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## The Influence of Personal Music Experience and Music Resources on Music Achievement in Middle School Students in Yichun, China - Gender as a Mediator

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### Abstract

*Music subject primarily emphasizes the student's learning ability and helps to grow the student's mind. Music Theory learning lays out a method for learning music by describing what students need to know at each stage of the development process to progress in a progressive and bridge manner to a higher level. It also helps students to create a basic level of music understanding and also prepares them to perform on many occasions. However, music learning, particularly within institutionalized settings, remains largely west-centric and teacher-centered. Major challenges in gaining an effective learning experience in music include factors such as students' commitment, budget, prioritization, adaptation, motivation, and access to major developments. The research has shed light on music learning of Middle Schools in Yichun by exploring the influence of personal music experience and music resources on musical achievement. This quantitative research applied a deductive research approach. Simple random sampling was conducted and 445 students of Middle Schools in Yichun was selected. The questionnaire was developed and validated before data collection. Statistical data analysis was conducted with the use of SPSS and SEM PLS to answer all the research questions. In this regard, the research has demonstrated that middle school students in Yichun had a pleasant music learning experience. Research results showed that there are significant and positive correlations among personal music experience, music resources and musical achievement. Personal music experience and music resources also significantly and*

*positively correlated with all the three dimensions of musical achievement. Personal music experience and music resources were found to significantly influence musical achievement. Lastly, the study showed that student gender does not moderate the relationship between personal music experience and musical achievement nor the relationship between music resources and musical achievement.*

**Keywords:** *Personal Music Experience, Music Resources, Music Achievement, Middle School Students, Yichun, China, Gender*

## **1. Introduction**

Music resources in education encompass a range of materials and facilities that are crucial for effective music teaching and learning. These resources include music instruments, music technology, educational materials, and innovative teaching methods. The importance of music resources in education has been increasingly recognized, as they play a vital role in enhancing students' music skills and overall learning experience. Gong (2021) emphasizes the significance of integrating diverse music resources, including folk music and digital tools, in enhancing the educational experience. The instrumental importance of music resources lies in their ability to provide hands-on learning experiences, which are essential for developing practical music skills. Curriculum integration of music resources ensures that music education is not isolated but is a cohesive part of the broader educational framework. Resources innovation, particularly in the digital age, involves incorporating new technologies and teaching methods to make music education more engaging and effective. Studies have shown that innovative music resources can significantly enhance students' engagement and learning outcomes in music (Scott & Shelley, 2023).

Personal music experience refers to the individual's engagement with music, characterized by personal interest, dedication, and development in music (Gaunt et al., 2021). This variable is crucial in understanding how students interact with and perceive their music education. Personal interest in music can significantly influence a student's motivation to learn and participate in music activities. Dedication to music learning involves the time and effort students put into developing their music skills. Development in music is the progression in music ability and understanding

over time. Lines (2022) highlights the importance of personal music experience in shaping students' aesthetic appreciation and understanding of music. The personal music experience is a multifaceted construct that encompasses emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of students' engagement with music. It is influenced by various factors, including individual preferences, cultural background, and educational environment.

The history of music achievement comprises a wide range of study, theories, and findings that, when taken as a whole, add to our comprehension of the ways in which individuals reach varying degrees of expertise and success in the field of music. It is necessary to have this background information in order to frame the context for studies that investigate the elements that influence music accomplishment. Some of these aspects include individual music experiences, music resources, and the contribution of gender.

Evans et al. (2021) highlight the persistent gender gaps in education and the need for gender-responsive educational practices. In the context of music education, understanding gender differences is crucial in ensuring that music programs are inclusive and cater to the diverse needs of all students. Gender can influence students' preferences for certain types of music, their participation in music activities, and their responses to different teaching methods. A gender-responsive perspective in music education research helps in identifying and addressing any gender-related disparities and biases, ensuring equitable educational opportunities for all students.

## **1.1 Problem Statement**

From a gender-responsive vantage point, there is a lack of study into the influence of music instruction and music resources on middle school students' music performance in Yichun, China. This knowledge gap is important for figuring out how these factors interact with one another to affect music achievement, which includes accomplishments in singing, playing an instrument, and having one's work praised.

