

Effects of Music on Student Academic Performance

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Abstract

The topic of this paper is something that has received much attention from academics as well as psychologists working on brain performance and effectiveness all over the world. The question to be answered is, how does listening to music impact students' academic performance? Does it improve learning or impede it? The answer seems fairly simple and straightforward. It is because, in American high schools, research shows that students who take music classes do better academically in other courses than those students who do not take music classes.

The National Center for Educational Statistics conducted research on high school sophomores. The sample size of the students chosen for the study was 13,327. Out of this, those who participated in music activities and listened to music had much higher scores in courses like English, Math, Science, and so on than those students who weren't very interested in music (A Hodges & S. O'Connell, 2013). Research and studies have been conducted in America and Europe to find out the impact that music has on education.

In this paper, some of those studies are considered, and the literature regarding the topic is also viewed and analyzed. All of the information derived from these sources is combined with primary information coming from an interview that was conducted with a student. The results of both sources of information are combined, and the conclusion that is arrived at is that, yes, music does enhance academic learning. This paper is in favour of the argument that music is beneficial for the mind as well as for health in general, and that it can have lots of advantages for students who are burdened with educational stress in particular. This point is proven by discussing the results and findings of various studies conducted regarding the topic.

Advantages Of Music

People all over the world generally listen to music because it is entertaining. There are multiple genres of music, and different people prefer different types of music based on their tastes and cultures. Music can be a source of pleasure and contentment. But what most people don't know is that music has a lot of other advantages as well, most of which are psychological and related to brain functionality (Črnčec, Wilson & Prior, 2006). This can be proven by the fact that music therapy today has become a very well-developed discipline that is used to help people deal with emotional and mental stress. It is meant to improve people's mental health and help them cope with problems. It

relaxes the mind and energizes the body and ends up making people feel better about the situations that they are in. Oftentimes, it performs the same function as caffeine and helps one stay energized for longer periods of time. When one considers the tiresome and monotonous educational tasks such as reading a hundred pages for an exam or writing a two-thousand-word essay, music prevents the brain from getting tired and improves functionality. It helps distract the brain and lightens up the mood, something which improves brain performance and helps the student write better and read with an improved understanding of the text.

Music can and does improve a person's cognitive performance. Research suggests that playing music in the background or listening to music while focusing on another activity improves performance on cognitive tasks (Cherry & Gans, 2017). An example of this is listening to music while studying. A lot of students listen to music while solving mathematical problems for practice, whereas other students like listening to music while reading. The student who was interviewed for this assignment said that he is oftentimes unable to study without music because he easily gets distracted without it. According to him, music is particularly beneficial when a person really needs to study in an environment where there is a lot of noise and people (Hunt, 2018). In such instances, music prevents one from getting distracted by the conversations that are taking place all around.

Another very important advantage of music that is particularly beneficial for students is that it improves memory. Research has shown that those students who read while listening to music retain the information better than those students who read without music. This helps them remember the important stuff for an exam, a quiz, or even a presentation. Since these students have better focus, they are also able to understand more complicated concepts more easily and quickly than the other students (Cherry & Gans, 2017). Thus, they end up scoring much better grades and marks and end up doing really well throughout their college years. Of course, all excellence in the academic performance of students cannot be attributed to music, but it must be acknowledged that music does enhance academic performance.

The Impact Of Music On Academic Performance

A study was conducted in Switzerland to see what impact music has on the academic performance of students. The study was conducted in Switzerland, where teachers from two schools were taken on board. They were asked to submit the school reports of 134 students who belonged to different grades. Out of these 134 students, the teachers identified the students who listened to music or received training in music either at home or at school. There were 54 students, and their school reports were compared with those of other students (Walters, Koerner & Schwaninger, 2009). There was a striking difference in the academic performance of those students who listened to the music and the academic performance of those who did not listen to/learn music. Thus, it becomes clear from this study that music does impact educational performance for the better. It is very beneficial, and therefore, students must be encouraged to listen to music and practice it.

This study, as well as many others conducted regarding the same topic in other parts of the world, such as America, has come to similar conclusions. If their findings are considered, it becomes clear that students who are somehow involved with music have a higher chance of performing better in academics. Music helps to make students smarter. Another study, which was conducted by a professor of music education at the University of Kansas, called Christopher Johnson in 2007, revealed that the students who learned and listened to music ended up with about 22% higher scores in English and 20% higher scores in Mathematics as compared to the students who had no involvement or engagement with music (Martin, 2014). This is striking because people usually do not think about the long-term advantages of music when they listen to it.

Music is important not only for memorizing things but also for understanding them better. It also significantly improves comprehension and listening abilities. This is extremely beneficial when it comes to paying attention during class lectures, especially during college years, when listening to lectures is very important. This is because when a person listens to music, he/she learns to listen to different instruments and distinct sounds separately. This helps him/her learn to pay attention to things separately, which is very important when it comes to focusing on all the important things. To find the results of music on listening abilities, the lecture notes of college students were compared. They were separated into two groups: one group consisted of students who listened to music, and the other group consisted of those who did not. The notes of those students who did listen to music were a lot more elaborate and detailed than the notes of those students who didn't listen to music. This allowed them to remember even the most minute details from the class lectures since all of them were noted down. This enabled them to perform much better on their tests and exams since they ended up being able to provide specific answers to the questions that were asked.

Conclusion

It has been found, using evidence and examples from various studies that have been conducted in many different parts of the world, that music does impact the academic performance of students. The findings of these studies were confirmed through an interview that was conducted with a Freshman student at New York University, who helped explain to us why he liked listening to music while studying and how he thinks it helped him focus. The information that he provided was completely in alignment with what was found through conducting secondary research. Thus, a conclusion is reached: Music is beneficial for students, and its advantages must not be underestimated. It improves understanding, focus, learning, and memory. Music enhances and increases learning abilities to a great extent, which is clearly evident in academic performances. Students must be encouraged to listen to music, and music education must also be promoted in schools.

Works Cited

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