

Art and its relevance in the emotional well-being of people

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Abstract: Art, considered in its manifestations, whether through music, singing, painting, dancing, and all the possible expressions it can have, is undoubtedly a beautiful way to enrich the soul, the spirit, and human emotions. In this work, the different forms of understanding art, and the benefits that it can have on people, are exposed. It that art in its multiple manifestations can help control stress, anxiety, and depression. For this purpose, the investigators use bibliographic support to compare academic scenarios, artistic expressions that allow people to improve their emotional, physical, and psychological health. For this purpose, is implemented a bibliographic search to comparing academic scenarios, artistic manifestations that allow people to improve their emotional, physical, and psychological health. On the other hand, it was possible to verify that music performed as a half-hour therapy helps children with catastrophic illnesses, relieving pain

Keywords: Art, human emotions, artistic expressions.

El arte y su importancia en el mejoramiento emocional de las personas

Resumen: El arte considerada así por sus manifestaciones, ya sea a través de la música, el canto, la pintura, el baile, y todas las posibles expresiones que ella pueda tener, es sin duda, una forma maravillosa de enriquecer el alma, el espíritu y las emociones humanas. En este trabajo, se exponen las diversas formas de entender el arte, y los beneficios que ella pueda tener en las personas. Se ha visto que el arte en sus diferentes manifestaciones puede ayudar a controlar el estrés, la ansiedad y la depresión. Se realizó entonces una búsqueda bibliográfica, se comparan escenarios académicos, manifestaciones artísticas en las personas que le permiten mejorar el estado de salud emocional, física y psicológica. Se pudo evidenciar que la música puede favorecer a las personas mayores al mejoramiento de la ansiedad y el estrés, pero también puede ayudar a los neonatos a mejorar su peso, mejorar los niveles de cortisol y a reducir las estadías en los hospitales. Por otra parte, fue posible constatar que la música ejecutada como terapia de media hora ayuda a los niños con enfermedades catastróficas, aliviando el dolor y la ansiedad.

Palabras Clave: Arte, emociones humanas, expresiones artísticas



I. INTRODUCTION

Art represents an activity in which people can recreate themselves in different ways, according to the form and style of each person. Art is an aesthetic way of expressing feelings and can be interpreted in all languages and countries in the same way, as an essence of life, culture, of spiritual forces.

Art has received various classifications throughout history; In medieval times, for example, liberal arts and mechanical arts were mentioned, and later a distinction was made between fine arts and applied arts, up to the present, which includes a greater diversity of creative manifestations as an area. In the 20th century, the Arts were more precisely defined and classified into nine expressions: architecture, dance, sculpture, music, painting, literature, cinematography, photography, and comics [1]. Nowadays, others manifestations such as advertising, animation, television, and video games to adding to the artistic categories.

Some authors [2], [3], affirm that art therapy is a technique that allows highlighting positive emotions in people, improving their health conditions, helping them in their emotional processes, and collaborating with the psychological consultation. The authors point out that art can be a tool of human existence that allows self-appraisal and self-definition of the being.

This paper considered different bibliographic sources that show different scenarios on the benefits of art in people and emphasizes the emotional enrichment that art, in its various expressions, can have on individual characteristics, the improvement of mood, and psychological situations of people.

The paper is four sections; the first one deals with the fundamental aspects of the artistic context; then, it discusses the theoretical criteria of art and its impact on human emotions. The methodology is found in section three and describes the processes that led to this research. Finally, the results and conclusions are presented, highlighting the findings and the derivations of art in human life.

II. ART AS PART OF MANKIND

Art has been present since ancient times [1], [4] and has played a fundamental role in all societies. Art has had evolutionary processes in its various manifestations, from ancient times to modern times, and its impact on people's lives has been significant.

A. Art in prehistoric times

In prehistoric times, art emerged from the materials available to its authors and, therefore, was directly related to the needs of the context; hence cave painting was

one of its manifestations. Music and dance also emerged at this time [5].

