教育的孩子多吗？

Do you have many children who have received music education? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
50%以上 (More than 50%)	1	 5.26%
20%-50%	5	 26.32%
10%-20%	4	 21.05%
0%-10%	9	 47.37%
本题有效填写人次	19	

是否有其他家长向您推荐让您的孩子接受音乐教育？

Have any other parents recommended music education for your children? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
有 (yes)	9	 47.37%
无 (no)	10	 52.63%
本题有效填写人次	19	

您是否准备让你的孩子接受音乐教育？

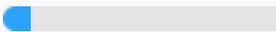
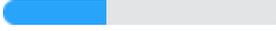
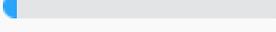
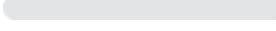
Are you prepared for your child to receive music education? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
是 (yes)	9	 47.37%
否 (no)	10	 52.63%
本题有效填写人次	19	

您能接受的在音乐教育方面的投资为多少？

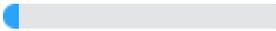
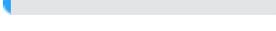
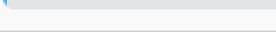
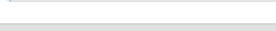
How much can you afford to invest in music education? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
----	----	----

500元以内 (Less than 500 yuan)	9	 47.37%
500-1000元 (yuan)	2	 10.53%
1000-2000元 (yuan)	7	 36.84%
2000-5000元 (yuan)	1	 5.26%
5000元以上 (More than 5000 yuan)	0	 0%
本题有效填写人次	19	

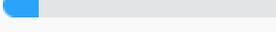
该题请选第二项

Please choose the second item of this question [\[单选题\]](#)

选项	小计	比例
1	4	 5.8%
2	60	 86.96%
3	2	 2.9%
4	1	 1.45%
5	2	 2.9%
本题有效填写人次	69	

了解更多这些好处会影响你未来的决定吗?

Could knowing more about these benefits impact your decisions in the future? [\[单选题\]](#)

选项	小计	比例
是 (yes)	60	 86.96%
否 (no)	9	 13.04%
本题有效填写人次	69	

您孩子的姓名是？

What is your child's name? [填空题]

填空题数据请通过下载详细数据获取

您的电话号码是？

May I have your telephone number? [填空题]

填空题数据请通过下载详细数据获取

## APPENDIX D: PARENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) Can you tell us about your child (age, gender, name etc)?
- 2) Has your child participated in any form of music education?
  - a) If so, what types of classes and for how long have they participated?
    - i) Did you have any specific reasons for selecting this?
  - b) If not, what is the reasoning behind this decision?
- 3) Did you notice any changes in your child after they had participated in music education? These might include changes in personality, speech, or academic performance.
- 4) What experience do you personally have with learning music, and did you yourself participate in any early childhood music education programs?
  - a) How do you think your experience (or lack thereof) has impacted your viewpoint on childhood music education?
- 5) Do you expect your child to learn how to play a specific instrument as part of their classes?
  - a) If so, do you have any reasoning behind this expectation?
- 6) As a parent, do you try to promote musical activities outside of formal music education for your child? These can be singing along, listening to music, etc.
- 7) Are you aware of the developmental and neurological benefits early childhood music education can have for your child?

If yes:

- a) Could you summarize what you know? Did knowing this information impact your choice on music education?

If no:

- b) Could knowing more about these benefits impact your decisions in the future?
- 8) Why did you choose the MeiYu Music and Dance Institute?
- 9) Have you participated in early childhood music education classes from other organizations?
  - a) If so, why did you switch/why do you go to other classes?
  - b) Are there things that you believe your previous/other organization did better?
- 10) Do you have any feedback for the MeiYu Music and Dance Institute?

## APPENDIX E: PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) Why do you think parents choose to send their children to ECME classes? What tends to be the most common and/or strongest reasons?
  - a) What particular skills do these parents want their children to learn, if any?
    - i) In one of our survey responses, we noticed that one of the reasons the respondent sent their children to ECME classes was for fun. Is this a common reason?
- 2) How aware are parents of the benefits of ECME for their children?
  - a) Does knowing about the benefits of ECME significantly influence parents' decisions on whether or not to send their children to ECME classes?
- 3) What kinds of classes tend to be most popular with which age groups?
- 4) Do parents with at least some musical background tend to be more likely to send their children to ECME classes?
  - a) Do parents' musical background influence what kind of classes they send their kid to?
- 5) What factors would you say tend to influence parents' choice of music education institute? I.e. cost, location, teaching methods, etc.
  - a) Which one of those factors would you say is most influential?
- 6) For parents who do not send their children to ECME classes, what are the most common and/or strongest reasons you know of?
  - a) Do these parents tend to know about the benefits of ECME?
    - i) Do you think if the parents who didn't know about the benefits of ECME were told about the benefits, they may change their decision about sending their children to ECME classes?
- 7) Do you believe are parents more likely to send their children to ECME classes if other parents around them are sending their children to ECME classes?
  - a) If they are, does this type of word of mouth advertising have a significant impact on your number of students?
- 8) How has COVID affected your ECME classes? What has had to change?
  - a) Did you shut down completely? Implement a form of remote learning?
  - b) Are there any pandemic reforms that you foresee remaining in place?
- 9) Even before COVID were there any major trends or changes in how your music education classes were run?
  - a) Did you tend to try different teaching styles and methods? Or alternatively do you stick to the same general types of classes that have succeeded in the past ?
  - b) Has technology had any impact?

## APPENDIX F: SPONSOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) What types of classes are the most popular at your institute?
  - a) If there are any classes that are significantly more or less popular why do you believe this is?
- 2) Do you believe parents choose music education so that their children learn specific skills?
  - a) If so, what are these skills, and does this impact your teaching methods?
- 3) When we were talking with the HDU students, they described how most parents of children in music education have an expectation that the children will learn to play an instrument. This is generally not the case in the United States. Why do you believe this expectation is so common?
  - a) Would you say this expectation affects parents' decision on whether or not to pursue early childhood music education?
- 4) From our project proposal you seemed specifically interested in the research surrounding the benefits of early childhood music education. These benefits are often marketing points for music education in the United States, and based on your website it is similar in China. Do you see parents as being particularly interested in these benefits?
- 5) Are the benefits a large part of your current marketing methods, or is it an aspect you hope to focus more on in the future?
- 6) Do you believe are parents more likely to send their children to ECME classes if other parents around them are sending their children to ECME classes?
  - a) If they are, does this type of word of mouth advertising have a significant impact on your number of students?
- 7) What factors would you say tend to influence parents' choice of music education institute the most? I.e. cost, location, teaching methods, etc.
- 8) For parents who do not send their children to ECME classes, what are the most common and/or strongest reasons you know of?
- 9) How has COVID affected your ECME classes? What has had to change?
  - a) Did you shut down completely? Implement a form of remote learning?
  - b) Are there any pandemic reforms that you foresee remaining in place?
- 10) Even before COVID were there any major trends or changes in how your music education classes were run?
  - a) Did you tend to try different teaching styles and methods? Or alternatively do you stick to the same general types of classes that have succeeded in the past ?
  - b) Has technology had any impact?