Potential for Adapting Music Therapy Improvisation within a Suzuki-based Music Lesson Context for Children of Chinese Immigrants

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Abstract

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Chih-Lin Chou

This research considered the cultural and value systems of children from Chinese immigrant families to make a case for the adaptation of a music therapy improvisation within a context of music lessons, to enhance emotional skills and to promote parent-child relations, of children in this population. The purpose of this research was to examine the questions: Why is music therapy improvisation, provided by a credentialed music therapist to children of Chinese immigrants, better applied within music lessons that embrace the Suzuki music education philosophy, than through clinical music therapy sessions? In what ways will this develop a child's emotional skills and promote parent-child relations for this population? Philosophical inquiry was used to explore these questions and to evaluate the underlying positions. Information central to support the positions was found using three main strategies: investigating traditional Chinese family values and related issues; examining the Chinese traditional role of music and Suzuki music educational philosophies; and evaluating the theoretical concepts and techniques of improvisational music therapy, all of this framed by the researcher's experiences with children of Chinese immigrants in Montreal. This study required a literature review that spanned many areas and disciplines, across two cultures and languages. These are understood by the author's experiences as a Chinese mother/music teacher/music therapist living in the Western culture, which might have influenced her direction of thinking when drawing the conclusion. Findings revealed that when collectivism is present in a cultural context, to enhance the emotional skills and parent-child relationships of children of Chinese immigrants, music therapy improvisation provided by a credentialed music therapist could be better applied in Suzuki-based music lessons than in the clinical setting. Study limitations and implications for future music therapy practice and research were identified.

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With English as my second language, writing research papers was a challenge. Through many conversations with Professor Kevin Austin, I was able to transfer many concepts into words that would be understandable in the West. I thank him.

My study in the master's program took 3 years to complete. My thanks extend to the internship supervisors, peers and classmates I have met during these years, and not least of all, to my husband and children who were there to continually support and encourage me.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1. Introduction

Cultural Background

The original motivation for this research arose out of the researcher's traditional Chinese cultural background and her immigration to Canada in 1991. Literature on the support and promotion of positive family functioning, healthy parent-child relationships, and psychosocial development of Chinese immigrant children (Chen et al., 2014a; Eisenberg et al, 2004; Foran, 2009; Glick, 2010; Heng, 2014; Lai & Ishiyama, 2004; Hamilton, 2011; Qin & Eun-Jin, 2014; Li, 2001; Schore, 1994) paralleled the researcher's personal experiences as a Chinese immigrant child herself during her own process of acculturation. As witnessed by the researcher, government efforts to support various Chinese community institutions and associations, such as the creation of new immigrant centers and programs for skills development (Amundson et al., 2011), did not appear to fully alleviate the stresses of acculturation experienced by these families.

The traditional Chinese attitude of perceiving mental illness as a shame that could not be disclosed–a cultural stigma– (Chen, Lai & Yang, 2013) was also the researcher's experience. Not expressing their acculturation stress to people outside of a close circle, primarily of family and relatives, could be understood as the parents' need to preserve the family's dignity and to save face. These experiences brought the researcher's attention to consideration of cultural aspects of supporting systems that could work for this population.

Music Background and Teaching Experience

Somewhat equally, the research proposal was also motivated by the researcher's musical education, professional background, and teaching experience. Her education was in both Eastern and Western music, with the Western music having been taught by teachers from both cultural groups. Her professional performance background and training was almost entirely Eastern, while her music therapy studies were conceptualized and situated within a Western cultural context. Instrumental music teaching included Eastern and Western instruments, guzheng and piano, and group classes with infants under the age of 5, notably embracing the influence of Shinichi Suzuki's music education philosophy (Suzuki, 1983).

The core concepts in Suzuki's philosophy of the tripartite parent-child-teacher relationship, character development, and a play-based environment (Kendall, 1996), Suzuki (1983), placed the development of a strong parent-child-teacher relationship as being of equal importance to the teaching within this educational philosophy. As Suzuki's music teaching methods are now being adopted in many Asian countries, the meaning of traditional music education may have been modified by this philosophy (Lee, 2013).

The internalized social stigma related to the diagnosis of mental illness (Chen et al., 2014) could explain the view that Chinese immigrant parents believe having their children take music lessons rather than seeking help from a professional therapist or through child psychiatry is a better way of developing emotional skills. Given this important underlying cultural trait, the researcher, with her own experiences of acculturation and with Suzuki teaching, began to consider whether a solution might be found in music lessons utilizing aspects of the Suzuki approach to provide a non-clinical setting where the positive attitude of developing children's emotional skills might take place.

Music Therapy Background

Finally, perhaps the most prominent motivation for the current research was related to the researcher's personal process of becoming a music therapist. In one of her music therapy practicum courses, she had to write a case study about her work with a Chinese immigrant family and their child who had developmental delays. Music therapy goals had been established to develop the child's emotional skills and provide support to the parents. Results of the case study revealed that the relationship between the parents and the child was the most important factor in facilitating effective music therapy sessions and achieving the goals. The parents would ask for homework that they could do with their child (Youm, 2013), and so the sessions focused on adaptions of music experiences they would try at home and then report on in the music therapy sessions.

This therapeutic process was collaborative (Lee 2013). Although the parents and child were receiving the music therapy services offered through a special needs daycare, speaking in Mandarin, they often called the music therapy session a "music class". As noted, this could be understood in light of traditional Chinese attitudes regarding the

stigma and its consequences, and the heightened concern for preserving face for the family (Chen, Lai & Yang, 2013).

The current researcher observed similarities and differences between her experiences in clinical settings and in her teaching environment. In both, there was the collaborative relationship with the parents and child. However, she observed differences between music therapy and lessons including the required qualifications, the setting, the goals and objectives, and the evaluation process (Canadian Association of Music Therapy, 2016). In a clinical setting, a child may have had a diagnosis or referral from a medical source, and the music therapy procedures are systematically implemented and recorded. This formalized activity requires a credentialed music therapist to conduct the music therapy session. In the traditional music teaching environment the child is generally seen as a "little person" who is taking music lessons to learn specific musical techniques and skills (Suzuki, 1983). Even though some of the children studying within the Suzuki method might have special needs such as developmental disabilities, in this learning environment the child is not labelled with a medical term or condition.

In a series of case studies, Wigram (2006) identified the effectiveness of improvisational music therapy in improving social emotional responsiveness of children with special needs. While Moore (2013) indicated that there are certain music characteristics and experiences that produce desired and undesired neural activation patterns implicated in emotional regulation, Vist (2011) noted that these particular music characteristics and experiences are developed from the clients' cultural backgrounds and preferences. In light of this, not all music therapy techniques, which have largely been developed within Western cultural frameworks, may be suitable for children in Chinese immigrant families.

Identification of the Problem

As a result of these literature findings and her own experiences, the researcher began to feel that music therapy techniques and music therapy setting needed to be adapted – in a word, acculturated, to create a more naturalistic environment so that parents and children of this population might accept therapy processes that are conceptualized within their cultural values and comfort zones.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this philosophical inquiry was to ask why is music therapy improvisation, provided by a credentialed music therapist to children of Chinese immigrants, better applied within music lessons that embrace the Suzuki music education philosophy, than through clinical music therapy session? In what ways will this develop a child's emotional skills and promote parent-child relations for this population?

Assumptions

Having a traditional Chinese cultural background, with both music teaching and music therapy experiences, the researcher holds the assumption that immigrant Chinese parents have some significantly different cultural values than those of the society they now live in, in this case, Canada or the United States. They seek out approaches that align with their traditional cultural values in dealing with their children's emotional issues rather than considering Western practices, such as psychological therapies or child psychiatry. Among these values is their belief that having their children learn music can help transform a child into a fine, noble person of good character and fine social manners, for example through Suzuki's approach. In addition, based upon typical thinking in music therapy improvisation approaches (Bruscia, 1998a) and Suzuki's (1983) philosophy, the researcher assumes that communication skills, verbal and non-verbal, are fundamental in developing a child's emotional skills.

Researcher's Stance

In this study, the researcher took the perspectives of a researcher, a music teacher, and a music therapist in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data from the literature. The benefit of working in this triple capacity included understanding the phenomenon from different positions. On the other hand, taking all three positions could put at risk the trustworthiness of the data collection and interpretation. A comparison, however, of variations and consistencies in the data from existing literature with that from teaching experiences could assist in securing a balanced conclusion. In this way, the researcher was able to take advantage of the benefits of working in a triple capacity while minimizing any disadvantages.

Chapter Overview

Chapter 1 examines the researcher's cultural background, music teaching and music therapy experiences, purpose of the research, assumptions, and the researcher's stance. Chapter 2 outlines the methodology of this research including identification of the problem, the study's position, definitions, and delimitations. Chapters 3 through 5 present the evidence related to the study's position, with an examination of the literature which is informed by the researcher's experiences. In particular, Chapter 3 investigates the traditional Chinese family and related issues; Chapter 4 reviews the Chinese traditional role of music, and Suzuki music education philosophies; and Chapter 5 evaluates music therapy and techniques of music therapy improvisation. The last chapter presents a discussion of the study's implications, including the challenges, limitations, and potential areas for future music therapy research.

Chapter 2. Methodology

Philosophical Inquiry Design

In this study, the researcher chose philosophical inquiry to make a case for the use of one of the four main types of music therapy expeiences/interventions – clinical improvisation, within music lessons with the children of Chinese immigrants. Philosophical research, through inquiry and reflection, aims to develop insight into questions about knowledge, meaning, and values (Grayling, 1998), and differs from empirical inquiry in that it is permissible to target the conclusion one wants to reach (Aigen, 2005). The purpose of philosophical inquiry is to think about "(a) what it means to be "good" (ethics); (b) what really exists (metaphysics and ontology); (c) how we can come to know something as well as what knowing itself is (epistemology); and (d) the search for reliable principles for thinking (logic)" (Willis, 2008, p.297).

