

POS-062

## **Observable Flow Experience in Japanese Children's Interactions with the Violin and the Iconic Grid Instrument**

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### **Abstract**

When children are involved in challenging activities, and there is a match between an individual's perceived skill and the challenge to acquire new skills, they experience flow in a state of optimal enjoyment (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). This study investigates observable flow experience in young children's interaction with the violin and the iconic grid instrument. The grid controller is a type of MIDI controller, also known as DJ controller. We connected Novation's Launchpad Pro and the device with a big button that when pressed would make a sound. The researchers constructed the device to include children with severe and multiple disabilities in musical activities (Nakanishi, Okada, Sutani and Akutsu, 2017). Although there is a vast amount of flow research in the realm of music education, there is no previous research focusing on children's interactions with both traditional and technological musical instruments. This study investigated the perceived challenges and observable flow experience in young children's interaction with the violin and the iconic grid instrument.

The method adopted a case study approach to capture young children's flow experience in depth. Participants of the study were 5 children ages from 2 to 7 including a child with severe and multiple disabilities. Children were observed in a total of 6 workshops and 4 trial playing the violin and the technological device from 2019 to 2020. The sessions were held monthly, and average in 60 minutes including free exploration of the instruments.

Custodero's Flow Indicators in Musical Activities (FIMA, Custodero, 1989 & 2005) were cited to capture children's flow experiences during workshop activities. Each session was videotaped by using four video cameras to capture events occurring during the children's instrumental playing. Certain portions of video data were selected for further review, and transcribed into verbal and written descriptions. Interpretations of video evidence by caregivers, teachers and practitioner-researchers provided contextual insight into children's flow experiences.

The present study revealed that playing the violin and iconic grid instruments offered different flow experience. The study found that the violin playing facilitated wider range of flow for children of all ages including the child with severe and multiple disabilities. In contrast, playing of the iconic grid instruments facilitated flow only in younger children in a limited manner. Findings also included interpretations of children's flow experiences to play both traditional and technological instruments, and critical examinations of children's musical play which may suggest implications for future practice.