

PERCEPTION OF PRIMARY STUDENTS TOWARDS MUSIC INTEGRATED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

This research work is completed as a prerequisite for the doctoral work. This study investigates students' perceptions of the integration of music in different formal and informal learning activities. Music Integration enriches learning experiences and stimulates motivation, interest, attention, and memory and thus indirectly enhances performance. This study employs a survey method to explore primary students' perception towards music integration both in their informal daily activities as well as their learning in the formal school setup. The study also tries to investigate whether their liking and positive perception towards music integration in cartoons, video games, or their other favorite activities are transferable to the formal teaching-learning process. The results indicate that students prefer music integration in their teaching-learning process, especially in difficult subjects.

Keywords: Music integration, Classroom settings, Teaching-Learning Process, Teaching Methods, Learning experiences, Academic achievement

INTRODUCTION

Learning is a dynamic lifelong process, from infancy period till old age, an individual keeps on learning both formally and informally. A transformation of an individual who cannot do certain things to an individual who can do it perfectly is the process of learning. It is permanent because once the skills are learned one does not lose the skills. Learning is defined as a relatively permanent influence on behavior, knowledge, and thinking skills that come about through experience. (Santrock W Jhon, 2018). Learning may be deliberate or unintentional, for better or worse, correct or incorrect, and conscious or unconscious (Mayer 2011; Schnk, 2012). When children learn to play new video games, learn to operate a computer, work harder at solving problems, explain in a more logical way, or listen more attentively the learning is at work. Morse W C & Wingo G M (1968) defines learning as changing one's potential for seeing, feeling, and doing through experience partly perceptual, partly intellectual, partly emotional, and partly motor. This definition implies that learning is a potential it may or may not express in behavior but the capability exists if learning has occurred and this definition also implies the broad scope of learning. It may involve cognitive aspects or feelings or maybe simple control and coordination of the body. It involves academic and non-academic behaviors. It occurs in school and everywhere else within children's environment. Learning is of many types like learning through imitation and modeling, insight learning, and latent learning.

Although learning is a life-long process and its scope is broad but rate of learning and amount of learning differences from individual to individual and situation to situation. These individual differences indicate that learning is influenced by various factors both extrinsic and intrinsic.

Intrinsic factors influencing learning

Intelligence: The intelligence level of students affects the amount and pace of learning. High intelligence level students learn fast and their scope of learning is wider than the students with comparatively low intelligence. Students with IQs below borderline make very little progress in learning concepts and their academic learning is not able to cross a certain age group.

Motivation: Highly motivated students are good learners, they initiate to learn new things around them and their motivation stimulates their learning in spite of their failures.

Health: Health is a factor that indirectly affects students' capability to learn. If the student is not healthy he will be lethargic, will not be able to concentrate, and irregular and non-persistent in his or her efforts. This will indirectly affect his learning capacity.

Learners' personality traits: Personality traits like introversion, confidence level, emotional stability, openness to change, reasoning, etc. play a powerful role in shaping students' behaviors and lifestyle so it affects their learning and also indirectly affects students learning both formal and informal.

Learning and thinking styles: Learning and thinking styles like styles are preferred ways of using one's abilities (Sternberg, 2015). Learners have a profile of many styles and individuals vary in their specific learning and thinking styles. A few of the styles are impulsive/reflective styles, deep/surface style optimistic/pessimistic styles, etc. Some of the learning styles have more application to helping students learn more effectively than do other styles so the choice of preference of these styles affects learning.

Study habits: Study habits related to time management, preparation for the examination, notes preparation, self-study environment, etc influence the learning abilities of the students.

Extrinsic factors influencing learning

Nutrition: A balanced diet plays a crucial role in learning by affecting the health, memory, and attention span of the students.

Teachers' personality: The personality characteristics of a teacher her approach to teaching, attitude, and dedication towards teaching play a role in creating an appropriate learning environment and thus indirectly influence learning.

Teaching methodology: There is a direct relationship between teaching strategies and the learning of the students, selection of appropriate teaching strategies and their proper execution enhance students' Learning environment.