In choosing to use a philosophical inquiry which encompasses traditional Chinese cultural background issues, the role of music and the Suzuki music education philosophy, and music therapy concepts applied to the understanding of different belief systems and theories, it might be possible to explore and make a case for the use of music therapy improvisation techniques within a Suzuki-based music lesson context for children of Chinese immigrants. With these as guiding principles, the core of philosophical considerations in comparing different systems could translate concepts and become less bound to one way of looking at things (Aigen, 2005).

The work of this philosophical inquiry took both inductive and deductive approaches in the construction of a comprehensive paradigm that expands the application of music therapy improvisation techniques, building on traditional Chinese family views and attitudes, and the lens of Suzuki's music education philosophy. As there is no specific literature discussing culturally-related music therapy techniques used in music lessons, many of the resources and developed understandings came about through the researcher's critical and analytical thinking of the case. Critical thinking involved the researcher's judgement regarding the worth of actions and ideas through personal inquiry and reflection, comparing the researcher's music therapy and teaching experience, against her traditional Chinese cultural background. Analytical thinking entailed breaking down

each concept and element and then reassembling it in the new situation, in this case, music therapy improvisation techniques used in Suzuki based music lessons for the designated cultural population. This kind of thinking must be guided by logical and moral rules. "Logical rules enable consistency within the analysis itself, whereas moral rules provide consistency of the analysis with the mores of the society or social group" (Jorgenson, 1992, p.93).

There were four main elements integrated in writing the philosophical inquiry: (a) carifying terms; (b) exposing and evaluating underlying assumptions; (c) relating ideas as systematic theory; and (d) using argument as a primary mode of inquiry (Aigen, 2005). The meaning of words and ideas was important to be defined and understood, as "it is difficult to compare ideas and systems of thought because one is uncertain of what is being compared" (Jorgensen, 1992, p.91). In this study, there was always the latent issue of the translatability of words and ideas between Chinese and English. Criteria for evaluating underlying positions were inferred from comparing available related literature, understanding the realty of expectations, and moral claims, the basis of which were acquired through the researcher's professional and personal experiences.

In terms of having chosen to do a philosophical inquiry, specifically a position paper for this research, it is important to talk about its methodology. When conducting a philosophical inquiry, there are no set procedures to follow. A general method is to "identify the problem, outline a position, present evidence, refine one's position and discuss study's implication" (Byers, 2013, p.18). Having discussed methodology, what follows next is the data collection.

Data Collection

The researcher collected data using different database search engines (See Table 1) to identify literature applicable to the search with specific key words or phrases.

Table 1
Electronic Databases

China Knowledge Resource Integrated Database
Education Source
Google Scholar
PsycINFO
ProQuest dissertations and thesis
RILM Abstract of Music Literature
Social Sciences Abstract

Key words related to the statement and research questions were used in searching the literature (See Table 2).

Table 2
Key Words

Chinese children
Chinese immigrants in Canada
Chinese parents
Parent and child relation
Chinese Family
Music Education in China
Music lesson
Metal illness
Therapy and treatment
Music therapy
Clinical Improvisation
Suzuki method/philosophy

Key Terms

For the purpose of this study, some important key terms are provided here.

The term *Chinese immigrant* is used to refer to recent immigrants (since 1990) from the People's Republic of China to the USA and Canada.

Children of Chinese immigrants is used to refer to those born either in China or Canada where the first language spoken at home is Mandarin, the official language of mainland China.

Acculturation is "the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members. At the group level, it involves changes in social structures and institutions and in cultural practices. At the individual level, it involves changes in a person's behavioral repertoire." (Berry, 2005, p. 298)

Music lessons include teaching an instrument/voice, and/or fundamental music skills, such as ear-training, music theory, and music history with the Suzuki music teaching philosophy focus on three-way parent-child-teacher relationship, character development, and a play-based music environment (Suzuki, 1983).

Music Therapy is "a discipline in which credentialed professionals (MTA) use music purposefully within therapeutic relationships to support development, health, and well-

being. Music therapists use music safely and ethically to address human needs within cognitive communicative, emotional, musical, physical, social, and spiritual domains." (Canadian Association of Music Therapy, 2016, para.1)

Music Therapy Improvisation requires "the client to make up music spontaneously while playing an instrument or singing, extemporaneously creating sound forms, melodies, rhythms, or entire pieces with necessary instruction or demonstrations from the therapist" (Bruscia, 1998, p.1) "in an environment of trust and support established to meet the needs of the clients" (Wigram, 2004, p.37)

Emotional skills refer to a child's "ability to identify, use, understand, and manage emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges, and defuse conflict" (Segal, 2015, para. 2).

Delimitations

In setting delimitations for the scope of this study, the researcher chose to look specifically at significant related English and Chinese literature from 1983 to 2016 in journal articles, theses, and edited books pertaining to: (a) the traditional Chinese family and related issues, including: the structure of the Chinese family, parent-child relations, developing a child's emotional skill, change of family dynamics due to immigration, attitudes towards mental illness, and attitudes towards therapy and clinical treatment; (b) the Chinese traditional role of music and the Suzuki music education philosophy, the traditional role of music and its functions, Suzuki music education philosophy, and Suzuki music-based music lessons; and (c) music-centered music therapy, the function of music therapy, music therapy from a Chinese point of view, and the application of improvisational music therapy.

Having identified issues of methodology, the research question, key terms, and delimitations in this chapter, Chapters 3 to 5 present concepts to understand the belief system and define the theory, with the researcher's evidence outlined as a statement in each paragraph and an exposition and evaluation of the underlying evidence in the body of the paragraph. How these concepts and ideas related to the study was based on the researcher's experiences and was determined by how clearly the rules of logical thought were followed throughout the chain of the argument. Evidence is presented to support the argument in (a) addressing existing and anticipated criticisms, (b) dealing with arguments

in favor of the researcher's position, and (c) addressing weaknesses in the researcher's position (Willis, 2008).

Chapter 3. The Traditional Chinese Family and Related Issues

Structure of Chinese Family

The increasing openness of Chinese society after the economic reforms of the 1990's revealed a shift from the traditional idea of collectivism regarding the Chinese family, separating family and individual privacy (Chan, 2013a). While family still remains as a haven, a warm, safe place for the individual psyche when encountering problems or unhappiness, family members do not necessarily want to tell their family about their problems. Notably, when it comes to articulating grievances, Chan's study (2013a) showed that they tended to select people outside the family, such as friends and lovers.

The one-child policy in place after 1970 influenced the expressive function of the family. It might be less important than the help offered by close friends, indicating that the boundary between friends might be more permeable than that between family members (Chan, 2001). As a result, the domain of privacy extended to public areas such as the workplace or school, or a circle of friends (Chan, 2013a). Difficult issues such as disputes and domestic violence that used to be part of the internal privacy of the family gradually entered the range of discussions at a social and public level (Chan, 2013a). These recent changes in China may challenge traditional Confucianism and collectivism to some extent as the following discussion suggests.

Parent-Child Relations

Particularly with the impact of the one-child policy, Chinese families have become "child-centered". Family resources, including the attention of the mother in her traditional role are now concentrated on one child, and the father's involvement in child rearing has become noticeable (Chen & Chen, 2012). The shifting by fathers of their parental roles from "helper" to active parenting was evidenced in Chan's study (2013d), which showed that the fathers' roles are more multifaceted, including those of economic provider, caregiver, and playmate, with additional household chore responsibilities.

Focusing more closely on the relationship between parents and children, the status of family members might change the relationship slightly. For instance, in the case of newly married, highly educated, working class parents, they tend to give more power to

their children to discuss personal matters. Furthermore, children are more open to the discussion of personal issues with their mothers than their fathers (Chan, 2013a). This two-way communication has decreased Chinese parent's use of power assertion, and increased their display of parental warmth when interacting with their children (Chen & Chen, 2012).

Child Rearing Values in Contemporary China

The concept of "guan" includes parents' guidance, accommodation, and governance for their child's success, and understanding of and obedience to the parents' actions (Wu, 2013). With increased parental warmth and reduced parental use of power assertion, the level of "guan" in child rearing might result in increasing negotiations between parent and child. Chinese parents could offer a range of indirect types of support such as providing a home structure conducive to study and at-home discipline, such as setting time limits for TV watching (Wu, 2013). In relation to the schedule of study, this might follow a positive reinforcement system rather than a coercive punishment system.

In this context, Chinese parental control and governance of the child are synonymous with parental care, concern, and involvement (Wu, 2013). It is not at all uncommon to see parents sacrifice themselves to provide resources to meet the child's needs (Wu, 2013). This may take the form of the parents using saved vacation money to pay for the children's educational fees, or accompanying their children to lessons and classes on the weekend. This concept seems to have been reinforced by the one-child policy, particularly in upper middle-class families (Wu, 2013), as all the resources may be concentrated on the only child in the family.

Having only one child in most Chinese families has raised two fundamental questions: those of filial piety, and the position of women and girls (Deutsch, 2006). In one study (Strom, Strom, & Xie, 1996), parents reported that they tried to teach their children good manners, respect for others' rights, and caring about others' feelings. Being an only child, the youngsters might be more likely to internalize these parental values. Also, being the only offspring in the family, this child bears the entire responsibility for the aging parent's welfare (Deutsch, 2006). This evidence continues to support the traditional view of filial piety.

Under the one-child policy, the status of girls in the Chinese one-child family has also raised many issues. Traditionally in Chinese culture, there was overt emphasis on achievement directed towards sons (Atwood & Conway, 2004). Daughters were steered toward child-care and daily household duties. However, today, parents of only one child – a daughter, know that they will be dependent on her alone in their old age. This change in family dynamics could increase the parental attention and investment towards daughters (Deutsch, 2006). Equality of gender roles might also lead to the parent's expectation of equal achievement.

