

Music

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Abstract

Music is an everyday phenomenon, but it is a concept as old as the existence of living itself, and it is widely used and appreciated in all stages of life by people. The dictionary defines music as the art of arranging sounds in time to produce a continuous, unified, and evocative composition. Anyhow, there still exists no 'one size fits all' definition for a concept as vast as music. Music is perceived differently by different individuals (individual differences); to some, it is just another everyday phenomenon; to some, it is an escape; some find it inspirational; some believe it brings zest and zeal, whereas so many consider it nothing but a sound that pleases the heart. Because of this diverse nature, music also holds a place in our educational system or curriculum. Music is being taught in schools to learners to enhance and develop the taste of learners for music so that they can appreciate different forms of music in their surroundings. In this write-up, I tried to look at various dimensions of music, how it is used or could be used in the educational setting and why it is necessary to use music in educational institutions.

Keywords: *sounds, development, education, school, teaching, learning*

Music is part of our heritage, and it is widely used and appreciated in all stages of life by people. Although music is an abstract concept, it's beautiful how it makes sense to people, who enjoy the moment they are in. There's no age when music loses its essence, and music remains lively for people of all ages. A lullaby has the potential to cater to the attention of not just an infant but of an adult too. For instance, nowadays, most people use various social media platforms, such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram etc., for entertainment purposes. Thus, it is being observed that usually, parents of children use these social media platforms to engage their children. YouTube is widely used for grabbing attention and engaging young children through songs, videos, rhythms, poems etc., which the children eventually appreciate because of its liveliness. Thus, music is appreciated in all stages of life by people, and people use it to teach their children the alphabet, rhymes, poems etc.

Music finds a place in our educational curriculum, and it is being taught to children in our educational institutions, but one of the questions which arise is whether we are utilising music in our educational institutions properly or not. In our country, we still believe and preach that good marks hold supremacy, the only

criteria which define the development and achievement of children. That's why teachers didn't focus on teaching music to learners, as teaching music didn't align with the idea of performance.

Mostly, music classes in schools are found as a part of extracurricular activities in which focus is not given to teaching and using music in daily life to articulate and express emotions because mostly teaching music is considered a useless activity by teachers. Generally, music classes are converted into or taken by other subject teachers to complete their syllabus to engage learners in academic subjects. Thus, the necessary scope is not given to children to flourish, build, use and learn music in our institutions. But as teachers, we need to counter this issue in our class to make our class more productive for learners.

In addition to the above-stated problem, it is also observed that music is not appropriately valued and appreciated by people. For most people, music is just a hobby, and one should not pursue a career in it because, in the modern era, people aspire to choose that profession which helps them to achieve upward mobility to fulfil their needs and demands. Hence, people are more focused and give more importance to academics because if they are good in academics, then they will get a well-off job which will eventually

fulfil their needs and demands. That's why mostly music holds its place as a hobby for people. For instance, in most families, parents want to spend their money on teaching main subjects to foster good academics in their wards, and they barely want to spend their money on teaching and learning music as teaching and learning music is not lined up with the idea of the utility of their economic resources (money).

Music is perceived differently by different individuals (individual differences); to some, it is just another everyday phenomenon; to some, it is an escape; some find it inspirational; some believe it brings zest and zeal, whereas so many consider it nothing but a sound that pleases the heart. Overall, music syncs with every mood and helps people to articulate and express their emotions and feelings. For instance, to most people, music is pleasant, soothing, and cheerful because music syncs with their mood have the potential to make them feel or remember moments of the past, bringing out peace; it is like a medicine for emotions as it helps to articulate and channelise different feelings and emotions.

There are also various sounds which are present in our surroundings. We all occasionally do hear and enjoy these various sounds which we encounter in our everyday routine. One of the common phrases which people use when they hear any soothing sound is "this is music to my ears". The calmness or smoothness that the sounds in the form of music bring to one's soul is somewhere peaceful for them. For instance, people listen to ritual songs as they have calmness in them, which the listeners appreciate.

Hence, because of the above-stated diverse nature of music, it will become important for us to incorporate, use and utilise it in our educational field so that children can enjoy and appreciate it, including natural music produced by nature. This will help learners to appreciate their environment, as they will become more sensitive towards the environment in which they live. Learners can use music to articulate and express their emotions, which is important for their social and emotional development as well. Teachers could also utilise music in their

classrooms to make the teaching-learning process less stressful, as music has the potential to bring out peace and calmness. One of the aims of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is to make learning less stressful for learners, which could be achieved using music.

