Reflection on Practice in Education Children with Special Needs:
Issues Related to Career Education for Music Teachers

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Abstract

This study discusses the outcomes and issues in meeting the educational needs of music teachers teaching children with special needs in support of their career paths, based upon the career educational practice of the author.

Some success appears to have been achieved with educational content and methods in understanding development issues, understanding children with issues, and providing the support required. On the other hand, understanding and responding to relationships with and support for parents, and supportive environments for music teachers, have their own educational needs, and further development of career education to support the career paths of music teachers is required in light of these needs.

Keywords : career education, career pathways, reflection on practice, music teachers, children with special needs

Ⅰ. Preface

I am involved in music education. Special needs education, particularly developmental disabilities, may be an issue with regards to school education in teaching programs and social education in music instructor training.

In the latter training of music teachers, difficulties in dealing with group teaching including children with developmental disabilities is often cited as a particular issue. Music education provided by music teachers consists of extracurricular education conducted at music studios or teachers' homes and may be based on very definite and occasionally highly necessary educational needs possibly involving monthly fees and other burdens. When a child with developmental issues attends group teaching, parents may request individualized support, resulting in other parents filing complaints to ensure that their children are not affected. Music teachers may find themselves in an environment in which they are forced to deal with these issues on their own under restrictive curriculum and instructor assignment conditions.

A previous study examined the practicality of music therapists supporting music teachers who need to respond to diversifying music education needs in social education,[1] in addition to specificities differing from regular school education.[2] Examining issues and measures to support music teachers who are in charge of music education, including the increasing number of children with developmental issues in music studios, will be academically and socially significant to capitalizing on the results of the aforementioned research.

Based on the results of a survey conducted after experiencing the author's educational practice, this study identifies how music teachers have understood and responded to developmental issues and the children involved, and how they have changed after experiencing the above educational practice. The outcomes and issues in meeting educational needs in support of music teachers with regard to the author's educational practice are them presented.

Ⅱ. Purpose and methods

The purpose of this study is to develop support and music education for music teachers working with children having developmental issues through a review of the outcomes and issues of the author's educational practice.

Based on the results of a survey, how music teachers have understood and responded to issues and the children involved are listed, and how this has changed over the course of the educational practice of the reporter is demonstrated.

The survey was administered to 50 participants, male and female, through the sponsor of the author's educational practice, with a 20-minute response time immediately following the reporter's educational practice. In accordance with sponsor intentions, the

participants were asked to provide open-ended responses regarding what they found helpful and their impressions. Prior to the survey, a verbal explanation was given that the results would be used for research related to education and teaching, and ethical considerations were taken into account so that individuals would not be identified.

Ⅲ. Results

Participants experiencing the author's educational practice understood and responded to developmental issues and the children involved beforehand as follows.

1. Understanding of children

(1) Understanding of children with developmental issues

・They are increasing in number.
・They seem selfish. (not following directions, loitering, yelling, etc.)
・Seem to be experiencing things for the first time. (sudden inability to do things, self-harm, etc.)

(2) Response

1) Relationship with children
・Sometimes rushed children to finish their assignments in time.
・Sometimes scolded children when they could not do what they seemed able to do or what was desired of them.
・Had a hard time dealing with and teaching children.

・Was frustrated in dealing with them.
・Sometimes wondered if they would be able to keep up given how much they could not learn.
・Sometimes thought teaching would be easier without child (with issues) present.

2) Teaching
・Responded to what is likely to happen.
・Child attending consistently, and working hard to listen.
・Sometimes help outside regular hours.
・Sometimes had to respond based on assumptions.
・Lack of opportunities to learn about characteristics and support for children with developmental issues.
・Personally learned about supporting children with developmental issues.
・Sometimes wonder afterwards if response was appropriate, but difficult to confirm.
・Susceptible to lack of understanding and complaints from parents.
・Group teaching is limited in its ability to support all children and accomplish tasks.

