

Screamo Music Dressed Like an Ocean: An Ethnomusicological Study and Its Implications for Early Childhood Education

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Abstract

Dressed Like an Ocean is a screamo or skramz band based in Ambarawa, Central Java, whose performances are characterized by high musical intensity, expressive vocal techniques, dynamic contrasts, bodily movement, theatrical actions, and interaction with the audience. This study aims to describe the form of Dressed Like an Ocean's musical performance and analyze its musical expressions and their potential relevance to early childhood education. The study employed a descriptive qualitative approach. Data were collected through non-participant observation, structured interviews, and documentation of Dressed Like an Ocean's performance at the Echoes of Sorrow event in Jepara on May 18, 2025. The performance lasted approximately 45 minutes and presented a sequence of songs that demonstrated the band's distinctive approach to musical and bodily expression. To formulate interdisciplinary implications for early childhood education, a literature review was also conducted, focusing on musical expression, emotional development, creativity, music and movement, improvisation, participation, and children's music learning. The findings indicate that Dressed Like an Ocean's performance is constructed through the integration of technical, structural, and expressive dimensions. The technical dimension includes the use of sound systems, signal routing, presets, sequencers, stage arrangement, and lighting to support the overall performance. The structural dimension is manifested through setlist arrangement and performance dramaturgy, which regulate changes in musical intensity and emotional atmosphere throughout the concert. Meanwhile, the expressive dimension is reflected in vocal intensity, dynamic changes, bodily gestures, theatrical actions, and direct interaction with the audience. These elements collectively create an intense, dynamic, and communicative performance experience. Based on a synthesis of the findings and relevant literature, the expressive principles identified in the performance have potential implications for early childhood education through activities involving vocal exploration, movement-based expression, dynamic contrasts, musical interaction, improvisation, and freedom of expression. These implications do not suggest introducing screamo music directly to young children; rather, they emphasize the adaptation of its underlying expressive principles into musical activities that are simple, safe, enjoyable, and developmentally appropriate.

Keywords: screamo; musical expression; performance dramaturgy; early childhood education; creativity

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Article Information

Received: 3 July 2026

Accepted: 28 August 2026

Published: 30 August 2026

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1. Introduction

Music is a form of art that uses sound as a medium to construct aesthetic experiences, convey ideas, and express human feelings and experiences. Musical elements such as melody, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, timbre, and vocals contribute not only to the structural organization of music but also to its expressive character. In performance practice, musical expression is manifested through vocal intensity, dynamic control, articulation, bodily movement, gestures, and interaction between performers and audiences. Musical performance can therefore be understood as an artistic event in which auditory, bodily, visual, and social dimensions interact to communicate musical and emotional experiences.

In social and cultural contexts, music serves functions that extend beyond entertainment. It can function as a means of communication, self-expression, identity formation, social interaction, and the communication of emotional experiences. The diversity of these functions is reflected in the development of various musical genres within society. The development of music in Indonesia has been influenced by historical, cultural, technological, and global musical factors. During the colonial period, for example, Indonesian music was strongly influenced by Western music and was initially used primarily as entertainment for certain social groups (Tanjung, Nasution, & Simangunsong, 2022). Following independence, Indonesian music became increasingly diverse through the emergence and

development of genres such as keroncong, dangdut, pop, rock, and various forms of alternative music (Noryuliyanti, Isawati, & Abidin, 2021; Rahmanda, 2018; Gani & Darmawan, 2023).

The development of these musical forms demonstrates that music continuously changes alongside transformations in society and culture. One manifestation of this development is the emergence of musical subgenres outside the mainstream. Rock music, for example, developed in Indonesia beginning in the 1960s and offered musical characteristics and forms of expression distinct from popular music of its time (Hidayat, 2018). The subsequent development of alternative music became increasingly open through advances in music production technology, digital distribution, and greater access to global musical references. These conditions facilitated the emergence of musical practices characterized by experimentation, stylistic diversity, and forms of expression that do not necessarily belong to the mainstream musical sphere.

One genre that developed within this alternative musical space is screamo or skramz. Screamo is generally understood as a subgenre associated with emo and the development of rock music, with strong roots in hardcore punk (Hillier, 2020; Kalbag & Lerch, 2022). The genre is commonly characterized by changes in tempo and dynamics, high sound intensity, instrumental distortion, and screaming vocal techniques. These characteristics function not merely to produce sonic intensity but also as expressive strategies for communicating emotional experiences. The lyrical themes of screamo frequently address personal experiences, inner conflicts, relationships, emotional struggles, and various complex issues of life, which may contain mature or emotionally intense subject matter (Ardini et al., 2024). Therefore, the expressive intensity of screamo should be understood in relation to both its musical characteristics and the thematic contexts conveyed through its lyrics. This distinction is important when considering the pedagogical relevance of screamo performance for early childhood education.

The expressive characteristics of screamo become particularly evident in live performance. Vocal intensity, dynamic changes, instrumental playing, bodily gestures, movement, theatrical actions, and audience interaction contribute to a performance experience that is simultaneously auditory and embodied. From this perspective, musical expression is not limited to the internal structure of a musical composition but also emerges through the ways performers physically and emotionally interpret and communicate the music. Examining such performances can therefore provide insight into how musical elements are transformed into expressive actions and how these actions contribute to communication between performers and audiences.

This phenomenon can be observed in the development of screamo music in Central Java, particularly in Ambarawa, Semarang Regency. One group representing this musical practice is Dressed Like an Ocean. The group was formed within a circle of friends who shared relatively similar musical references and an interest in screamo or skramz. Its presence forms part of the development of the alternative music community in the region. Dressed Like an Ocean subsequently released its debut single, *Torn Pages from Restless Tale*, through the local label Mortal Blood Records.

Throughout its development, Dressed Like an Ocean experienced changes in personnel formation and continued its creative processes to develop works consistent with its musical identity. On November 23, 2024, the group released its debut album, *A Winged Coda from My Leeching Arms*, consisting of nine tracks. The album was recorded at Inside the Whale Labs in Ambarawa, with drum recordings conducted at 4WD Studio in Semarang. Mixing and mastering were carried out by guitarist Irvan Naba at Inside the Whale Labs. The album was subsequently released through Mortal Blood Records (Indonesia), BSDJ (Japan), and Slow Down Records (Norway) in cassette format. This creative trajectory indicates that Dressed Like an Ocean constructs its musical identity not only through recorded works but also through processes of musical creation and live performance.

Dressed Like an Ocean is particularly relevant for examination because its performances place musical expression at the intersection of sound, bodily action, and audience interaction. Intense vocals, dynamic contrasts, instrumental performance, bodily gestures, and stage energy produce an experience

that can be heard, observed, and felt by the audience. Accordingly, analyzing the band's performance requires attention not only to technical aspects of musical presentation but also to the ways in which expressive elements are organized and communicated during performance. However, studies of alternative or extreme musical genres have more commonly focused on their musical characteristics, cultural identities, or social contexts, while their expressive principles as potential sources of pedagogical insight remain less explored, particularly in relation to early childhood music education.