Later, in the Neolithic period, the presence of human forms stands out in the paintings. And changes are observed in the artistic manifestations, which could be drift by the sedentary life resulting from agriculture [1]. With the discovery of metals such as bronze and copper, new artistic expressions were developed, highlighting funerary enclosures, temples and, religious sculptures.

B. Ancient art

Ancient art was mainly relevant due to the formalization of writing, which changed the traditional human behavior to develop new expressions based on human figures, with hands-on the chest. Poems and music dedicated to religious themes also stand out [6].

C. Ancient Egyptian Art

It stands out for the formation of large constructions, monuments dedicated to the power over the earth and life in the afterlife. Different types of materials are used, such as metals, clays, paints, among others. The architectural formations dedicated mainly to the dead are of enormous magnitude and high visual enhancement. There is an outstanding detail in the artistic manifestations, symbols that describe the relevance of the culture of the moment appear [7].

D. Art in America

In America, monumental sculptures of religious character made in stone and with evident use of high knowledge of mathematics and sciences, especially astronomy, stand out; in addition, deposits of cave paintings have been found [8]. The most relevant is undoubtedly the presence of large stone constructions dedicated to the gods and the cultural processes of the civilizations of the time. Unlike Egyptian art, in America, the buildings could have residential purposes apart from religious ones and were built with materials unknown even to the first researchers.

In America, artistic manifestations had a different character with the arrival of the European peoples and their influence on the indigenous American cultures. Hence we can mention pre-Columbian art and later the art of America.

III. EMOTIONAL TRASCENDENCES

Art has undergone continuous changes throughout the history of humanity, and this is reflected in the architecture, painting, and music of each era, to cite the main ones. Art, like human circumstances and needs, has evolved.

A. Music History

Music is one of the oldest human artistic manifestations, tracing its presence in the first African mobilizations, taken place more than 50 thousand years ago. Music bounding with the culture and ways of life of human societies, with how historical events unfold and how the social bonds of each era produce. Therefore, music linking to the environment.

Figure 1 shows a summary of the history of music, showing the repercussions it has had in the different epochs; in the prehistoric era, it was mainly composed of handmade instruments made from bones and natu-

ral materials, which led to the production of wind instruments. Later, in ancient times, stringed instruments were incorporated, thus producing other trends in musical appreciation.

The figure shows how each period is related to the previous one and takes advantage of the historical benefits of the context to formulate new artistic proposals that enrich music and allow its transcendence throughout time and regions. The cultural changes had a considerable influence on the musical conception and the different ways to making, perceiving, and enjoying music.

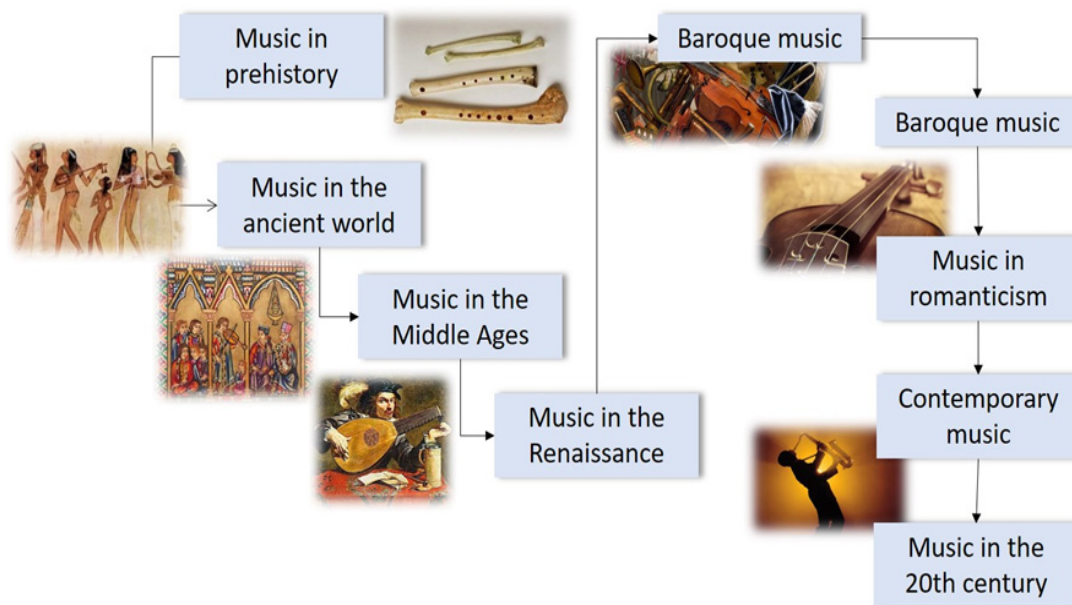


Fig. 1. Music evolutionary history [9], [10], [11], [12]

