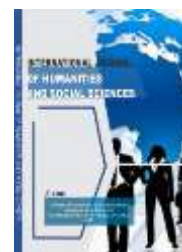


The Importance of Music Education in the Cognitive Development of a Child Age 0 – 6 Years in Obio/Akpor Local Government, Rivers State

Offor Ndubuaku Kate

Department of Music, Faculty of Humanities, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

nducynth@gmail.com



Abstract

Music education has long been recognized for its benefits to individuals of all ages. Recent studies have focused on the importance of music education in the cognitive development and academic achievement in a child. This article aims to explore the positive effects that music education can have on child's cognitive abilities and academic performance. Studies have shown that music education enhances cognitive abilities such as memory, attention, and spatial reasoning. Music education also improves academic performance, particularly in reading and mathematical skills. The cognitive skills acquired through music education are transferable to other areas of academic performance, resulting in an overall improvement in academic achievement. Given the significant benefits of music education, it is essential to provide music education in schools to enhance cognitive abilities and academic performance in a child. The paper recommends amongst other that parents should expose their child to music environment at early stage in order to significantly impact sensory, cognitive, and socio-emotional developments which serve as a benefit to the child.

Keywords: Music Education, Cognitive Development, Academic Achievement, Child, Memory, Attention, Spatial Reasoning, Reading Skills, Mathematical Skills, Study Habits.

I. Introduction

A child (Plural children) is generally a human between the stages of birth and puberty. The legal definition of a child generally refers to a minor, otherwise known as a person that is younger than the age of majority. Child may also be describing a relationship with a parent, such as sons, daughters of any age ranging from 0-18 years.

Who is a child? A child is any person still under the parent guidance. Who cannot make and take decision on his own. But depend on the parent's instruction and guidance. The United Nation convention on the rights of the child. Defines child as "A human being below the age of 18 years unless the law application to the child, majority is attained earlier".

This is ratified by 192 of 194 member's countries biologically; a child is anyone between birth and puberty or in the developmental stage of childhood between infancy and adulthood.

The English definitions of the world child include the fetus (sometime termed the 'unborn') in many cultures, a child is considered an adult after undergoing a rite of passage, which may or may not correspond to the time of puberty McLaughlin, & Gabard-Durnam, (2022).

The cognitive development of a child. The issue of music cognitive development emphasis has brought about child development in so many ways. The brain of a child's similar to a sponge and is eager to soak up what even it touches kids toy that enhance cognitive skills are a must in every play nom for a positive educational experience. Play is the very mechanism by which children learn and building toys like logo blocks of fisher price toys with role playing activities like being superheroes or playing house and exploration toys like magnifying glasses and games with rules helps the cause. McLaughlin & Gabard-Durnam, (2022), posits that cognitive development skill should be inculcate in children's right from the toddler stage to the early adulthood. Because it include baby's ability to learner and develop, think comprehend solve problems, build reasoning skill and remember things of all the medium considered important enough to build cognitive development a toy is clearly the first among equals.

In cognitive development the inner process and product of the mind that lead the way to knowledge today the importance of the learning angle should not be ignored cognitive development skills which are cultivated during childhood stage with the aid of toys are said to have long lasting benefits children grow up ready to take on the challenges which life throws at them constantly and are better place to cope up with pressure situations.

But cognitive development in infant are also facilitated in the manner in which adults actually use the toys to interact with babies brand development.

According to the metaphorically authority figure or religion it can also signify being strongly effected by a specific time, place or circumstance as to who a child should be. When does childhood cease or begin. These simple questions have complex answer. Most of the old world's civilizations did not consider children human beings with full human value. Thus childhood was not an independent social category until. The beginning of the 18th century. Legislation did not deal with childhood as a period of life that needs special measure of protection until the early 19th century. In his book *L'enfant El levie familiale sous (Ancient Regime Philippe Aries)* said that the child in the middle ages did not exist as an independent anthropological category and therefore children did not need to be taken into consideration (Fancourt & Perkins (2018).

II. Objectives

The aim of this paper is to encourage teacher, guidance, parent etc. to used music in the aspect of bringing up their children.

And to see these process as a means of developing the child growth. Because listening to music help your baby grow in every possible way.