The literature documents relationships between social class and childrearing values. For instance, working class families may be more concerned with children's conformity while middle class families may tend to place greater emphasis on their child's autonomy (Chan, 2013a). The value items that make up the conformity scale (obedience, hard work, and thrifty saving) are all qualities emphasized in Confucian teachings, however those prized qualities of modernity and individualism, such as autonomy, independence, self-determination, and imagination (Chan, 2013c) are not values of conformity.

Other factors that might have a strong connection to child rearing values include the parents' age, the parents' levels of education, and the size of the family (one-child or multiple-child family). For example, younger parents with a high level of education, and only one child might place autonomy as an important child rearing value (Chan, 2013c). The economic reform in 1990 – a new competitively-oriented market, has effectively promoted individualism (Chan, 2013c), as parents have begun to emphasize values such as individual initiative, assertiveness, and self-confidence. Traditional values such as interdependence, obedience, and cooperation are less emphasized when developing child characteristics (Chan, 2013c).

Change of Family Dynamics Due to Immigration

Chinese immigrants in Canada in general are maintaining multi-stranded social relations with China and Canada. They are called transnational families (Chan, 2013b). Due to the difficulties of finding employment and obtaining subsidized childcare, the resolution has been to send the children back to China to be taken care of by grandparents or other family members (Chan, 2013b). While transnational mothering is prevalent

among Chinese immigrants, it is also common to see "astronaut" families – families in which one spouse, typically the husband, returns to the home country for well-paid employment, leaving the wife and children in Canada.

These transnational arrangements might result in more acculturation dissonance between the parents and child, as the Chinese families still maintain strong network and linkage with their home country while some family members are more rapidly adapting to the new culture in Canada. For example, youth in immigrant families may acculturate more rapidly than their parents due to their greater exposure to host culture socialization and media. This dissonant acculturation in immigrant families may result in increased conflict, and emotional distancing between parents and children. Chan's study (2013b) found that dissonance of acculturation contributes to the youth's perception of traditional parenting as being more verbally and physically punitive, especially when the parents are still more acculturated to Chinese culture. When the children are more engaged in Chinese culture, the discrepancies are smaller on rating of punitive parenting behavior (Chan, 2013b).

Immigration seems not to have changed parenting styles and involvement in the child-rearing values of Chinese families (Chan, 2013d; Chuang & Sue, 2009; Yu, 2015). Immigrant parents tend to report greater child problems, and the parents are experiencing varied degrees of acculturation dissonance, including symptoms of depression. These signs might be evidence of stress which reduces the parent's tolerance for a child's behavior (Fung & Lau, 2010).

Attitudes towards Mental Illness, Therapy, and Treatment

Awareness and vigilance toward mental health issues might be addressed differently (Fung & Lau, 2010) due to changes in transnational family structure and varied level of acculturation dissonance, for example, as a way of protecting the family name and sense of cohesion, Chinese parents rooted in Confucianism might be less willing than their Chinese-Canadian children to talk openly about child and family problems. Cautiousness and inhibition of impulses may be perceived from a Western perspective as symptoms of depression, however for these parents they might be interpreted as signs of maturity (Fung & Lau, 2010).

Depression could be one of the mental illnesses that is very difficult for a traditional family to accept as a viable and treatable condition (Lee &Mock, 2005). Given the fundamental importance of "saving face", protecting the family's reputation and honor in Chinese culture, a child's departure from normalcy into depression could be felt as shaming for the family. The symptoms of depression may be perceived as laziness or selfishness, instead of keeping with family traditions such as academic achievement, learning social rules, and respecting one's elders (Lee & Mock, 2005). It could be understood that some families may be so shamed by their child's depression that they delay or avoid appropriate treatment. By the time the family decides on treatment, more intensive treatment may be required. Unfortunately, due to the lack of clinical literature available regarding appropriate treatments – particularly for this Chinese immigrant sector, clinicians are less able to effectively treat this group of people, which further deters members of this cultural group from seeking out mental health assistance (Hsieh & Bean, 2014).

Considering these cultural factors, assessing the family's level of acculturation (Yeh et al., 2008), and understanding the role of the therapist (Chen & Davenport, 2005; Ta et al., 2010) can facilitate the therapeutic process. As suggested in a study by Fung & Lau (2010), the effective strategy for bridging communications to improve the congruence between parents' and children's perception of family and youth problems might be the first step in establishing a working alliance within the therapeutic relationship. In addition, understanding their expectation of the therapy and communicating the role of the therapist are essentials in the therapeutic process. For instance, Chinese-Americans treat therapists as any other physician (Chen & Davenport, 2005; Ta et al., 2010). As a result, the therapist might be expected to take more of an expert position with some pressure to quickly resolve the situation. As in behavior family therapy, parents support the idea that they could still control their children's aggressive behavior not only in a psychotherapy room, but also in real life situations even long after the therapy was over (Zhu, 2010).

Summary and Implication of Significant Concepts

Confucianism, collectivism, and the concept of guan remain the essential factors when understanding the Chinese family structure, the parent-child relationship, and child

rearing values. China's one-child policy starting in 1979 and economic reforms, notably those of 1978 - de-collectivization and 1997 -privatization, are major influences on most upper-middle class families in parenting style and child-rearing values. This change from more traditional values is seen in the young, educated, working-class couple becoming more child-centered with a view of autonomy as an important part of their child-rearing values.

The roles of mother and father, daughter or son, are becoming more equal than in traditional views of these roles. Collectivism might need to extend beyond the family, to the "circle", including friends, schools, social institutions, and workplaces. The concept of guan remains important in the parent-child relationship; however, its actual practice might include some form of greater negotiation.

An idea to be examined is that transnational arrangements might result in more acculturation dissonance between parent and child when the family members are also in conflict between the home country and the newly adopted country. While parenting styles and child-rearing values might not be greatly influenced by the immigration, parents report more behavioral problems with the child, partly due to this acculturation dissonance and the resulting depression.

The perception of mental illness may depend on the level of the parent-child acculturation. Due to the strongly internalized shame of mental illness that might harm the "family face", there arises a delaying period of time between first signs and seeking mental health assistance. A clear understanding of Chinese culture can help in assessing the family member's level of acculturation, and can inform expectations of the therapeutic treatment process.

Acculturation dissonance encountered by Chinese immigrant families seems to be the major issue challenging the traditional view of family structure, type of parenting, the attitudes regarding mental illness and the motivation for seeking therapy and treatment in the clinical setting. To understand these issues, some literature has pointed to new directions when dealing with this population in North America. It might help to create therapeutic alliances with the specific aim of reducing stress factors – those of the clinical setting, and the view of music therapy as medical treatment and or mental health

profession, etc., which from the start may have created an uncomfortable environment for both the music therapist and the client.

The author's clinical experience with children of Chinese immigrants – along with the literature found – support the position for seeking a non-clinical setting to maximize the benefits that music therapy could bring to this particular population. With the important factor of Chinese parental involvement in providing a learning environment to nurture the developmental growth of their children, many Chinese families believe that music lessons build character and contribute to an individual's overall development as a human being, giving cultural value to music lessons. From the author's music teaching experiences with Chinese students and music therapy experiences with a Western population in Montreal, the concepts, goals, and techniques of Western music therapy seem better employed within Suzuki's method of music lessons than in a clinical context. The incorporation of music therapy techniques by a certified music therapist into the music lesson context in this manner could be culturally appropriate in this context. To further understand this phenomenon, the Chinese traditional role of music, the cultural and political influences on the function of music, and its connection to the Suzuki method of music education will be reviewed in the next and following chapters.

Chapter 4. The Chinese Traditional Role of Music and Suzuki's Music Education Philosophy

The Traditional Role of Music

In the Chinese tradition, music has an immense impact on the development of an individual's personality and is crucial in the cultivation of a genuine disposition in young people (Wang, 2004). The Ancient Chinese believed that the proper music could cultivate virtuous qualities such as peacefulness, straightforwardness, compassion and honesty (Wang, 2004).

Chinese society has traditionally associated music with the natural harmony of heaven and earth. Certain musical parameters were used to represent different forms of natural phenomena. The quality of order and regularity in each of the parameters were taken to symbolize the quality and order of nature. For example, clarity and explicitness in music symbolized Heaven, while broadness and enormity in music denoted Earth. The circular sequence of notes represented the changing of the seasons. The five scalar notes indicated the five elements, together creating the order and balance of the whole (Wang, 2004).

A theory of music based on Yue Ji (乐记) and Yue Shu (乐书) maintains that the ethical power of music is closely related to its effect on the body. The joy music brings to the heart through being peaceful, straightforward and compassionate, also calms the mind (Wang, 2004). A calm body, rather than a perturbed or anxious one, ensures the heart and mind exist in a state of joyfulness (Wang, 2004). The theory suggests that the right music may ultimately lead to longevity by acting positively on the heart and mind. Unlike the traditional Chinese emphasis on the associations of music with Nature, Yue Ji and Yue Shu (Wang, 2004) place less attention on the relationships between music and the ethos, focusing rather on the effect that music brings to the wellness of the individual's body.

Confucian thought placed music at the center of aesthetic education maintaining that one's education begins with being stimulated by poetry and observing rituals, and ends with music. The peak of human refinement was not limited to social and artistic forms; music's ultimate purpose was the education of feeling. The cultivation of one's feelings was of equal importance to thinking, and the feeling shared through music and

art enabled people to experience their common humanity (Tan, 2015). Confucian "meliorative aestheticism" (Tan, 2015, p.195) focused on the betterment of oneself, society, and civilization. Through active participation in various creative musical roles, one experienced the ethical values of trust, competence, cooperation, and mutual respect. The role of music in Confucian theory was to bring completeness to a person's refinement of mind.

These various beliefs and theories can be seen to form an interrelated system. Music brings wellness to the body and affects individual feelings, and through individual wellness, society as a whole is harmonized. Ultimately the association of music with the natural harmony of heaven and earth could be explained by the balancing of body, feelings, and human society. As the transformative role of music for both the individual and society becomes clear, it is necessary to study the practice of music within a broader Chinese cultural context.