Middle school kids' music accomplishments can be improved with individualized music instruction; however, this subject has received little research. An individual's cultural background, personal tastes, and learning environment all play a role in shaping the unique way in which each student engages with music. Research has demonstrated that incorporating music into

individualized learning strategies can have a profound effect on students' engagement and drive to succeed (Koenka & Anderman, 2019). In the setting of Yichun, China, in particular, there is a lack of research on how these individualized experiences affect many components of music accomplishment among middle school children. Furthermore, there is a lack of research on how gender dynamics interact with these individual experiences. A dearth of thorough research concentrating on the ways in which these experiences impact music accomplishment across genders exists, despite the fact that some studies have started to investigate the effects of personalized learning environments in middle school contexts (Butler et al., 2023; Dissinger, 2023).

There is also a lack of study on the effects of middle school music resources on students' music achievement, including how often and how well they are used. As a broad category, "music resources" include many things, such as physical and virtual instruments, software for creating music, educational opportunities, and exposure to many styles and traditions of music. While there are consensus that these tools have an impact on students' music performance in general (Wang et al., 2018), studies examining the precise ways in which they influence middle school students' music performance in particular are few and far between. Additionally, gender plays a complex role in the relationship between music resources availability and gender. Cultural and educational systems in Yichun, China, may have a distinct effect on the accessibility and effectiveness of these resources, making this disparity all the more apparent.

There needs to be further research on the moderating effect of gender on the relationship between individualized music experiences, access to music resources, and music accomplishment. Students' gender can greatly impact their music education experiences and outcomes. While there has been some recent recognition of the need to include gender in educational research (Li et al., 2023), few studies have specifically looked at middle school students' gender and how it affects the correlation between music exposure, access to resources, and academic performance. This disparity is especially noteworthy when considering Yichun, China, as a place where cultural and social standards may have a distinct impact on gender dynamics in the classroom.

## 2. Literature Review

When everything is said and done, listening to music is an experience that encompasses more than just the act of hearing it; it includes a wide variety of experiences and emotions that are unique to humans. The manner in which individuals experience music is highly diverse due to the fact that it is influenced by a multitude of factors, including cultural, psychological, and personal components. Several studies, including the one that Juslin and Sloboda (2021) carried out, have been done in recent times to explore the emotionally charged components of music. The purpose of these studies was to study the ways in which different types of musical compositions and genres generate a wide range of emotional responses from listeners. Lamont (2020) studies the personal and social contexts in which music is experienced, highlighting the relevance that individual backgrounds and surroundings have in determining musical experiences. This topic is comparable to the one discussed in the previous paragraph.

When it comes to the realm of musical engagement, the live music experience, in particular, holds a unique and important place in the realm of musical interaction. The communal nature of live performances, whether they take place in concerts, festivals, or smaller venues, results in the production of a shared experience that is quite different from listening to music on one's own. This is because live performances are characterized by the presence of numerous people. Groarke and Hogan (2021) note the elevated emotional responses and sense of community that are produced by the experience of listening to live music in their assessment of the psychological impacts of live music. Brown and Knox (2022) conduct an additional study in which they analyze the transformative potential of live music events. More specifically, they focus on the role that these events play in developing a sense of belonging and collective identity among people who attend.

It is essential for educational institutions to have access to music materials in order to facilitate the development of music abilities and knowledge. For example, the availability of music instruments in schools and the quality of those instruments are essential components of the instructional experiences that children have in the real world. The development of skills is not the only benefit that comes from playing instruments; they also encourage interest and participation in music activities. As a result of the incorporation of digital music technologies into educational settings in recent years, the range of available music resources has been broadened even more. The teaching and study of music has been completely transformed as a result of the proliferation of digital tools,

which include music creation software, online tutorials, and interactive learning platforms (Yan, 2022). Students are provided with new methods to interact with music through the use of these tools, which enables them to have more individualized and creative educational experiences.

