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Citation for the original published paper:

Jeppsson, C. & Lindgren, M. (2018). Exploring equal opportunities: Children's experiences of the Swedish Community School. *Research Studies in Music Education*. Prepublished October 2, 2018. DOI: 10.1177/1321103X18773153

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Exploring equal opportunities: Children's experiences of the Swedish Community School of Music and Arts

Research Studies in Music Education. Prepublished October 2, 2018. DOI: 10.1177/1321103X18773153

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Abstract

The article explores the social stratification of the Swedish Community School of Music and Arts, which offers voluntary extra-curricular arts education to children in Sweden, and children's experiences of attending the school. A survey was executed where sixth-graders in Sweden were asked about their experiences of the school and about background factors such as their gender, country of birth, parents' level of education and family involvement in the music and arts. The results show that the typical Swedish Community School of Music and Arts student is a Swedish-born girl with well-educated parents. Children of parents who play an instrument or sing are more likely to find their way to the school, and the level of support that parents provide contributes to the children's persistence in their studies. In sum, the results largely conform to cultural reproduction theory.

Keywords

Community School of Music and Arts, survey, children, cultural reproduction, social stratification, background factors

Introduction

The aim of this study is to explore the social stratification of the Swedish Community School of Music and Arts (CSMA) and children's experiences of CSMA. On a general level, cultural reproduction theory has proven to be influential and resulting in social stratification of education (Blanden, Gregg, & Machin, 2005; Esping-Andersen, 2008). However the Nordic countries have shown a high degree of social mobility compared to other parts of the world (Blanden et al., 2005; Erikson & Jonsson, 1996) though after 2000 this tendency appears to be less pronounced (Esping-Andersen, 2008).

Being involved in the arts in some form, for example playing a musical instrument, is a variable that is often included in operationalizations of the concept of cultural capital based on the work of Bourdieu (Aschaffenburg & Maas, 1997; DiMaggio, 1982; Dumais, 2006; Roscigno & Ainsworth-Darnell, 1999; Zimdars, Sullivan, & Heath, 2009). Correlations between different aspects of cultural capital are to be expected; for instance, cultural capital in the form of having well-educated parents is associated with taking part in art education (Southgate & Roscigno, 2009). Southgate and Roscigno (2009) found that children's involvement with music varies quite systematically by class and gender status, and they suggest that such involvement has implications for other school achievement. Research exploring the links between socioeconomic background factors, involvement in music and school attainment is often based on correlation research, which precludes the demonstration of causality. Hallam and Rogers (2016), however, managed to show a causal effect of music involvement on school attainment. Skills gained in childhood have been shown to be very significant for a person throughout life (Esping-Andersen, 2008). Hence the choices parents make for their children early in life, for example enrolling them in CSMA, can turn out to be of game-changing importance for their education and later life.

The Swedish Community School of Music and Arts in Context

In all Nordic countries, as well as in most of Europe, local communities offer children extra-curricular arts education. Unlike in Sweden, the CSMA in Finland, Denmark and Norway are statutory bodies organized and governed on a national level. Nevertheless, the schools are not homogeneous, not even in the same country. The local variations in subjects and profiles are wide, and often depend on individual teachers' personal understanding of their assignment. In Sweden, the CSMA have no specific stated goals at the national level, something that has been criticized in Swedish research. Teachers are seen as being "in the hands of their students and the market" (Holmberg, 2010, p. 221), and another risk that has received attention is that the lack of national supervision may result in not all children having the same opportunities to participate (Hofvander Trulsson, 2010).

In Sweden the CSMA offer voluntary extra-curricular arts education to children aged approximately 7–18 years in practically every Swedish municipality. Instruction, for the most part, takes place in the children's free time. The subjects offered include music, dance, theatre/drama and arts and crafts, the largest of which is music. CSMA have been able to offer music education for at least 50–60 years for a relatively low fee, thanks to municipal subsidies (Heimonen, 2006). The municipal funding has been reported to cover over 80% of costs, and the term fees vary from 0 to 1700 SEK (*Sveriges Musik- och Kulturskoleråd*, The Swedish Council of Community Schools of Music and Arts, 2016). The ambitions that shaped the first CSMA in different parts of Sweden were explicitly inclusive, built on the ideal of cultivation for "the common man", to develop the individual and contribute to a more democratic society ("*folkbildning*" in Swedish) (Brändström & Wiklund, 1995; Olsson, 1994; Persson, 2001). As Persson (2001) and Bergman and Lindgren (2014) state, CSMA in Sweden were constructed alongside the welfare state, and the ideals of social justice and

equality were guiding principles of this development. In line with the educational tradition in Sweden, the Swedish CSMA was ideologically constructed of political ideals in making music education available to all children regardless of their socio-economic situation (Bergman & Lindgren, 2014). According to Lilliedahl and Georgii-Hemming (2009) parents whose children attend CSMA expect the school to embody democratic norms and values, because it is a publicly financed and administered activity. When it comes to social stratification of the children attending CSMA, Elofsson (2009), who was commissioned by the City of Stockholm to examine gender and socioeconomic factors in relation to CSMA in the Stockholm region, described a roughly 2:1 predominance of girls over boys, and roughly the same predominance (2:1) of children with well-educated parents over those with less well-educated parents. Brändström and Wiklund (1995) showed that two out of three pupils at CSMA were girls, and that it was twice as common for children of higher employees and university graduates to study at CSMA than children of working class parents. In a quantitative study at master's level, Hofvander Trulsson (2004) found that 16% of 11-year-old children involved in CSMA in Malmö had immigrant background, while in Malmö as a whole, 40% of 11-year-olds had immigrant background.

This lack of equality in CSMA has been identified as an important issue on the agenda of a commission (KU, 2015), appointed by the Swedish government to investigate the Swedish CSMA. The purpose of the commission was to assess the activities of CSMA in Sweden and propose ways the state can contribute to creating a more equal and accessible CSMA. The survey discussed in this paper constitutes part of the work of this commission. In this survey sixth-graders in Sweden were asked about their experiences of CSMA and their background.

With the aim of exploring children's perceptions of the Swedish CSME in relation

to background factors, the following research questions were outlined:

- Does the children's tendency to attend the CSMA vary according to the background factors gender, country of birth, parents' level of education and family involvement in the arts, and if so, how?
- What perceptions do the children have about CSMA?

Previous research

Cultural Capital, Cultural Reproduction and Cultural Mobility

A substantial amount of previous research within the field of social stratification in education concerns the link between cultural capital and children's educational achievements and success (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979; De Graaf, De Graaf, & Kraaykamp, 2000; DiMaggio, 1982; DiMaggio & Useem, 1978; Dumais, 2002, 2006; Jæger, 2009; Kaufman & Gabler, 2004; Kisida, Greene, & Bowen, 2014; Roksa & Potter, 2011). This body of research relies heavily on the influential work of Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979) outlining the theory of cultural reproduction. This holds that the totality of a child's home environment forms a heritage called cultural capital, and that this in turn heavily influences the child's educational and life outcomes. As a result, according to cultural reproduction theory, class inequalities are reproduced from one generation to the next. Later, DiMaggio (1982) found cultural capital and parents' level of education not to be so highly correlated, and put forward a theory of cultural mobility suggesting that cultural capital can be acquired throughout one's life. One could say that the egalitarian ideal in the Swedish CSMA builds on this assumption that cultural mobility is possible.