The relevance of musical expression to early childhood education can be understood from the developmental role of music as an experiential medium. Young children learn and communicate not only through verbal language but also through movement, sound, rhythm, vocalization, imitation, and other forms of symbolic expression. Musical activities can provide opportunities for children to explore variations in sound, respond to rhythm and dynamics, coordinate bodily movement, and communicate emotional responses. Such experiences are pedagogically important because they position children as active participants who explore and construct meaning through direct engagement with musical materials rather than merely reproducing predetermined musical outcomes. Musical expression in early childhood education, therefore, should emphasize exploration, participation, creativity, emotional communication, and developmentally appropriate forms of musical response.

From this perspective, the pedagogical relevance of Dressed Like an Ocean's performance lies specifically in its expressive principles rather than its genre identity or lyrical content. The study does not propose transferring screamo music, its lyrical themes, or its mature emotional narratives into early childhood education. The personal conflicts, relationship issues, emotional struggles, and other complex life experiences represented in screamo lyrics remain part of the cultural and artistic context of the genre and are not treated as learning content for young children. Instead, the analysis isolates transferable formal and expressive features of performance, such as variations in dynamics, vocal exploration, rhythmic response, bodily movement, interaction, improvisation, and the use of contrasting musical intensities. In pedagogical application, these elements can be detached from the original lyrical and thematic context and reconstructed through child-appropriate musical materials, lyrics, sounds, movements, and situations.

For example, the principle of dynamic contrast can be adapted into activities in which children distinguish between soft and loud sounds without reproducing the high sound intensity characteristic of screamo. Vocal expression can be explored through playful vocalization, humming, articulation, or changes in vocal character rather than screaming techniques. Similarly, bodily gestures and energetic movements can be transformed into structured music-and-movement activities that are safe and appropriate for children's physical development. Audience interaction can be adapted into turn-taking, call-and-response, group singing, and collaborative movement. Improvisational principles can also be introduced through simple opportunities for children to create their own sounds, rhythms, movements, or responses. In each case, the expressive mechanism is retained while the original genre, mature thematic content, and potentially inappropriate performance intensity are deliberately excluded.

This distinction establishes a clear boundary between artistic analysis and pedagogical adaptation. The value of the screamo performance for early childhood education does not derive from the suitability of screamo as a children's music genre. Rather, it derives from the possibility of identifying general principles of musical expression that can be separated from the cultural, lyrical, and stylistic characteristics of the original performance. Such an approach allows teachers to use contemporary performing arts as a source of pedagogical ideas without requiring children to encounter mature lyrical themes or reproduce performance practices that are unsuitable for their developmental stage.

The connection between musical expression and early childhood development is important because emotional expression and creativity are integral dimensions of early learning. When children are encouraged to vary vocal sounds, respond to musical dynamics, move according to rhythm,

improvise, and interact with others, they are given opportunities to communicate feelings through non-verbal and symbolic forms. Such experiences can support children's confidence in expressing themselves while also encouraging active listening, attention, imagination, and social participation. Music thus functions not simply as an object of aesthetic appreciation but as an experiential environment in which children can explore relationships between sound, movement, emotion, and interaction. This perspective provides a scientific basis for considering musical performance as a potential source of pedagogical ideas, even when the original performance genre is culturally and developmentally distant from children's music.

Nevertheless, the pedagogical implications must be approached through careful adaptation rather than direct replication. The high volume, screaming vocal techniques, intense bodily movements, mature lyrical themes, and other context-specific characteristics of screamo are not necessarily appropriate for young children. What can be transferred are the underlying expressive concepts, including variation in dynamics, age-appropriate vocal exploration, movement, emotional communication, improvisation, interaction, and freedom of expression. The lyrical narratives and mature thematic content of screamo are explicitly excluded from the proposed pedagogical adaptation. Instead, teachers can employ child-friendly themes, simple lyrics, non-verbal sound exploration, familiar musical materials, and developmentally appropriate movement while maintaining the expressive objectives represented by these principles. This distinction prevents the educational interpretation from equating the potential value of screamo performance with the direct introduction of screamo as a musical genre or its lyrical content to young children.

Based on this context, examining Dressed Like an Ocean's performance is important for understanding how technical, structural, and expressive elements work together to construct musical expression in a live performance. The study focuses on the technical organization of the performance, the structural arrangement of the setlist and performance dramaturgy, and the expressive manifestations of vocals, dynamics, instrumental performance, bodily movement, theatrical action, and audience interaction. The resulting analysis is then connected with literature on music, emotional expression, creativity, movement, and early childhood learning to formulate pedagogical implications. Therefore, this study aims to describe the form of Dressed Like an Ocean's screamo musical performance in Jepara, Central Java, with particular emphasis on its musical expression, and to analyze how the genre-independent expressive principles, rather than the genre's mature lyrical or thematic content, can inform developmentally appropriate musical experiences in early childhood education.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Approach

This study employed a qualitative ethnomusicological approach combined with a literature review. The ethnomusicological approach was selected because the study examines musical performance as a cultural and social practice, considering not only the musical sounds produced but also the ways in which music is performed, embodied, experienced, and communicated within a particular community. This approach is consistent with the research objective of understanding the form and expressive characteristics of Dressed Like an Ocean's screamo performance within its social and cultural context. The literature review was conducted separately to develop a conceptual interpretation of the empirical findings in relation to early childhood education.

The ethnomusicological component of the study focused exclusively on the empirical phenomenon of Dressed Like an Ocean's performance and its adult participants and audience. No children, early childhood teachers, early childhood education institutions, or early childhood classroom settings were involved in the empirical data collection. The connection to early childhood education was developed only during the discussion stage through a synthesis of the empirical findings and relevant scientific

literature. Consequently, the implications presented in this study should be understood as conceptual and pedagogical interpretations, rather than empirical findings tested directly with children or within early childhood education settings.

Qualitative research seeks to understand phenomena in their natural contexts by generating an in-depth interpretation of participants, practices, and experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this study, the ethnomusicological investigation examined the performance practices of Dressed Like an Ocean through observation, interviews, and documentation. These empirical sources were used to understand the musical, technical, structural, and expressive dimensions of the performance. Meanwhile, the literature review provided a separate conceptual source for interpreting how selected principles of musical expression could potentially be adapted to developmentally appropriate early childhood music activities.

2.2 Data Collection

The primary empirical data were collected through non-participant observation, structured interviews, and documentation of Dressed Like an Ocean's performance at the Echoes of Sorrow event in Jepara on May 18, 2025. The performance lasted approximately 45 minutes. The empirical object of observation was the live musical performance, including the activities and interactions of the adult performers and audience.