The Cultural Influences and the Motivation for Learning Music

Collectivism remains an important influence within the Chinese view of the learning process. Some (Li, 2002a, 2002b, 2004) propose that learning is a moral process to perfect the individual. This is accomplished by: emphasizing the importance of knowledge, persistence, and concentration; cultivating a passion for lifelong learning; fostering diligence and enduring hardship; studying hard regardless of obstacles; and feeling shame for a lack of motivation to learn. The pursuit of these characteristics ensures that one will behave in an upright manner and bring honour, not disgrace, upon the family name.

Researchers have found that a student's interest in learning is closely related to the level of external control they feel (Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2009). The more a student feels controlled by external forces, the less likely they are to show interest and make an effort, producing a negative effect on their well-being. While studying students learning music, Comeau and Liu (2015) identified four types of motivation. The first, identification, uses the concept of a role model to motivate children to play an instrument. For example, Lang Lang, a Chinese concert pianist who has performed with leading orchestras around the world, is a role model to motivate Chinese children to see piano-playing as a part of who they are and who they will become. The second type of

motivation, external regulation, is based on Asian values of filial duty, the belief that one's achievements benefit the entire family. Through this, children take on the responsibility of learning well, as a duty toward their parents. Academic success is a source of pride for the whole family, while academic failure is a disgrace to the family name. For instance, after playing in a concert recital, the present author once noticed a very young student ask her mother, "I made only a little minor mistake, do I meet your expectations? Are you proud of me?" The third type of motivation, introjection, is frequently used as a form of shaming to encourage the child to learn. For example, when the present author was young, she often heard her parents use their friend's child as a comparison for her own playing. Wanting to obtain her parents' praise became an important motivation for her to work hard to show that she was better than the other child. The fourth type of motivation, parental influence, involves symbolic meaning for children studying music (Comeau & Liu, 2015). When a parent attends the lessons, the child receives the message that the parent values playing the piano, increasing the interest, creativity and skill at playing the piano.

Comeau and Liu (2015) noticed that Chinese students showed healthy levels of identification, external regulation, and introjection motivation. These motivations are greatly influenced by traditional Chinese and Confucian views, with the children having incorporated these characteristics unconsciously into their personality and attitudes toward learning.

Political Influences and the Development of Music in China

Music is sensitive to political influences. Even today in Chinese society Confucian principles of harmony and hierarchy continue to have a strong influence. Notably, following the Republican Revolution of 1911, the Confucian tenets for social harmony were banned by Mao Zedong and his followers. They criticized these beliefs as being old-fashioned, feudal, and part of bourgeois hierarchical thinking. This abandonment continued into the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). During this period, both Western and traditional Chinese music were banned, being perceived as "feudal" and "bourgeois." In an effort to break down old social concepts, a commission on music education was formed by the Chinese government to provide suitable music for schools, and civic and national gatherings. One objective of this commission was to reinforce

political ideology and governmental desires to bolster the new social order and values (Ho, 2003). The governing Communist party then supported this "revolutionary music" by adapting existing Soviet songs (Law & Ho, 2011), while the use of Western music was also encouraged to aid in the development of a national and patriotic education (Ho & Law, 2004).

In 1978, the open-door policy allowed for musical exchanges between China and the West in order to cultivate a love for traditional Chinese music and a deeper understanding of various musical styles. The government of the period encouraged students to learn diverse musical values as a means of cultivating their musical appreciation and aesthetic sensitivity. The openness was also aimed at developing respect for other cultures, in order to foster a sense of social harmony and global peace. Within the movement of the "Confucian revival," Chinese authorities used contemporary popular culture to promote traditional values. Examples included popular music, which incorporated lyrics in praise of parenthood and friendship to encourage the individual's responsibility towards family and community and highlight the importance of bringing honor to the family name and avoiding disgrace (Law & Ho, 2011).

As China has become a globalized economy, culture, and society in the twenty-first century, its government faces the unavoidable educational problem of how best to define the various musical 'styles' in schools. This is not about which musical style to teach, but rather, how to balance "Western individualism" and "Chinese communist collectivism" (Law & Ho, 2011). To address this issue, it has been suggested that the traditional teacher's role must change to that of a facilitator and co-learner in order to cope with rapid changes in Chinese society (Chen, 2008; Shi & Englert, 2008). Music teachers need to learn new methods of teaching and to adopt an open-minded attitude toward interpreting and applying pedagogical principles in the curriculum (Dello-Iacovo, 2009).

About 7% of the Chinese population, more than 100 million people, are Western Classical music practitioners. This may account for why Western Classical music is considered to embody the traditional Confucian values of artful self-cultivation while still symbolizing modernity and individual creativity (Huang, 2012). In addition, Chinese government education policy gives credit to college applicants who play Classical music,

thereby further encouraging the study of this music. Knowing that their children could be more likely to be accepted into a good college and/or university may inspire parents to discover and develop their children's musical abilities via Western Classical music (Huang, 2012). Also, twenty-first century political influences have a strong impact on the students' educational motivation. As the study of Western Classical music has become popular within the Chinese population (identification), parents are supporting the musical training of their children as this may provide more opportunities for getting into college and/or universities (introjection and parental influence). By finishing their higher education, children will have a better life and their achievements will ultimately honor the family's name (external regulation). This evidence could explain the motivation of Chinese children for taking Western music lessons.

The example of children learning piano in China shows parental involvement and teacher's expectations. Active involvement is required of parents who must attend their children's weekly piano lessons so that they may supervise younger children's practice at home. Teachers ask for 1 to 3 hours of practice at the elementary to intermediate level to ensure steady progress. Children are expected to listen to both parents and teacher, and to accept harsh criticism in order to improve (Mahamuti, 2013). Mahamuti (2013) reported cases of students who never again touched the piano after the years of lessons were over, or after passing the top-level piano exams. In light of this, it would seem appropriate, now more than ever, for parents and teachers to find teaching methods and philosophies that balance "Western individualism" and "Chinese communist collectivism," and to instill a love of music that is meant to last a lifetime. The next section will briefly introduce the Suzuki music teaching philosophy, a philosophy that promotes Western individualism while adapting ideas of collectivism. This could be an orientation in music education that acknowledges traditional Confucian values, and meets the current needs of Chinese parents with children learning music in China.

Suzuki's Music Education Philosophy

As the Suzuki teaching method has gained in popularity in China, there are several concepts that need to be examined closely to determine whether this method might fit into current Chinese society. The initial goal of the Japanese music educator, Shinichi Suzuki's educational philosophy was to fill the world with kindness and love.

Suzuki and his increasing number of followers pursued this ideal for decades, working together to change the world, one child at a time **(**Hendricks, 2011). Much has been written about a principle feature of Suzuki's philosophy: Talented students can be taught if the necessary environmental influences are in place (Hendricks, 2011). Suzuki maintained that the most basic objective for developing talent should be the search for truth, goodness, beauty, and love. The essential spirit behind his philosopy was that when people develop the ability to feel the music with their hearts, they can develop the ability to understand another person's heart (Hendricks, 2011). Suzuki's self-reflection and his thoughts on how children learn their "mother tongue" were combined with his action-based approach in bringing life-experience to teaching. The principle of the teaching method followed the order "hear, learn, read" (Grooms, 2013, p.44). Children learned a piece of music by ear through listening to high quality recordings, imitating the teacher's playing, and then, when the child was ready, developed their reading skills. The objective behind Suzuki's philosophy was not only to teach children music but also to develop good character.

Parental involvement. The triangular relationship with the teacher and parent at the bottom and the child at the top was the guiding framework of the Suzuki method. A parent was required to attend all lessons, take notes, learn how to help improve their child's playing, take responsibility for practicing with the child at home, and keep track of required listening (Lang 2015). The parent could not withdraw from supervising the entire practice until the child's reading level enabled him/her to become independent. However, continued parental support and encouragement was still required.

At the beginning stage of a student's learning, parents were responsible for providing a proper learning environment at home. Parents were to avoid being overly aggressive about the child's practice and achievement. Grooms (2013) suggested that close communication between teacher and parents ensured that the parents follow instructions. Just as parents were expected to be an ongoing source of support to the child, the teacher had to provide similar support to the parents. Parents were invited to a meeting where the teacher pointed out the strengths and weaknesses of the at-home practice supervision. Traditionally, parents sitting in the classroom might only function as a symbol of supporting the child's learning **(**Bugeja, 2009) but with Suzuki's teaching

method, parental involvement could become a concrete contribution toward the child's progress in learning music. In the current author's experience, if the parents understand the difficulties in playing an instrument, they tend not push their children so hard in practicing. Practice time would not be a battle between the parents and child, but instead become a valued time where the child can experience the parent's care and attention.

Student centeredness. Suzuki proposed a triangular relationship in teaching, placing the child at the apex, the teacher and parents – equally important – as the base (Lang, 2015). Suzuki (1983) believed that where love is deep, much can accomplished, a sentiment which supported his teaching philosophy that the "child comes first, the music is second" (Groom, 2013, p.46). Gromm (2013) showed that students' learning progress is better when the teacher and parents show love and respect. Suzuki had a great love of children, believing that every child can learn when provided with the proper environment in which to realize their potential (Suzuki, 1983). This also emphasized the role of the teacher as a facilitator and co-learner in the relationship to help the student find the deeper, inner meaning by which to enrich their lives. Placing the student at the center, while adjusting the parents' and teacher's roles in the relationship, could be a useful teaching philosophy to balance the collectivism and individualism in current Chinese society where most younger families have only one child.