A large body of research attempts to adjudicate between these two theories, cultural reproduction and cultural mobility. Support for the cultural reproduction theory can be found in Roscigno and Ainsworth-Darnell (1999), support for cultural mobility in De Graaf et al.

(2000), and mixed support in studies by DiMaggio (1982), Jæger (2009) and Roksa and Potter (2011) among others.

The interpretations and applications of Bourdieu's concepts of cultural capital and cultural reproduction vary, however, to a large degree (Lareau & Weininger, 2003). Lareau and Weininger (2003) describe how middle-class homes prepare children for different school encounters and have looked into the micro-interactional skills displayed by middle-class and working-class girls and mothers. They suggest an interpretation of cultural capital that highlights how the middle class might impose evaluative norms in the schools that favour children from a particular social milieu.

In the context of CSMA in Sweden, research has found that children's sociocultural background and parents' musical background influence children's tendency to enrol at CSMA and persist in their studies there (Brändström, 1999; Hofvander Trulsson, 2004). Bourdieu's concepts of cultural capital and habitus have proven useful in explaining how both social background and parents' musical experience facilitate applying to and entering the CSMA, helping children practice at home, and providing a general musical environment at home.

Parents' influence

Factors that have been found to influence children's musical responsiveness are the parents' musical background (Bloom & Sosniak, 1981), socioeconomic background (Klinedinst, 1991), parental support for practice and lessons (Davidson, Sloboda, & Howe, 1995; Howe & Sloboda, 1991), parental support, positive attitude and participation, providing musical structure and environment (Howe & Sloboda, 1991; Zdzinski, 2013), and parental self-efficacy (Creech & Hallam, 2003). Creech (2010), Creech and Hallam (2009) and Zdzinski (2013) have elaborated on the influence of different parental behaviours and patterns of

interaction between parents, children and teachers. Creech (2010) highlighted the importance of taking into account the child's view of how the parent can be supportive and the importance of the parent forming a relationship with the teacher based on sensitivity and responsiveness. Sichivitsa (2007) has shed light on how parental support interacts with other variables that influence musical motivation, namely self-concept in music and actual experiences in the music class.

Common to all the research on parental support mentioned above is that the supportive behaviours examined do not presuppose that the parent plays or has played a musical instrument. Nonetheless, we assume behaviour associated with learning to play a musical instrument is probably more likely if the parent has personal musical experience.

Gender and children's choice of subject

As a subject of study, music has been found to be considered feminine by children (McGregor & Mills, 2006; Paechter, 2000). On a general level, girls have been found to be over-represented and more successful than boys in music educational settings (Green, 2002). In a survey of the UK Local Authorities Music Services, Hallam, Rogers, and Creech (2005) found a predominance of girls, especially at the lower levels. When it comes to choice of musical instrument, the gender stereotypes become obvious, with a predominance of girls on the flute and clarinet, and boys playing brass instruments and percussion (Eros, 2008; Hallam et al., 2005; Hallam, Rogers, & Creech, 2008; MacLeod, 2009; Marshall & Shibazaki, 2011; Sheldon & Price, 2005; Taylor, 2009; Wrape, Dittloff, & Callahan, 2014; Wych, 2012). Changes over time in instrument choices and their gender associations have proven to be modest (Abeles, 2009).

What explanations can be found in the literature for the resistance to change concerning different musical activities and instruments and their association with gender? On a general level, the gender debate among proponents of different theories and perspectives is very lively (Lykke, 2009). The main line of contention, briefly put, concerns whether gender differences are (partly) biologically and/or culturally determined, or if they should be considered purely socially constructed, as the gender construction theories or “doing-gender-theories” assume (inspired by Butler, 1990 ref. in Lykke, 2009, p. 64-65).

Green (2002) acknowledges the discursive construction of gender, and writes:

Girls and boys on the whole respectively tend to choose particular activities and styles that already symbolically affirm conventional discursive constructions of femininity and masculinity in the wider world outside the school. (p. 142)

A tendency has been observed among boys to avoid femininity in their choices of activities (Archer, 1984; Archer & Lloyd, 2002), and Green (1993) explains the tendency to stick to musical instruments “appropriate” to one’s sex as an avoidance of *musical transvestism*.

According to gender construction theories, all arts subjects can be assumed to contribute in different ways to children’s gender construction.

Method

Design

The study explored the relationship between children’s background factors and their tendency to participate in CSMA. The background factors examined were the child’s gender and country of birth (Sweden/other country), parents’ level of education, and parents’ involvement in the arts. Attending CSMA was handled as a dependent variable, while such variables as children’s gender, children’s country of birth and parents’ level of education were

handled as independent variables.

The concept of cultural capital was operationalized in parents' level of education and parents' involvement in the arts. A large share (about 75%) of the teaching in CSMA is in music (as opposed to other arts and crafts) and music is also the main focus of this study. Due to this, the parents' involvement in music is in special focus in the study.

Material

The material for this study consisted of quantitative data from a survey concerning CSMA targeting sixth-graders (12 years old) in elementary school in Sweden. The survey was performed by Statistics Sweden (SCB). The survey was executed according to the standards of ISO 20252:2012 for marketing, opinion and public surveys, which guarantees that high quality requirements were met. The survey is a part of the national commission "A national strategy for the CSMA" Ku2015:2 (KU 2015, "*En nationell strategi för den kommunala musik- och kulturskolan Ku 2015:2*") appointed by the Swedish government. The purpose of the commission was to assess the activities of CSMA in Sweden and propose ways the state can contribute to more equal and accessible CSMA. The survey was designed to provide information on what children attend CSMA, what subjects they take part in, and also what children are not involved in CSMA.

Population and sample

The population (the total number of sixth-graders in Sweden) is 96 596. The sample of schools was 220. After some schools declined to participate 129 schools remained, making the response rate 59% at this stage. Some children may have been absent on the day the school classes answered the survey, or may have declined to fill in the survey; the 2413 children who answered the survey therefore represent only 88% of the total number of children in the responding school classes.

To compensate for the missing schools, Statistics Sweden calculated weighted values for each participant. This was done to ensure that the proportion of smaller and larger cities reflected the distribution in the country as a whole. The calculation was based on SCB's development of a SAS-macro (CLAN). The weighted values have been used in the analysis in order to represent the population in the best possible way. The χ^2 -tests (chi²-tests) presented were based on weighted values. All χ^2 -tests were also significant if based on non-weighted values.

The survey

The survey questions concerning background factors included gender, country of birth, parents' level of education and family involvement in the music and arts. The question concerning gender asked "Are you a boy or a girl?" Alongside the answers "boy" and "girl" the alternative "Don't want to answer" was available. Reasons for choosing the latter alternative may vary; respondents might be unwilling to categorize themselves as either boys or girls, but there may be other reasons as well. The children were asked whether or not they attended CSMA and, if applicable, to give their reasons for not having participated in CSMA or for having dropped out. Examples of questions were: "Consider the adults you live with. What is the highest level of education any of them has?" The answer options were: "elementary school", "upper-secondary school" and "college or university". Another example was the question: "Why did you drop out of CSMA?" Twelve different causes were listed of which a few examples were: "It was boring", "It was too expensive" and "It was difficult for me to get there". All variables were in a nominal scale.