Babies do not only love rhythm and music but also greatly benefit from listening to music, which is not only fun and relaxation. It also serve as a powerful effect on people.

It creates a special atmosphere and has the power to smoothen an individual, stir or just make an individual want to get up and dance, recap memories, experiences, atmospheres and moods are all greatly influenced by the tunes that accompany them.

Music also aim at enhancing the learning process of a child.

Scope of the Study

Music cognitive development is a wide topic that is considering the wide spread of practice and historical trend. However, for the purpose of this paper, the focus will be on the child development using music as a tool at the stage of 0-6 years and it effect in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. In doing this other variables will be considered in examining children under the age of 0-6 years attitude and development toward music cognitive development such as social, language vocalizes musical background on children size and the norms of Alakahia and Eligbam communities in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

Significance of the Study

This paper will be beneficial to parents, children teachers and guidance communities, other music setting and will lay the bases for further research work in this sphere of knowledge.

These benefits can be seen in the following ways:

It will enlighten parents on the effects of music cognitive development.

It will aid the young children, adulthood to know their advantage in music cognitive development.

This paper will educate new parent and pregnant and nursing mothers can bring adequate care for the children and lead to desirable outcome in future of family.

This paper will also help the parent and teachers not to ignore the music cognitive development in the school setting and the society at large. That children should be educated know the effect of music on the children's health.

Research Questions

This paper is to be guided by the following research questions:

What is benefit of music cognitive development in the children from 0-6 year in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State?

Who is a child?

To what extent does music effect the child growth at 0-6 years in nursery/primary school?

What is the children performances in learning?

III. Review of Literature

Concept of Child Behaviour

All kids misbehave some time. And some may have temporally behavior problem due to stress for example the birth of a sibling a divorce, or dearth in the family may cause a child to act out. Behaviour disorders are more serious. They involve a pattern of hostile aggressive or disruptive behaviours for more than 0-6 years old. The behaviour is also not appropriate for the child's age Dean (2021).

Childhood can see like a carefree but kids still experience stress. Thinks like school and their social life can sometimes create pressures that can feel over-whelming for kids. As a parent, you can't protect your kids from stress-but- you can help them develop healthy ways to cope with stress and solve everyday problems. Kids deal with stress in both healthy and unhealthy ways. And while they may not initiate a conversation about what is bothering them, they do want their parents to reach out and help the cope with their troubles. But it's not always easy for parents to know what to do for a child whose feeling stressed.

Some Warning Signs In The Child Behaviour

Gee (2016), opined that warning signs in the child behaviour are: Harming or threatening themselves, others people of pets, lying or stealing. Damaging or destroying property, early sexual activity. Not doing well in school skipping school, frequent tantrums and arguments consistent hostility towards authority figures if you see signs of a problem ask for help. Classes of family therapy may help parents learn to set and enforce limits talks therapy and behavior. Therapy for your child can also help.

IV. Theoretical Framework

According to Piaget's theory of cognitive development of a childhood consist of two stage preoperational stage and concrete operational state.

In developmental psychology childhood is divided up into the developmental stages of toddlerhood (learning to walk) early childhood (play age). Middle childhood (school age) and adolescence (puberty through post-puberty various. Childhood factors could affect a person's attitude formation.

Age ranges of childhood; the term childhood is non-specific and implies a varying range of years in human development. Developmentally and biologically- it refers to the period between infancy and adulthood in common terms, childhood is considered to start from birth.

Some consider that childhood as a concept of play and innocence, ends at adolescence. In the legal systems of many countries, there is an age of majority when childhood officially ends and a person legally becomes an adult. The age ranges from 0-21 with, 18 being the most common age for that, the easy and fasted way of a child to develop is through the music training causes that improve so many diverse aspects of cognition and this one way music produces effects. Learning music requires focused attention, abstract, relational thinking and fluid intelligence (called "executive control), Learns frustration by five months of age.

Learns to whine by 6 months of age. Demonstrates pleasure by gurgling. Learns fear and anger. Social development moves from reflexive simile to social smile, to smiling consistently at familiar people. Begins to fuss when people leave. Greets people with sounds.

Language: Exhibits listening with rapt attention-like variety of sound.

