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## **"MUSIC EDUCATION" - A STIMULATOR IN ACADEMICS**

Music is a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity. A high-quality music education engages and inspires youth to develop a love of music and their talent as musicians, and so increase their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement. Education in music has benefits for young people that transcends the musical domain and it also equips students with the foundational abilities to learn, to achieve in other core academic subjects, and to develop the capacities, skills and knowledge essential for lifelong success.

It is an unfortunate truth that music education is not being given proper importance in Schools, Affiliated Colleges and Universities. Infact Arts education is being slipping away as a result of tight budgets and a general conception that the Arts Subjects are lovely and are just for fun, but not essential but that is certainly not the case. While Music Education courses are enjoyable, there is substantial evidence provided by various studies and experiments that they also provide many benefits for students of all ages. Not only can music education provide an enjoyable experience for the students, but researches have been proving that it can benefit the students cognitively, emotionally, and academically. Involvement in the such subjects is associated with gains in reading, cognitive ability, critical thinking, verbal skill, improved motivation, concentration, confidence and teamwork. Due to the numerous benefits it provides for students, music education should be motivated in Schools, Colleges and Universities.

Music is said to be an important aspect of Education. It is about communication, creativity, profound imagination and cooperation and by motivating the subject the students will get opportunity to build on these skills, enrich their academic skills and experience success from a new perspective.

## **BENEFITS OF MUSIC EDUCATION**

Studying music encourages self-discipline and diligence, traits that carry over into intellectual pursuits and that leads to effective study and work habits. The benefits may be psychological or spiritual and they may be physical as well. But learning music facilitates learning other subjects and enhances skills that are required in other areas and help them progress into more formal learning. A student learning music has to tap into multiple skill sets very often simultaneously thus music learning supports all learning. Here is a list of few skills that get improved over the period of time when a student is into music learning and practice:

### ***Academic Skills***

Music education prepares students to learn. It prepares the brain for achievement and cultivates better thinking skills. It also facilitates and boosts student's academic achievement in other academic areas also. Researches have always proved that Music Instruction is an essential part of overall education because it improves the overall academic performance. Rather than distracting students away from studies which is a common misconception, music moves the brain to pay attention. Students start believing that music choice was highly influential on the brain processing which becomes an influential asset to studying. Students thus develop habits of mind for sustained focus, imagination, close observation and articulation of their decision-making process. Students also develop self awareness, self concept, self confidence and self expression which leads to stronger abilities to self regulate and self discipline. The positive effects of music education is being recognized by science verifying what eminent musicians have always suspected.

Learning to play pieces of music on a new instrument is always challenging but an achievable goal. Students who master even the smallest goal in music can easily feel a sense of achievement and hence students get motivated towards better learning and better academic future. Hence we can say that learning music could improve the concentration, memory and focus of students in the classroom by improving their neural functions. Thus the students get benefitted and their overall academic performance gets affected positively.

## ***Communication Skills***

Even a Non-Music enthusiast finds the best way to express feelings, anger, love, passion, joy and other kinds of feelings is simply through music. It is rightly said that when words and letters fail the best option is music. We can express the intent of our heart through music which ordinarily may not be possible with words or letters. Mastering a musical piece or an instrument improves brain processing in areas associated with language development and may have implications for improving language and reading skills which can eventually help students develop communication skills.

## ***Linguistic Skills***

Growing up in a musically rich environment is often advantageous for linguistic development. But these inborn capacities can be reinforced, practiced and celebrated in a formal music education setting. Researches have been indicating that musical training actually wires the brain's circuits to process the linguistic skills. Language competence is at the root of social competence and thus musical learning and experience strengthens the capacity to be verbally competent and efficient.

## ***Brain Development***

Scientists doing research on music have always believed that music causes significant changes in the brain. The “Mozart effect” is definitely a common example. Music has always been thought to use the brain differently than other cognitive functions. Scientists have recognized that music stimulates the brain in ways other activities do not. Hearing music stimulates the auditory cortices of our brain. It activates the part of our brain required for listening and interpreting sound. Research indicates the brain of a musician, even a young one, works differently than that of a non-musician. When you're a musician and you're playing an instrument, you have to use more of your brain. This leads to structural brain changes and results in improvements in motor and auditory skills . Even while performing on stage, student musicians constantly use their memory to perform. Thus the skill of memorization can serve students well in education and beyond. Music stimulates the brain which in turn helps in building imagination and intellectual curiosity which can help foster a positive attitude towards learning and curiosity.