Learning environment: The learning environment plays a crucial role in learning. The stimulus being provided in the environment may stimulate or reduce learning. The human, physical, and psychological factor of the environment directly or indirectly influences learning. A cordial atmosphere that is free of fear, soothing for the heart, and challenging for the mind is considered best for the learning purpose. A successful learning environment is one that creates more time for learning, provides positive ethos, stimulates creativity, encourages engagement, makes students interested, ensures emotional well-being, and helps to manage self-learning. Closs, L. Mahat, M. & Imms, W. (2021). investigated how physical, pedagogical, and psychosocial dimensions of the learning environment influence students learning experiences in an Australian Faculty of Business and Economics. The result revealed that educational space and teaching strategies, educational activities, and students' subjective experiences in different learning environments intersect and influence students' learning. Similarly, a study by Vermunt Jan (2007) underlines the power of the learning environment in relation to the quality of student learning.

Music Integrated Learning Environment

An integrated Learning environment is that which is supported by music either in the form of a background score or music-integrated learning strategies. Music is a useful tool for enriching educational experiences because of its cognitive, emotional, and social advantages. Music can improve memory recall, boost cognitive processes, and provide an engaging learning atmosphere in academic settings. Integrating Music in the Classroom enhances the learning atmosphere and makes the process more engaging and enjoyable M. Lynch (2017).

Beyond just providing enjoyment, music may be used as an instructional tool to strengthen concepts, increase focus, and foster a good learning environment in the classroom. Music can accommodate various learning styles and make difficult subjects more approachable and pleasurable when carefully and selectively included in teaching-learning. In the study, KeefeO et al (2016) reported the benefits of music integration in the general classroom with core subjects i.e., mathematics, language arts, science, social studies/history. Studies have shown that music not only supports language development and mathematical reasoning but also enhances students' ability to retain information and think creatively. Additionally, music can reduce stress and anxiety, fostering a conducive environment for effective learning. According to the study conducted by C. T. Overland (2013) collaborative teaching with the arts (music and painting) in the classroom brings tangible benefits of social movement and cooperation.

This study explores students' perceptions towards the integration of music in the teaching-learning process, examining how it influences their retention, focus, academic performance, motivation, and overall classroom experience. By evaluating different techniques for incorporating music, this research seeks to identify best practices for maximizing its impact on student engagement and knowledge retention. The study by DijkmanDerks et al., 2022 found that music mnemonic or rhythm affected working memory. Incorporating music into almost any class can be a great way to teach content like mathematics, science, history, and literacy (K. Condon2015). Understanding student perspectives on music-integrated learning environments can help educators work on practical aspects of creating music-supported learning environments.

Statement of the Proble

Perception of Primary Students towards Music Integrated Learning Environment

Operational Definition of the terms

- **Perception of Students:** in this study 'perception of students' refers to the primary school students' perspectives regarding music integration in teaching-learning.
- **Music Integrated learning environment:** in this study 'Music Integration' refers to the deliberate incorporation of musical instruments, songs, and activity-based experiences in teaching-learning.
- **Primary students:** primary students that are included in this study are students studying in classes fourth and fifth.

Significance of the study

The child of today has wide exposure, compared to his age group in the past who had limited resources of entertainment he has tremendous options and a variety of entertaining and interesting media like video games, cartoons, and YouTube social networking sites so it is necessary the teaching-learning process should also strive to reorient itself to incorporate some of the elements from these entertaining media to keep students enthusiastically engaged in learning. One such element is music. The present study investigates students' perception of this element in their daily activities, the entertainment activities they are indulged in, and their formal teaching-learning process. Indigenous knowledge or testimony indicates that music has immense potential influence on learning outcomes and learning climate. All the government policies have consistently suggested that primary school education should be based on fun activities and an enjoyable learning environment. NCF-2023 for school suggested developing creativity and innovation through 'Art'. According to Richard et al. (2013), music has also been demonstrated to create an atmosphere that is favorable to learning by encouraging emotional expression and creativity. The results of this study will be helpful in establishing ways to make teaching-learning more engaging

and interesting for students. It will also stimulate more research and exploration of more ways to incorporate the element of music in the learning environment for primary students. This study also establishes the fact that students have a very positive attitude toward blending the elements of their favorite media in their classrooms. In a way, this study implies the need to make the learning environment for primary students more natural and more near to their hearts rather than making it formal in rigid ways.

Objectives of the study:

The purpose of this study is to identify music as an important element of the learning environment for both informal activities like games and videos or formal academic learning., the objective is –

To study the primary school students' perception of the music-integrated learning environment.

Methodology

The descriptive survey Method was considered as most precise and accurate according to the nature, need, and objectives of the present study.

Population

The population of the study includes the primary students studying in classes 4 and 5.