Another essential component of music resources is the amount of attention paid to the quality of music education programmed. Programs that are effective in the field of music education are those that are well-designed, culturally responsive, and include a wide range of music styles and practices. For the purpose of delivering a well-rounded education in music, the curriculum ought to be organized in such a way as to accommodate students of varying skill levels and interests. In addition, the function of educators is of the utmost importance in this context. It is possible for educators who are well-trained and enthusiastic about music to considerably improve the quality of music education by motivating and directing students on their music journeys during their time in school.

Understanding and appreciation of music are both enhanced when students are given the opportunity to experience a wide range of music styles, ranging from classical to contemporary and from local to global forms. The multicultural nature of modern society is reflected in this diversity, which helps students develop an appreciation for many cultures and an understanding of those cultures. By way of illustration, the incorporation of folk music and traditional music forms into the educational programmed can offer extremely beneficial insights into the histories and cultures of the local community (Gong, 2021). In order to provide a comprehensive education in music, it is necessary to incorporate a wide range of music styles and performance practices within the curriculum.

The development of performance skills has been identified as one of the most important parts of music excellence. These skills include the ability to play music instruments proficiently as well as vocal abilities. The development of these abilities is often the primary focus of traditional music education programmed because it is frequently considered to be the key indicator of achievements in the field of music. Nevertheless, music achievement encompasses more than just attaining technical proficiency. A comprehensive understanding of music theory and history, as well as the capacity to interpret and appreciate a variety of music styles, are also included in this description. It is important to have a well-rounded music education that not only focuses on building

performing skills but also on acquiring a comprehensive understanding of music. This larger understanding of music achievement underscores the necessity of such an education.

There are several things that can have an impact on the path to music performance, such as an individual's natural talent, the amount of practice they put in, and the environment they are exposed to. Deliberate practice, which is defined by concentrated, goal-oriented, and persistent effort, has been demonstrated to be essential for obtaining high levels of music ability, according to research (Platz et al., 2014). Consequently, this highlights the significance of not only the quantity of practice but also the quality of practice in the field of music education. On the other hand, it is essential to acknowledge that the level of music achievement is significantly influenced by the individual's aptitude. Although it is possible that some people are born with intrinsic gifts or predispositions that make it easier for them to develop their music skills, this does not negate the significance of consistent practice and hard work.

It is impossible to exaggerate the significance of the surroundings in terms of music success. When it comes to the development of music talent, the support and resources that are offered by families, schools, and communities are absolutely essential. On the other hand, it has been discovered that parental support is a vital factor in the music growth of children, particularly during difficult periods such as lockdowns (Oliveira et al., 2021). The provision of access to music instruments, the encouragement of practice, and the cultivation of a positive attitude toward music are all examples of the several different forms that this support can take.

The acquisition of technical skills is one of the fundamental components that contribute to the achievement of music instrument achievement. Aspects such as finger dexterity, coordination, tone generation, and rhythmic correctness are included in this category. Having a strong command of these technical abilities is absolutely necessary for playing an instrument with proficiency. Having said that, technical proficiency is not sufficient to represent complete achievement in the realm of music instruments. A further requirement for musicians is the development of Musi city, which entails the interpretation and expression of the emotional and stylistic aspects of the music. It is necessary to have knowledge of music theory and history, as well as the capacity to establish a more profound connection with the song they are playing.

## **2.1 Theoretical framework**

### **Theory of Music Intelligence**

The Theory of Music Intelligence, primarily derived from Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, posits that music intelligence is a distinct cognitive capability separate from other types of intelligence (Gardner, 1983). This theory has significantly influenced music education, emphasizing the importance of recognizing and nurturing music talent and skills as a distinct form of intelligence. According to Gardner, individuals with high music intelligence have a heightened ability to recognize and create music pitch, rhythm, timbre, and tone (Gardner, 1999). This theory supports the notion that music education should be tailored to recognize and develop these unique capabilities.