Education is meant to be a component of society, and for there to be a mutually beneficial connection between educational institutions and society is necessary. The same was advocated by the psychologist Lev Vygotsky in his theory of sociocultural, cognitive development, where he stated that human development is a socially mediated process as children learn from society. Various policies and documents also highlight the point, i.e., our pedagogy should be child or learner-centric, and the content should be connected to the learners' home environment or culture (given in National Curriculum Framework 2005). One of the goals of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is to bridge the gap between society and education. These above-mentioned objectives, goals, or aims given in different policies or documents could be achieved using music in the classes, like by incorporating or using Indian folk music.

As teachers, it becomes important for us to bridge the gap between society and education, and it can be achieved by using music in the classes. Music is part of our culture, and teachers can use it in their classes to bridge the gap between society and education. For instance, Indian folk music, which could be described as something which people perform at local celebrations to bring the people of the community together, could be used by teachers in their classes to bridge the gap between society and education. Almost every region has their own folk music, which is commonly performed by the local people of the community. For instance, Haryana has Ragini, Gujarat has Sugam Sangeet, Assam has Bihu geet etc. Another example of folk music, which can be observed easily, is the music performed or sung by the women of particular communities during weddings.

The use of Indian folk music in classes would also help teachers to teach various cultures and

traditions of different communities to learners. Teachers could organise some programmes or events where they can invite local artists or community members to the school to teach music to learners and to interact with them, to enhance community participation in the schools and to bridge the gap between school and education. The same is stated by Lev Vygotsky in his theory of sociocultural development, as he firmly believes that community plays a crucial part in making meaning, and that's why community participation and collaboration with the community is necessary. Hence, it could be said that by using music in educational institutions, teachers can attain the goal of holistic development of learners by connecting learners' home environment with the school and collaborative learning by increasing community participation.

Music fosters language development to some extent. For instance, when people listen to the music of different languages and dialects, they try to imitate the sounds, words, and lyrics of that particular music which eventually fosters language development as they learn different words and sentences through music. In addition to language development, using music in the class helped enhance or develop communication skills. For instance, findings of one of the research journals named "*Analysis of the Communication Levels of the Students Studying in Music Education and Preschool Education in Terms of Music and Different Variables*" suggested that using music has positively impacted communication development among learners as it has helped learners to enhance their communication levels. Thus, it could be said that it has become important for us to use music in the classroom to foster children's language and communication skills, as suggested by the findings of the research journal.

As mentioned above, music is part of our heritage and a concept as old as the existence of life itself. Thus, ignoring music or not utilising it properly in educational institutions impacts the development of learners. Many teachers are using music in their classrooms as audio-visuals to engage and teach learners of their classroom,

but many teachers are not using it in their classrooms. So all teachers need to use music in their classrooms as music has a lot of scope, potential, and qualities which educational institutions could adopt to create a more inclusive environment for learners as they will have more options for their expressions or to articulate their ideas. In addition to this, music would help teachers to create a stress-free environment for learners, which is essential for their development and learning.

Post-COVID-19, a noticeable increase in aggression and stress levels among children is observed. One of the causes is the increased involvement of technology in children's lives. In recent years, technology or gadgets have swept into learners' lives, shortening their concentration span and contributing to stress. These levels can be balanced, and the issues could be addressed with the help of music. For instance, music could be paired with yoga and art and craft classes to alleviate stress. Researchers have shown that listening to music causes the production of hormones that promote a healthy and stress-free lifestyle. Findings of one of the research studies named "*The Effect of Music on the Human Stress Response*" also suggest that listening to music has a positive influence on health by reducing stress. Thus, to promote a healthy lifestyle among learners, teachers should use music in their classes.

One of the goals of NEP 2020 is the holistic development of learners. Holistic development comprises all kinds of development, such as cognitive, emotional, physical, social, etc. The most neglected area of development in schools is the emotional development of learners. Teachers could use music in their classes to work on the emotional development of learners as music has the potential to help people to cope with overwhelming feelings; here music can be used as a processing tool. For instance, people frequently listen to songs they can identify with because it relieves their stress and puts them in a good mood and in the mood to learn. Therefore, music could be used as a tool to enhance the emotional development of learners, which

eventually leads to a healthy mind and a healthy life for learners.

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