

Essay



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Music and Psychology

Name

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Music and Psychology

The concept that music has the power to influence feelings, thoughts, and behavior is not much of a surprise. Listening to music is both entertaining and healthier. Music can energize the body, relax the mind and help individuals manage and overcome stress. The psychological effects of music can be wide-ranging and influential. In psychology, music therapy is used to promote emotional well-being and to help patients overcome stress and hardships. Although music is widely considered a form of pleasure, it has numerous psychological benefits. This paper will analyze how the songs "Don't worry, be happy" by Bob McFerrin, "Enough" by Delta Goodrem featuring Gizzle, and "The Nights" by Avicii have impacted my psychological well-being. The paper will further apply Erikson's psychological development theory, Kohlberg's moral development theory, and Jean Piaget's Psychoanalytic Approach.

The song "Don't worry, be happy" is a significant inspirational song that has helped me overcome my darkest moments in life. Part of the song states that:

*Here is a little song I wrote
You might want to sing it note for note
Don't worry, be happy
In every life, we have some trouble
But when you worry, you make double
Don't worry, be happy (McFerrin)*

At the beginning of the year, I faced immense anxiety and stress. Trapped within these challenging moments, I loved to listen to "Don't worry be happy" on repeat. The song encourages me to resist allowing external factors to weigh me down. The song taught me that even though I cannot control what happens to me, I can control how I react. According to McFerrin, life is not always smooth. It has ups and downs. However, the deposits that one should be happy instead of worrying because worrying only worsens the situation. By listening to McFerrin's song, I learned that life comes with sorrows and problems, and there is no way we can avoid this. Still, we can overcome these challenges if only we focus our minds on being optimistic about the situation.

According to Kohlberg's moral development theory, individuals move through three stages of moral development in a fixed order. The three-stage of moral development are pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional (Spielman, 2020). By using children's answers after presenting them with multiple dilemmas, Kohlberg recognized that the reasoning behind an individual's decision was a massive indication of moral development (Dawson, 2002). Moreover, Kohlberg identified that moral reasoning changed as individuals grew older. In the third stage of moral development:

post-conventional morality, people base their principles and moral reasoning on individual justice. The main aim is to preserve individuals' life at all costs. At this stage, individuals recognize that they have the power to choose what is best for them (Dawson, 2002). Similarly, through the list to McFerrin song, I made decisions that were beneficial to my well-being, enabling me to remain optimistic despite the challenges I was experiencing.

In addition, the song "Enough" by Goodrem featuring Gizzle is a song I almost listen to every day. Some of the song lyrics assert that:

*Well, my first mistake was trying to please everybody
Only to realize I ain't need anybody
But all I wanted was acceptance
Till I accept myself, now I can check that off my checklist
I am no longer checking on your guest list
Or where I land in your best list
I look at my reflection, and it tells me who the best is (Goodrem & Gizzle, 2016).*

A few years back, I faced social rejection in my neighborhood. When my parents relocated to another street, the more significant percentage of the individuals living in the neighborhood were from a different race, and it wasn't easy to fit in. During this period, I felt rejected and unwanted by individuals I thought we could be friends with. These individuals were my age mates whom I felt we would share a lot. However, they avoided my participation in their social activities in most cases. I remember being so sad that I requested my parents to allow me to go live with my grandmother. The situation made me feel socially excluded, which led to an increase in my anger.

According to Erikson's stage five of psychological development theory: Identity and role confusion, the main goal of this stage is for individuals to develop a sense of self. At this stage, individuals struggle with the various identity questions such as "Who am I?" or what do I want to become in life?"(Maree, 2021). Many individuals try to establish what is best and which ones match their expectations on many occasions. They explore different ideas and roles as they aim to discover their adult selves. Individuals who are successful at this development stage have established a strong sense of identity. They can uphold their values and beliefs in situations where they face challenges and negative perceptions from other individuals. By listening to the song "Enough," I firmly regained my self-identity, which I felt mattered the most compared to other individuals' opinions.

Lastly, the song "Nights" by Avicii is an inspiring and uplifting song I like listening to while having fun with my friends. Some part of the song states:

*One day, my father, told me
"Son, don't let it slip away."
He took me in his arms. I heard him say
"When you get older
Your wild heart will live for younger days
Think of me if ever you're afraid."
He said, "One day, you'll leave this world behind
So live a life you will remember" (Avicii, 2014).*

When I am with my friends having fun, either through traveling or attending parties, I always remind myself of the need to live my life to the fullest. Life will always have obstacles and challenges at a given period, and this is why I like being happy and making unforgettable moments when I get the chance. The nights by Avicii reminds me to live lightly and freely, which is why the song has been my favorite fun time song. My perception about life is that we have limited time and therefore, I must not remain trapped in the hardships. Instead, I should have the courage to follow my heart and find happiness. The lyric by Avicii has enabled me to appreciate life and live for the moment regardless of other people's opinions.

According to Piaget's Cognitive Development, human intelligence develops from continuous rearrangement of mental processes, resulting from environmental experience and biological maturation. Piaget believed that individuals constructed an understanding of the environment around them by experiencing variation between what they already know and what they learn from the external world. They go ahead to adjust these ideas. Through his theory, Piaget's focused on two processes: assimilation and accommodation (Babakr, Mohamedamin & Kakamad, 2019). According to Piaget, assimilation revolves around how individuals receive, process, and interpret new ideas. It entails the process of fitting new ideas into already existing cognitive schemas.

In contrast, accommodation entails receiving new information and changing the pre-existing schemas to fit in with new information. These two development helps an individual achieve intellectual equilibrium. Music has helped me understand the need to accommodate and assimilate ideas to achieve a balance in my life.

Music is a powerful tool. Aside from entertaining people, music has incredible positive impacts on the human brain. More specifically, music transforms how people think, behave, and act. From hip hop to folk to rock and gospel music, individuals can find a song that directly speaks to them. When listening to music, our brains generate different thoughts, memories, and emotions, which positively affects our learning capabilities. Music has improved mental health, boosted confidence and self-esteem, and enhanced individuals' intelligence. Understanding how music works help individuals ease depressive thoughts and improve their well-being.

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