Character development. Listening to music was fundamental to Suzuki's method because it is how children learn their mother-tongue – they simply absorb it through listening and imitation (Suzuki, 1983). This extended to the idea that surrounding children with professional quality performances of their repertoire could help them unconsciously absorb fine phrasing, style, and good rhythmic execution (Grooms, 2013). Suzuki (1983) believed that if a child can produce a beautiful tone, he/she must have a beautiful heart. In producing a beautiful tone, one must develop good character and high sensitivity to others so that musical expression through tone can be broadened (Grooms, 2013). The traditional Chinese view was that an instrumental performance is an aesthetic experience (Tan, 2015). In the Confucian view, the role of music was not limited to its aesthetic artistic nature, but also that it was valuable in developing empathy. Thus, Suzuki's idea of developing an individual's good character through teaching music aligns

well with the traditional Chinese concept of the role of music, both in how it should be learned and its effect on one's personal development.

Creative environment. As Chinese child-rearing values have moved towards greater individual initiative, assertiveness, and self-confidence (Chan, 2013c), parents and children in this competitive society may find the Suzuki approach to be a method that allows for parentally-involved, student-centered character development while providing a nurturing creative environment in which the child can grow. It was the Chinese belief that the aesthetic experience can and should be an important part of daily life (Tan, 2015). On his part, Suzuki used many life experiences in teaching his students. Students were regularly given homework assignments such as: Try to see when your mother needs your help before she asks, perhaps later you will catch the hearts of Bach and Mozart in their music (Suzuki, 1983). The purpose of assignments like these was to bring the learning environment into daily life. Teachers may also adapt Suzuki's teaching method by creating listening games for the children to assist in producing a beautiful tone (Grooms, 2013). Over time, Suzuki's teaching practices evolved and new techniques and goals were added: Creating lesson plans that incorporate improvisation or composition in order to promote the student's interest in learning (Grooms, 2013). Within the current author's own teaching, musical stories and characters are often invented to inspire children to improvise different tone colors and characterizations. The aim being to encourage students' self-awareness of their emotions, and to develop the skill of expressing the emotions through non-verbal communication – music making.

Suzuki students, in public recitals or concerts, often appear as a large, highly-trained group. In particular, Asian students might perform within a group (collectivism), rather than showing their individual talent. Parental involvement had been shown to contribute significantly to progress in students' learning (Grooms, 2013). This had however provoked a number of criticisms of the Suzuki music education philosophy, such as insufficient ability in note-reading, "robotic" performances, and the considerable parent involvement (Hendricks, 2011). Despite the criticisms, Lange (2015) noted that good communication is a factor in avoiding the drawback of pushing the child too hard in practicing with unrealistic expectations. To ensure the parents are 'on the same page'

with the Suzuki teaching philosophy, parental meetings were organized to discuss and share experiences.

Based on the concept of Suzuki's "hear, learn, read" (Grooms, 2013, p.44) the early pieces in the method were learned by ear and children focused on developing physical approaches to the instrument, sensitivity to beautiful sounds through listening, and internalizing the melodies (Lange, 2015). Reading skills waited until the child was ready. Being a student-centered approach, the timing of the introduction of certain skills depended on the student's ability and age, whether it was learning by ear or reading. Suzuki's students might have started developing reading skills after students in other methods, but once a student was ready, there were many ways to help them learn this quite quickly (Grooms, 2013). In any method, the student is largely a product of the teacher (Kendall, 1996). Given the right environment, a student will read when taught to read and will develop musically.

Suzuki taught his students orally and aurally. The Suzuki method is an educational philosophy and how individual teachers apply the philosophy and concepts in their own teaching is important. Kendall (1996) suggested that teachers should use the techniques appropriately, at the right time, and with good intentions. Underlying the application of this philosophy is the need for each teacher to be continuously and actively engaged in the exercise of philosophical inquiry, to consider and question assumptions in their teaching, and to reflect on their rationale for using the Suzuki method. It is necessary to develop a personal philosophy based on their experience, beliefs, and aspirations (Hendricks, 2011).

Summary and Implications of Significant Concepts

A review of the beliefs identified in Chinese literature and the Confucian view of music, shows that music plays a crucial role in the cultivation of one's disposition, promoting good health, and fostering social harmony. Notably, cultural influences have had a great impact on the individual's motivation for learning music. Children have a variety of motivations for learning music. These include finding their identity, fulfilling filial duty, bringing honor to the family, and obtaining support from their parents.

From the political point of view, music carries the function of expressing the moral or political message of the time. China is becoming a global force, economically

and culturally. This ancient society is facing the challenge of balancing ideologies of "western individualism" and "Chinese communist collectivism." The traditional roles of teachers and parents are rapidly changing, and with music teaching, as in many areas of Chinese society, new methods are required to meet this challenge. Parents have become actively involved in the children's learning processes, trying to better understand how to help and assist their children in learning music, while the teacher becomes a co-learner, a facilitator in the child's development.

With Suzuki-based music lessons becoming increasingly popular in China, there is also a need to examine this teaching philosophy more closely to understand this phenomenon. Not only does Suzuki's philosophy hold parallels with traditional Confucian thinking, its important pedagogical concepts — student-centeredness, creative environment, parental involvement, and character development — may prove a useful method for balancing "individualism" and "collectivism." The Chinese belief that music has healing functions for the body and mind aligns well with the Suzuki method's focus on transforming a child's character, which may result in parents believing that music lessons may help their children both physically and mentally. Music lessons could be the "non-clinical setting" where parents are expecting to see the result of the "transformation" of their children.

Not being a clinical practice, the Suzuki movement is not able to provide extensive research about its success and achievements (Kendall, 1996), nor about its possible application for students with special needs. Could music therapy research and literature help in providing techniques to enhance the Suzuki based music teaching by a certified music therapist? The next chapter will examine how a credentialed music therapist may use music therapy skills and techniques, especially improvisation, in music lessons for children of Chinese immigrants.

Chapter 5. Application of Improvisational Music Therapy Techniques

Music Therapy

Music therapy is the process of a relational discovery between the individuals involved, the musical process (composing, improvising, performing, or listening), the musical product (a composition, improvisation, performance, perception), and the context (the physical, emotional, interpersonal environment) (Bruscia, 1998a). The essential point of music therapy is to "[find] the relationships between them" (Bruscia, 1998a, p. 101). Music therapists use a variety of approaches based on their individual philosophies, training, and experiences (Aigen, 2005a; Bruscia, 1987; Clair, Pasiali, & LaGasse, 2008; Priestley, 2012; Thaut, Thaut, & LaGasse, 2008; Wigram, Pederson, & Bonde, 2004)

Music-Centered Music Therapy

Music-centered music therapy utilizes the innate experience of making music as the means of therapeutic change (Aigen 2005a). The creative and aesthetic content of creating live music is paramount to forming a therapeutic alliance that can influence the outcome of the therapy (Lee & Clements-Cortés, 2014). The aesthetic content includes tones, rhythmic cells, harmonic progressions, textures, and form, all of which are considered with precision (Lee, 2003). In order to support and facilitate the client-therapist relationship, characteristics of music such as triads, intervals, and modes are viewed as having specific meaning. The therapist responds to the client through modifications of musical elements (e.g., dynamics, melody, harmony, and meter; Hanson-Abromeit, 2015), and it is therefore essential for the music therapist to understand clinical musicianship, music analysis, and musicology. To reach the desired clinical outcomes, the music therapist is often guided by the musical qualities of the intervention, through his or her musical knowledge and intuition (Nordoff & Robbins, 2007).

In order to be with the client in the music, a therapist needs to develop the skills of intuition (Brescia, 2005). In music therapy literature, countertransference appears in relation to the conceptualization of intuition. It is understood as a process by which the therapist learns more about their client through the recognition of their own feelings (Bruscia, 2005). Factors that facilitate the therapist's intuition include trust (leap of faith), deep listening, self-awareness, previous experience and education, and the relationship to

the client (Brescia, 2005). This implies that a therapist might need to be trained in one or more of these specific music-centered music therapy models (Aigen, 2001; Bruscia, 1987; Nordoff & Robbins, 2007; Wigram, 2004) in order to be able to react to a client's presenting sounds and rhythms, while also utilizing their intuition to make improvisation more effective by properly adjusting interventions. To rely on one's intuition as a life-long learning process falls beyond the scope of professional training in clinical improvisation.

Music Therapy and Improvisation

By way of Beer's (2011) teaching and clinical practice, improvisation is defined as "a spontaneous musical interaction between client and therapist with specific therapeutic goals and objectives; it is supported by the clinical and intentional use of musical styles and elements. This musical interaction is a shared experience between client and therapist." (p.118).

There are differences between musical improvisation in a performance context and clinical improvisation in a music therapy context. Kenny (2006) recognizes that the aesthetic quality expressed in a music therapy session might be different from those in a concert hall. The sounds of a therapy session "may not always sound beautiful to a critic…the music therapist hears these expressions as profound representations of human experience" (Kenny, 2006, p. 64). Aesthetic aspects come about through the interaction of being in the music with the client, the commitment of the client to express their true feelings, and the openness of the therapist to hear and accept the client's true feelings. Aigen (2007) notes that it is the openness of the therapist's support which provides the foundation for the development of the client's positive orientation to life.

Clinical improvisation is not simply an artistic, creative musical process; it is the use of musical improvisation in an environment of trust and support established to meet the needs of clients (Hanson-Abromeit, 2015). In musical improvisation the improviser and the listener have a wide gap with regards to communicating emotions. The listener has a passive role while the performer might conceal their personal emotions (Gilboa, Bodner, & Amir, 2006). Unlike musical improvisation, a music therapist in the therapeutic setting is likely to be more personal in their emotional expression. The therapist carries the responsibility of modeling and evoking musical creativity in the

client so that they may more easily reveal inner states, unconscious conflicts, and repressed expression (Priestly, 1994; Wigram et al., 2002). The clinical use of improvisation addressed in music therapy literature is a way of building the client-therapist relationship (Wigram et al., 2002) and a way to understand the developmental needs of clients (Bruscia, 1987). Clinical improvisation may be able to provide information about various aspects of a person's past and present, including musical culture, skills, taste, and preferences, which are influenced by the way they have been taught and their associations to past life events.