In the Middle Ages, Music had a religious relevance, and already in the Renaissance, it opted for other social aspects, incorporating new instruments. Renaissance music was composed of Gregorian Chants with counterpoints. Later on, baroque music appeared, giving origin to the concept of tonality musical, contrasts appeared in the composition of voices, including chords of functional progressions. Classical music is born with the purpose to transmit elegance, simplicity valued from its highest expression, and emotional manifestations stand out. Then a diversity of genres that make up contemporary music are incorporated into societies and permit to merge instruments, ideas, cultures, expanding throughout the planet.

B. Stress and other emotional manifestations

Stress, or general adjustment syndrome [13], is an

antique disease that gains prominence in the new century. Its manifestations can be diverse, and its impact on people is also complex since it underlies emotions.

Stressor stimuli are those external or internal factors that can cause stressful situations in people [14]. The permanent presence of stressful stimuli can cause severe changes in health, mainly affecting skin problems, gastric problems, cardiac problems, among others.

A person subjected to stressful situations may change the way to relates to the environment and may also change the manner to performs at work. Thus, when a person undergoes stress unconsciously, it can have other health repercussions that are not perceptible, such as heart and blood pressure problems.

Stress responds to emotions, which is why it does not have the same manifestations in all individuals, and its presence in the organism comes from different sources.

That means that a person subjected to a situation may manifest various stress than another person subjected to the same stimulus since perceiving the environment will vary from one individual to another.

Stress can represent a social problem, even a collective one, as it can seriously affect the productivity of

companies, the operating conditions of a school, or those of an educational system, having a devastating impact on different scenarios of daily life.

Stress can manifest itself in three main categories (Fig. 4) that affect people's health.

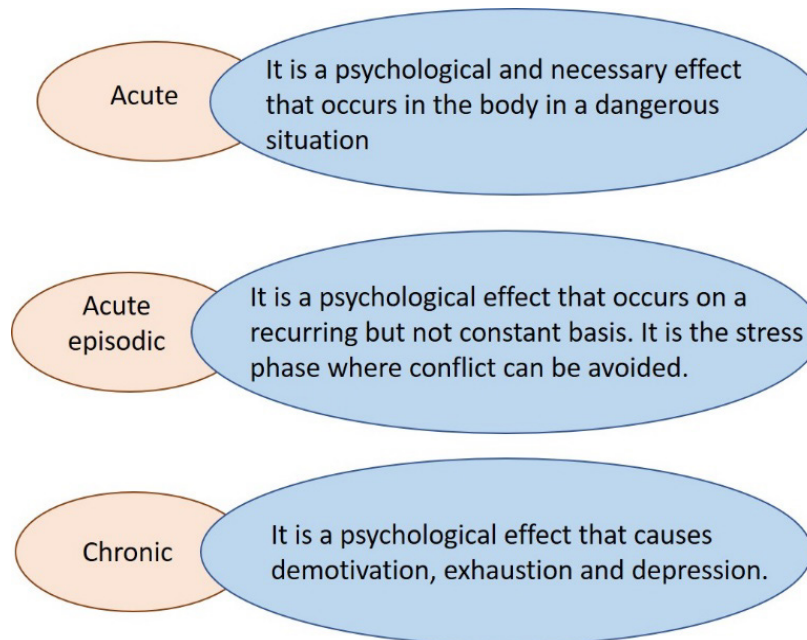


Fig.2. Stress types.