Non-participant observation was conducted by positioning the researcher as an observer who did not participate directly in the performance activities. Observation focused on the form of musical presentation and the expressive practices emerging during the performance. The observed dimensions included vocal use, musical dynamics, instrumental performance, bodily gestures and movements, theatrical actions, interaction among performers, and interaction between performers and the audience. Attention was also given to technical and structural aspects that contributed to the expressive character of the performance, including sound systems, signal routing, presets, sequencers, stage arrangement, lighting, setlist organization, and performance transitions. The purpose of the observation was to document how musical and non-musical elements interacted to construct the expressive character of the performance. Observation is a data collection technique involving systematic examination and recording of behaviors, conditions, or events related to the research object (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Structured interviews were conducted to obtain primary information concerning the band's creative process, musical characteristics, performance concepts, and expressive strategies. The interviews were directed toward band members and individuals who possessed relevant knowledge of Dressed Like an Ocean's creative process and musical presentation. The interview questions were prepared in advance and focused on aspects that could complement the observational data, particularly artistic intentions, performance concepts, musical decisions, and expressive considerations that could not be fully identified through observation alone. Interviews can provide primary information relevant to the objectives and methodological design of qualitative research (Salam, 2023).

Documentation was used to complement the observational and interview data. The documentation included photographs, performance videos, music recordings, publication materials, news reports, archives, and other materials related to Dressed Like an Ocean's musical activities. Visual and audiovisual documentation was used to examine performance form, vocal expression, bodily movement, musical dynamics, stage presentation, and interactions between performers and audience. Documentary materials also provided contextual information concerning the band's musical development and performance practices.

2.3 Literature Review

A literature review was conducted as a separate interpretive stage of the study rather than as a source of empirical data concerning early childhood education. The review focused on scientific

literature addressing early childhood music education, children's musical expression, creativity, social-emotional development, music and movement, improvisation, and arts learning for children aged 0–8 years. Relevant journal articles, academic books, and scholarly publications were identified, selected, critically read, and synthesized according to their relevance to the expressive principles identified in the empirical findings.

The purpose of the literature review was not to determine whether screamo music produces particular effects on children's development. Rather, it was used to establish a theoretical and developmental basis for interpreting whether selected, genre-independent principles of musical expression identified in the performance could be conceptually adapted into early childhood music activities. In this process, the mature lyrical themes and genre-specific performance characteristics of screamo were not treated as pedagogical content. Instead, the synthesis focused on transferable expressive principles such as dynamic contrast, age-appropriate vocal exploration, movement, interaction, improvisation, and freedom of expression.

This distinction is particularly important because the empirical data and the pedagogical literature represent two different domains of inquiry. The empirical data describe an adult musical performance, whereas the literature provides developmental and pedagogical knowledge concerning young children. The relationship between the two was therefore established through interpretive synthesis, rather than through direct observation, experimentation, or assessment involving children or teachers.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted through several interconnected stages. First, observational records, interview data, and documentation were organized and reduced according to categories representing the form of performance and musical expression. The empirical data were then categorized into technical, structural, and expressive dimensions. The technical dimension included sound systems, routing, presets, sequencers, stage arrangement, and lighting. The structural dimension included setlist organization, transitions, and performance dramaturgy. The expressive dimension included vocal intensity, dynamic changes, instrumental expression, bodily gestures, theatrical actions, and performer–audience interaction.

Second, the categorized data were described and interpreted to identify patterns in how these dimensions interacted during the performance. The analysis considered musical expression not as an isolated sonic property but as a phenomenon produced through the interaction of sound, bodily action, stage presentation, and social interaction. Interview and documentary data were used to complement and contextualize the observational findings.

Third, the identified expressive principles were compared with concepts and findings in the selected literature on early childhood music education and child development. At this stage, the analysis did not claim that the observed screamo performance had been experienced by children or that it produced developmental effects. Instead, the researchers identified which expressive principles could potentially be separated from the original genre and adapted to developmentally appropriate musical activities.

Finally, an interpretive synthesis was developed by bringing together the empirical findings and the relevant literature. The synthesis generated conceptual pedagogical implications concerning vocal exploration, dynamic contrast, movement, musical interaction, improvisation, emotional expression, and creativity in early childhood education. The adaptation explicitly excluded mature lyrical themes, screaming techniques, excessive sound intensity, and other performance characteristics that may not be appropriate for young children.

Thus, the methodological design maintains a clear distinction between empirical evidence and pedagogical interpretation. The ethnomusicological investigation provides empirical knowledge about Dressed Like an Ocean's adult musical performance, while the literature review provides the conceptual

and developmental framework through which selected expressive principles are interpreted for potential relevance to early childhood education. The resulting PAUD implications are therefore conceptual propositions derived from the synthesis of empirical performance analysis and scientific literature, not findings obtained through direct research with children, teachers, or early childhood education settings.

3. Results

3.1. Overview of Dressed Like an Ocean's Performance

The Dressed Like an Ocean performance examined in this study was held in Jepara on May 18, 2025, as part of an independent music event or collective organized by F2F Klab under the title Echoes of Sorrow. The event featured several local music groups, with Dressed Like an Ocean among the performing acts. The performance lasted approximately 45 minutes and featured six songs from the album *A Winged Coda* from *My Leeching Arms*, along with one opening song from the group's earlier release.

The observation results indicate that Dressed Like an Ocean's performance was constructed through a combination of technical preparedness, musical structure, and performative expression. These three aspects did not operate independently but supported one another in creating an intense and communicative performance experience. Prior to the performance, the members prepared through individual practice, instrument checks, routing arrangements, sound preset checks, rehearsal, and physical and mental preparation. These preparations were carried out approximately one to two days before the performance. Irvan Naba explained:

"Just like other bands, we do individual practice, check the equipment, routing, and presets. One or two days before the show, we also have a rehearsal and prepare physically and mentally to maintain our stamina" (Interview with Irvan Naba, 2026).

This statement indicates that expression during the performance was not entirely spontaneous but was supported by preparation that enabled the performers to maintain musical and physical control on stage. In a performance characterized by screamo, which relies on vocal intensity, dynamic changes, and bodily movement, such preparation is important because artistic expression requires technical support to be conveyed effectively.

In terms of sound management, the band used an organized cabling system with separate audio channels for each instrument. A sequencer was used as a supporting element as well as a transition device between songs. Sound presets had been prepared in advance, allowing the technicians to focus primarily on adjustments and balancing during the performance. This arrangement enabled the sound characteristics of each instrument to remain proportionally balanced while supporting the musical characteristics of screamo.

