



EFFECTS OF LISTENING TO LO-FI HIP HOP MUSIC ON ACADEMIC STRESS AMONG GRADE 12 STUDENTS OF DE LA SALLE UNIVERSITY INTEGRATED SCHOOL - LAGUNA CAMPUS

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About the Study

The study was conducted in order to address the lack of evidence proving the efficacy of Lo-fi hip hop, a newly emerging genre born in the internet claiming to be helpful for stress relief while studying (Saywood & Winston, 2019).

Data for the study was gathered from 42 Grade 12 students through a mixed-method research methodology designed to fulfill the specified objectives under current quarantine protocols. Grade 12 students were selected for fitting the target demographic of late adolescents and early adults undergoing academic stress (Arsenio & Loria, 2012).

Objectives

I. Determined whether or not lo-fi hip hop music positively affects the stress levels of students from De La Salle University Laguna Campus and

II. Determined what elements of lo-fi hip hop music contribute to its efficacy of affecting the stress of students from De La Salle University Laguna Campus.

Methodology

1. Preparation of materials for online experiment (Discord server, Spotify playlist, Google Forms)
2. Gathering of participants through E-mail
3. 1-week period for participants to freely start the experiment after classes
4. Distribution of incentives to participants
5. Organization and analysis of gathered data through unequal variance t-test and thematic analysis

Hypotheses

Null: Listening to Lo-fi hip hop music does not affect or affects negatively the level of academic stress of the participants

Operational: Listening to Lo-fi hip hop music positively affects the level of academic stress of the participants

Interview Questions

Controlled Group

- What elements of silence affected your stress levels?
- How did each element contribute in affecting your stress levels?

Experiment Group

- What elements of the music contained in the playlist affected your stress levels?
- How did each element contribute in affecting your stress levels?

Results

The data used for quantitative analysis was gathered through a survey held through Google Forms which featured three questions, all of which were 7-point Likert-scale questions asking about the participants' stress levels after the experiment and the effects of the experiment on them.

Table 1. Results gained from using the Aspin-Welch Unequal Variance T-Test

Question #	df	t statistic	p-value	p < α?	Conclusion (Reject/Accept H ₀)
1	34	-13.33612089	4.58458624 x 10 ⁻¹⁴	Yes	Reject H ₀
2	36	-12.23766405	2.17335870 x 10 ⁻¹⁴	Yes	Reject H ₀
3	33	-12.91343974	1.87662785 x 10 ⁻¹⁴	Yes	Reject H ₀
Avg.	33	-14.62033921	5.64655522 x 10 ⁻¹⁶	Yes	Reject H ₀

Table 2. Question 1 Results from Control Group

Themes present in data set	# of appearances of theme in data set
Distaste Towards Silence	3
Lack of Distraction	10
Distracted by Background Noise	3
Stressed by Academic Requirements	3
Relaxation Through Silence	2

Table 3. Question 2 Results from Control Group

Themes present in data set	Codes present in such theme	# of appearances of theme in data set
Positive Effect	Thoughts of schoolwork	10
	Emptiness	
	Impatience	
	Distraction	
	Loss of focus	
Negative Effect	Fidgeting	2
	Background noise	
	Time passing slowly	
	Discomfort	
	Recollecting Thoughts	
	Calmness	

Table 4. Question 1 Results from Experiment Group

Themes present in data set	# of appearances of theme in data set
(Soothing/Calm) Atmosphere	11
(Slow/Upbeat) Tempo	7
Harmony	4
(Subtle) Melody	3
Rhythm	2
Lack of vocals	2
Instrumentation	3
Sampling	1

Table 5. Question 2 Results from Experiment Group

Themes present in data set	Codes present in such theme	# of appearances of theme in data set
Positive Effect	Calm tempo	10
	Pleasant rhythms	
	Songs fit for relaxation	
	Alliated thoughts about schoolwork/other problems	
	Lack of vocals	
Negatively Affected	Instrumentation	1
	Heightened focus from slow tempo	
	Instrumentation providing calming imagery	
	Not as effective as music with vocals	
Neutral Reaction	Stress levels stayed the same	1

The data used for qualitative analysis was gathered through an interview adjusted for both participant groups about what affected their stress levels and what sort of effect it was.

Table 1 shows the t-statistic identified from both sample groups. At α = 0.050, the p-value attained through the t-test was identified at all the survey questions and the average of these questions to be under α, meaning that the null hypothesis will be rejected and that the hypothesis that listening to Lo-fi hip hop music positively affects the level of academic stress of the participants will be accepted.

There were five themes identified in the data set of the first interview question given to the control group, as shown in Table 2. "Lack of Distraction" appeared the most in the data set, having ten appearances, whereas "Relaxation Through Silence" had the least, having only appeared twice. The rest appeared thrice each.

The various codes identified in the data gathered from the second question were categorized under the themes "Negative Effect" and "Positive Effect" (Table 3). A large majority of the gathered data were identified under "Negative Effect," having ten appearances, whereas "Positive Effect" only had two. This shows that most of the elements cited within the ten minutes of silence contributed mostly negatively in affecting the stress levels of the participants.

There were eight themes identified in the data set for the first interview question given to the experiment group, as shown in Table 4. "Soothing and Calming Atmosphere" appeared the most in the data set, having eleven appearances, whereas "Sampling" had the least, having only appeared once. The rest appeared at around two to seven times in the data set.

The various codes identified in the second question were categorized under the themes "Positively Affected," "Negatively Affected" and "Neutral Reaction" (Table 5). A large majority of the gathered data were identified under "Positively Affected," having ten appearances, whereas both "Negatively Affected" and "Neutral Reaction" only had one each. This shows that most of the elements cited within the 10-minute playlist contributed mostly positively in affecting the stress levels of the participants.

Conclusions & Recommendations

- The quantitative analysis showed that Lo-fi hip hop music had a positive effect on the levels of academic stress on the participants
- The qualitative analysis showed that for the controlled group, the elements identified to have affected the stress levels of the participants were about a lack of distraction, being bothered by silence, and others which had mostly negative effects
- For the experiment group, the elements identified were related to the music itself, which had a mostly positive effect.
- Future studies aimed to expanding this developing academic topic could focus on measuring the effects of Lo-fi hip hop through more physical means such as measuring heart rates, doing mock tests, and other more elaborate procedures possible with face-to-face research.
- Such future studies could also focus on comparing the effectiveness of lo-fi hip hop to other genres of music instead of just silence.

References

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