Improvisation in music therapy can be used to describe experiences ranging from highly prepared and structured, to unstructured and free form musical expression (Wigram et al., 2002; Wigram, 2004; Aigen, 2005b). A highly structured improvisation requires a great deal of direction, supervision, and guidance from the therapist, whereas within unstructured improvisation, the client is largely in control of the music, which may signify freedom or chaos (Beer, 2011). When the use of free improvisation or atonal improvisation is inappropriate or the client finds it difficult to create sounds spontaneously, Hanson-Abromeit (2015) suggests staying close to the material with which the client feels most comfortable, while creating flexibility by encouraging the potential for expression of his or her own feelings and ideas. More specific improvisational techniques which Lauzon (2006) has summarized include Bruscia's (1987) total of 63 improvisational techniques as an "action knowledge" (pp. 100-101) that could be easily applied in the music session. These include: (a) Mirror: same action/same time/supportive; (b) Alter: Same action/same time/re-directive; (c) Echo: Same action/after/supportive; (d) Model: Same action/before/re-directive; (e) Match: Different action/same time/supportive; (f) Intervene: Different action/same time/re-directive; (g) Reflect: Different action/after/supportive; and (h) Change: Different action/before/re-directive.

It is important to conduct improvisational music therapy within a safe environment, creating the feeling of security so as to maintain a low level of client anxiety. It is suggested (Geretsegger et al., 2012) that reliability and predictability are essential factors that need to be considered. For example, using preferred music, planning the music therapy session with the same sequence of activities, providing the therapy

with the same setting in the same room, and responding to the client's behavior in a consistent manner. This is also articulated in Wigram's (2004) concept of frameworking, as "providing a clear musical framework for the improvised material of a client, or a group of clients, in order to create or develop a specific type of musical structure" (Wigram, 2004, p. 118).

Application of Improvisational Music Therapy in the Clinical Setting

Improvisational music therapy is described as a method of establishing contact and relationship, providing space for an individual's self-activity (Geretsegger et al., 2012), enhancing emotional communication (Gilboa et al., 2006), encouraging social engagement, and supporting functional improvement (Schmid, 2014) through improvisational music making. Free improvisation is widely used to enable the client to express deep feelings and hidden emotions, to create a channel for non-verbal communication with the therapist, and to enable an ongoing flow of emotional-musical interaction (Bruscia, 1987 &1988). In many cases, the music therapist plays the role of the caregiver in the musical interactions, replicating the dyadic interactions that occurred in the client's early life as an infant or child, providing the client with an opportunity to work through unresolved relationships (Austin, 1999).

Not only can improvisation be used in music therapy interventions to achieve these various goals, it can also provide useful information to families, therapists, and other social-service professionals within the field of child services (Jacobsen & Killén, 2015) regarding the child's level of mutual attunement, nonverbal communication skills, emotional parental response, and indications of attachment behavior. With a therapeutic goal of strengthening parenting competency (Jacobsen & Wigram, 2007), parents must think from the child's perspective, to feel the needs of the child, and to control their needs and attitudes by merging their cognitive and emotional competencies.

In using improvisation for assessment purposes, the process evolves from structured to unstructured improvisation, free improvisation, turn-taking exercises, and follow-the-leader exercises, and is evaluated using the autonomy profile of the Improvisation Assessment Profiles (Bruscia, 1987). The Improvisation Assessment Profile is focused on many parameters, from musical elements to analytic integration, variation, tension, congruence, salience, and autonomy in the client. Literature indicates

that the autonomy profile could be used in assessing parent-child relationships through analyzing interpersonal and inter-musical interactions employing the five gradients: Dependent, Follower, Partner, Leader, and Resister. Research provides evidence of parent-child interactional behavior, positive and negative (Jacobsen & Wigram, 2007), in helping parents cognitively and emotionally understand the needs of the child (Jacobsen & Killén, 2015).

Summary

For music therapy improvisation to be used effectively in the clinical setting, the music therapist must: (a) provide a safe and warm environment needed to create the space of liberation for all conscious and unconscious material to emerge; (b) have acute awareness in order to trace and be inspired by the client's phonic/aphonic state in the here-and-now so as to appropriately respond through clinical improvisation; (c) acquire training in clinical improvisation to meet the client at a non-verbal level (Psaltopoulou-Kamini, 2013); and (d) use intuition through trust, deep listening, self-awareness, previous experience, and education.

Clinical improvisation can be used as an assessment tool to provide an indication of the client's strengths and areas for improvement and in music therapy intervention to achieve various goals. It is a music therapist's decision regarding how to apply the techniques from the improvisational spectrum described by Beer (2001). The right end of the spectrum is associated with rigid, non-improvisational structures as the starting point, while the left end suggests free improvisation without structure, empowering the client to control the musical flow. Places across the spectrum represent the distribution of power, control, and expression between the client and therapist. The decision for selecting the best model could be based on the perspective of how broad the goals are (Beer, 2001), and the client's past experience with improvisation. In the following section, the author will focus on her personal experiences as a Chinese mother and teacher, and on my role as a therapist in understanding music therapy and improvisation.

Music Therapy from the Chinese perspective

The definition of music therapy found in the article, "On the basic method of music therapy with its operation" (Hou, 2013) written in Chinese, can be translated into English as: Music therapy is a new subject that combines music, medicine, and

psychology, using music as a medium to improve the person's physical and physiological states. This definition makes no mention of the therapeutic processes or the relationships that Bruscia (1987) addressed in his definition. In line with general Chinese beliefs, this definition portrays music therapy as a cure for a problem, with therapy being part of medical practice and the role of music therapist being similar to that of a physician (Chen & Davenport, 2005; Ta et al., 2010). This article, written from a Chinese cultural point of view, had a significant impact on my writing of this thesis. First, it affirms for this author that music therapy should be used in a less critical context than a purely medical setting, and not holding the expectation that music therapy is the ultimate cure for the problem. Second, being a Chinese-Canadian music therapist trained in the West, there has developed a heightened awareness of the importance of building the client-therapist relationship and providing a safe, non-judgmental environment so that music therapy techniques may be applied in order to reach the therapeutic goals. Good communication channels need to be established prior to any application of music therapy, as strong Chinese cultural values of protecting the family name can create a wall against developing a client-therapist relationship. Hao's (2013) writing makes no mention of this essential element. It could be that Chinese are not open to expressing their true feelings; therefore she unconsciously omitted this topic. Another possibility, previously raised, could be the Chinese belief that music itself is medicine to the mind and body (Wang, 2004).

Again, Hao (2013) introduces various music therapy methods and their application. While methods such as singing, listening or recreating are fully explained, there is no further information in relation to how improvisational music therapy could be used to achieve a therapeutic result. When presenting methods of improvisation, she maintains that Chinese clients in the group setting tend to maintain "harmony" both in sounds and in relationships when improvising. It seems that the ultimate goal is to achieve a state of harmony and to make pleasant sounds together, with the idea of collectivism strongly represented in methods utilizing improvisational techniques. The article is silent about individual self-expression or the music therapist's skills. This writer understands that other factors such as limited creative freedom, shame, fear of being evaluated and anxiety (Kim, 2010) could make employing improvisational techniques

uncomfortable for a Chinese client, and it could also be that there is no strong client-therapist relationship to provide a basis to comfortably use improvisational techniques.

In becoming a music therapist, the personal learning experiences provided many opportunities to empathize with the Chinese reaction to improvisation and the inherent hesitation toward expressing their true feelings, especially in the clinical setting. While practicing her clinical internship at various sites, there was discomfort in expressing what she felt and thought of the situations, either to the supervisor or to the clients. Later, this author learned that the hesitation came from her being restricted in self-expression as a child living in a traditional family where obedience and respect for authority figures are an essential part of the traditional view of being a good child. This almost unconscious inhibition, had to be resolved. It was necessary for the author to work through the fear of expressing herself through improvisation and self-reflection, in order to reflect openness to her clients, and to be able to listen deeply to her own true feelings. The notion is that a therapist's difficulty in expressing emotions (emotional troughs) might present a problem in therapy and could possibly be avoided. Gilboa, Bodner, & Amir, (2006) suggest that working through various shades of emotional difficulty by employing emotional improvisation could improve communicability in therapy.

The process of becoming a music therapist, helped in the understanding that self-awareness is important to facilitate the therapeutic process, self-awareness being the process of recognizing feelings and letting go of thoughts or rules that might limit choices while employing improvisation in a session. Through writing journals and process notes, this author learned both self-questioning and self-reflection, increasing her self-awareness. As greater self-awareness developed, so did the ease access to, and trust in her intuition. Intuition became the guide to finding the route to connect to the client, release tension, use the techniques at the right time, and make adjustments when contradictions arise (Brescia, 2005).

A lecturer from a Chinese medical university, Hao (2013) presents some critical questions that need to be considered. 1. What is the definition of music therapy? 2. What is the therapeutic client-therapist relationship? 3. What is the use of improvisation? Reading through the reference entries for the article, there is only one Chinese author, Gao (2007), who was trained in the United States and became an accredited music

therapist, The others are members of the "Chinese Music Therapy Association" which follows a different music therapy system from that of the West – its belief being that music itself is medicine for a problem. This information indicates that it may be Hao's intention to classify music therapy within the field of medicine, rather than in the discipline of music therapy. The restrictions on writing or using improvisation in music therapy might also be related to the musical training and traditional Chinese beliefs about expressing one's true feelings. Restraint from expressing individual will within a group is a way of showing respect. Gao was trained in the United States and teaches in the music therapy program at a university in Beijing. He might have made the adjustments after his re-entry to China so as to be able to continue practicing in his homeland. The phenomenon of music therapists having the determination and passion for promoting the profession of music therapy was described by Kim (2010). They might see bringing music therapy skills and knowledge back to China as their mission. This mission might become the motivation for them to be positive about their encounters and experiences.