The stage arrangement was relatively simple but functional. The instruments were positioned to facilitate interaction among the band members, while the vocalist was placed at the center as the primary visual focus. Under certain conditions, the band also incorporated visual elements such as motion videos and flags to strengthen the performance atmosphere. Irvan Naba explained:

"We prepared motion videos for the visual background... our vocalist created slightly theatrical stage actions... the sequencer was used for transitions between tracks so that there would be no empty space" (Interview with Irvan Naba, 2026).

These findings demonstrate that the expressive character of Dressed Like an Ocean's performance was constructed not only through sound but also through visual and performative elements. Vocals, instruments, bodily movements, stage arrangement, and visual elements worked simultaneously to create the overall performance experience. Thus, the form of the performance can be understood as an integration of auditory and visual aspects that produces a distinctive expressive character.

The arrangement of the setlist also played an important role in establishing the flow of the performance. In smaller venues, the band could begin the performance with the keroncong intro “Rawa Pening” before transitioning into songs with higher intensity. In larger venues, the setlist was arranged more dynamically, with high-energy songs placed at the beginning and middle of the performance, followed by a relatively calmer closing song. This strategy demonstrates that the band considered the characteristics of the performance space, the audience, and the dramaturgical requirements of the performance.

Overall, the performance demonstrates that Dressed Like an Ocean constructed its presentation through a balance between planning and spontaneity. Planning was reflected in technical preparation, setlist arrangement, routing, presets, and coordination with technicians, while spontaneity emerged through stage actions, gestures, interactions, and responses to the audience. Both dimensions contributed to the formation of musical expression, which constitutes an important characteristic of the band’s performance.

3.2. Musical Expression in the Performance

Musical expression emerged as one of the significant findings in Dressed Like an Ocean’s performance. The expressive character was manifested through the use of intense vocals, dynamic changes, instrumental performance, bodily gestures, and the management of energy throughout the performance. In the screamo genre, screaming vocals function not only as a means of conveying lyrics but also as an integral element in constructing the emotional dimension of the performance. Vocal intensity could be increased or reduced according to the requirements of particular sections of the songs and the overall flow of the performance.



Figure 1

Musical Expression (Source: Researcher’s Documentation, 2026)

This expression was reinforced through the use of musical dynamics. Transitions from relatively calm sections to sections of high intensity created emotional contrasts that gave the performance a sense of direction and development. Thus, intensity was not maintained constantly throughout the performance but was deliberately managed to create tension, release, and climactic moments.

Expression was also manifested through the performers’ bodies. The vocalist demonstrated relatively theatrical stage actions through bodily movements, changes in position, gestures, and verbal communication with the audience. In this context, the body functioned as an expressive instrument that complemented the voice. Musical expression was therefore produced not only through what was heard but also through what was seen.

The interaction between auditory and visual elements generated a multisensory performance experience. The audience did not experience the music solely through hearing but also through observing movement, bodily expressions, stage lighting, visual elements, and the collective responses

of the audience. Therefore, Dressed Like An Ocean's musical expression can be understood as a form of artistic communication involving sound, body, space, and social relationships between performers and the audience. These findings indicate that musical expression has two main characteristics: structured expression and spontaneous expression. Structured expression was evident in the arrangement of dynamics, setlist, song transitions, and technical planning, whereas spontaneous expression emerged through theatrical actions, gestures, and performers' responses to the circumstances of the performance. The combination of these two dimensions resulted in a performance that remained controlled while retaining its emotional character.

3.3. Setlist Development and Performance Dramaturgy

Dressed Like an Ocean does not merely determine the sequence of songs but uses the setlist as a dramaturgical strategy to guide changes in the audience's energy and emotional atmosphere from the beginning to the end of the performance. In the context of musical performance, the organization of performance elements, including the opening, main performance, transitions, and closing, contributes to the formation of an integrated performance structure. The structure of a musical performance is also supported by presentation elements such as stage arrangement, sound system, lighting, and performer formation (Uliyana & Muttaqin, 2024).



Figure 2

Setlist Development (Source: Researcher's Documentation, 2026)

The opening song plays an important role in establishing the initial atmosphere. The use of "Rawa Pening" in a keroncong format provides a contrast to the screamo characteristics that are subsequently presented. This contrast creates a theatrical opening and provides the audience with an opportunity to gradually enter the atmosphere of the performance. Ambient elements, guitar delay effects, and subdued lighting further reinforce the initial atmosphere.

The middle section of the performance serves as a space for increasing energy. Tempo, dynamics, vocal intensity, and stage actions gradually increase, resulting in an emotional climax. Transitions between songs are supported by the use of a sequencer and a sound system that has been prepared in advance. Sound management constitutes an important component of musical performance because the sound system is not merely a technical device but also forms part of the overall stage and performance configuration. The arrangement of the sound system must therefore be adapted to the concept of the performance in order to maintain sound clarity and listening comfort (Mubarok & Gunawan, 2022).

Toward the end of the performance, the energy is directed toward a calmer and more reflective atmosphere. This transition produces a dramaturgical pattern consisting of an atmospheric opening,

increasing intensity, the achievement of a climax, and a gradual reduction of energy toward the conclusion. This pattern demonstrates that the setlist functions as a kind of emotional map that organizes the audience's experience throughout the performance.

Changes in energy are also related to audience responses. At certain points, the audience responded through collective singing, applause, bodily movements, and other emotional responses. These observations indicate that the audience is not merely a passive recipient but participates in constructing the atmosphere of the performance. The interaction between performance structure and audience response demonstrates that musical performance develops through the relationship between musical presentation, performers, spatial conditions, and audience participation.

These findings demonstrate that the setlist has a conceptual pedagogical function in the sense that musical experiences can be organized gradually from one emotional state to another. In early childhood education, this principle is not applied in the form of a concert setlist but can instead be adapted into the sequencing of musical activities that provide children with structured experiences of changing intensity and atmosphere. Such an approach is consistent with research showing that music and movement activities can support creative thinking and encourage freedom of expression, exploration, and experimentation among preschool children (Chronopoulou & Riga, 2012).

3.4. Interaction and Performance Dynamics

Dressed Like an Ocean's performance demonstrated active interaction between the performers and the audience. The vocalist consistently used verbal communication and bodily gestures as integral parts of the performance. Audience responses were manifested through bodily movements, light moshing, and participation in shouting the lyrics at certain points. This pattern demonstrates that the performance did not take place as a one-way process but instead established a reciprocal relationship between the performers and the audience.



Figure 3

Performance Dynamics (Source: Researcher's Documentation, 2026)

This interaction was also established through spatial management. The band did not impose rigid physical boundaries between the performers and the audience, thereby allowing a sense of proximity to emerge. During breaks between songs, a sequencer was used to maintain the continuity of the atmosphere while providing the vocalist with an opportunity to communicate with the audience. Irvan Naba stated:

“We fill every break with a sequencer track... we also do not create or block off a boundary between the performers and the audience” (Interview with Irvan Naba, 2026).

