

### Abstract

After Kamins, M. L., & Dweck, C. S. (1999) first proposed the negative effect of ability praise, child rearing experts tended to suggest parents to avoid praise their children's ability for it lead to attribution to fixed personal property. However, for domains such as music which commonly perceive innate ability as the key to greater achievement, should one stop praising children's ability?

To investigate this interesting question, the present qualitative study aimed at gaining in-depth understanding of the meanings and experiences of praise among mothers and children in Hong Kong- Chinese context. 6 children (mean age =7.3years) and their mothers (N=12) were participated in this study. Before the interviews, mothers gave feedbacks to their children after listening to the comment from a music tutor. The children and mothers, then being interviewed separately to retrieve the praise they had received and explore their praise experiences. The results showed that mothers inclined to praise their children ability more than effort in music domain; however, other feedbacks were given equally. In addition, three themes were identified which suggested effective praise should consider the cultural meanings of praise type, maternal beliefs and the children's values towards the activity.

Taken together, these findings suggested that praise is context determined and the effect could be override by the preoccupied cultural meanings of the mother and children. This study is presenting information which could be useful in providing praise intervention to children in Eastern culture.

*Keywords:* Ability praise, Performance praise, Parenting, Feedback, Culture