Track sounds from side to side begins to cool at about 3 months of a age make tongue clicks, lip smacking sounds vocalize consonants, such as m, b, k, g, p strings sounds of vowels and consonants Babbles repeatedly in familiar places but may be quiet in new places at the end of this period.

Musical: Responds and reacts physically to music and rhymes.

Recognizes Familiar Voices

Appears to be calmed by lullabies begins to join the group in swaying to music responds to a variety of timbres when parents support cognitive development in children through musical activities we love how that certain lullaby or silly nonsense song can calm both a child and parent during one of that moment. Perhaps one of our favourite things we love about music is its ability to support healthy child brain development, because when children listen to musical activities- their brain high light up. Musical variety supports child brain development.

Throughout the kinder music experience we deliberately introduce children to a wide variety of musical genres to give them a greater understanding of what is possible through music. One month we may explore the precision of classical music.

Exposure to a variety of sounds and rhythms is critical to cognitive development in children varied exposure leads to language proficiency. Spatial reasoning and temporal reasoning. It also increases understanding of moods emotions and other cultures (Hardmeier, Hatz, Bousleiman, Schindler, & Fuhr (2014).

Development Stages of a Childhood

Early childhood follows the infancy stage and being with toddlerhood when the child begins speaking or taking steps independently. While toddlerhood ends around the age of three when the child becomes less dependent on parental assistance for basic needs, early childhood approximately through years seven or eight.

According to Hardt & Rutter (2004):

For the education of young children, early childhood, at this stage, children are learning through observing experimenting and communication with others. Adults supervise and support the development process of the child, which then will lead to the child's autonomy. Also during this stage, a strong emotional bond is created between the child and the care providers. The children also start to begin kindergarten at this age to start their social lives.

It has been argued that childhood is not a natural phenomenon but a creation of society.

According to Kathios, Patel & Loui (2024):

An important French medievalist and historian, pointed this out in his book centuries of childhood.

According to Cunningham (2006):

In his book the invention of childhood which looks at the historical aspect of childhood from the middle age to what he refers to as the post war period of the (1950s) to (1960s). Aries published a study in 1961 of painting gravestones, furniture and school records. He found that before the records he found that before the 17th century children were represented as mini-adult. Since then historians have increasingly researched childhood in past times.

Before Aries, George Boas has published the cult of childhood during the Renaissance. Artistic depiction of children increased dramatically in Europe. This did not impact the social attitude to children.

During the 1600s the concept of childhood began to emerge in Europe. Adults saw children as separate beings innocent and in need of protection and training by the adults around them. English Philosopher John Locke was particularly influential in defining this new attitude toward childhood and children. Especially with regard to his theory of the tabula rasa which considered the mind at birth to be a "Blank Slate". A corollary of this doctrine was blank and that it was the duty of the parents to imbue the child with correct notion during the early period of capitulation the rise of a large. Commercial middle class, mainly in the protestant countess of Holland and England brought about a new family ideology centred around the upbringing of children. Puritanism stressed the importance of individual salvation and concern for the spiritual welfare of children development. Another theory of childhood development according to Reynold (2010) said that:

The natural grace of children depend the environment. The modern motive of childhood with its own autonomy and goals begin to emerge during the enlightenment and the Romantic period that followed it.

Jean Jacques Rousseau formulated the romantic attitude towards children in his famous (1762) novel Emile on education building of the ideas of John Locke and others. 17th century thinkers, Rousseau described childhood as a brief period of sanctuary before people encounter the perils and hardships of adulthood.

"Extensive children portraiture clearly demonstrates new enlightened attitudes toward their advice age" Joshua Reynolds (1788:6).

According to Agomoh (2002):

Parents attitudes towards childhood development in Alakahia and Eligbam communities in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. Government Areas in the prehistorically time of training a child and bring them up with cultural development (5).

He also maintains that children are allowed to learn things on their own or through peer-play. Children were not allow to perform something in communities traditionally. They believe that children will develop fully at the stage of 19 to 20 years as for the 15 - 17 years in the early childhood stage then was not given the opportunity to develop fully. Childhood development was too poor because parent don't have time for their children development rather they pay more attention on farming that was their major development.