This statement demonstrates that technical elements can function as supports for communication. The sequencer was not merely a musical device but also helped maintain the continuity of the atmosphere while verbal interaction took place. Similarly, stage arrangement was not solely related to aesthetics but also influenced the possibility of interaction between performers and the audience.

The performance dynamics also demonstrated coordination between the musicians and the technical team. Song transitions, sound effects, and lighting were coordinated effectively, enabling the expressive elements developed by the performers to be supported by the performance environment. This demonstrates that musical expression is the result of interaction among individuals, music, space, technology, and the audience.

From an early childhood education perspective, this interaction pattern provides an understanding that musical experiences can be designed not merely as activities in which children follow teachers' instructions, but as two-way communication processes. Children can be given opportunities to respond to music through sounds, movements, facial expressions, or choices of activities. Thus, the findings concerning performer–audience interaction can be transformed into a learning principle that provides space for children's active responses.

3.5. Integrative Analysis: The Relationship Between Technical Aspects and Musical Expression

Based on observations, interviews, and documentation, the form of Dressed Like An Ocean's performance was constructed through the integration of technical and expressive aspects. Sound management functioned to maintain the clarity of the musical characteristics, stage arrangement supported visualization and performative communication, the setlist established the dramaturgical flow, while gestures, vocals, and audience interaction served as expressive media. These findings demonstrate that technical aspects are not merely supporting devices external to artistic expression. Rather, technical elements constitute the conditions that enable expression to be communicated effectively.

Prepared sound presets, organized routing, the use of a sequencer for transitions, lighting arrangements, and stage positioning enabled the performers to maintain the continuity of the performance while simultaneously creating space for spontaneous expression. Technical preparation therefore did not eliminate spontaneity; instead, it provided a stable framework within which spontaneous artistic expression could emerge.

Accordingly, the form of Dressed Like an Ocean's performance can be conceptualized through three interconnected layers. First, the technical layer, comprising sound management, instruments, sequencers, lighting, and stage arrangement. Second, the structural layer, manifested through the setlist, transitions, and dramaturgy. Third, the expressive layer, manifested through vocals, dynamics, gestures, movements, theatrical actions, and interaction with the audience. These three layers collectively produce an integrated performance experience. This finding extends the understanding that the success of a musical performance is not determined solely by the musicians' musical abilities. It also depends on their ability to integrate technical aspects, performance structure, and expression so that the audience experiences a performance with a coherent emotional trajectory. In this study, musical expression serves as the point of intersection between musical structure, performers' actions, and audience responses.

4. Discussion

4.1. Musical Expression as an Integrated and Embodied Performance Practice

The findings demonstrate that musical expression in Dressed Like an Ocean's performance was not generated by a single musical element but emerged through the interaction of vocal intensity, dynamic variation, instrumental texture, bodily movement, stage arrangement, visual elements, and performer–audience interaction. Musical expression in this performance was therefore constructed as

an integrated practice in which auditory, bodily, visual, spatial, and social dimensions operated simultaneously. The performance could not be adequately understood by examining vocal technique or instrumental sound independently because the expressive meaning emerged from the relationship among these elements throughout the performance.

This finding is consistent with recent perspectives in music education that increasingly understand musical experience as embodied rather than exclusively auditory. Del Barrio and Arús (2024), through a systematic review of 29 studies published between 2013 and 2023, identify music and movement as closely connected pedagogical practices and report that movement-based music education can contribute to physical, cognitive, and emotional development. Their review emphasizes that bodily movement provides a natural means of representing and expressing musical experience. Similarly, Hernández-Arciniegas et al. (2023) demonstrate the relevance of embodied music cognition in musical initiation for children, showing that musical learning can be approached through the relationship between bodily action, perception, and musical cognition. Weatherly and Weatherly (2024) likewise propose a movement-based constructivist framework for early childhood music education in which movement provides an important medium for children's active engagement with musical experiences. These studies support the interpretation that the body should not be regarded merely as an accompanying component of musical activity but as one of the means through which musical experience is perceived, organized, and expressed.

The relationship between musical structure and expression is also evident in the present findings. The setlist, dynamic organization, sound presets, transitions, stage configuration, and technical preparation provided a structural framework within which expressive actions could occur. At the same time, vocal intensity, bodily gestures, physical movement, and audience interaction transformed this framework into an embodied performance experience. Technical preparation, therefore, should not be regarded simply as an external support for artistic expression. In the observed performance, routing, presets, sequencer use, stage positioning, and coordination with technical personnel created the conditions that allowed performers to maintain continuity and control while simultaneously responding to the changing atmosphere of the performance.

The importance of this relationship can also be understood from research concerning children's musical creativity. Addressi (2023) conceptualizes children's musical creativity through reflexive interaction, repetition and variation, turn-taking, and co-regulation. From this perspective, musical creativity does not necessarily emerge from completely unstructured activity but can develop through interaction within an environment that provides opportunities for variation and response. A similar conclusion is presented by the literature review of children's musical creative practice conducted by Zhang et al. (2023), which emphasizes the importance of diverse musical practices, social engagement, and emotional experience in the development of children's musical creativity. The empirical study by Custodero and colleagues on musical improvisation likewise demonstrates that improvisational musical experiences can provide opportunities for children's creative thinking, including originality and the development of musical ideas.

These findings help explain why the expressive character of Dressed Like an Ocean's performance should not be equated simply with intensity. Screamo performance frequently involves intense vocals, distorted instrumental textures, rapid changes in energy, and strong bodily engagement. Nevertheless, the present observation indicates that intensity became expressive because it was organized through contrast, timing, dynamic variation, movement, and interaction. A high-intensity vocal passage, for example, acquired expressive significance because it occurred within a particular musical and dramaturgical context rather than simply because it was loud or physically forceful. Expression consequently emerged from the relationship between different levels of musical and bodily activity.

This distinction is important when the findings are considered in relation to early childhood education. The pedagogical value of the present finding does not lie in transferring the sonic intensity,

vocal techniques, stage behavior, or thematic content of screamo into early childhood settings. Rather, the transferable principle concerns the embodied construction of musical expression. Children can experience music through movement, gesture, vocalization, rhythm, facial expression, and interaction without being exposed to the musical genre from which the research finding originated. Del Barrio and Arús (2024) emphasize that music-and-movement activities provide opportunities for children to represent musical characteristics through the body, while Hernández-Arciniegas et al. (2023) show how embodied approaches can be used to support musical initiation in children.

Recent research further indicates that musical engagement in early childhood is inherently multimodal. Cho and Ilari (2021), for example, found that young children's engagement with recorded music involved multiple forms of participation associated with children's mood and everyday experiences. Their findings indicate that children's musical experiences cannot be reduced to passive listening because music is experienced in relation to emotional states, activities, and social contexts. Steinberg et al. (2021) similarly report that musical engagement occurs within parent–child relationships and can be associated with affective attachment. These findings reinforce the importance of understanding musical activity as an experience involving relationships, emotion, action, and context rather than merely the reproduction of musical sounds.