## ***Creative Skills***

Music education develops the creative capacities for lifelong success as it sharpens student attentiveness, strengthens perseverance and equips students to be creative. So we can say that music certainly nurtures the creative side and can help them to solve problems by thinking outside the circumference and realize that there may be more than one right answer. These days even employers identify creativity as one of the important skills required for success in the workforce. Originality and flexibility are benefits of music education because they are key components of the creativity and innovation that music requires. Graduates from music programs report that creativity, teamwork, communication, and critical thinking are skills and competencies necessary in their work, regardless of whether they are working in music or in other fields.

## ***Social Skills***

Music is a part of the fabric of our society. Every human culture uses music to carry forward its ideas and ideals. Music shapes individual abilities and character and this is highly recognized by our society. With so many forces in this world acting to drive wedges between people, music can be of great power for bringing people together. It certainly helps in connect with oneself but also acts as a bridge for connecting with the Society. Through music, students get acquainted with the richness and diversity of the human family and to the myriad rhythms of life.

## ***Professional Skills***

Students can tame their professional skills through music. They can learn teamwork as many musical programs require teamwork as part of a the orchestra where students interact with a larger group and thus learn to to work together and build camaraderie. Apart from getting involved with a Band Group students also need to perform a musical piece which can bring fear and anxiety but doing so the students learn to take risks and deal with fear. This will help the students to become professionally successful and explore their potential and build up pride and confidence. Music is also found to help people perform better in high-pressure situations such as the Main Year End Exams and get transformed from coal to diamonds while shining continuously under pressure.

Music also allows students to try something new and develop confidence as they master singing or playing an instrument. When students are working towards a common goal, they appreciate that their 'voice' and interests are being heard and understood by others. This joint effort creates a sense of secure acceptance that is critical to their self-esteem. Hence music learning develops character traits such as discipline, perseverance, teamwork, patience, self-control, problem solving and empathy which are required in a professional atmosphere.

### ***Spiritual Skills***

Music is the most wonderful way to achieve spiritual realization and there is no quicker and no surer way of attaining spiritual perfection than through music. *According to renowned musician Hazrat Inayat Khan, "There is no better way of getting closer to God, of rising higher towards the spirit, of attaining spiritual perfection than music, if only it is rightly understood."* According to Osho - the Spiritual Guru, *"Music is the easiest method of meditation. Whoever can let himself dissolve into music has no need to seek anything else to dissolve into."*

Music helps the spiritual seeker to go deep within to get the utmost satisfaction from life, from truth and from reality. I believe that there is no other medium that can transport us as immediately beyond the limits of our intellect and physical body to a higher, blissful and inexplicable state. Spiritual Music has addictive potency and experience through music brings abundance of bliss, a state of spiritual joy and an ecstatic moment of perfect union with Almighty which ultimately gives complete spiritual fulfillment. People listen to Bhajans and various religious prayers set to tune which penetrates the souls to experience the state of ultimate Bliss and Trans. Music helps developing an identity and understanding of self and it touches inner depth and seeps inside the soul to realize the true sense of God.

### ***Cultural development***

Musically rich culture has the power to transform entire societies, strengthen local communities and forge a sense of identity and belongingness amongst people. As a catalyst for youth development and civic engagement, music plays an important role in promoting sustainable social and economic development for future generations. Students learning music can act as a bridge between cultures and serve as key agents in promoting peace and intercultural understanding.

## ***Emotional development***

A tool for arousing emotions and feelings, music is far more powerful than language. Music can be described as a “Language of Emotion”. Be it within films, live orchestras, concerts or a simple home stereo, music can be highly evocative and overwhelming. Music provides an emotional outlet which can be in the form of singing their favourite Raga or playing an instrument or dancing to the tunes of music. Music can immensely help with the appropriate self-expression of self.