The single question with the largest share of missing answers was the one on parents' level of education, where 19% were missing. The share of missing answers was occasionally higher for combinations of questions, as will be reported when relevant.

Procedure

The children filled in the survey in their classroom during the school day under the direction of their teachers. Before answering they watched a short instructional film on how to fill the form. Depending on whether they were currently attending, have attended or have never attended CSMA, they were asked to fill in different parts of the survey. Our analysis was conducted in the statistics software program SPSS.

The surveys were filled in after informed consent was given by the parents and the children. Statistics Sweden conducted an internal ethical review before the undertaking of the survey. Confidentiality requirements have been met. Analysis of variables was performed in SPSS, crosstabs, resulting in contingency tables that show relationships between our selected variables. Significance for the relationships was tested with χ^2 -test. When appropriate, frequency tables were produced.

The survey data presented in this study has several advantages: the sample is large (2413 children) and represents the whole of Sweden; the survey was undertaken by Statistics Sweden, ensuring high-quality handling of the survey; the survey highlights the perspective of the children; and, of course, the survey is up-to-date.

Results

Parents' level of education and the children's CSMA attendance

Figure 1 and Table 1 show the relationship between parents' level of education and the children's attendance of CSMA. The higher the parents' education, the more likely the child was in CSMA χ^2 (4, n = 1907 non-weighted values, n = 17 208 weighted values) = 849.35, p

= <. 001. Of the children reporting elementary school as the highest educational level of either parent, 9.9% were in CSMA, 15.1%, have been, and 75% have never been. The corresponding figures for upper-secondary school were that 14.7% attended CSMA, 17.5% have done so and 67.8% have never done so. For university or college, 19.2% were in CSMA, 23.6% have been, and 57.1% have never been. Regarding the combination of the survey questions on parents' education and children's attendance at CSMA, 20.8% of the answers were missing.

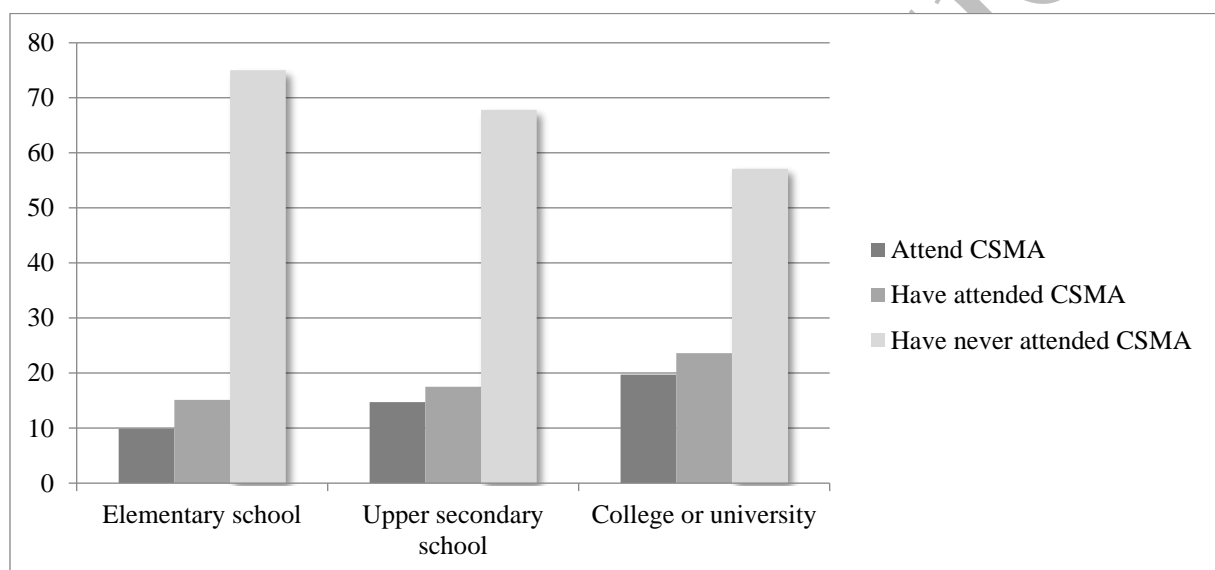


Figure 1. Relationship between parents' education and children's CSMA attendance. The figure shows the proportion of children with parent(s) with a specified level of education who attend, have attended and have never attended CSMA.

Table 1. Relationship between parents' education and the children's attendance at CSMA, weighted values.

Parents' education	Attend CSMA	Have attended CSMA	Have never attended CSMA	Total
Elementary school	9,9 % (199)	15,1 % (302)	75 % (1502)	2003
Upper-secondary school	14,7 % (2888)	17,5 % (3443)	67,8 % (13318)	19649
College/University	19,2 % (9526)	23,6 % (11709)	57,1 % (28321)	49556
Total	17,7 % (12613)	21,7 % (15454)	60,1 % (43141)	71208

Parents' involvement in the arts and children's CSMA attendance

Figure 2 and Table 2 show the relationship between parents being involved in the arts, playing a musical instrument or singing and children's involvement in CSMA programs. If a child's parent(s) were involved in the arts (especially playing an instrument or singing) the likelihood of the child attending CSMA increased very significantly compared to children whose parents were not involved in the arts. Of the children who reported that one of their parents acted, danced, painted or wrote (e.g. poetry), 31.8% attended CSMA, 24.6% have done so, and 43.6% have not done so. If one parent played a musical instrument or sang (e.g. band, orchestra or singing in a choir), 40.9% of the children attended CSMA, 19.8% have done so, and 39.3% have not done so.

Of those who reported not having a family member who plays or sings, 10.9% were in CSMA, 21.7% have been, and 67.4% have not. The differences were significant χ^2 (6, n = 1020 non-weighted values, n = 67 450 weighted values) = 11 177.49, p = <.001.

For each combination of questions, the proportion of missing answers was 11.7% or less. The results also showed that children who have a parent involved in the arts (especially music) and who have enrolled at the CSMA did not drop out to the same degree as children who did not have a family member involved in the arts.