The interactive dimension of musical expression identified in the present study also has relevance to early childhood music education. In the *Dressed Like an Ocean* performance, expression developed through reciprocal relationships between performers and audience. Audience responses, bodily movements, verbal communication, and collective participation contributed to the atmosphere of the performance. This resembles, at a conceptual level, the interactive character of children's musical engagement. Rickert (2022), based on ethnographic observations of preschool settings, demonstrates that children's spontaneous singing can function as a social and interactional practice in which songs, bodies, objects, and places become interconnected. Similarly, a systematic review by Bicknell et al. (2024) emphasizes the importance of naturally occurring musical interactions between infants and caregivers, particularly vocalization, attention, and synchrony. Such research suggests that musical expression is not necessarily an individual act but can emerge through reciprocal interaction.

The emotional dimension of musical expression provides another basis for interpreting the present finding. Boucher et al. (2021) found that participation in a music program was associated with aspects of socio-emotional development among four- and five-year-old children, including social interaction, independence, and emotion comprehension. A meta-analysis by Gaudette-Leblanc et al. (2021) similarly examined the relationship between participation in early childhood music programs and socio-emotional development, highlighting the social and emotional dimensions of musical engagement. More recent research by Bugos et al. (2023) demonstrates that multimodal music programs can be associated with children's emotional responses during vocal activities. These findings provide a relevant educational foundation for interpreting vocal and bodily expression as possible components of children's musical experiences, although they do not establish that the specific expressive practices observed in screamo performance would produce equivalent outcomes.

Creativity provides a further connection between the observed performance and early childhood music education. The spontaneous expressive actions observed in *Dressed Like An Ocean's* performance demonstrate that a structured performance can still provide space for variation and individual expression. This principle is relevant to early childhood music pedagogy because children's musical creativity can be encouraged when they are provided with opportunities to explore and modify musical materials rather than being required to reproduce a single predetermined response. Sari et al. (2023), for example, identify music intervention as a potential medium for supporting verbal creativity in early childhood, while Arteaga Robles (2024) reports a relationship between music education and creativity among five-year-old children. These studies reinforce the relevance of providing children with musical environments that encourage active participation and creative responses.

The relationship between musical expression, movement, and creativity is further supported by recent research on music-and-movement pedagogy. Del Barrio and Arús (2024) emphasize that music and movement can provide opportunities for expressive freedom, exploration, and active participation. Addressi (2023) similarly emphasizes interaction, variation, and co-regulation as important dimensions of musical creativity. Hendricks and Symborski (2024) extend this perspective through the concept of empathic creativity in child–adult musical play, emphasizing the relational character of musical creativity rather than treating creativity solely as an individual cognitive product. Taken together, these studies suggest that musical expression in early childhood can be conceptualized as a participatory and relational experience in which children respond to musical stimuli through multiple forms of action.

Nevertheless, an important methodological boundary must be maintained between the empirical findings of this study and their pedagogical interpretation. The empirical object of the present research was one approximately 45-minute performance by one adult screamo band, *Dressed Like an Ocean*, on one occasion in Jepara on May 18, 2025. No children, early childhood teachers, or early childhood education institutions participated in the observation, interview, or documentation process. Consequently, the present findings cannot be interpreted as empirical evidence that the expressive practices of *Dressed Like an Ocean* directly improve children's emotional development, creativity, musical ability, social interaction, or other developmental outcomes.

The connection to early childhood education is instead established through conceptual synthesis with existing literature. The observed performance provides empirical evidence concerning how expression can be organized through sound, dynamics, body, space, and interaction, whereas the early childhood literature provides evidence concerning how developmentally appropriate musical experiences can involve movement, vocalization, interaction, creativity, and emotional expression. The pedagogical interpretation therefore represents an analytical bridge between two bodies of knowledge rather than a tested educational intervention. This distinction is particularly important because contemporary research continues to emphasize the need for appropriately trained early childhood educators and carefully designed music-learning environments rather than assuming that any musical activity is automatically developmentally beneficial.

Accordingly, the principal contribution of this finding is not to propose screamo as a musical genre for young children, but to identify embodiment, dynamic contrast, vocal exploration, interaction, and expressive freedom as transferable principles. In practical terms, the intensity observed in the performance may be translated into developmentally appropriate contrasts between soft and strong sounds; bodily energy may be translated into controlled movement activities; performer–audience interaction may be translated into teacher–child musical exchanges; and spontaneous performance gestures may be translated into opportunities for children's own musical responses. Importantly, such adaptation must exclude the adult thematic and lyrical content of screamo when that content concerns mature experiences, interpersonal conflict, distress, or other themes inappropriate for young children. The adaptation concerns the formal and expressive principles of musical performance, not its lyrical narratives, vocal aggression, sound intensity, or adult cultural context.

This distinction also corresponds with recent research emphasizing that children's musical learning is most meaningful when activities are responsive to children's developmental characteristics and opportunities for active participation. The systematic review by Ow and Cheong (2024) identifies relationships between music engagement and several dimensions of twenty-first-century learning among young children, while the review by del Barrio and Arús (2024) emphasizes the importance of movement-based and inclusive approaches in music education. Together, these findings support the broader proposition that musical learning can be designed around children's active engagement rather than around the reproduction of a particular professional performance style.

Thus, *Dressed Like an Ocean*'s performance can be understood as an artistic case that offers conceptual insight into embodied musical expression. Its relevance to early childhood education

emerges not because screamo itself should become children's instructional material, but because the performance illustrates how musical expression can be constructed through the coordinated relationship of sound, body, movement, dynamics, space, and social interaction. The literature on early childhood music education provides a theoretical and empirical basis for considering these principles within child-appropriate musical activities. However, whether the proposed adaptation actually produces desirable educational outcomes remains an empirical question. Future research should therefore move beyond conceptual synthesis by piloting and evaluating these expressive principles with early childhood teachers and children in authentic PAUD settings. Such research could examine whether activities derived from vocal exploration, movement, dynamic contrast, musical interaction, and expressive freedom contribute to children's musical expression, creativity, emotional communication, or social participation. In this way, the present study should be regarded as a conceptual starting point for interdisciplinary inquiry, rather than as evidence of an already validated pedagogical model.

