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## **An Exploration of the Factors Affecting Hong Kong Children's Motivation in Early Childhood Education Under Extracurricular Activities**

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### **Abstract**

Hong Kong parents are now attached importance to extracurricular activities. Previous studies have highlighted that participating in extracurricular activities can stimulate children's development in various components, such as academic achievement and social competence. In Hong Kong, some teachers have adopted Kodaly and Orff approaches in early childhood music education. The aim of this study is to investigate factors that affect children's motivation in early childhood music education under extracurricular activities environment. Children's motivation in childhood music learning is crucial among music educators as music plays a significant role in children's development process in terms of both musical and intellectual domains.

The current multiple case study consists of five pre-school children who have participated in two groups of extracurricular music classes. The music classes were adhered with the Orff teaching method. Data of the study is collected and triangulated through semi-interviews and structured observation. Each case consists of parents and their children who have participated in the early childhood music classes. Structured observation is adopted in this paper to study children's motivation and behaviour during music lessons. This study is constructed based on the concept of self-determination theory which is an empirically based, organismic theory of human behaviour and personality development. This paper focused on one of SDT's mini-theories, basic psychological need theory, which discusses the role of three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competency, and relatedness.

The findings reveal that children's motivations in the classes were varied according to different fulfilment level of the basic psychological needs. It was found that relatedness was the key factor affecting students' overall motivation level in the prescribed settings. Students' sense of relatedness grew over with their learning period. The level of relatedness was also affected by class size and curriculum design – the larger size demonstrated a higher level of relatedness due to more frequent group activities. Competency could be enhanced by prenatal music exposure and parental music guidance which had brought to the students. Autonomy was found in the freedom to choose songs and musical instruments by the students in the classes. The result from this study will be informed to early childhood music educators and parents. Moreover, the findings from the research are intended to inspire future research exploring suitable ways to increase children's motivation when they are participating in the music classes.