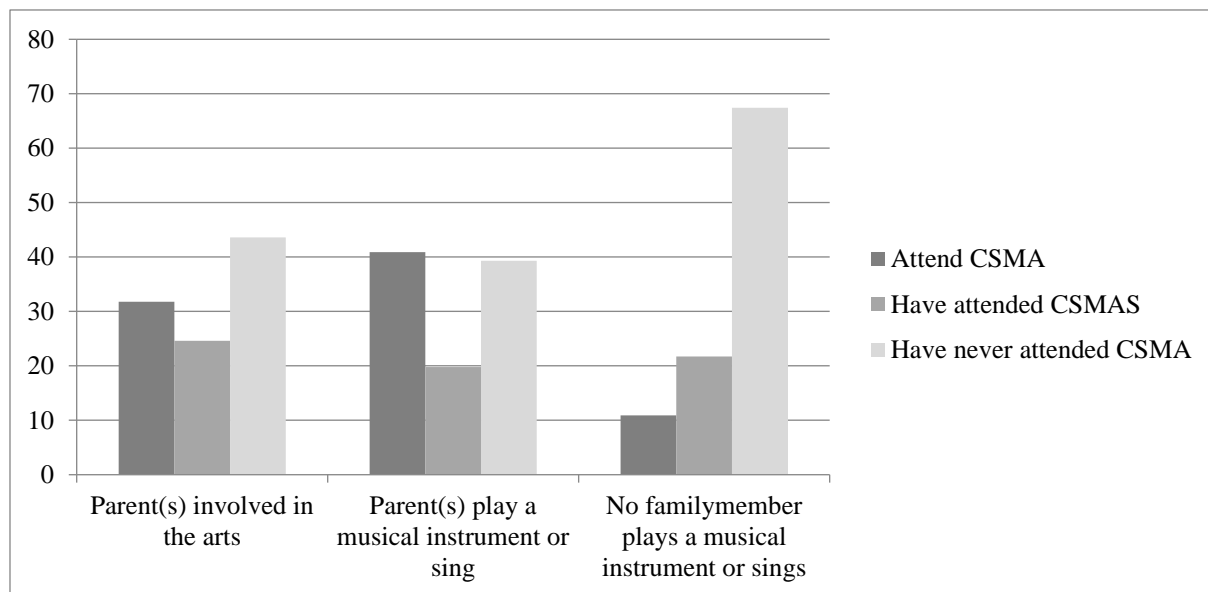


Figure 2. Relationship between parents being involved in the arts, playing a musical instrument or singing and children's attendance at CSMA. The figure shows the proportion of children with parents having specified forms of involvement in the arts and music and the children's attendance at CSMA.

Table 2. Relationship between parents' involvement in the arts or music and children's attendance at CSMA, weighted values

Parents' involvement in the arts or music	Attend CSMA	Have attended CSMA	Have never attended CSMA	Total
Parent(s) involved in the arts	31,8 % (1415)	24,6 % (1093)	43,6 % (1940)	4449
Parent(s) play or sing	40,9 % (2959)	19,8 % (1431)	39,3 % (2846)	7235
No family member plays or sings	10,9 % (6331)	21,7 % (12595)	67,4 % (39079)	58005
Total	10102	14547	42800	67450

Parents' involvement in music and their children's involvement in music education or other subjects at CSMA

In the following we further explore the impact of parents' involvement in music and children's tendencies to keep studying at CSMA or to drop out, and how this may relate to the subject the child is learning. Figure 3 and Table 3 show the relationship between parents playing a musical instrument or singing and children's involvement in CSMA music education and other subjects separately.

Of children who enrolled in music courses at CSMA and whose parent(s) were involved in music, 28,5% drop out. If a child's parents were not involved in music, the risk of the child

dropping out is 54,6%. The differences were significant χ^2 (1, n = 574 non-weighted values, n = 20 158 weighted values) = 722,35, p = <.001.

If the parent(s) were involved in music and the child started attending CSMA in another subject than music, the risk of the child dropping out is 45.6%. For children who enrolled at CSMA in another subject than music and have no parent involved in music, the risk of dropping out is 67%. The differences were significant χ^2 (1, n = 258 non-weighted values, n = 9853 weighted values) = 206, p = <.001. In all instances, the risk of dropping out was considerably higher for other subjects than music. About 75% of the activities in CSMA was music related, and the remaining 25% consisted for the most part of dance, theatre/drama and arts and craft.

Missing answers for the combination of questions amounted to 9.2% for children taking music classes, and 9.7% for children taking other classes.

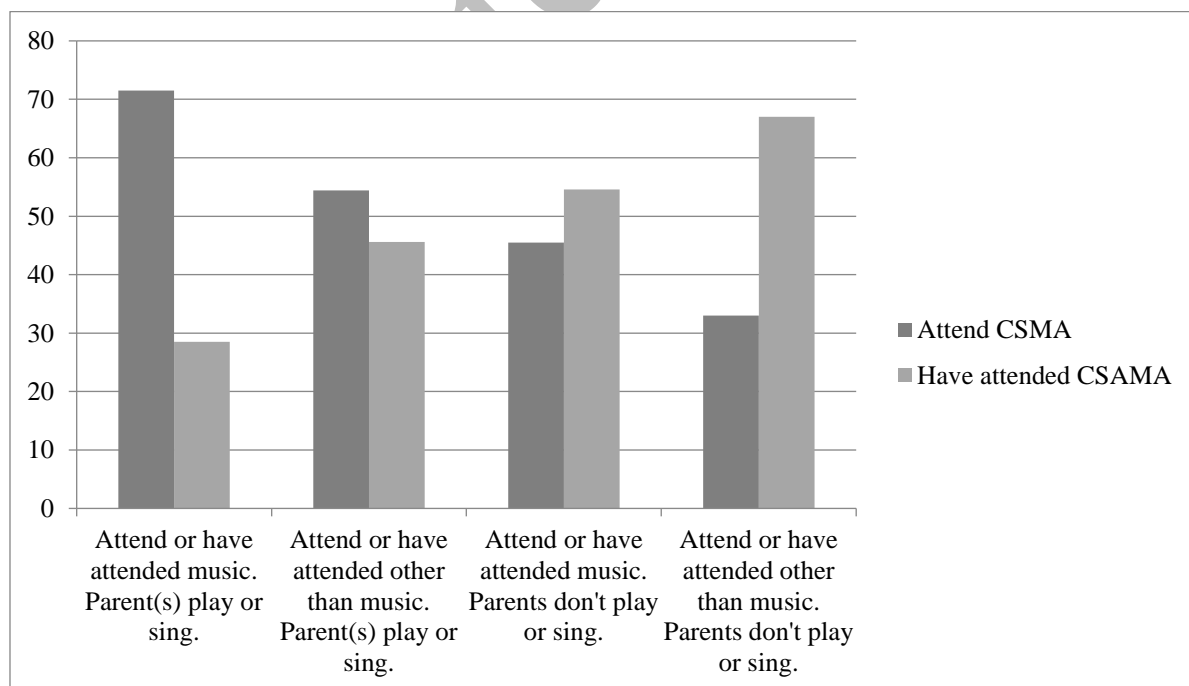


Figure 3. Relationship between parents' involvement in music and children's attendance at CSMA in music or another subject. The figure shows the proportion of children with parents with specified involvement in music and children's attendance in CSMA in music/other subjects.

Table 3. Relationship between parents' involvement in music and children's attendance at CSMA in music/other subjects, weighted values.

Parents' involvement in music	Attend CSMA	Have attended CSMA	Total
Attend or have attended music. Parent(s) play or sing	71,5 % (2240)	28,5 % (893)	100 % (3133)
Attend or have attended other than music. Parent(s) play or sing	54,4 % (632)	45,6 % (529)	100 % (1161)
Attend or have attended music. Parents don't play or sing	45,4 % (7725)	54,6 % (9300)	100 % (17025)
Attend or have attended other than music. Parents don't play or sing	33 % (2866)	67 % (5826)	100 % (8692)

Children's country of birth and CSMA attendance

Figure 4 and Table 4 show the proportions of Swedish- and foreign-born children respectively who attended CSMA, have attended, or have never attended. A larger proportion of Swedish- than foreign-born children attended or have attended CSMA. Of those born in Sweden, 18.6% attend CSMA, 21.8% have attended, and 59.6% have never attended. As for the children born abroad, 10.3% were in the CSMA, 16.4% have been, and 73.3% have never been $\chi^2 (2, n = 2312 \text{ non-weighted values, } n = 85\,784 \text{ weighted values}) = 554.25, p = <.001$. Missing answers for the combination of questions amount to 4.6%.