4.2. Implications of Musical Expression for Early Childhood Education

The findings concerning musical expression in Dressed Like an Ocean's performance have interdisciplinary relevance to early childhood education, particularly in understanding music as a medium for expression, emotional experience, and interaction. This connection does not imply the direct application of the screamo genre to children; rather, it involves extracting the expressive principles present in the performance and adapting them according to the developmental characteristics of young children. From the perspective of music education, children's musical experiences should ideally not focus solely on the reproduction of sounds or the acquisition of technical skills but should also provide opportunities for children to listen, respond, move, explore, and actively produce musical responses. This principle is consistent with Gordon's Music Learning Theory, which positions listening, movement, singing, and responding to music as important components in the development of children's musical abilities (Gordon, 2012; Galera-Núñez, 2018). Approaches to music learning in early childhood education also emphasize the importance of responsive and developmentally appropriate learning environments through activities involving movement, singing, rhythmic patterns, listening, and simple improvisation.

A review of the literature indicates that music is closely associated with children's emotional development. Through a systematic review of 26 studies concerning the use of music in education for children aged 3–12 years, De Stasio et al. (2021) found that musical activities can contribute to the development of emotional intelligence, particularly in the areas of emotional perception, expression, and regulation, and are also associated with the development of prosocial skills. Music can also function as an emotional stimulus, an aesthetic experience, a means of relaxation, a medium for self-expression, and a shared group experience. Hallam (2010) similarly demonstrated that active engagement in music is associated with various aspects of personal and social development, including emotional sensitivity, self-confidence, social skills, cooperation, and the ability to work in groups, particularly when musical experiences are enjoyable and meaningful.

These findings provide a basis for interpreting the musical expression of Dressed Like an Ocean within a pedagogical context. Vocal intensity, dynamic changes, bodily movement, and interaction identified in the performance can be translated into musical activities for children through simple and developmentally appropriate forms. Children's ability to respond to the emotional expression of music has also been demonstrated empirically. Stachó et al. (2013), for example, found that children aged 3–7 years were able to interpret emotional content conveyed through expressive characteristics in musical performances. This finding indicates that musical elements and the manner in which music is expressed can serve as stimuli that children perceive as emotional experiences. Therefore, changes in dynamics can be adapted into activities involving the differentiation and exploration of loud and soft sounds; changes in tempo can be implemented through fast and slow movements; while vocal expression can

be developed through sound-play activities, singing, or creatively imitating different sound characteristics.

The first implication concerns the development of emotional expression through the voice. In *Dressed Like an Ocean's* performance, vocals function as a powerful medium of expression. In early childhood education, this principle can be applied through activities that allow children to use their voices to represent various emotional states. Teachers may provide musical stimuli, pictures, stories, or simple situations and then invite children to respond using voices with different characteristics. Children can explore soft, strong, long, short, high, or low sounds according to the experiences they wish to express. The focus of such activities is not on singing accurately but on children's confidence and ability to communicate their experiences through sound. This is consistent with the findings of De Stasio et al. (2021), which indicate that the use of music in education can be associated with children's ability to recognize and express emotions.

The second implication concerns expression through bodily movement. The movements of the performers demonstrate that musical expression can be manifested kinesthetically. This principle is relevant to the Dalcroze Eurhythmics approach, which connects musical experience with bodily movement and rhythmic responses. Within this approach, the body serves as a medium through which children experience and understand musical elements, particularly rhythm and dynamics. Research on the application of Dalcroze-based music and movement activities in early childhood education has also demonstrated that such activities can be used to develop children's rhythmic experiences. Kołodziejski and Králová (2016) likewise position music and movement activities as a means of developing movement expression as well as social relationships among preschool children. Accordingly, children can be given opportunities to move according to the character of the music with varying levels of intensity, such as gentle movements when the music has low intensity and stronger movements when the music increases in energy. Such activities provide opportunities for children to connect auditory experiences with bodily expression.

The third implication concerns the exploration of musical dynamics and contrasts. The dramaturgy of *Dressed Like an Ocean's* performance is constructed through changes in intensity, moving from relatively calm sections toward stronger sections and subsequently returning to a more reflective atmosphere. This principle can be applied in early childhood music education through contrast-based activities, such as loud–soft, fast–slow, high–low, or active–calm. Children are not merely asked to listen to these differences but can also be encouraged to respond through vocalizations, movement, or simple musical instruments. Research on music and movement activities among preschool children indicates that such experiences can support the development of creative thinking abilities, including fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. Chronopoulou and Riga (2012) also found an increase in creative behavior among five-year-old children following participation in a music and movement program, including greater freedom of expression and a tendency to explore and experiment.

The fourth implication concerns the development of active response and social interaction. The interaction between performers and the audience in *Dressed Like an Ocean's* performance demonstrates that musical experiences can develop through reciprocal relationships. In the context of early childhood education, teachers can create musical activities that position children not merely as recipients of instructions but as active participants. Children can be given opportunities to choose sounds, create movements, respond to rhythmic patterns, imitate sound patterns, or provide responses to music performed by the teacher. This principle is consistent with Gordon's perspective on music learning, which emphasizes active and responsive musical experiences as well as the importance of musical interaction within children's learning environments. Research by MacGlone, Wilson, and MacDonald (2021) also demonstrates that children's musical actions during group improvisation are spontaneous and creative and develop through interaction. Accordingly, the concept of Creative Musical Agency can be used to understand children's capacity to take an active role in musical experiences.

The fifth implication concerns freedom and creativity in expression. One important characteristic of Dressed Like an Ocean's performance is the emergence of spontaneous expression that remains within the framework of the performance. This principle can be applied in early childhood education by providing children with opportunities to produce diverse musical responses. Teachers do not need to standardize all movements, sounds, or ways in which children respond to music as long as these responses remain aligned with the objectives of the activity. This approach is consistent with the research of Chronopoulou and Riga (2012), which demonstrates that music and movement activities can encourage freedom of expression, exploration, experimentation, and the development of creativity among preschool children. Wong and Lau (2002) likewise emphasize that music and movement activities can encourage children to experience, explore, discover, and interact with their environment, peers, and adults in creative ways. Therefore, music learning can be designed as an environment that allows diverse responses rather than merely functioning as a reproductive activity requiring children to produce identical responses.

Based on these five implications, the musical expression identified in Dressed Like an Ocean's performance can be mapped onto several pedagogical principles for early childhood education: vocal expression, bodily expression, exploration of musical contrasts, musical interaction, and freedom of expression. These five principles are connected to research findings concerning children's emotional development, creativity, rhythmic abilities, and social interaction through musical activities. Thus, the contribution of this study does not lie in using screamo music as instructional material for young children but rather in utilizing the principles of musical expression found in the performance as a source of pedagogical ideas.

The application of these principles must nevertheless take into account children's developmental characteristics, safety, comfort, and individual needs. The sound intensity used in learning activities does not need to follow the level of loudness characteristic of a screamo performance. Likewise, expressive movements and activities should be designed within a safe and structured environment. The adaptation concerns the principles of expression rather than the reproduction of the performance itself. Through this approach, teachers can use music as an experiential medium that enables children to listen, feel, move, explore, interact, and express themselves.