Gardner's theory suggests that music intelligence is as important and valid as other forms of intelligence, such as linguistic, logical-mathematical, or spatial intelligence. Individuals with high music intelligence display exceptional sensitivity to rhythm, pitch, meter, tone, melody, and timbre. They are often adept at singing, playing music instruments, and composing music. This intelligence is not just about skill or talent; it's about a unique way of understanding and interacting with the world through music sound.

### **Self-Determination Theory in Music Education**

The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) in music education, an extension of Deci and Ryan's SDT, focuses on the role of intrinsic motivation in learning and personal development (Deci & Ryan, 1985). In music education, this theory emphasizes the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering intrinsic motivation among students (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Autonomy refers to the feeling of volition and choice in learning activities, competence involves the sense of mastery and effectiveness in music skills, and relatedness denotes the sense of connection and belonging in the music learning community.

Applying SDT to the proposed study highlights the significance of personal music experience in shaping students' intrinsic motivation and satisfaction in music learning. When students engage in music activities that align with their personal interests and allow for a sense of achievement and



community, their intrinsic motivation and satisfaction with music learning are likely to increase (Ellefsen, 2022; Bond & Russell, 2021). This theory also supports the integration of gender-responsive perspectives, as gender can influence how students perceive autonomy, competence, and relatedness in music education (Aróstegui, 2020).

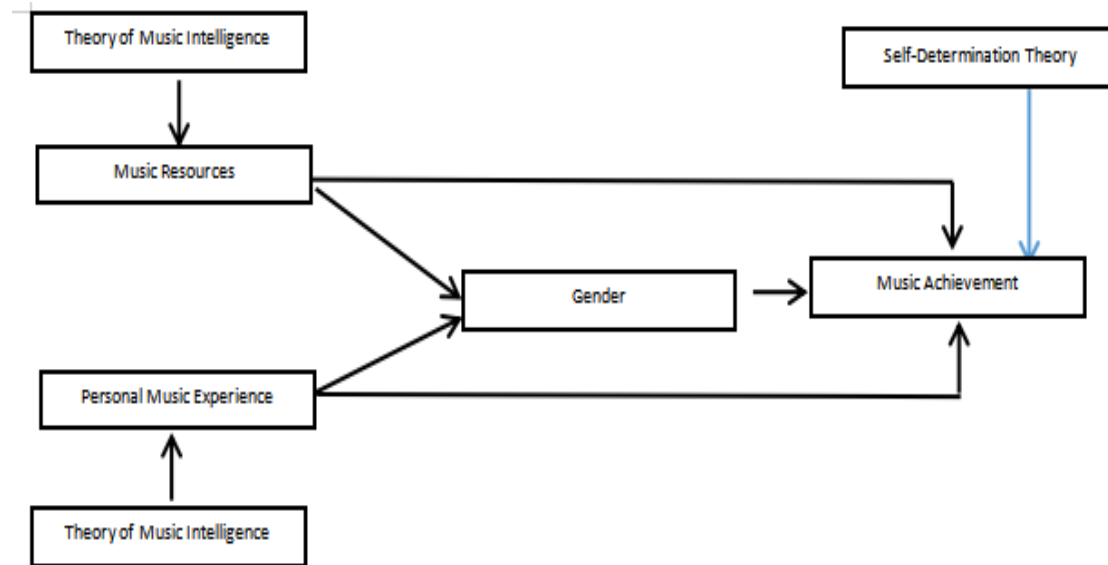


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

### 3. Methodology

The research design for the study examining the influence of personalized music engagement and music resources on music achievement among middle school students in Yichun, China, with a gender-responsive perspective, is structured as a quantitative approach. This design is chosen for its ability to provide objective, numerical data that can be statistically analyzed to test hypotheses regarding the relationships between the independent variables (music resources and personal music experience), the dependent variable (music achievement), and the moderating variable (gender).

The study employs a cross-sectional survey design, which involves collecting data at a single point in time. This approach is suitable for assessing the current state of music education in Yichun and understanding the immediate impacts of music resources and personal music experiences on

students' music achievement. The survey will consist of structured questionnaires designed to measure each variable quantitatively. The use of a survey is particularly effective in gathering data from a large sample size, allowing for generalizable and statistically significant findings.