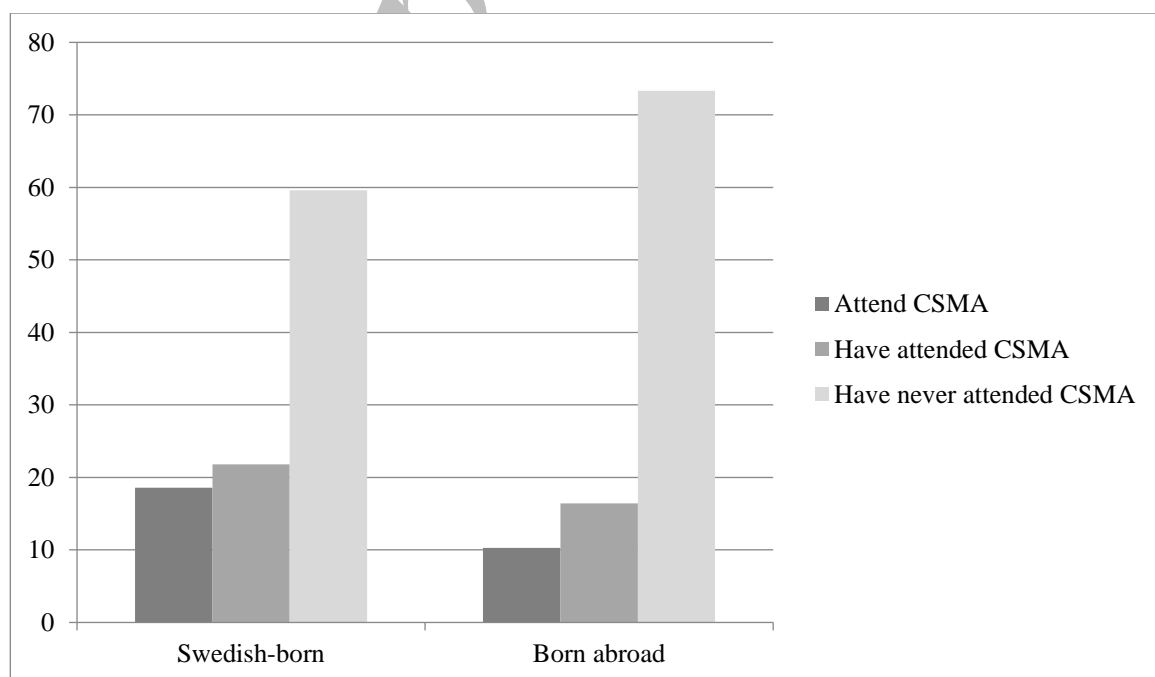


Figure 4. Relationship between country of birth and attendance at CSMA. The figure shows proportion of children born in Sweden and abroad, respectively, and attendance at CSMA.

Table 4. Relationship between children's country of birth and attendance at CSMA, weighted values.

Country of birth	Attend CSMA	Have attended CSMA	Have never attended CSMA	Total
Sweden	18,6 % (14640)	21,8 % (17098)	59,6 % (46763)	100 % (78501)
Abroad	10,3 % (750)	16,4 % (1197)	73,3 % (5336)	100 % (7283)
Total	17 % (15390)	21,3 % (18295)	60,7 % (52099)	100 % (85784)

In the survey 8.5% of the children stated that they were born abroad (weighted values, 1.9% missing answers). Among the children attending CSMA, 4.9% were born abroad.

Gender and the CSMA attendance

Figure 5 and Table 5 show that significantly more girls than boys participated in CSMA programs χ^2 (4, N = 2335 non-weighted values, n = 86 551 weighted values) = 5968.38 p = <.001.

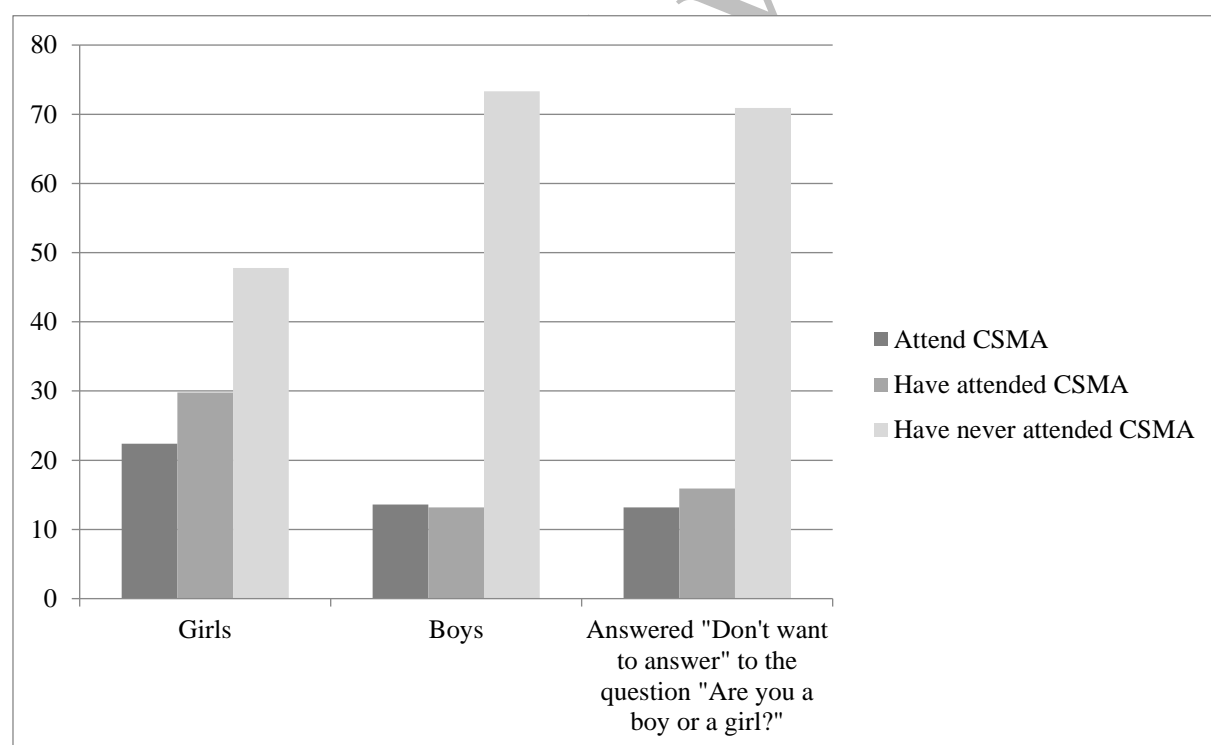


Figure 5. Relationship between children's gender and attendance at CSMA.

Table 5. Relationship between children's gender and attendance at CSMA, weighted values.

