



## Music - Its Influence on Self Awareness and Stress Among Adolescents

## KEYWORDS

Music, adolescents, self awareness, stress management

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**ABSTRACT** Music has potential influence both psychologically and physiologically. Music helps restore "harmonious balance" of body, when it is undergoing stress. (Walworth, 2003). People listen to music to regulate arousal and mood, to achieve self awareness and expressing social relatedness. (Thomas Schafer, Peter Sedlmeir, 2013). The study aims to investigate the level of self-awareness and stress management of adolescents trained and untrained in music. Purposive sampling technique is used for the study consisting of 30 adolescents, 15 music trained and 15 untrained. The tools include Personal effectiveness scale by Uday Pareek and Dr.Thomas Holmes, Inventory for stress. The data is analyzed with "t" test and correlation with SPSS.

**INTRODUCTION**

Music is an integral part of our everyday life and behaviour. Music psychologists have started to explore factors that contribute to the emotional experience of music (Juslin & Sloboda, 2001; Scherer & Zentner, 2001). Growing interest in the relationships between music, emotions, quality of life, subjective wellbeing & health in everyday life has also emerged in the fields of community music therapy and stress research. (Ansdel, 2000, Beronius Haake, 2006, Batt-Rawden, 2006).

Adolescence is a transitional period with many developmental challenges and they need to find balance between their personal, environmental demands and resources. The developmental challenges cause emotional unrest and increased demands for mood regulation. (Halle, 2003). Several researchers have proposed that music functions as a means to work through various developmental tasks and related emotional experiences. (Larson, Kubey & Colletti, 1989, Larson, 1995).

For adolescents under stress and anxiety, Music provides an emotional outlet for releasing, altering emotions.

**SELF AWARENESS**

Burnard (1992) defines self awareness as "the process of getting to know your feelings, attitudes and values. Dural and Wicklund (1972) suggests two types of self awareness, 1. Subjective self – awareness 2. Objective self- awareness.

1. In subjective self awareness, the self is the thinking subject (the "I") and consciousness is directed towards the outside world as object.
2. In objective self awareness, attention is directed to the self as object (the "Me"), with strong individual differences, where people focus attention on self. ( Fenigstein, Scheier and Buss 1975).

**JOHARI WINDOW**

Self growth is facilitated by self awareness. The Johari Window provides a very effective self-awareness model. It is a 2x2 contingency table depicting two dimensions- one being known to you and the other unknown to you. There are resultant four quadrants or "panes".

- Open or public self
- Blind self or arena
- Hidden or private self
- Unknown self or dark area

**JOHARI WINDOW MODEL**

		Things I know	Things I do not know
Things they know	Open or Public Self	Blind self or arena	
Things they do not know	Hidden or Private self	Unknown self or Dark area	

**STRESS**

Stress is a nonspecific often global emotional response by an organism to real or imagined demands. An environmental stimulus that affects an organism in physically or psychologically injurious ways is called a stressor. The word "Stress" means pressure which can be-

- Endogenous: Internal pressure (within the body)
- Exogenous: External pressure (from outside)
- Endogenous and exogenous factors: This includes both internal and external factors

**THEORIES**

Cognitive model – (Glass and Singer 1972) (Cohen 1978), Stress taxes perceptual and cognitive resources by drawing off attention, over taxing cognitive capabilities or depleting cognitive resources for other tasks (Glass and Singer, 1972).

Psychological arousal model: High levels of psychological arousal narrow the focus and attention on complex tasks. Psychological arousal can interfere with performance because important cues may escape attention.

Emotional functioning model: This model considers emotional responses, which are due to stress. Stress results due to frustration that causes infuriation and irritation.

Hans Selye, gave the general adaptation syndrome/GAS with 3 stages, the alarm reaction, initial shock is followed by a mobilization of defenses, till symptoms such as nervous tension, headache etc develop. In adaptation phase – the body accommodates to additional demands – stress symptoms diminish. In exhaustion stage the symptoms reappear and the body loses its ability to accommodate further.

**SOME ADOLESCENT STRESSORS**

1. School under achievement and frustration
2. Negative thought and feelings about themselves

3. Ignorance about body changes
4. Adjustment issues with parents and relatives
5. Problems with friends
6. Unsafe living environment
7. Separation/divorce of parents
8. Chronic illness/some problem in the family
9. Death of loved ones
10. Having too high expectations
11. Family financial problems
12. Lack of affection and attention from parents
13. Loneliness and low self-esteem

#### NEED FOR THE STUDY-

There are many studies dealing with stress management using music in clinical settings with patients suffering from chronic ailments, post traumatic stress disorder, but there are few studies on self awareness and stress management among the non clinical adolescent population.

#### AIM:

1. To study the level of self awareness and stress management among musically trained and untrained adolescents.
2. To suggest suitable measures to improve self awareness and stress management among adolescents.

#### HYPOTHESES:

1. There would be a significant difference in self disclosure among music trained and untrained adolescents.
2. There would be a significant difference in openness to feed back among music trained and untrained adolescents.
3. There would be significant difference in perceptiveness among music trained and untrained adolescents.
4. There would be a significant difference in stress management among music trained and untrained adolescents.

#### RESEARCH DESIGN:

The present study adopted descriptive research design with purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling is a sample chosen for particular purpose, Sample gives insight into a particular issue related to the study area and the number is determined by the research topic and availability (Alston & Bowels, 2003).

#### Variables

Music training, self awareness and stress management.

#### Sample for the study

A total sample of 30 is included in the study. 15 students untrained in music were selected from Periyar matriculation school, Trichy. 15 adolescents undergoing vocal music training, from Kalai Kaveri College of Fine Arts Trichy.