Sample

The data was collected from the five primary schools of Lucknow city and it included 100 primary students studying in classes fourth and fifth.

Sampling

The convenience Sampling method under the non-probability sampling technique was employed for the selection of schools and the selection of students to be interviewed.

Tool

As the study is conducted to investigate the perception of primary students interview was identified as an appropriate tool for data collection. A self-constructed semi-structured interview schedule was used for the data collection.

Tool construction

As per the requirement of the study, items for the interview schedule were formulated by the researchers. The items included were both open-ended and close-ended. After this, the interview schedule was given to eminent educationists and psychologists to assess its appropriateness with respect to correlation with the purpose of the study and the age and mental level of the target population. Based on their suggestions the first draft was finalized after revision and rejection of a few items. The first draft was administered to a small group of the target population and based on responses it was revised to prepare the final draft of the interview schedule.

Data collection

S.N.	SCHOOL NAME	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
1	GS Public School	20
2	Raj Udai Public School	20
3	Vijayam Convent Public School	20
4	Genius Montessori School	20
5	Kranti Vidya Mandir	20
	Total number of students	100

The data was collected from the five primary schools in Lucknow. In the selected schools' students of class fourth and fifth who were ready to talk were included in the study.

Data analysis

For the close-ended items percentage analysis was used to interpret the data and for open-ended items thematic analysis was used to analyze the responses of the students.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The result of the interview is summarized in the table given below-

Table 1: showing items, their nature and response

S.No	Item	Nature of item	Responses
1	Do you like to play video games?	Close-ended	87% of students answered in affirmative
2	Why do you like to play video games?	Open-ended	Various reasons were recorded like excitement, competition, speed, sound effects, and reality.
3	Do you like watching cartoons?	Close-ended	97% answered yes
4	What do you like in cartoons?	Open-ended	Response included story, animation, music, fascinating main characters, etc.
5	Would you enjoy it as much if the music was removed from the video game?	Close-ended	88% responded that they would not like it without music
6	Would you enjoy it as much if the music was removed from the cartoons?	Close-ended	97% answered in negative
7	Do your teachers use music while teaching? If yes how?	Mixed	Only used for poem recitation
8	Would you enjoy, it if music is blended into your regular studies?	Close-ended	80% agreed that they will enjoy
9	Which subject do you find difficult/dislike to study?	Close-ended	Most of the students considered Mathematics and English as difficult subjects.
10	Do you want to try studying these subjects using music? If yes why?	Mixed	70% agreed that they will want to try learning difficult subjects with music

Item wise analysis

Do you like to play video games?

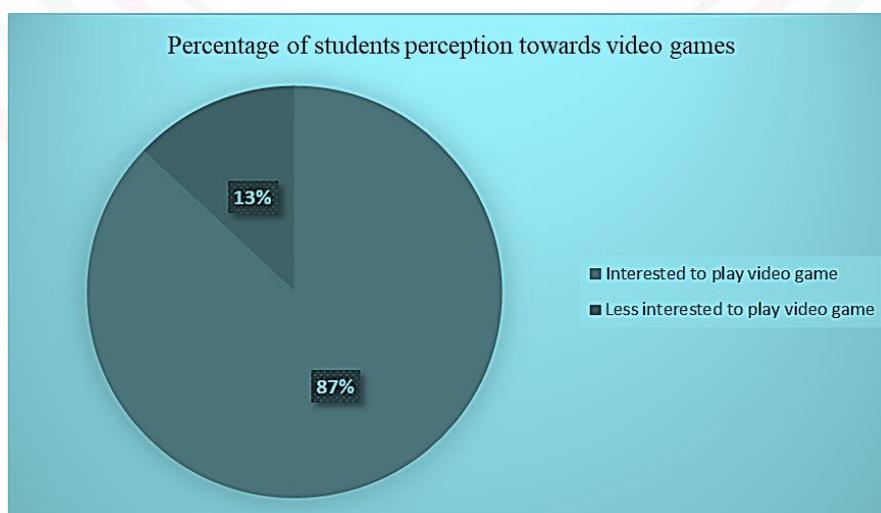


Fig 2 Percentage of students' perception towards video games

This pie chart indicates that 87% of students express an interest in playing video games, while 13% show little to no interest in engaging with any form of video games. When further enquired the researcher found that most of the students who said that they don't like video games are those who either are not allowed to play or don't have access to hardware for playing games.

Why do you like to play video games?