Gender	Attend CSMA	Have attended CSMA	Have never attended CSMA	Total
Girl	22,4% (9451)	29,8% (12548)	47,8% (20128)	100%(42127)
Boy	13,6% (5527)	13,2% (5360)	73,3% (29837)	100%(40724)

Answered “Don’t want to answer” to the question “Are you a boy or a girl?”	13,2% (490)	15,9% (587)	70,9% (2623)	100% (3700)
Total	17,9% (15468)	21,4% (18495)	60,8% (52588)	100%(86551)

The results also shed light on the proportions of girls and boys in the different subjects. No subject at CSMA engaged more boys than girls. The two largest subjects at CSMA are music and dance. Of children learning music, 57% were girls and 40% were boys, while 3% responded “Don’t want to answer” to the question “Are you a boy or a girl?”. For dance, the corresponding figures were 91% girls, 7% boys and 2% “Don’t want to answer” to the question “Are you a boy or a girl?”.

Composite of selected variables and CSMA attendance

Figure 6 and Table 6 show the relationship between the selected weighted variables as a composite and attendance at CSMA. Being a Swedish-born girl, having college- or university-educated parent(s), and having a parent who also plays a musical instrument or sings were the variables that correlated with the tendency to attend or have attended CSMA. Of these girls, 44.5% were in CSMA, 30% have been, and 25.5% have never been (n = 2331, weighted values, 0.8% missing). The second example, a boy born abroad lacking a parent who plays a musical instrument or sings, represented the variables that correlated negatively with attending or having attended CSMA. Among these boys, 3.5% attended CSMA, 10.5% have done so, and 86% have never done so (n = 2986, weighted values, 5.9% missing). The variable related to parents’ level of education was not included when it came to these boys, because there were so few foreign-born boys attending CSMA in the material that the result would not have been statistically significant. However, it is unlikely that having well-educated parents would increase their probability of attending CSMA; in the total sample (of 2413 children, non-weighted value) there was only one such person. To serve as a point of

comparison with these two “extreme types”, an average based on the total sample was also included. Based on this average, 17.5% attended CSMA, 21.3% have attended, and 60.9% have never attended (N = 89 915, weighted value, 3% missing).

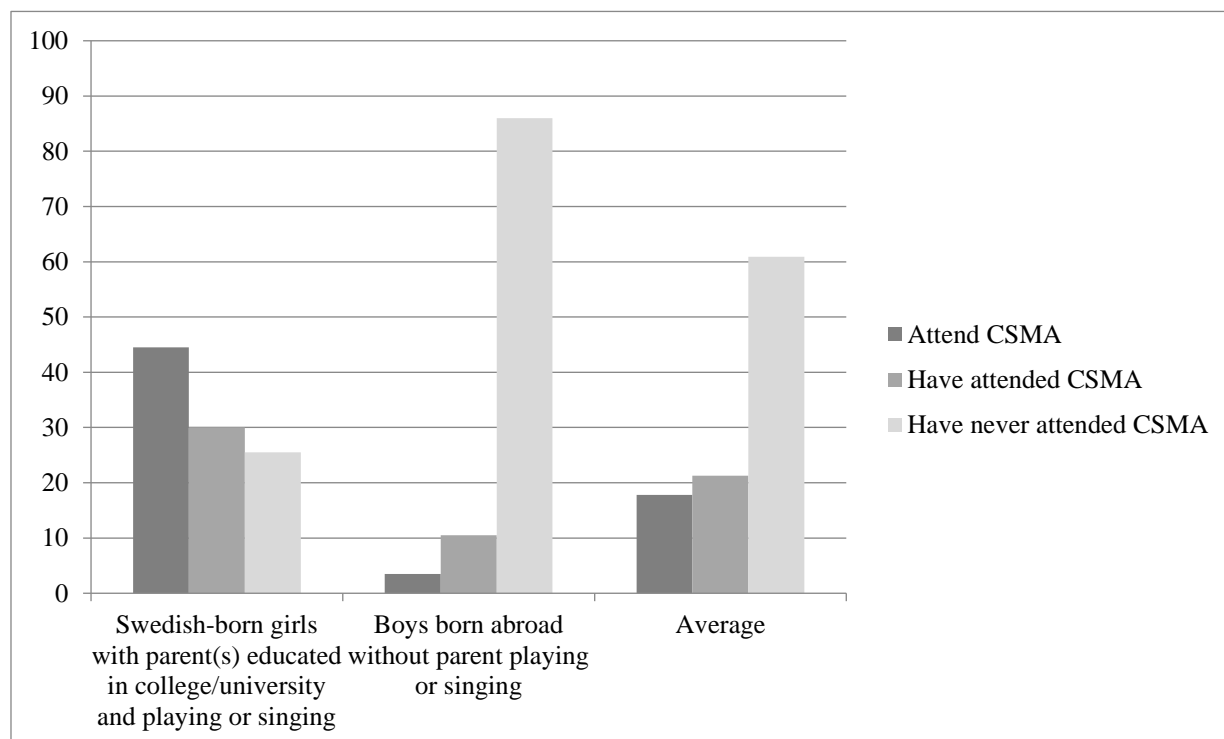


Figure 6. Relationship between selected composited variables and children's attendance in CSMA, weighted values.

Table 6. Relationship between selected composited variables and children's attendance at CSMA, weighted values.

Composite	Attend CSMA	Have attended CSMA	Have never attended CSMA	Total
Swedish-born girls with parent(s) educated in College/university and playing or singing	44,5 % (1037)	30 % (698)	25,5 % (255)	100 % (2331)
Boys born abroad without parent playing or singing	3,5 % (105)	10,5 % (312)	86 % (2569)	100% (2986)
Average	17,8 % (15517)	21,3 % (18581)	60,9 % (87195)	100% (89915)

How fun is CSMA?

Generally speaking, one can say that the children who were involved in CSMA were satisfied;

between 84% and 90% thought it was pretty fun or very fun, regardless of category. At the same time, the most common reason that children left CSMA was that they thought “it was boring”. The most common reason for children not having begun at CSMA was that they did not “feel like it”. Overall, one can say that the CSMA activities suited some children, who also thought CSMA was very fun, but did not suit many of the others (about 82% of all children) who, simply have quitted or never begun in the first place. The correlations between attending CSMA and gender, country of birth, parents’ educational background and parents’ cultural involvement were clear, but once the children became students at CSMA, corresponding differences in satisfaction or dissatisfaction were not to be found.

Children’s reasons for quitting CSMA or never attending

Figure 7 shows reasons for dropping out of CSMA given by the children who dropped out.

The survey had twelve different answer alternatives and offered the possibility to add a personal comment. The alternatives, followed by the percentage of the answering respondents who selected them, were:

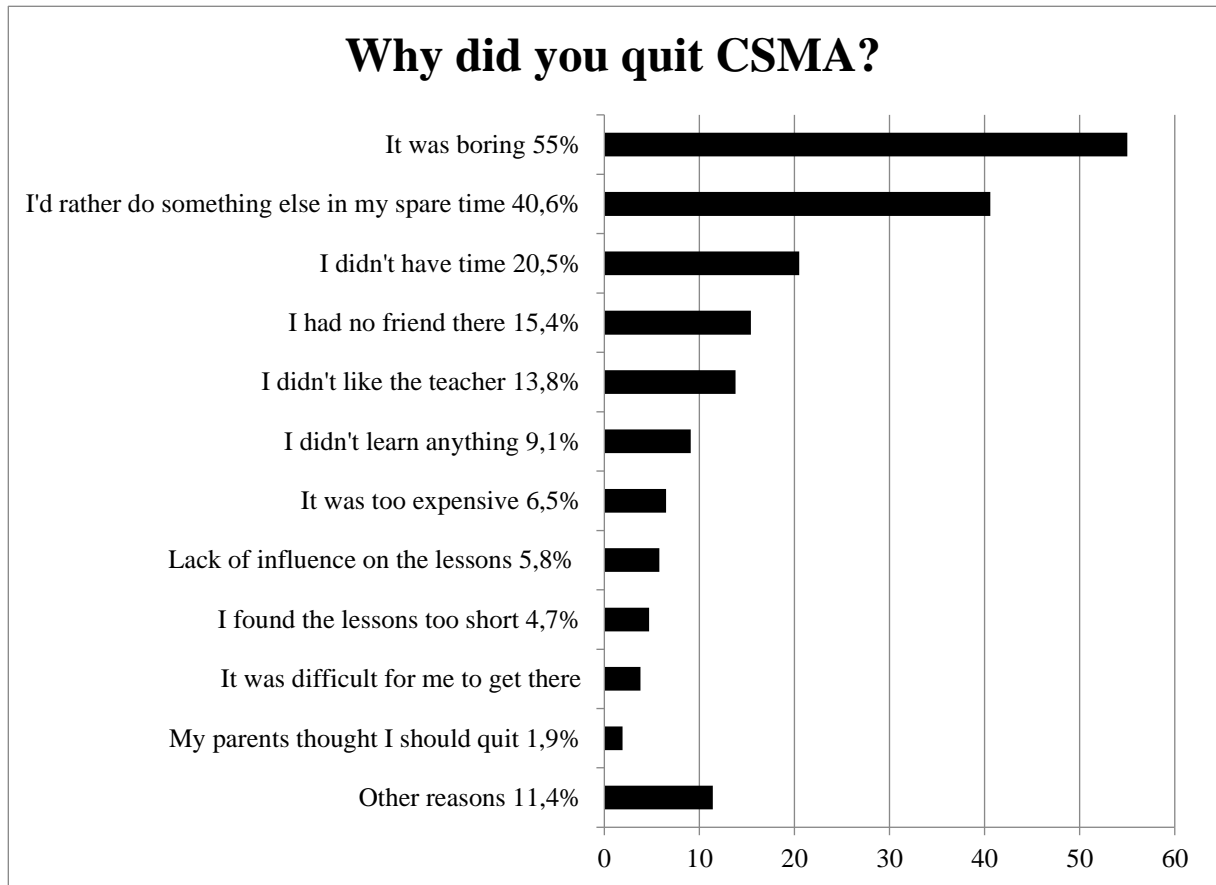


Figure 7. The children's reasons for quitting CSMA.

Figure 8 shows the reasons for not beginning at CSMA given by the children who have never attended CSMA. The survey had nine different answer alternatives and offered the possibility to add a personal comment. The alternatives available (followed by the percentage of the answering respondents who selected the alternative) were:

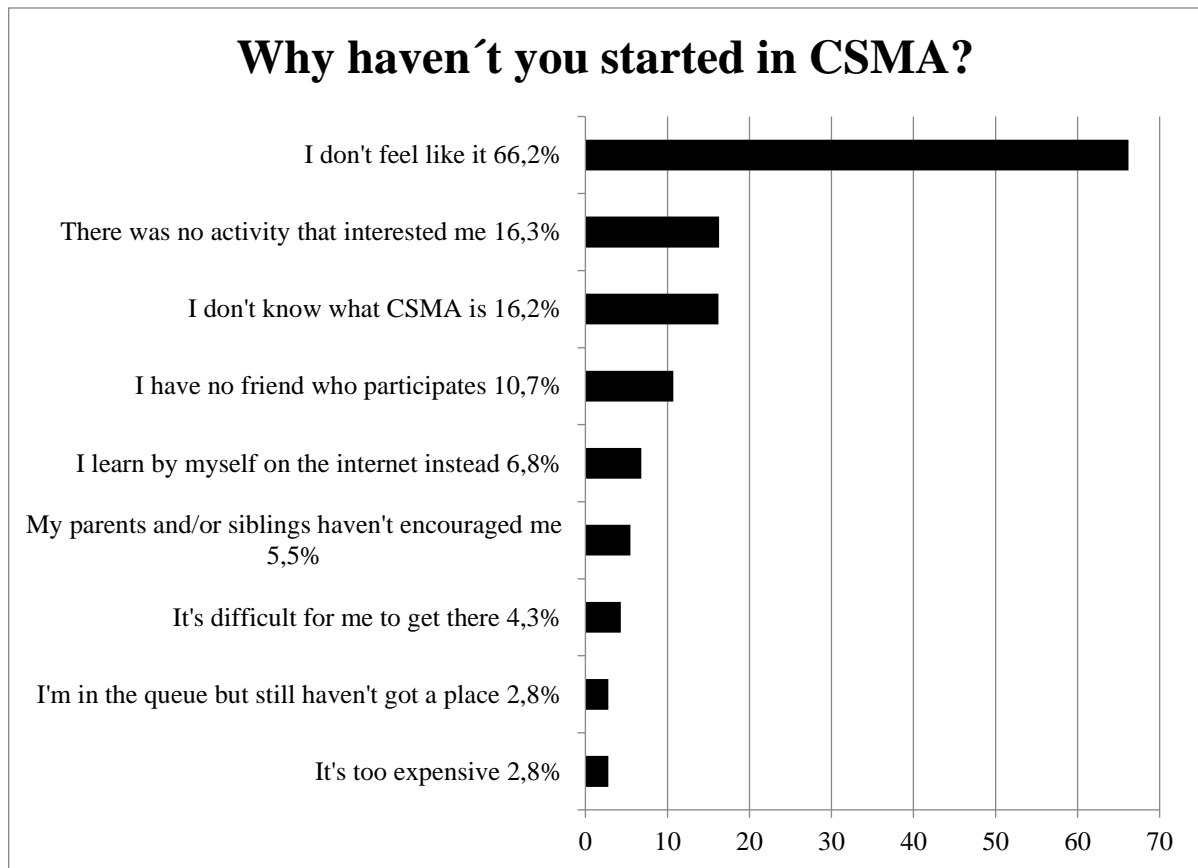


Figure 8. The children's reasons not to begin in CSMA.

Summary of results

A positive relation between parents' level of education and their children's tendency to be involved in CSMA was established: the higher the parents' education the more likely it was that the child was in CSMA. Further, the likelihood of the child being involved in CSMA was greater if the child was a girl and was born in Sweden. If at least one of the parents played a musical instrument or sang, the likelihood that the child was in CSMA increased markedly. Children with a parent involved in the arts, especially if the parent played an instrument, were much less likely than others to drop out of CSMA once they had started. Having a parent who was involved in music was a strong predictor of the child being more persistent and not dropping out of CSMA; this hold for both music and non-music students, but the effect was stronger for music students. The drop-out rate was consistently higher in other subjects than

music.

The results of the study largely conform to predictions of cultural reproduction theory. The results concerning the impact of gender and socioeconomic background on involvement in CSMA were largely consistent with the results of Elofsson (2009). As mentioned earlier, in Hofvander Trulsson's study (2004) of 11-year-old children in Malmö, the proportion of immigrant children attending CSMA was 16%, although immigrant children made up 40% of the total population of 11-years-olds in Malmö. In the current study 4,9% of the children in CSMA were born abroad, which can be compared to Sweden's total population of sixth-graders born abroad (8,9%). This means that a slightly larger proportion of children with immigrant background take part in CSMA according to our study than in Hofvander Trulsson's study (2004). This result should, however, be interpreted with caution, keeping in mind the differences in measurements between the two studies.

