

The Effects of Children's Group Music Lessons on the Mood of Accompanying Parents

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1. BACKGROUND

Previous studies have shown the effects of group music lessons on children's development, such as social skills and self-esteem. Meanwhile, parents usually accompany their children for music lessons when they are very young. However, few studies have investigated whether children's group music lessons also influence parents accompanying their children.

2. AIMS

The aim of this study was to investigate how accompanying their children's group music lessons influenced the mood of parents.

3. METHOD

Participants: Parents of children who took group music lessons (two groups: aged 1-2 years and 2-3 years) at the Yamaha Music School participated in this study. We obtained 85 valid responses (83 women and 2 men, $M = 36.1$, $SD = 5.3$). The mean age of their children was 28.3 months ($SD = 6.4$).

Group lesson: A teacher instructed several child-parent pairs to sing, move their bodies to the rhythm, appreciate music, and so on for 40 minutes. There were about eight child-parent pairs per lesson. Parents watched and helped their child, although they were not forced to do the same things as the children and did not require musical skills. Namely, mild participation was allowed for parents.

Instruments: We employed three scales: The Japanese version of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) (Sato & Yasuda, 2001) for measuring participants' mood, Japanese version of State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) (Shimizu & Imae, 1981) for measuring participants' state anxiety, and Japanese version of Parenting Stress Index Short Form (PSI-SF) (Asano et al. 2015) for measuring participants' parenting stress.

Procedure: First, the participants rated the three scales on a non-lesson day. Second, immediately before/after the lesson, they rated the PANAS and STAI.

4. RESULTS

The results showed that the rating for positive emotion after the lesson was significantly higher than that on the non-lesson day, and marginally significantly higher than before the lesson. The rating for state-anxiety after the lesson was significantly lower than on the non-lesson day and before the lesson.

Participants who showed high state anxiety on the non-lesson day decreased negative mood and anxiety. Thus, group music lesson improved mood of parents and reduced their anxiety.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The child-parent group music lesson served to enhance parents' positive mood and reduced parenting stress, suggesting that even mild participation in children's group music lesson can be beneficial for parents.

6. KEY WORDS

group music lesson; parents; mood; anxiety; parenting stress