The sample size for this study is 445 middle school students from various schools in Yichun, China. This sample size is deemed sufficient to provide reliable and valid results, considering the statistical power and the ability to detect significant effects. The sampling technique employed is simple random sampling. The criteria include being a middle school student enrolled in a school in Yichun and participating in music education programs. Simple random sampling is chosen to ensure the edibility of the sample chosen represents the population of the study.

The operationalization of variables is a critical aspect of the research design. For music resources, the survey will include items measuring the availability and quality of music instruments, the extent of music integration in the school curriculum, and the presence of innovative music teaching methods. Personal music experience will be measured through items assessing students' interest in music, time spent on music-related activities, and progression in music skills and knowledge. Music achievement will be gauged through questions about students' levels of satisfaction with music classes, including enjoyment, perceived value, and fulfillment. Gender will be recorded as a demographic variable, and its moderating effect will be analyzed through statistical interaction terms.

Data collection will be conducted through the distribution of online surveys to middle school students in Yichun. The survey will be administered with the assistance of school administrators and music teachers, ensuring that it reaches a diverse and representative sample of students. Prior to the distribution of the survey, informed consent will be obtained from both the students and their parents or guardians, adhering to ethical research standards. The survey will be designed to be user-friendly and age-appropriate, with clear instructions and definitions to ensure that participants understand the questions and can provide accurate responses.

The data collected from the surveys will be analyzed using statistical software. Descriptive statistics will be used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the sample and the responses to each survey item. Inferential statistics, including multiple regression analysis, will be employed to examine the relationships between the independent variables, the dependent variable, and the moderating variable. The regression analysis will allow for the assessment of the individual

and combined effects of music resources and personal music experience on music learning satisfaction, as well as the moderating effect of gender. Interaction terms will be included in the regression models to explore the interaction effects between the independent variables and gender.

Ethical considerations are paramount in this research design. The study will adhere to principles of confidentiality, informed consent, and the protection of participants' rights. Participants will be informed about the purpose of the study, the nature of their involvement, and their right to withdraw at any time without any consequences. Data will be anonymized and securely stored, ensuring that individual responses cannot be linked back to specific participants.

#### 4. Results

The interconnections of students' perspectives on music education, personal Experience, and music resources were highlighted via correlation analysis, which identified correlations between various assertions. Statements on music resources, personal music experience, and successful music learning all showed strong positive correlations. Regression study looked at the impact of personal music experience and music resources perceptions on the music learning experience in middle school in Yichun.

Hypotheses	r	Path coefficients	T statistics	P values	f <sup>2</sup>	Decision
<b>H1:</b> Personal music experience is positively related to junior high school students' singing ability.	0.452**					Supported
<b>H2:</b> Personal music experience is positively related to junior high school students' instrumental ability.	0.374**					Supported
<b>H3:</b> Personal music experience is positively related to junior high school students' music appreciation ability .	0.504**					Supported
<b>H4:</b> Personal music resources are positively related to junior high school students' singing ability.	0.587**					Supported
<b>H5:</b> Personal music resources are positively related to junior high school students' instrumental ability.	0.504**					Supported
<b>H6:</b> Personal music resources are positively related to junior high school students' music appreciation ability .	0.377**					Supported
<b>H7:</b> Gender has a moderating effect on personal music experience and junior high school students' singing ability.		0.391	5.969	0	0.074	Supported
<b>H8:</b> Gender has no moderating effect on personal music experience and junior high school students' instrumental ability.		0.237	3.225	0.001	0.023	Supported