As it is an open-ended question students' responses were recorded and analyzed to identify the major. The following main reasons students shared –

- Excitement – students shared that it is exciting to play, they shared that they feel enthusiastic and eagerly wait for the time when they can play it.
- Desire to win- Many of the students said that play to win, they don't like to lose so they play to practice and win. Students shared that they feel a strong competition to conquer levels and become top scorers.
- Speed- some of the students revealed that speed is an attraction.
- Sound effects- when asked about music, students said that the background music and sound effects make the game more interesting. It makes it more real. The sound of winning encourages them to win more.

Do you like watching cartoons?

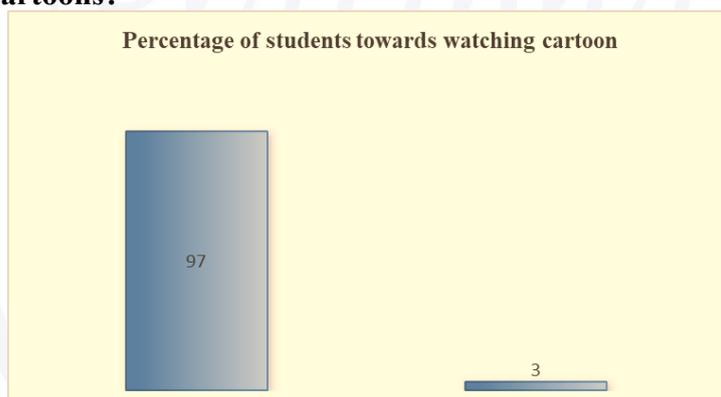


Fig 3 Percentage of students' perception towards watching cartoons

This question is intended to help the researcher determine whether or not students enjoy watching cartoons. The data shows that 97% of interviewed students prefer watching cartoons during their leisure time and many of them indicated that they steal time to watch their favorite cartoons whereas only 3% prefer playing outdoor games.

What do you like in cartoons?

The students gave a variety of reasons for their liking of cartoons but the main and most common were –

- Favorite cartoon character-most of the students said that they watch certain cartoons because they love the characters. They try to imitate them also.
- Story- most of them found the story of their cartoons exciting, daily new incidents and stories with a lot of adventure are included so they like watching it
- Animation- animation effects also emerged as an important theme. Animation effects, visualization, and scenes created like that of space, spaceships, castles, and craft make it very attractive.

- Music-though students did not mention Music as the reason when probed they agreed that music is an inbuilt element and it adds to the animation effect. Most of the students shared that music is an important element especially when watching cartons of language other than their mother tongue or English. It helps them better understand the plot and characters' emotions even if they miss the translation.

Would you enjoy it as much if the music was removed from the video game?

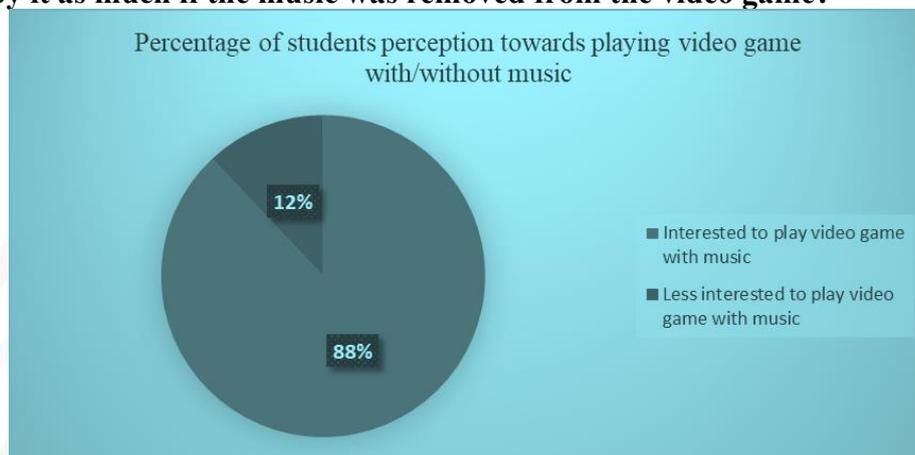


Fig 4 Percentage of students' perception towards playing video games with/without music

According to this data, 88% of students stated that there will be no fun to play video games without music. Music brings excitement it would be dull without it. rest of the students said it does not make any difference in video games.

Would you enjoy it as much if the music was removed from the cartoons?