Thus, the implications of this study demonstrate a point of intersection between performing arts and early childhood education through the concept of musical expression. The findings from Dressed Like an Ocean's performance demonstrate that musical expression is formed through the relationship among sound, dynamics, body, space, interaction, and emotion. In the context of early childhood education, these elements can be adapted into simple, enjoyable, safe, and developmentally appropriate musical experiences. This position extends the contribution of the study beyond a description of musical performance toward an interdisciplinary understanding that expressive practices in the performing arts can serve as a source of inspiration for designing musical learning experiences that support emotional expression, creativity, participation, and interaction among young children.

4.3. Interdisciplinary Synthesis of Performing Arts and Early Childhood Education

The findings of this study reveal a point of intersection between performing arts research and early childhood education through the concept of musical expression. Within the domain of performing arts, expression functions as a means through which performers communicate the character, emotions, and energy of music to the audience. Within early childhood education, musical expression can be positioned as a learning experience that provides children with opportunities to recognize, explore, and communicate their experiences through sound and movement.

This relationship can be conceptualized as a pedagogical pathway: expressive characteristics of music → exploration of sound and movement → emotional response → expressive communication → children's musical experience. This pathway demonstrates that findings from performing arts research

can make a conceptual contribution to early childhood education without altering the original focus of the research.

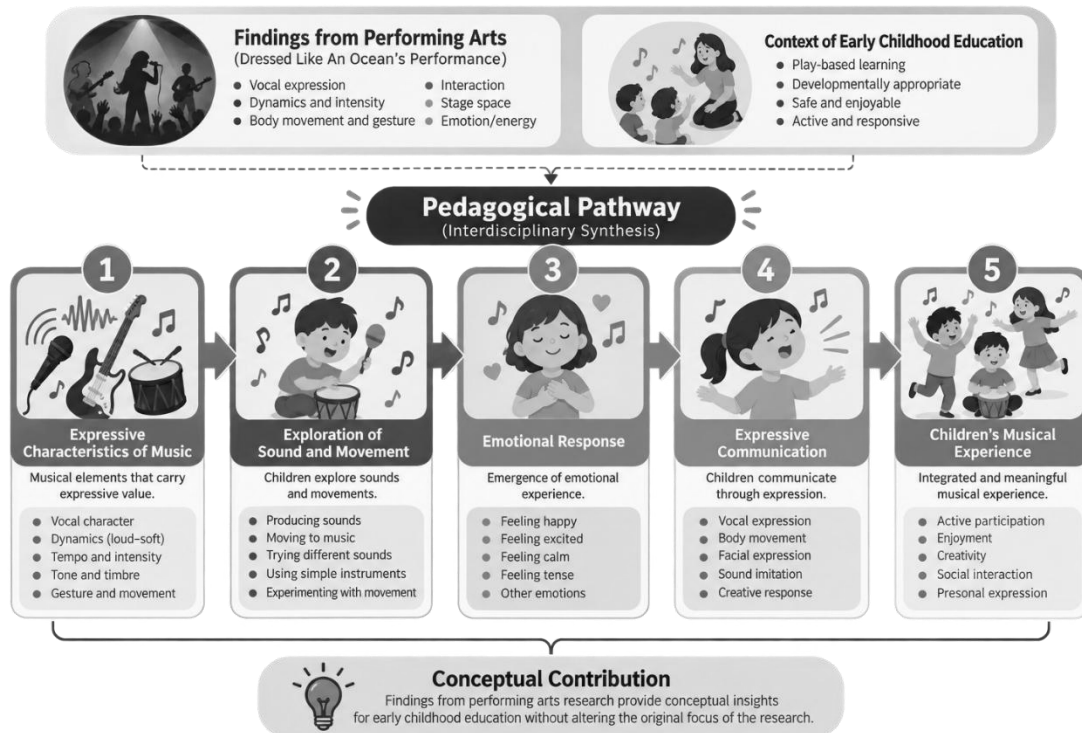


Figure 4

Pedagogical Pathway of Musical Expression in Early Childhood Education (Source: Researcher's Documentation, 2026)

From this perspective, early childhood teachers can draw inspiration from the ways in which performances manage dynamics and expression and subsequently adapt these principles into activities appropriate to children's developmental needs. For example, the concept of dramaturgy can be translated into a sequence of musical activities that begins with the exploration of simple sounds, continues with an increase in movement-based activities, and concludes with calmer musical activities. The performer–audience interaction can be adapted into responsive musical games between teachers and children. Meanwhile, the concepts of vocal and bodily expression can be applied through sound and movement activities that allow children to express their emotional experiences.

Thus, this study demonstrates that performing arts can serve as a source of interdisciplinary knowledge for early childhood education. Dressed Like an Ocean's performance is not positioned as a direct instructional model for children but rather as an artistic phenomenon that provides insight into how music can organize sound, dynamics, movement, interaction, and emotion into an expressive experience. These principles can subsequently be adapted contextually within early childhood education settings in ways that are appropriate to children's developmental stages.

5. Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, the screamo musical performance of Dressed Like an Ocean is constructed through the integration of technical, structural, and expressive aspects. The technical aspects include sound management, routing, presets, sequencers, stage arrangement, and lighting; the structural aspects are realized through setlist arrangement, transitions between songs, and dramaturgy; while the expressive aspects are manifested through vocal intensity, musical dynamics,

bodily gestures, theatrical actions, and interactions between performers and the audience. The integration of these aspects produces an intense, dynamic, and communicative performance. The implications for early childhood education lie in the adaptation of expressive principles rather than the direct application of screamo music to children. Through synthesis with relevant literature, principles of sound exploration, dynamic contrast, bodily movement, musical interaction, and freedom of expression can provide conceptual inspiration for developmentally appropriate musical experiences. Importantly, the adaptation concerns these expressive principles and does not include the adult thematic content, lyrical narratives, vocal intensity, or other contextual characteristics of screamo that may be inappropriate for young children.

The pedagogical pathway proposed in this study musical expression → sound and movement exploration → emotional response → expressive communication → children's musical experience—is derived from the synthesis of the performance findings and existing literature and therefore remains conceptual rather than empirically validated. The empirical data were obtained from one approximately 45-minute performance by one adult band on one occasion and did not involve children, teachers, or PAUD settings. Future research should therefore empirically test this pathway in authentic early childhood education contexts by involving teachers and children, particularly through classroom-based action research, design-based research, or other appropriate empirical approaches. Such studies are needed to examine the feasibility, developmental appropriateness, safety, and potential effects of activities involving vocal exploration, movement, dynamic contrasts, musical interaction, and expressive freedom on children's emotional expression, creativity, musical participation, and social interaction. Thus, this study provides a conceptual foundation for interdisciplinary inquiry, while further empirical validation is necessary before the proposed pathway can be established as an evidence-based pedagogical model.

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