The population of growth was a major tax that parent don't seem to involve themselves in these period as a result of not knowing the factor that childhood development need in the 0-6 year of age. The first year of life is a time when babies strengthening their muscles and bone and learn how to use their bodies to move around and manipulate their environment if babies are constantly held and carried during this first year, they will lose valuable opportunities to gain fine-turn skills parents and growth by giving babies safe environments to play and to explore on their own.

V. Methodology

This paper is a survey research design, this design is ideal for this research because the paper involved collecting and describing data obtained from a sample of population.

The area of the study is to deal with the historical child development in Alakahia and Eligbam communities in time of using music as a tool for the growth of a child under the age of 0-6 years old in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

The targeted population are the children in Alakahia community and Eligbam community all in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area from 464 789 Census (2014).

For the purpose of this paper, the researcher employs the Taro Yemen formular for sample size determination $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$

Where = N = Population of the study 464789

n = development sample size

e = cognitive effect (0.05) I - theoretical constant 1

$n = 464,789$

$1 + 464789 \times (0.05)^2$

Sample size = 400

3.7 For the purpose of this study, the research will limit its research to a total of 400 children of the entire population of 464789 (2014 census) in Alakahia community and Eligbam community in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, this figure was gotten from the sampling technique.

VI. Summary

All kids misbehave sometime. And some many have temporary behaviour. Problem due to stress, divorce, or death in the family may cause a child to act out. Childhood can seem like a carefree. But kids still experience stress. Think like school their social life can sometime create pressures that can feel over-whelming for kids. As a parent, you can't protect your kid's ways to cope with stress and solve everyday problems.

In the prehistorically time, parents had little role to play in life of their children, time of training a child and bring them up with cultural development. They allow children to learn things on their own or through peer play. Children were not allow to perform something in communities traditionally they believe that children will develop fully at the stage of 19 to 20 years.

I. Recommendations

Based on the research, this paper recommends the following:

Parents should expose their child to music environment at early stage in order to significantly impact sensory, cognitive, and socio-emotional development which serves as a benefit to the child.

Government should ensure that appropriate laws are promulgated and ensure proper enforcement to these laws in order to protect a child from being denying their rights.

Stakeholders should educate parents on the importance of music and the role music plays in child's cognitive developmental plasticity which allows for environmental experiences to shape the child's brain and behaviour.

Parents should be encouraged to monitor and support early childhood education in order enhance learning performance in schools.

References

- Custodero, L. A., & Johnson-Green, E. A. (2003). Passing the Cultural Torch: Musical Experience and Musical Parenting of Infants. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 51(2), 102–114.
- Dean, B. (2021). Young children, solitude and singing: Self-directed singing and personal agency in three- and four-year-old children at home. *Early Child Development and Care*, 191(12), 1858–1870.
- Fancourt, D., & Perkins, R. (2018). Maternal engagement with music up to nine months post-birth: Findings from a cross-sectional study in England. *Psychology of Music*, 46(2), 238–251.
- Gee, D. G. (2016). Sensitive Periods of Emotion Regulation: Influences of Parental Care on Frontoamygdala Circuitry and Plasticity. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 2016(153), 87–110.
- Hardmeier, M., Hatz, F., Bousleiman, H., Schindler, C., Stam, C. J., & Fuhr, P. (2014). Reproducibility of Functional Connectivity and Graph Measures Based on the Phase Lag Index (PLI) and Weighted Phase Lag Index (wPLI) Derived from High Resolution EEG. *PLOS ONE*, 9(10), e108648. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone>
- Hardt, J., & Rutter, M. (2004). Validity of adult retrospective reports of adverse childhood experiences: Review of the evidence. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 45(2), 260–273. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7610.2004.00218.x>
- Kathios, N., Patel, A. D., & Loui, P. (2024). Musical anhedonia, timbre, and the rewards of music listening. *Cognition*, 243, 105672. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2023.105672>
- McLaughlin, K. A., & Gabard-Durnam, L. (2022). Experience-driven plasticity and the emergence of psychopathology: A mechanistic framework integrating development and the environment into the Research Domain Criteria (RDoC) model. *Journal of Psychopathology and Clinical Science*, 131(6), 575–587.