



THE EFFECT OF MUSIC ON IMPULSIVITY IN COLLEGE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS WITH ATTENTION DEFICITS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of music listening on impulsivity as judged by the Conners' Continuous Performance Test (CPT) II v. 5. College undergraduate students were recruited into one of two groups and were administered a computer task (CPT) to complete in an initial condition, a music condition, and a silence condition. One group of participants had no diagnosed history of ADHD while the other participant group had a history of ADHD. The initial condition served as an opportunity for each participant to take the CPT with the researcher present to allow each participant to ask questions before taking the test alone; each participant was then taken to a separate testing room. As all participants were tested in all three conditions, the remaining two (music and silence) were randomly assigned to control for order effect. The music condition involved taking the CPT alone in the testing room with "In a Mellow Tone" by Count Basie playing in the background during the test administration. The piece was manipulated to have a tempo of $mm = 124$ and looped to last the entirety of the CPT (14 minutes). Each participant was administered the CPT in a silence condition, in which the participant was alone in the testing room without other provided stimuli. The final sample was $N = 51$ with $n = 26$ enrolled in the typical group and $n = 25$ enrolled in the group with attention deficits. A significant main effect difference was found by group: the typical group exhibited lower impulsivity levels as compared to the ADHD group based on Commission mean scores. Additionally, significant main effect differences were found by condition (initial, music, and silence). Both the factors of group and condition appear to be independent as no interaction was found. Implications and suggestions for future research were discussed. [The author can be reached at DunbarLL@uwec.edu]