The different forms in which stress can manifest itself in people vary from acute stress when it is consequent of an eventual, unforeseen situation, and physiological reactions more eloquent to alert the individual to a determinate event. Then there is episodic acute stress when stressful situations are repetitive and vicious circles produce in people's daily lives. Finally, the most worrying case is chronic stress, which can cause significant damage to health and can also trigger unexpected diseases.

C.The brain and music

When the brain perceives music, important neural activities occur that promote emotional and cognitive responses in people. In principle, the auditory cortex is activated, which detects sounds and rhythms, acting as the principal sensor. The hippocampus is involved in the memory of music and its association with experiences and contexts. On the other hand, the visual cortex is responsible for the motivation of the dance, the organization of dance steps, the visualization of artistic scenarios.

One of the most relevant areas is the cerebellum, res-

ponsible for creating emotional motivation, reactions to certain music or dances. The nucleus accumbens and tonsils are also involved with emotions. The prefrontal cortex will then be in charge of activating emotional controls, behavior, and decision-making.

To play instruments or perform a dance piece, the motor cortex must be activated, in charge of performing harmonic movements, following the music. The sensory cortex is responsible for providing feedback and linking motor sensations with music, whether through a dance or a song, or an instrument. Finally there is the corpus callosum, which links both sides of the brain to link physical and emotional activities.

D.Effects of music on emotional state

There are numerous ways to relieve stress, but this will depend on the individual characteristics of each person, some will prefer to practice a sport and others will prefer to cook, but in all cases they will opt for music as a tool for personal relaxation.

Some authors claim that artistic manifestations can enrich the emotional state of people [15]. This includes appropriate decoration of enclosed spaces, music in so-

cial spaces, music for work and other expressions that could be useful for mental and emotional relaxation of people.

Other authors point out the importance of music in mental illnesses [16], specifically in the therapy's stress due to Alzheimer's disease in both patients and caregivers. The study revealed that music therapy would be effective in treating these ailments, improving the quality of life of those involved.

Several studies show that music has a positive impact on different aspects of life and that it improves learning or cognitive skills [17]. Music provides relaxing support to people, providing a space for the exchange of emotions and allowing communicative scenarios.

Music therapies comprise different forms and different techniques, among which we can mention: music, dance, and singing techniques, and may include the following aspects:

Receptive techniques: these refer to techniques based on listening and constitute all those processes where the patient requires high receptivity. In this technique, the patient is less active and does not require many movements, nor is a greater understanding of the musical contexts required. The psychologists or those responsible for the therapies will be in charge of the musical activity, being directly involved in it.

Active techniques: these refer to activities where more creative skills are needed, giving the patient an active, dynamic and, participating role. Using simple instruments, body expression activities, singing, rhythms, and free improvisations of sounds and songs are performed, so that the patient can express his inner emotions and release stressful situations he may have.

Thus, the most commonly used techniques are:

- Musical improvisation.
- Free singing.
- Dance and movement.
- Rhythms and percussions.
- Improvised choreographies.
- Improvised instruments.
- Musical interpretation.

IV.METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

In this paper, a bibliographic search has been carried out (Fig.2) to know the positive aspects that music can have in the therapy of diseases and the emotional state of people. For this purpose, we have reviewed important documents that show the impact of music on human emotions, achieving communicative and relaxing spaces.

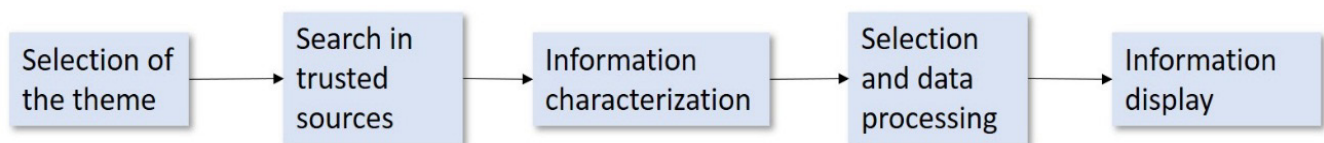


Fig. 3. Information review process.

For this paper, the authors considered the inclusion and exclusion aspects described in Figure 3 and

reviewed documents from reliable sources showing scientific and systematic results on music therapy.