Application of Improvisational Music Therapy in the Music Lesson

The following sections reflect the experiences that the author applies in music enrichment group classes, piano, and guzheng private instrumental lessons. The concepts of music-centered music therapy and improvisational techniques are aligned with those developed from the Suzuki philosophy of teaching music.

The lesson plan. After securing her professional credentialling in music therapy, the author started offering music enrichment classes in her own studio for young Chinese immigrant children. The maximum class size is set at three children. Each class begins with the "Hello song" followed by a music story, where the children are asked to create a story by making the sounds of a specific character. When the children's attention is ready to be focused, materials are introduced with the specific objective of learning some particular music elements. The class ends with a "Goodbye" song, sung sitting in a circle. Each class is organized in the same sequence of activities. The evaluation system focuses on the children's positive improvement in communication, application of music elements, and development of emotional skills through their level of participation, emotional sensitivity, and parental involvement. In this situation, it is the clear intention to conduct the class without the parents in order see and evaluate the child's creativity without

parental influences. Classes last 30 minutes and for about 10 minutes after the class, the parents are informed about the lesson, provided with homework and given suggestions as to how to play with their children at home. During class time, parents wait in the outer room, and they are encouraged to discuss their child's learning with other parents. Group communications are established through "WeChat." The enrichment class term is about 10 weeks, with parents renewing the lessons for up to a year. Some children continue to take individual lessons after the completion of the enrichment class.

The parent-child profile. When Chinese parents and children come to visit this studio for the first time, they are offered a structured rhythmic improvisation (Jacobsen & Killén, 2015) to gather information about the child and the relationship with the parents. While the parents are supportive, the children are typically hesitant to show their skills. Commonly, it is noticed that the children cannot make a decision about which instruments to play, and will often open the discussion by asking their mother which one to choose and receiving her preference before choosing. This is interpreted as evidence of increasing parental warmth and decreasing parental power by opening the two-way discussion with their children (Chan, 2013a, Chen & Chen, 2012). During activities, parents also like to explain the instructions to the child to make sure things are being done correctly. It is common to see parents providing direct and indirect support to their child throughout the learning process (Wu, 2013). This author's observation is that these parents' child rearing values and attitudes towards their child's success still have much in common with parents in mainland China.

Techniques used. The lesson plan of the music enrichment classes are designed to provide the children with a sense of reliability and predictability (Geretsegger et al., 2015) by following the same sequence of activities. Familiarity with the instruments in the room can also provide a sense of being at home.

Within the situation described above, the experience is that children find it easier to establish relationships in a playful environment (Godstein, 2012). Through close observation of these children at play in the class, including how they choose to make sounds, it proves easier to expand the musical activities by including different kinds of structured games: find the instrument, guess the instrument by listening etc. When playing music games, it is efficient to create opportunities for performance or contests, as

the reward encourages the students in their learning. If children feel that their parents are proud of their achievements (external regulation), they will want to learn more (Comeau & Liu, 2015).

Each of these music activities involves various degrees of improvisation. Below is the improvisational spectrum (See Figure 1):

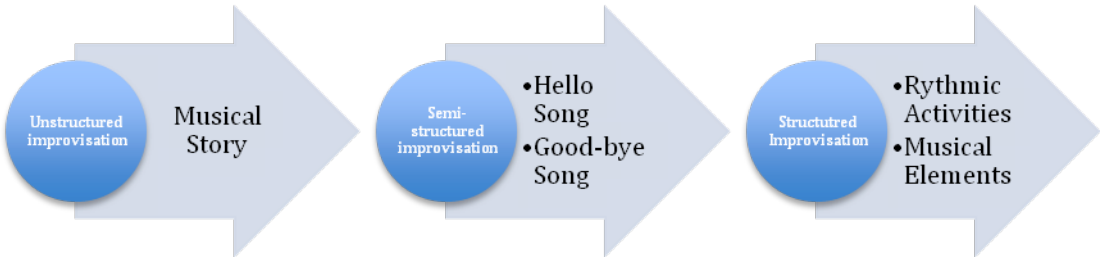

Figure 1. Improvisational spectrum of music experiences

Hello song/Good-Bye song. The Hello song and the Good-bye song mark the beginning and end of the lesson, the aim being to bring the children's attention to the class and to prepare the transition for them to continue their day after the class. Repetition and routine provide a sense of security and encouragement and through this, a natural space for improvisation is established. With lyrics in praise of the children's willingness to participate in the group (Law & Ho, 2011), the songs encourage the children to create sounds and sing in the space provided. The activity is arranged as a semi-structured improvisation – the children improvise sounds and rhythms, while in the role of teacher-therapist, this author provides the structure to help balance the improvisation.

Rhythmic experience/Music Elements. The present author's philosophy of education is student-centered (Gromm, 2013). When teaching concepts of music rhythm, dynamics, notes, high and low registers, she often establishes a two-way communication by using a 'Model and Echo' improvisational technique (Lauzon, 2006) to gauge the state of the child's understanding, and sometimes uses a Mirror technique (Lauzon, 2006) to help the child recognize what they are doing. Inspired by Gromm's (2013) statement that "the child comes first, the music is second" (p. 46), the intervention is adjusted to provide the children with an environment in which to develop their potential. For example, the improvisation may use preferred or known music as a starting point for the children to follow and gain self-confidence as the experience expands or unfolds (Grocke &

Wigram, 2007). The core of this activity is classified on the right end of the spectrum model, the teacher-therapist providing direction, supervision, and guidance in order to facilitate learning (Beer, 2011).

Since this learning activity requires the children's attention and focus, the technique of creating the moment to introduce this activity could follow the common iso-principle technique (Heiderscheit, 2015), the therapist using music to match the current state of the client and progressively bring about a desired change in mood or physiological response.

Music story. On the left end of the improvisational spectrum, guided methods are used to provide the basic framework for children to invent a story and improvise sounds for the characters with the aim of encouraging and empowering the children to express the story from their imaginations and feelings. A basic framework is embedded in the organization of the music played (Beer, 2011), for example, an ABA' music form; the A being the initial event, B being a change of direction, and then a varied return to the initial event with some reflections (A'). Specific improvisational techniques such as Match, Alter, and Change (Lauzon, 2006) are used as accompaniment and provide a direction to the free improvisation.

Chinese children remain shy and or rigid in these activities with various intensities of improvisation, even in this flexible creative environment. This could be due to a combination of the fear of being judged (Kim, 2010), traditional attitudes towards learning (Li, 2002a, 2002b, 2004), or a limiting of their self-expression. Responses such as children imitating other children's ideas and choosing to use the same instrument could be the result of not expressing one's own feelings.

An individual child's character is hardly ever seen in these improvisations. To improve the students' use of communication and emotional skills in the improvisations, the author researched both the Chinese attitude towards "collectivism" and "individualism" (Law & Ho, 2011), and Suzuki's aim of teaching students from life experiences (Suzuki, 1983). From this research, ideas developed regarding making improvisation workable for Chinese children. For example, one of the homework assignments developed asks the child to think of a daily routine, and then to employ this as the basis for an improvisation. When the children start to notice differences, the music

stories begin to develop individual characteristics. The beginning of individualism in the musical story enables me to create communication by sensitively and musically matching the child's musical and non-musical expression in order to 'tune in' empathically (Kim, Wigram & Gold, 2008).

Parental involvement. A significant contribution towards the children's enjoyment and improvement in the class is the "homework." Performed by the parents and child at home, it includes activities such as preparing a story, a Rhythmic Echo game, and finding an object on which to play the rhythmic activity. Not only do these activities help improve the children's learning, they encourage harmonious parent-child communications, such as "enjoyment and feeling interconnected when engaging in reciprocal interactions," mutual cooperation, "shared eagerness and willingness to meet each other's needs and cooperate," and " positive emotional ambiance including joyful moments, reciprocal affection, humor, and quick negative affect modulation" (Pasiali, 2012, p.305).

Individual Examples

Re-defining the motivation of learning. The author's experiences teaching private piano and/or guzheng, have brought a degree of understand as to how difficult it is to correct all of a student's poor reading and playing habits while simultaneously trying to develop their ability to express emotion through playing. The student's performance problems may be caused by a combination of their attitude towards learning and the parents' expectations. As mentioned concerning student motivation for learning (Comeau & Liu, 2015), motivation mostly depends on external sources, and improvisation and enrichment classes may represent beneficial ways to encourage students. That being said, this may not be an appropriate attitude for learning music. On one occasion, a Level 2 student arrived with the ambition of reaching Level 10 in just 3 years. This would usually take from 6 to 9 years. The student had no patience for reading or playing correctly, but pursued her goal by investing large amounts of time practicing. Why? Because her Chinese peers were following the same path, and she wanted to gain recognition from her parents and school (Huang, 2012). When the basic musical elements are not correct, it is difficult to shape the music with emotional expression. Her progress could not meet her desires or expectations.

In role of a music teacher/therapist, the author continually evaluates her teaching through processes of self-reflection (Hendricks, 2011) regarding the philosophy and techniques being used, and she self-question the outcome of her interventions. The self-reflection enhances her intuitive feelings about the student's situation: (a) the student may have anxiety regarding academic achievement; (b) she may not be recognizing that she is playing incorrectly; and (c) she may have a fear of failing. To test these, in the class the student's playing is recorded. When the student listens to the recording she recognizes many of her mistakes. Second, the student is asked to listen carefully to recordings of other people's playing. This leads the student to say that everyone else plays better than she does. It is usually the second exercise that motivates the student to play better. Third, one of the student's favorite pieces is used as the basis for an improvisation. By creating variations of the piece with the student playing the melody, this author matches the student by providing an accompaniment, creating a musical space which allows the student to express her emotions. From regular application of these exercises, the student realizes her weakness, becomes motivated by beautiful music, regains her self-confidence and explores her emotional feelings. Her journey of individuation begins to emerge.

