

# Motivational Regulation and Dropout in Music Schools

Wednesday, 11 September 2024 15:10 (20 minutes)

Many children and adolescents learn a musical instrument with enthusiasm, while others take little pleasure in it and develop little sustainable intrinsic motivation. Additionally, many music students stop attending music school and abandon their instruments. The causes of these motivational differences can be found in the individual (e.g., interests), the quality of music lessons, or the social environment's support. We investigate the longitudinal development of sustainable motivation in music students and its effects on retention or dropout rates. The study is framed by Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2017), which posits that satisfying basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and social relatedness fosters self-determined motivation (e.g., Cheon, Reeve, Lee, & Lee, 2018). Numerous studies (e.g., Kingsford-Smith & Evans, 2019; MacIntyre et al., 2018) have examined self-determined motivation in school-based music education. However, learning an instrument in music schools, as practiced in Austria, has been rarely studied, especially considering motivation development and teaching conditions (e.g., Evans & Liu, 2019; Wieser & Müller, 2022). In an empirical study, music students (N=200, as of May 2023) were surveyed about their motivation, teaching conditions, and music-specific parental behavior using a questionnaire. Structural equation analyses of the first cohort's data reveal how parental behavior, need satisfaction in lessons, and perceived teacher characteristics predict students' motivation and their intention to persist in music schools.

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**Session Classification:** Talk Session 2

**Track Classification:** Educational Psychology and Educational Research