Almost 90% of the children in CSMA found it pretty fun or very fun. But that did not apply to the 82% of the children who were not (or were no longer) involved in CSMA. The most common reason the children gave for quitting was "It was boring" (55%), and for not starting in the first place was "I didn't feel like it" (66,2%). Examples of other reasons given for quitting were "I'd rather do something else in my spare time" and "I don't have time". Other less frequently stated reasons for not starting at CSMA in the first place were "There was no activity that interested me" and "I don't know what CSMA is".

Discussion

Although CSMA is publicly financed at the municipal level and is built on explicitly egalitarian ideals, all groups of children are not equally represented at the schools. The typical

CSMA student is a Swedish-born girl with well-educated parents. Children of parents who play an instrument or sing are more likely to find their way to the school, and persist in their studies.

Reflecting on the children's satisfaction and dissatisfaction with CSMA we conclude that almost 90% of the children in CSMA were very satisfied, but among the children who were not in CSMA (82% of the children in the survey) it was common to perceive CSMA as "boring" and as something they "don't feel like" being a part of.

The results conform to previous results concerning parents' positive influence on children's music education (Bloom & Sosniak, 1981; Brändström, 1999; Davidson et al., 1995; Hofvander Trulsson, 2010; Howe & Sloboda, 1991). Other studies have elaborated on more complex patterns including child, parent and teacher, with regard to behaviours supporting children's musical development (Creech, 2010; Creech & Hallam, 2003, 2009; Sichivitsa, 2007; Zdzinski, 2013). Factors such as the parents having high positive self-efficacy, having a positive attitude, participating in their children's studies, providing musical structure, and so on are not explicitly investigated in this study. Nevertheless we suggest behaviours like these are probably more likely to occur if a parent has personal musical experience, and there is an evident correlation in the study between parents playing an instrument or singing and the likelihood of their children enrolling at CSMA and continuing to attend. A parent who plays an instrument, for example, we suggest, will probably be better acquainted with the procedures for applying to CSMA and know how to go about renting or buying an instrument and other materials, and will be better able to encourage good practice habits and give helpful advice when the child faces obstacles to his/her improvement.

Other behaviours, like driving children to lessons and recitals, and organizing the family's weekly schedule to accommodate CSMA activities, can occur even if a parent lacks musical experience, but we assume that a parent who plays or sings will probably value and prioritize musical activities more highly. Creech (2003) highlights the interactional pattern comprising the child, the parent and the teacher. We suggest this could be associated with research by Lareau and Weininger (2003) describing how the habitus in middle-class homes influences different school encounters. Can we assume that Swedish middle-class families to a greater degree represent a "CSMA-appropriate habitus" (from the teacher's perspective) leading to smooth teacher-parent relationships marked by shared expectations in the educational situation? Might middle-class children, influenced by their parents' satisfaction with CSMA, likewise express greater satisfaction with CSMA overall? Furthermore, children whose parents lack such a "CSMA-appropriate habitus" may never think of enrolling in CSMA, and if they do and then quit, they may summarize their experience in the words "It was boring".

Parents who are involved in music proved to have a stronger positive influence on their children's CSMA studies than parents involved in other areas of art; and music students at CSMA generally drop out to a lesser degree than students taking other subjects. The results do not clearly indicate why this is the case, however a plausible explanation may have to do with the fact that music is the subject that dominates the CSMAs and has the longest tradition within this type of school. CSMA's music classes may be better established and may "meet the expectations" of parents and children to a greater extent than classes in other subjects.

So how can we address the very persistent issue of social stratification in arts education? To start with gender, the implications suggest trying to avoid teaching and marketing the programmes in ways that too one-sidedly emphasize tradition and gender stereotypes. In order

to attract children, regardless of gender, to all arts subjects and musical instruments, it is necessary to challenge hetero-normative notions existing within the field of arts education. Dance in general, and genres such as ballet and jazz dance in particular, as well as musical instruments such as the flute, are strongly associated with femininity (Eros, 2008; Hallam et al., 2005, 2008; MacLeod, 2009; Marshall & Shibazaki, 2011; Sheldon & Price, 2005; Taylor, 2009; Wrape et al., 2014; Wych, 2012). Based on gender construction theory, we see it as important to design the teaching in a way that weakens stereotypes and gendered patterns of learning a specific genre or playing a particular instrument. Possible ways to reduce the influence of tradition and gender stereotypes in the children's activities and choices are found to be more active teacher management/monitoring as well as engaging in genres and ensemble types that the children are not so familiar with (Borgström Källén, 2014; Onsrud, 2013).

In this study the fees are not found to be a very important factor dissuading children from participating. Nevertheless we consider accessibility – financial and geographic – to be important if CSMA's are to be a realistic and attractive option for children and their families.

The most important aspect of the cultural reproduction found in this study, however, is the match between the middle class habitus and the "CSMA-appropriate habitus". Parental behaviours, such as encouraging their children to practise (Davidson, Sloboda, & Howe, 1995; Howe & Sloboda, 1991), participating with them and having a positive attitude (Howe & Sloboda, 1991; Zdzinski, 2013) have been found to influence their children's music education in a positive way. If these behaviours or other factors in the Swedish middle-class families are the most crucial for the children's CSMA-studies remains to be explored. In any case, it can be noted that all children do not enjoy and benefit from parental support to the

same high degree, and a challenge for the CSMA is to form alternatives that do not depend on substantial parental support to make the CSMA experience possible and rewarding for all children.

The results highlight a pattern that to a large degree is consistent with the theory of cultural reproduction. Nevertheless the traces of cultural mobility should not be overlooked. The persons represented by the composites (see Figure 6 and Table 6) can stand out as “caricatures”; in real life, of course, children are much more complex, as are their reasons for joining or not joining the CSMA.

When it comes to strengths and weaknesses of the study, the overall reliability can be considered good based on the large sample size and the fact that the survey was conducted by Statistics Sweden. A strength is that it highlights the children’s own perspectives. However by only including sixth-graders, it offers only a limited picture of CSMA. Other factors that might limit reliability are the restrictions set by the wordings in the survey and the children’s limited ability to fully convey their reasons and understanding in writing, given the limited space for writing and time to fill the form. Exploring the children’s perspectives in greater depth is a possible task for further research.

Conclusions

In sum, the pattern indicating the impact of cultural reproduction is relatively salient based on the statistically robust relationships between socioeconomic and cultural background on the one hand, and involvement in CSMA on the other. The implications suggest designing the teaching in a way that weakens stereotypes and gendered patterns of learning a specific genre

or playing a particular instrument, and forming alternatives that do not depend on substantial parental support, as ways to attract children, regardless of gender and class, to all arts subjects and to make the CSMA experience accessible and rewarding for all children. Further qualitative research may shed light on the meanings that might be disguised in the children's statements about CSMA "being boring" and their "not feeling like" joining, and on how to understand the interplay between statements of this kind and the children's background. It also needs to be explored what parental behaviours or other factors that may influence the relationship between the children's background factors and their CSMA participation.

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