The reporter conducted educational practice as follows for participants who understood and responded to developmental issues and the children involved as described above. The subject matter and content of educational practice were set after confirming and consulting educational needs.

2．Educational practice of author

（1）Content

"What are developmental issues?" was selected as a question, allowing time for thinking and exchanging ideas, and it was then confirmed that there are issues in 'communication', 'behavior', and 'learning'.

The following are typical behaviors indicated regarding the first of these three issues.
・Difficulty making eye contact.
・Difficulty imagining things that cannot be seen (feelings, pain, situations, atmosphere, etc.).

The following behaviors were indicated regarding the second issue.
・Difficulty in places or situations when not knowing what to do.
・Difficulty adapting to new changes.
・Tendency to be picky.
・Overly sensitive or insensitive.
・Noticeably clumsy.

The following behaviors were indicated regarding the third issue.
・Difficulty listening and understanding what to do.
・Difficulty concentrating on what is being said.
・Difficulty understanding 'beginnings' and 'endings'.

Then, I confirmed what kind of support is generally needed in connection to individual issues as follows based the outline.
・Avoiding scolding.

・Acknowledging what children do and praising them.
・Understanding disabilities and children with them.

The following are ways to settle children who are or appear restless.
・First, enter a child's line of sight.
・Read their expressions without relying on words.
・Start things with something that interests them.
・Keep talking as short and simple as possible.
・Be specifically visual in expressing things.

Avoid unviewable, abstract expressions.
・If plans diverge from the norm, tell the child in advance so that they will know.
・When getting their attention, be brief, specific, and positive.
Instead of saying '×× is bad', try Let's try ○○', and so on.

（2）Method

Rather than proceeding in a one-way direction, an interactive format was adopted so that questions could be made up frequently, so that participants would have opportunities to think, share and examine their ideas individually or collectively, and also to make use of their experiences.

An outline was distributed to each participant that could be used as a notebook so that they could understand the agenda in advance and provided assistance as needed.

After confirming necessary support based on issues, the participants were supported in understanding and uncovering further issues through a process of making up specific problems as assignments and examining them individually and as a group.

We prepared five different specific problems and tried to share the results of a wider and more diverse range of studies by examining them as a group and then summarizing them as a whole.

The following problems were addressed in assignments.

- Example 1: 'I can't do the necessary steps in order'.
- Example 2: 'I can't do things that look easy'.
- Example 3: 'I can't keep quiet'.
- Example 4: 'Doesn't listen no matter how many times I try to get their attention'.
- Example 5: 'I don't clean up', 'My shoes don't match', and so on.

Participants examined 'what not to make children do' and 'effective support for children' in response to each issue.

3. Evaluation after educational practice

The following items were respectively identified in the survey regarding the author's educational content and methods.

(1) Content
- Renewed desire to make learning fun for all children.
- Want to compliment them for sharing in the

fun and joy of being able to do things.
- Began to feel responsible not only for reaching goals, but also being involved with the children themselves.
- Learned the importance of giving support so they do not give up in trying to do things despite their developmental issues.
- Realized the importance of understanding disabilities and children with them.
- Reaffirmed that education starts with 'knowing the child'.
- Was able to learn about the situations and circumstances of children with developmental issues.
- Have a deeper understanding of disabilities and children with them, especially their behavior.
- Found out there are reasons for children' behavior.
- Learned that problem behaviors in children arise because they are 'restless' and 'want to settle'.
- Learned that children will not do something unless they want to.
- Able to consider responses based upon the situations and circumstances of children.
- Now know how to respond to actual situations.
- Realized the importance of communicating in a positive manner.
- Learned that it is important to give children specific explanations.
- Learned need to be aware to always speak as if it is the first time.
- Realized the importance of children 'liking' themselves, not just being 'able to do' something.
- Wondered if the feelings of the adults would

affect children.

・Got hints on the importance of having a positive and constructive understanding of problems.

・Thought necessary even for children without issues in their development.

（2）Method

・Thought it appeared immediately useful, such as how to express oneself.