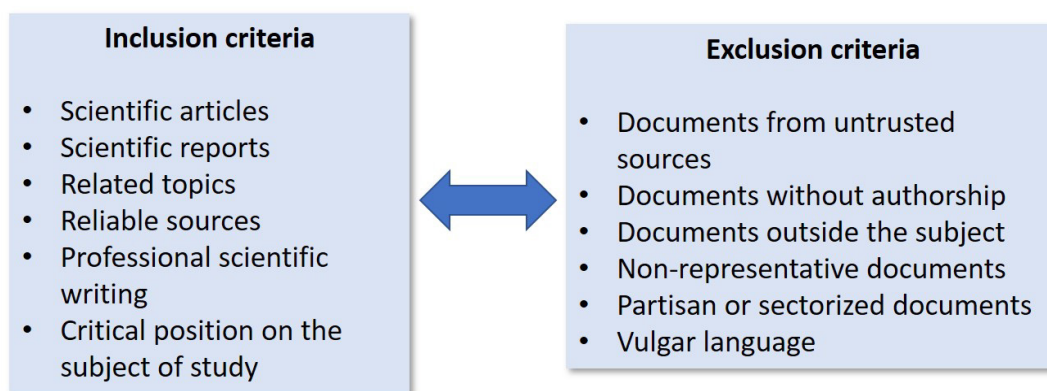


Fig. 4. Information selection criteria.

From a total of 120 academic papers, 25 of them were classified as relevant to the topic. From these papers, the contributions were extracted, considering both the specific apport and those derived from them.

V.RESULTS

Once the bibliographic review has been carried out, it is possible to compile the following results from all the academic papers reviewed:

Music as therapy, allows to give emotional support to people, providing a relaxing, reliable space and giving the opportunity to express emotions, feelings and ideas that make you feel better.

Patients with catastrophic diseases showed greater serenity to the perception of pain, stress and the discomfort of their own health situation [17]. The overcoming of pain and anxiety had an impact on the improvement of the state of health and a positive effect on the immune system.

Musical sessions of only 30 minutes can be significant to the improvement of people's health, contributing to the strengthening of their immune system and to the improvement of the individual's attitudes.

Some researchers claim that listening to music for 15 minutes increases interleukin levels, as well as improving immunoglobulin levels [17].

Music therapy comprises different techniques:

- Landscape sounds, which are recreated in environmental sounds.

- Sound envelope sounds, consisting of a selection of instruments, sounds and tones.

- Singing familiar songs, selecting those songs that may be part of the individual's prior knowledge.

Music therapy can positively affect isolation problems and those related to socio-emotional development.

In children, music can stimulate the speech process and the vocalization of words.

In older adults, music was also significant in reducing anxiety and stress levels in people.

In patients with Alzheimer's disease, it could be observed that depression was reduced by 25%, and anxiety was significantly improved [16].

In neonates, music was also a positive factor for weight improvement, heart rate improvement, respiratory rate improvement, accompanied by body massage music [18].

Other improvements found in neonates were the reduction of cortisol levels in saliva, cortisol in urine, reduction in the use of mechanical ventilation, as well as the reduction of hospital stay.

V.CONCLUSIONS

Having carried out this paper and having observed the previous studies, it is possible to draw the following conclusions:

1.Music can be useful for the improvement of stress in people, but it has to be selected according to the personality of each individual since inappropriate music can cause an increase in stress levels.

2.Music can improve people's health status, achieving significant effects on the immune system, blood pressure levels, anxiety levels, cortisol levels, and the state of well-being.

3.Music can also improve work stress levels, improving social environments, work environments, and the quality of life and job productivity that people may have.

4.Music must maybe a stressor depending on its tonality, its rhythm, its category, and its other criteria, according to the type of person and according to the emotional characteristics of each individual.

5.The different artistic manifestations can cause emotional relaxation for people, but it will also depend on the characteristics of each one.

6.For some people, silence may be their best way to relax but, these are exceptional cases since, according to the studies reviewed, it is music that motivates certain aspects of the brain to improve people's emotional state.

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