Creating a safe environment. In another example, it is noted that the student plays the music smoothly with musical expression in the class but not in the home environment. The mother cannot understand why her son plays differently during the lesson, as she says that she accompanies his 2-hour daily practice, making sure that he plays the piece fluently. In the lesson, the author provides the student with attainable goals to help him overcome the challenging sections through structured improvisation, something the mother cannot do. The process involves dividing the piece into smaller sections and playing these smaller sections separately or in different combinations (Lee & Clements-Cortés, 2014). This is similar to the concept of creating a safe environment in music therapy (Geretsegger et al., 2015) where the student can feel secure by gaining control, individually, of various sections of the music. This author's suggestion to the mother is to create a non-judgmental practice time, and to consider her accompaniment of her son's practice as a symbol of her support (Comeau & Liu, 2015). It is clear that, it is not only by assessing the student and the parents that conclusions are drawn. This writer's self-reflection (Austin, 1998; Bruscia, 1998; Priestley, 1994; Scheiby, 1991)

guides her in understanding the problems and the needs of the student. In this situation, the student needs to gain self-confidence and feel support from his parents; those are the factors that facilitate the student's improvement. Within these classes, it is seen that the parents often focus almost exclusively on the musical product (e.g. playing the piece fluently through hours of repetition and practice); in doing so, they may overlook the student's needs and forget that it is the musical process that provides valuable life-long learning experiences.

Summary and Implications of Significant Concepts

As Bruscia (1998) points out, the process of music therapy is to find the relationships between people, musical processes, a musical product, and a context. This aligns strikingly with much of Suzuki's philosophy (Suzuki, 1983). A Suzuki-trained teacher uses the concepts of student-centered education, a creative environment, character development, parental support, and the teacher's self-reflection in the music lesson. A credentialed music therapist absorbs these concepts through formal and informal education and training, practice in clinical settings, the continuing education of conferences, workshops, symposia, reading current literature and following contemporary research. From using the present author's professionally developed skills and broadening experience assessing young Chinese students, she senses internally a profound feeling of being with the child in each part of this transformative process when these techniques are applied in music lessons.

The sustaining force in the author's numerous experiences, is her relationship with the students and their parents Employing her ability to assess the student's needs, it is possible to provide interventions for children to learn through musical processes, with a musical product being the ultimate result. Below is a pyramid summarizing her approach (See Figure 2):

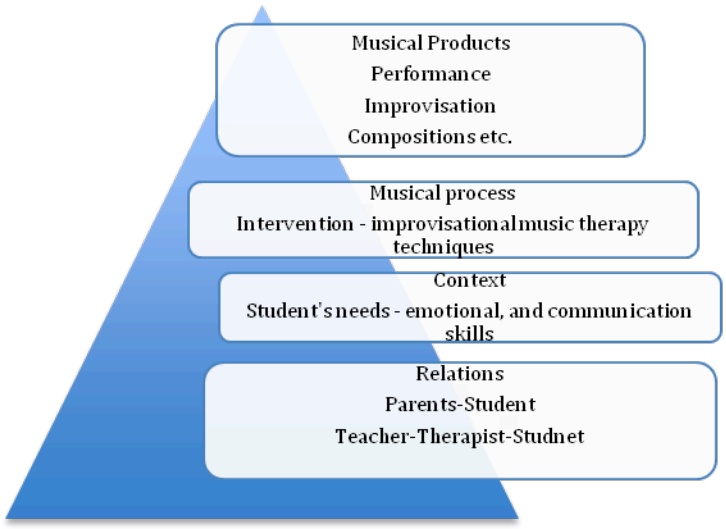

Figure 2. Pyramid of application of improvisational music therapy concepts in music lessons for Chinese immigrant children

Culturally speaking, improvisational techniques seem difficult to implement in both clinical and music lesson contexts as Chinese people, in many respects, are aiming for measurable results and are constrained by a fear of being judged. Just so, however, this writer feels that it is not impossible. In her experience, improvisation can be introduced by moving from structured to unstructured forms, by providing a safe environment and building a trusting relationship. The benefits of adapting improvisational techniques in music lessons could make the environment enjoyable and playful while addressing emotional and parent-child relationship issues.

In the following final chapter, some conclusions are presented in light of the findings of this research. This includes challenges and limitations as well as suggestions for possible future directions in research.

Chapter 6. Discussion

The Study's Implications

A fundamental concept that became clear through this study is that of the continuum ranging from collectivism to individualism. Contemporary and historical Chinese cultures are primarily based on concepts of collectivism, while music therapy in the West focuses on principles of individualism. The Suzuki music education philosophy runs mostly parallel with the core principles of music therapy, with some main differences being: (a) the non-clinical and clinical environment; (b) non-systematic and systematic methods; and (c) the techniques used. Although the Suzuki philosophy supports individualism, collective ideas such as group performance in unison, the commitment of the mother to assisting the child, and the instruction of learning music by ear for beginners could be useful in adapting collectivism to this philosophy.

Given that the Chinese immigrant family is oriented towards the idea of collectivism, parents and children may feel uncomfortable being in a clinical music therapy setting and when they are, expecting to 'solve the problem' with the therapist within a limited time frame. Music lessons could be seen as providing a safe environment where transformation could take place during the learning process, removing the need for finite and perhaps rushed time frames, while also building the teacher/therapist-student-parent relationship without the necessity of reaching a predefined goal.

When applying improvisational music therapy techniques in music lessons, the principle work would include the process of balancing collectivist and individualist forces through: (a) creating therapeutic relationships; (b) providing a safe environment; (c) redefining the motivations for learning; and (d) enhancing self-awareness. Improvisational music therapy techniques might not be effective in enhancing children's emotional skills during music lessons without having these concepts clearly established. Once the foundation is prepared, improvisational techniques such as, Mirror, Alter, Echo, Model, Match, Intervene, Reflect, and Change (Lauzon, 2006), among others, could all be used to address issues such as developing children of Chinese immigrant's emotional skill or used to design interactive games for Chinese immigrant's parents to play with their child to promote parent-child relations.

Challenges

This study required a literature review that spanned many areas and disciplines, across two cultures and languages. It was a challenge to sort, classify, and organize the information to present the evidence as clearly as possible. For example, while the information selected to support her position is not always directly related to the discipline, the author intended to provide the reader with a broad base of understanding, both in context and specifics. Despite the breadth and depth of the search, she found no literature that specifically addresses the use of music therapy improvisation within a Suzuki-based lesson context with children of Chinese immigrants. The study was cross-cultural; it involved research of two different cultures. This writing could only propose connections between ideas based on the author's research and personal understanding of Chinese culture, her many years of teaching, and her clinical experiences in Montreal.

Not surprisingly, the author uncovered many seeming contradictions in the non-English literature. Notably, the contemporary Chinese government is working toward modernization and globalization, while a revival of Confucianism is promoted to remind the Chinese people of their 3,000 years of rich traditions. Chinese literature describes music therapy as a medical practice while the Chinese population is still generally hesitant to take part in clinical settings, especially where psychological aspects are involved. As well, history continues to reflect governmental concern regarding new or radical ideas in education. Traditional views of motivation seem to not be congruent with the ideals of communication, individual emotional expression, and creativity found in music classes supported by the parents.

These and other contradictions pose a challenge. If one must draw some conclusions from the evidence, it would be that contemporary China variably lives with two sets of opposing yet complementary ideals, collectivism and individualism. As with many things in modern China, assessment and judgments are based on the situation at hand, aiming for the best possible, achievable result.

Limitations

The information gathered here is confined by limited access to other resources, should they exist, and the direction of the author's thinking and understanding as a Chinese music therapist living in the Western culture. Her understanding of Chinese

traditional family values was developed mostly from her parents' values, and her first 20 years growing up in Taiwan. Through the literature review of the contemporary Chinese population living in Mainland China, this writer recognized some significant cultural differences between China and Taiwan. The dominant influence of the Communist Party government in China was not my experience. Significantly for example, the term "collectivism" experienced under communism might be directly related to the reinforcement of the Chinese government's policies, dedicated to forming the ideal communist society. However, my experience of collectivism was closer to that of traditional Confucian philosophy. This contributed to my generalizing some of the traditional family concepts and social phenomenon discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. In addition, most of my experience in Montreal has been with more recent immigrants from the mainland, who are not of the same socio-economic background as the majority Chinese-Canadian populations living in Vancouver and Toronto whose families arrived more than 50 years ago. The individual conclusions may therefore have value in certain situations, but the broader implications of this study might not be currently generalizable across the children of Chinese immigrant families in Canada.

Future Research Considerations and Recommendations

The application of important music therapy techniques could be used in non-clinical settings for the Chinese immigrant population. Research could be done exploring different music therapy techniques, such as listening, and singing to provide information as to how these techniques could be used for the Chinese population, and, more generally, other cultural groups. Other research methods including questionnaires and interviews could be used to provide both quantitative and qualitative information on this area of study. Case studies might provide evidence of how music therapy techniques could be used in non-clinical settings for this specific cultural group. Such information would benefit music therapists in understanding some of the cultural issues and help them make adjustments to the music therapy techniques used. Some of the fundamental concepts explored may be able to be generalized for other populations. Further future research could also address the significant foundational issues of language and non-verbal communication – culture-specific and generalized, used in music therapy sessions. This detailed and broad approach could contribute to the knowledge base and

communication of this knowledge, furthering the effectiveness of the professional discipline of music therapy.

Conclusion

As seen above, the specific question leading to this thesis led the author to specific and broad understandings of the issues. Specifically, in the analysis of the author's direct experience she determined that when collectivism is present in this cultural context, music therapy improvisation designed to enhance the emotional skills and parent-child relationships of children of Chinese immigrants, provided by a credentialed music therapist, could be better applied in Suzuki-based music lessons, than in the clinical setting.

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