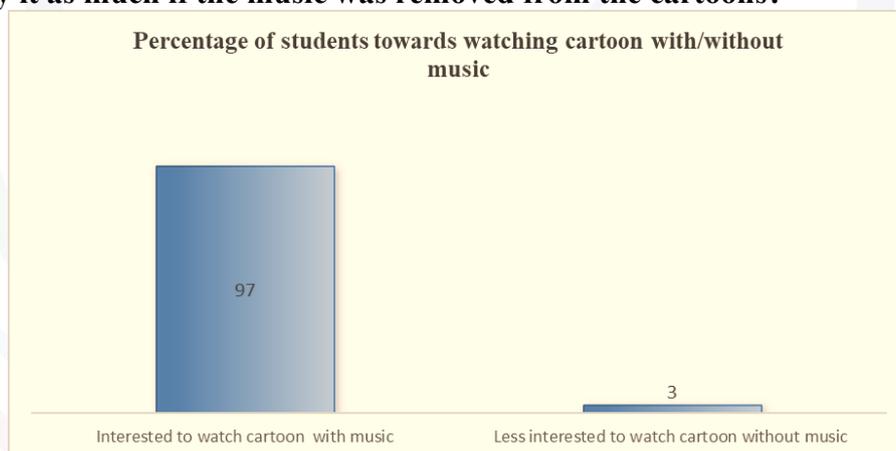
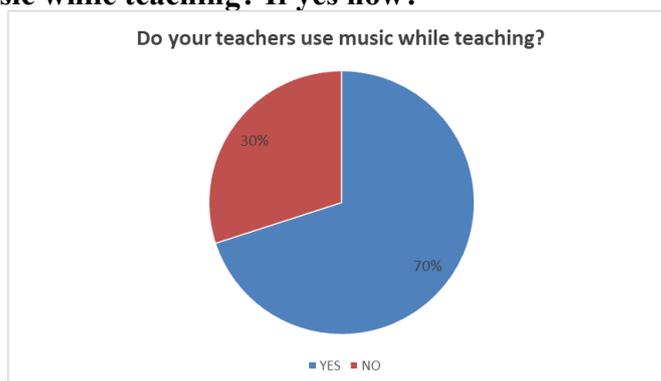


Fig 5 Percentage of students' perception towards watching cartoons with/without music

This data shows that 97% of students are interested in watching cartoons with music because they reveal that without music they have to concentrate more on reading captions. Without music, it will be incomplete. The interest is developed due to music playing and interesting sound effects whereas 3% of students said that cartoons may still be enjoyable without music.

Do your teachers use music while teaching? If yes how?



Nearly 70 % of students revealed that their teachers never used any music while teaching. The students who gave the answer in affirmative shared that it was used by only English teachers for reciting poems. The element that was used was rhythm occasionally accompanied by clapping but musical instruments were never used. Few of the students responded that an audio recording of the song or poem was played in the class.

Would you enjoy, if blended music in your regular studies?

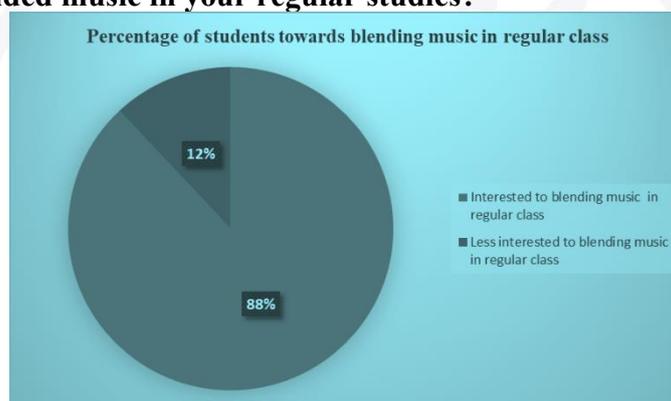


Fig.6 Percentage of students towards blending music in regular class.

The data indicates that 88% of students are interested in blending music with regular class whereas 12% of students are less interested in blending music with regular class.

Which subject do you find difficult/dislike to study?