<b>H9:</b> Gender has a moderating effect on personal music experience and junior high school students' music appreciation ability.	0.247	3.41	0.001	0.025	Supported
<b>H10:</b> Gender has no moderating effect on personal music resources and junior high school students' singing ability.	0.409	6.291	0	0.083	Supported
<b>H11:</b> Gender has a moderating effect on personal music resources and junior high school students' instrumental ability.	0.247	3.292	0.001	0.026	Supported
<b>H12:</b> Gender has a moderating effect on personal music resources and junior high school students' music appreciation ability.	0.328	4.677	0	0.046	Supported
<b>H13:</b> Personal music experience has a predictive effect on junior high school students' singing ability.	-0.323	3.902	0	0.03	Supported
<b>H14:</b> Personal music experience has a predictive effect on junior high school students' instrumental ability.	-0.123	1.357	0.175	0.004	Not supported
<b>H15:</b> Personal music experience has a predictive effect on junior high school students' music appreciation ability.	0.291	3.49	0	0.021	Supported
<b>H16:</b> Personal music resources have a predictive effect on junior high school students' singing ability.	0.121	1.508	0.132	0.004	Not supported
<b>H17:</b> Personal music resources have a predictive effect on junior high school students' instrumental ability .	0.297	3.44	0.001	0.022	Supported
<b>H18:</b> Personal music resources have a predictive effect on junior high school students' music appreciation ability.	-0.293	3.31	0.001	0.021	Supported

Each hypothesis is tested, showing the path coefficients (strength of the relationship), T statistics (statistical significance), P values (significance level), effect sizes ( $f^2$ ), and the decision whether the hypothesis is supported or not. Overall, the table indicates that personal music experience and personal music resources positively influence students' singing, instrumental, and music appreciation abilities. Gender also moderates some of these relationships, while personal music experience predicts singing and music appreciation abilities, and personal music resources predict instrumental and music appreciation abilities.

## 5. Conclusion

Improving one's music achievements become dependent on personalized music Experience. Students' motivation, skill development, and enthusiasm for music can all benefit from music education that is personalized to their unique tastes and needs, according to the study. In addition to improving their technical skills, students can develop a deeper emotional connection to music through personalized encounters. This highlights the significance of adaptability in music education to meet the needs of students with varying interests and learning styles.

Students' music adventures were greatly enhanced by music resources. Having access to a variety of music instruments, vocal coaches, practice spaces, and music libraries greatly enhanced music achievement in many ways. Nonetheless, gender and students' interests influenced how resources were used. Encouraging children to freely explore their music interests, offering varied instruments and Experience, and promoting resources equity are all crucial for ensuring equitable opportunities for all students.

The correlation between individualized music Experience, access to music resources, and skill level in music was found to be moderated by gender. It is important to note that although there were disparities based on gender, they were caused by personal preferences and decisions and not innate ability. While male students were more concerned with technical competence and competitiveness, female students were more likely to focus on the expressive and emotional dimensions of music. Teachers will be better able to accommodate their pupils' wide range of requirements if they take the time to identify and address these variances.

The necessity for an all-encompassing and inclusive strategy in music education was further brought to light by the complicated interplay between gender, music resources, and personalized music Experience. It is the shared responsibility of schools and educators to facilitate individualized learning plans, guarantee equitable access to resources, design gender-inclusive curricula, support educators through professional development, and inspire students to investigate music in all its forms. The inclusion, equity, and empowerment of middle school children can be enhanced through music education by taking these elements and their interactions into account.

In the end, music education stands to benefit much from the conclusions reached from these results. Regardless of a student's gender or origin, they stress the significance of acknowledging and appreciating their individual music paths. A music classroom should be a safe place for students to experiment with different styles, learn new techniques, and develop an appreciation for music that will last a lifetime.

Effective implementation of these ideas requires close cooperation among communities, parents, lawmakers, and educators. Schools should make sure that music programmed get enough financing, that teachers have opportunities for professional development, and that everyone has equal access to resources. An appreciation for music in the home and strong school music programmed are two ways communities and parents can encourage their children's music interests.

When we work together, we can make sure that every middle school kid has access to a high-quality music education.

Finally, this research sheds light on the complex interplay of variables that influence middle school students' music achievement through its findings and discussions. Students can thrive in their music journeys when we acknowledge the significance of customized music Experience, promote fairness in resources, and accommodate gender-related variances. This will lead to a music education system that is more inclusive and equitable. We have a responsibility to make sure that every kid has access to music education because of the positive effects it can have on their lives, including improving their creativity and general health.

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