#### TOOLS

##### PERSONAL DATA SHEET

This personal data sheet gives information about the demographic details like age, education, socio-economic status and family pattern.

##### PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS SCALE

The PE scale(s) has been adapted for use with the students by Udai Pareekh.. It gives their profile in terms of self-disclosure (openness), feedback, and perceptiveness. It contains 15 statements, 5 for each aspect, on a 5 point scale. The total scores on openness, feedback and perceptiveness are given, each rating from 0-20. The score of 11 can be used as cut-off point for classifying the scores, on each of the three aspects, as high and low.

##### STRESS ASSESSMENT SCALE

Stress assessment scale is developed by Dr. Thomas Holmes (1981) and his associates. There are three alternatives "Strongly Agree" "Moderately Agree" and "Not at all agree". The subject has to choose any one. Scoring is as

follows-Strongly Agree – 3, Moderately Agree – 2, Not at all Agree – 1

Higher the score indicates higher stress. The reliability of the tool is found to be 0.878.

#### DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE VARIABLES

##### TABLE I

##### TABLE SHOWS TOTAL NO. OF BOYS AND GIRLS IN BOTH GROUPS

Groups	Boys	Girls	Total
Music trained	08	07	15
Music untrained	09	06	15
Total	17	13	30

##### TABLE II

##### DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MUSIC TRAINED AND UNTRAINED ADOLESCENT ON SELF AWARENESS DIMENSIONS

Variables	N	Mean	SD	't' Value
Self Disclosure	30	0.00715	0.002	0.0357
Openness to feed-back	30	0.00012	0.0019	0.0624
Perceptiveness	30	0.000765	0.002	0.0374

P<0.05

##### TABLE III

##### DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MUSIC TRAINED AND UNTRAINED ADOLESCENTS ON STRESS MANAGEMENT

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	SD	't' Value
Stress Management	Music trained	15	0.0033	0.0033	1.52
	Non music trained	15	0.0018	0.0019	

P<0.05

#### DISCUSSION

Music has been used for hundreds of years to treat illnesses and restore harmony between mind and body. Adolescence is an important period with heightened love for music and demands for coping. Music seems to help in managing negative moods in several ways. Researchers have proposed that music is considered to help tension relief & cathartic release of negative emotions (Schartz & Fouts, 2003; Lacourse, Claes & Villeneuve, 2001, Raud, 1997).

Engaging in music for the purpose of cognitive (Self awareness) and emotion regulation may enhance wellbeing. (Tanchyuan Chin Nikki.s.Rickard, 2013).

Adolescents undergoing music training have effective self-disclosure. These adolescents share when it is appropriate in a given situation. They are in touch with their own feelings and also aware of others feelings. They use emotion focused coping, by minimizing the emotional damage of stress, they involve in music, as the function of music is social, emotional, cognitive or self-related and physiological or arousal related functions. (Hargreaves & North, 1999, Schafer and Sedlmeier, 2009, 2010). By involving in music these adolescents have better self-esteem, self-disclosure compared to music untrained adolescents. These adolescents are lacking opportunity to understand the self through music.

Openness to feedback is the characteristic of the person that others are aware of but the person himself does not know. Music trained adolescents are receptive of both positive and negative feedback. They take criticism on their stride, analyze and go for a change when required. Whereas the music untrained adolescents may resort to defensive behaviour, when it is negative feedback, viewing it as criticism. This defensive behaviour may not reduce anxiety leading to dissonance and conflict with the self increasing stress. Whereas the music trained adolescents use confronting behaviour, which reduces the conflict within self and leads to integrated self.

The third dimension of perceptiveness among the music trained adolescents is better than the music untrained adolescents. The ability to pick up verbal and non verbal cues from others is used appropriately by music trained adolescents. Music experiences can help us know ourselves, communicate with others in wordless ways and contribute to our understanding of our place in our culture. (Dillon, 2007). Whereas music untrained are too conscious of others feelings and inhibit interactions or being aware of limitations will not take risks. This can be one of the reasons that these adolescents are perceived as manipulative or unavailable limiting their self awareness.

Overall values of all the three dimensions of self-awareness- self-disclosure, openness to feedback and perceptiveness indicates "t" values as 0.0357, 0.0624, 0.0374, which is significant. Thus music trained adolescents have better self-awareness compared to music untrained adolescents. The results are similar to previous study that music regulates mood, helps achieve self-awareness and social relatedness (Schafer Thomas, Sedmeier Peter 2013).

Music could reduce blood pressure, relax body and calm mind. Music can serve as a medium for expressing emo-

tions and reducing stress levels (Saarikallio, 2006). Subject's listed preferred music was found to have reduced anxiety, negative emotional states. (Salamon, Bernstan, Kim, Stefano, 2003, Labbe et.al.2007). The "t" value of music trained and untrained adolescents for stress management are 1.52, significant at 0.05 level. Thus it supports the hypotheses that music trained adolescents have better management of stress than music untrained adolescents.

Stress management and self-awareness are important life skills needed for dealing effectively with challenges of everyday life, which should be inculcated among adolescents.

## CONCLUSION

It may be concluded based on the findings that self-awareness and stress management of music trained adolescents are better than music untrained adolescents, thus supporting the research hypotheses. So involvement in music enhances self confidence, self esteem and effective stress management.

## IMPLICATIONS

- Music can help adolescents in coping with stress, decrease angry outbursts, emotional breakdowns, and insecurities and achieving self awareness, schools can incorporate music in their school curriculum.
- Incorporating music in school can enhance learning, eg. Use of songs to learn difficult facts.
- Music therapist in school can help in relationship and emotional management.
- Parents can expose their adolescents to music as hobby during this challenging developmental period and help to channelize their strong emotions to cope with adolescent stress.

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