・Program helped to understand effective responses, such as getting in a child's line of sight.

・Would like specifically communicate to children what is desired for them to do, with an eye towards what they can do.

・Was able to relate what they actually experienced to how they should behave.

・Was good to share with other lecturers difficulties and efforts.

・There were lessons learned in setting up times and communicating with participants.

・Issues remained, such as the difficulty of dealing with cases in which the cooperation of parents cannot be obtained.

・Would have liked to set up times for individual consultation.

As described above, in evaluations conducted during educational practice, understanding of and support for content and methods was found, but issues dealing with parents rather than children were unresolved and support was sought.

Ⅳ. Discussion

Based on evaluations, some success appears to have been achieved with the content and method of the reporter's educational practice in understanding development issues, understanding children with issues, and providing the support required. In particular, participants positively rated the fact that they were able to discover problem-solving strategies through discussions with other participants based on specific situations that actually needed to be addressed. Assuming that there is a high need for such collaborative learning, we would like to improve the program so that it can be developed into a collaborative learning experience based on participant experiences.

Even in music education, where achievement of goals tends to be emphasized, there was a high level of awareness of one's role as a support person involved in nurturing children, not just getting them to do something.

Despite the limited conditions, we would like to continue supporting the development of career paths for music educators by sharing examples of superior practice and difficult cases, so that we can further meet the needs of teachers involved as educators.

On the other hand, the reporter's educational practice could not include sufficient content related to parental support, partly because the content was child-centric at the request of the sponsor. Assuming that there is a considerable need for education related to parental support, I

would like this reflected in advance studies and preparations. I assume that this may have been influenced by the fact that needs identification prior to educational practice was done only with the sponsors. Based on these reflections, the group hopes to develop practice based on the pedagogical needs of music teachers in the future.

Furthermore, participants expressed that the support environment for teachers involved in education itself is not sufficient. In music studios, for example, curriculums are organized in such a way that students are required to complete group work within 60 minutes, and it is common for one instructor to be in charge of the curriculum with parental support. To reduce the burden on teachers with needs who want to be supported as educators, along with improving the educational environment, the task of the reporter is to further develop the content and methods of education, focusing on support related to learning and psychology.

V. Conclusion

Based on the results of a survey of music studio instructors, this study attempts to reflect on the reporter's educational practice in understanding and supporting children with issues.

While the author's educational practice produced results in terms of understanding children and issues, methods for supporting children, and support for music teachers, issues related to understanding and supporting

parents remained. On reflection, future development of educational practice requires support directly responding to the educational needs of music teachers.

Notes

1) Saki Matsumoto. What is required for music education in local communities?: Possibilities of support by music therapists for music instructors dealing with diversifying needs, *Heisei College of Music Bulletin 12* (2), 2012, pp. 55–59.

2) Kenji Yoshida, Hisashi Yoshinaga, Yasuhiro Shimizu, et al. Lecturers of Yamaha Music Foundation talk about their work in pop music: The kind of knowledge and technique that cannot be learned at a music college, *Pipers*, 18 (11), 1999, pp. 34–36.

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特別な支援を必要とする
子どもの教育にかかわる実践と省察：
音楽講師を対象としたキャリア教育にかかわる課題を中心に

山本 智子

概要

　本稿では、筆者によるキャリア教育実践に基づいて、特別な支援を必要とする子どもの教育を実施する音楽講師のキャリアパスを支援する教育的ニーズに応えるための成果及び課題に関して検討した。

　内容及び方法に関して、発達にかかわる課題の理解、課題のある子どもの理解、必要な支援等に関する一定の成果が得られたものと考えられる。一方、保護者との関係や支援、音楽講師の支援環境に関して、理解や対応にかかわる教育的ニーズがあることが明らかにされ、これらのニーズをふまえて音楽講師のキャリアパスを支援するキャリア教育のさらなる発展が求められる。

キーワード：キャリア教育、キャリアパス、教育の実践と省察、音楽講師、特別な支援を必要とする子ども