## ***Helping special needs children.***

Music can have a powerful impact on students with special needs. It helps them find a way to communicate and open up, which they may struggle with otherwise. Such students find it difficult to work on challenging tasks or skills but music tends to be one of the top motivators for such students. Music builds up their self-esteem and feeds their spirit. With all of the struggles that such children with special needs face, it is so important to support them in this way. Gayatri Mangalani, a student of Music - BA 3rd year of Maheshwari College, is one such example who has shown tremendous improvement in her academics, her personality traits, her confidence level and her spirit. The exhilarating and miraculous powers of music helped her gain confidence and walk with pride.

## **CAREER IN MUSIC**

Music is required across the Professional Spectrum and a career in Music can involve performing as a Musician, being a Sound Technician who provides the technical expertise to run a sound system, or being a composer who directs groups of musicians performing music. There are programs in music at the Undergraduate and Graduate levels. Those with a Bachelor's degree in Music can study Music Therapy, Stage Performances and Music Education. Graduates and Post Graduates can also obtain many different types of entry-level positions in the Music Industry depending on their specialization. Students can further their education by getting their Ph.D. in Music. Students studying music are prepared to excel in a wide array of careers wherein the options are wide and students can choose their career according to their interest area. The following is a list of Careers in Music which can be chosen according to the taste and interest of individual:

### **Careers in Composition**

Music Arranger, Music Producer, Orchestrator, Music Composer, Film Scorer/Composer, Jingle Writer, Songwriter, Transcriber, Copyist, Music Conductor, Jazz Composer.

### **Careers in Song Writing**

Jingle Writer, Songwriter, Composer Transcriber, Copyist, Conductor, Editor (Print Music Publishing), Lyricist, Performing Singer-Songwriter, Freelancer, Music Journalist, Musicologist

### **Careers in Electronic Production and Design**

Recording Engineer, Sound Mixing Artist, Sound Technician, Programmer, Performing Synthesist, Music Sequencer, Sound Designer

### **Careers in Film Scoring**

Film Composer, Music Editor, Music Supervisor/Director, Film Arranger/Adapter, Film Conductor, Film Music Orchestrator, Synthesis Specialist, Theme Specialist, Film Scorer/Composer

### **Careers in Music Business/Management**

Advertising Executive, Booking Agent, Business Manager, Field Merchandiser, Music Publisher, Personal Manager, Professional Manager, Booking Agent for Musical Shows,

### **Careers in Music Education**

Choir Director, College/Conservatory/University Music Educator, Secondary School Music Teacher, Elementary School Music Teacher, Music Supervisor, Private Instructor

### **Careers in Music Production and Engineering**

Sound Engineer, Music Director, Program Director, Recording Engineer, Studio Director/Manager

### **Careers in Music Therapy**

Music Therapist, Creative Arts Therapist, Health Care Delivery Professional In Hospitals, Oncology Treatment Centers, Pain/Stress Management Clinics, Freelancer

## **Careers in Performance**

Vocal/Instrumental Soloist, Session Musician, General Business Musician, Performing Artist, Orchestra/Group Member, Background Vocalist, Floor Show Band Member, Classical Performer, Radio Artist, Jingle Recordings, Background Score for Advertisements.

## **MUSIC - A PERFECT CATALYST**

Music definitely has positive impacts on the students' development. The music learning stimulates the development of attentiveness, co-operation, interactive learning, self-confidence, self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, leadership skills, aesthetic sensitivity and aesthetic evaluation. On the basis of experience and the level of participation in the subject, students develop abilities such as intuition, imagination, thinking strategies, independent studying, problem and creative thinking, critical evaluation and creative communication in different areas of expressing.

Music washes away from the soul, the dust of everyday life and inspires to attain perfection in everything that we do. When the magical notes of Music enters one's heart and mind, it brings absolute harmony, peace and tranquility, the experiences are beyond words and can only be experienced. The pursuit of continuous improvement and the recognition of achievement are the essence of Music Education. Learning Music guarantees that students will definitely get the tool they need to pursue, achieve and uphold excellence in every area of their lives. Students take pride in their work and their achievements and this instills an appreciation of quality in them which can motivate them towards Excellence.