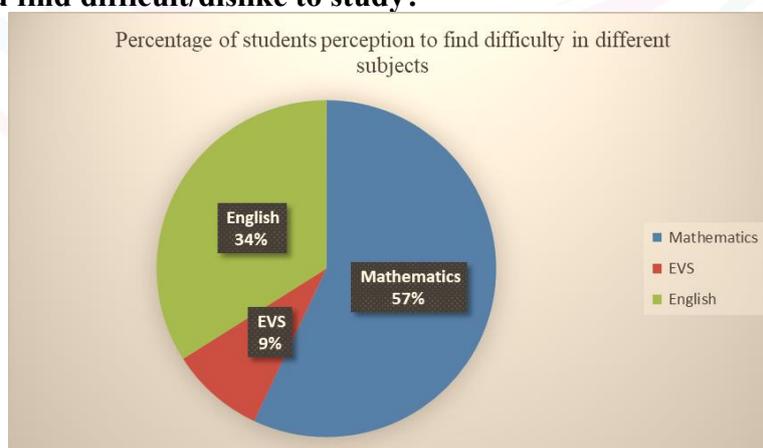
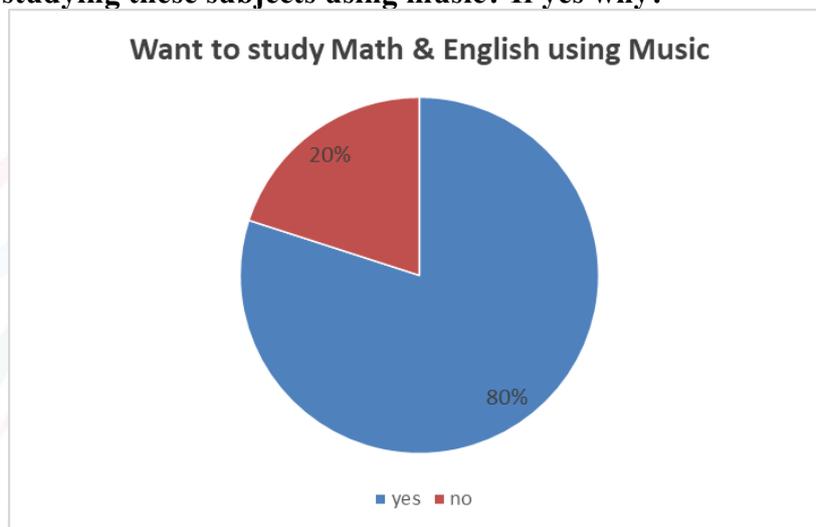


Fig 1 Percentage of students' perception to find difficulty in different subjects

The purpose of this question is that the researcher can find out which subjects students dislike or have difficulty studying. In the present study, we can see that there are 57% of students have difficulty in understanding Mathematics subject. 34% of students showed difficulty/dislike in English subjects. And there are 9% of students showed dislike for EVS subject. This clearly reveals that the three R's considered as a necessary part of primary education are either disliked by students or they consider it as a difficult subject.

Do you want to try studying these subjects using music? If yes why?



Nearly 80% of students said that they want to try studying their difficult subjects with blended music. They even seem excited that in which form it will be blended and is it possible. Overall most of the students seem eager to try it. When asked about the reason varieties of responses were received. Analysis revealed that students thought that adding music might make the subjects interesting, they would be able to pay more attention, and they will wait for the period of that subject if it happens, few students feel that it may reduce fear of the subject. Most of the students mentioned that it will help them to memorize the facts like tables formulas, syntax rules, and definitions better.

Conclusion

The conclusion of the study is that we need to understand in the education system there is a primary focus on the teaching-learning environment instead of teaching-learning materials. In the study students answered that the teaching-learning environment is generally monotonous, they don't want to learn at all in such a type of environment. The findings of this study clearly reveal that a significant majority of primary school students perceive the integration of music into the teaching-learning process as highly engaging and beneficial. The data suggests that students not only show a natural inclination towards music through their preference for music-rich media such as cartoons and video games, but they also express a strong interest in having similar musical elements incorporated into their classroom experiences.

The study also revealed that mathematics and English are subjects students most commonly find difficult or uninteresting; thus, integrating music into the instruction of these subjects may serve as a strategy to make them more approachable and enjoyable. These results reinforce the broader educational discourse that supports innovative, arts-integrated teaching methods. The students' positive responses confirm music's potential as a powerful pedagogical tool that can enhance academic outcomes while fostering creativity and a joyful learning environment. As supported by national education policies such as NCF-

2023, the inclusion of music and the arts is not just beneficial but necessary for nurturing creativity, emotional expression, and holistic development.

In conclusion, the study emphasizes that integrating music into classroom instruction is not merely an accessory but a valuable component of an effective teaching strategy. Understanding and utilizing students' positive perceptions can lead to the development of more dynamic, inclusive, and impactful educational practices.

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