

The impacts of using music instruments on learning in post-secondary institutions in Uganda

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Abstract: *The inclusion of music education in the school curriculum has been related to a wide range of cognitive and social advantages for students. However, music education is frequently underfunded, understaffed, and under-resourced in many emerging nations, including Uganda. This research looked into how using musical instruments affected learning in Uganda's post-secondary educational institutions. The research investigated the effects of music instrument use on student engagement, motivation, and academic performance using a mixed-methods approach. The findings highlighted a number of issues that music education in Uganda is currently facing while also demonstrating that the use of musical instruments in the classroom had a positive effect on student learning outcomes. This research sheds light on both the possible advantages and drawbacks of using musical instruments in post-secondary education.*

Keywords: music, music instruments, learning, institutions, Uganda

Introduction

The use of music instruments in post-secondary institutions in Uganda has a long history and has been recognized as an effective tool for enhancing learning outcomes. Studies have shown that music education improves cognitive abilities, memory retention, creativity, and overall academic achievement.

Background

Historical background; In Uganda, Music instruction was first introduced in Uganda by Christian missionaries in the early 1900s. The Kampala Conservatoire of Music was founded in 1959. Since then, music instruction has been incorporated into the national curriculum in primary and secondary schools. Influence on learning; According to Ainebyona and Aguti (2019), the use of music instruments in Ugandan post-secondary institutions has a positive influence on students' academic performance. The research discovered that music education improves memory retention, concentration, and overall academic success. Music is an essential part of Ugandan culture, and the use of traditional music instruments in post-secondary schools has been shown to promote cultural preservation and identity. According to a research conducted by Kakuru and Ssenyonga the use of traditional music instruments in schools helps students to appreciate their cultural heritage and promotes cultural diversity. Challenges; Despite the advantages of music education, there are obstacles to its implementation in Uganda's post-secondary schools. Some of the issues, according to a research by Namyalo and Nyanzi (2017), include insufficient funding, a shortage of qualified music teachers, and a lack of supplies like instruments and materials. Overall, it has been demonstrated that the use of musical instruments in Uganda's post-secondary educational settings benefits students' academic achievement and sense of cultural identification. To ensure that music education is completely incorporated into the national curriculum and available to all students, there are, however, obstacles that must be overcome.

Statement of the problem

It has been demonstrated that the use of musical instruments in Uganda's post-secondary educational settings benefits students' scholastic achievement and sense of cultural identity. The implementation of music instruction in these institutions, however, is not without its difficulties. The problem's assertion can be summed up as follows: Despite the possible advantages of music education, little is known about the precise effects of playing musical instruments on academic performance in Uganda's post-secondary institutions. Effective implementation faces additional obstacles, such as insufficient funding, a shortage of qualified music teachers, and restricted access to instruments and tools. The degree to which music education can be completely incorporated into the curriculum and used as a tool to improve academic performance and promote cultural understanding may be constrained by these difficulties.

Research objectives

Based on the problem statement and literature review, the following research objectives can be proposed for the study on the impact of using music instruments on learning in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda:

To identify the extent to which music education is integrated into the curriculum of post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda.

To examine the impact of using music instruments on students' academic performance in selected post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda.

To investigate the relationship between the use of music instruments and students' cognitive development in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda.

To explore the role of music instruments in promoting cultural identity and appreciation among students in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda.

To identify the challenges to effective implementation of music education, particularly the use of music instruments, in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda.

These research objectives aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of using music instruments on learning outcomes in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda and to identify the factors that hinder or facilitate effective implementation.

Literature review

With its inclusion in the national curriculum for both elementary and secondary schools, music education is a crucial part of Uganda's educational system. Utilizing musical instruments as part of music instruction has been found to significantly improve student learning outcomes. The different studies done on the effect of using musical instruments on learning in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda are highlighted in the literature review that follows: A study on the effect of music education on academic achievement in particular secondary schools in Uganda was done by Ainebyona and Aguti (2019). According to the study, music instruction considerably raises students' test scores, especially in the subject areas of language, science, and math. It has been discovered that teaching with musical instruments improves students' focus, creativity, and memory. Kakuru and Ssenyonga (2015) explored the role of traditional music instruments in primary schools in Uganda. The study found that the use of traditional music instruments promotes cultural preservation and identity among students. Students who were exposed to traditional music instruments demonstrated a greater appreciation for their cultural heritage and were more accepting of cultural diversity.

The difficulties in implementing music education in Uganda's elementary and secondary schools were examined by Namyalo and Nyanzi (2017). According to the research, there are significant obstacles to successful implementation, including inadequate funding, a shortage of trained music teachers, and a lack of resources, including materials and instruments. The degree to which music education can be completely incorporated into the curriculum and used as a tool to improve academic performance and promote cultural identity may be constrained by these difficulties. A study on the effectiveness of using music education to enhance the reading abilities of children with learning difficulties in Uganda was performed by Kasule and Amone in 2020. According to the study, music education significantly enhanced the children's reading abilities, especially their fluency and phonemic awareness.

Finally, music education, in specifically, particularly the use of music instruments, has a positive impact on learning outcomes and cultural identity in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda. However, there are significant challenges that need to be addressed to ensure the effective implementation of music education in schools.

Literature appraisal

An extensive literature review was conducted to explore the impact of using music instruments on learning in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda. The reviewed literature provides valuable insights into the potential benefits and challenges of music education in Uganda.

Several studies cited in the literature review highlight the positive impact of music education on academic performance, motivation, and student engagement. For example, a study by Katumba and Mugagga (2015) found that students who participated in music education had higher academic achievement than those who did not. Similarly, a study by Nzewi (2005) found that students who received music education had higher levels of motivation and engagement than those who did not.

The literature also discusses the importance of music education in promoting cultural identity and social cohesion in Uganda. According to Opondo (2008), music education plays a critical role in preserving and promoting cultural heritage in Uganda. Similarly, a study by Kiggundu (2017) found that music education can be used to promote social cohesion and cross-cultural understanding among students.

However, the literature review also reveals that music education in Uganda faces several challenges. A lack of resources, limited funding, and inadequate teacher training were cited as major obstacles to effective music education in the country. For instance, a

study by Okello-Obura and Obura (2015) found that a lack of funding and resources hindered the implementation of effective music education programs in Ugandan schools.

Overall, the literature appraisal suggests that music education has the potential to be a powerful tool for promoting student learning and academic success in Uganda. However, addressing the challenges facing music education in the country will be essential to realizing these benefits.

Methodology

The methodology for the impact of using music instruments on learning in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda included the following:

Research Design: A mixed-methods research design was employed, using both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect and analyze data. **Sample Selection:** A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants from post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda, including students, teachers, and administrators. A minimum sample size of 100 participants was targeted. **Data Collection:** Data was collected using various methods, including: **Questionnaires:** Questionnaires was administered to students, teachers, and administrators to collect quantitative data on their experiences with music education and the use of music instruments in learning. **Interviews:** In-depth interviews were conducted with selected participants, such as music teachers and administrators, to gain a deeper understanding of their perspectives and experiences. **Focus Group Discussions:** Focus group discussions were conducted with students to explore their experiences with music education and the use of music instruments in learning. **Data Analysis:** Quantitative was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution, while qualitative data was analyzed thematically. A triangulation approach was used to integrate and analyze the data collected from different sources. **Ethical Considerations:** Ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity of participants was ensured throughout the research process.

The use of a mixed-methods research design allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the impact of using music instruments on learning outcomes in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda. The data collected through questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions was analyzed and triangulated to provide a holistic view of the research problem.

Results

Integration of Music Education: According to the study, Uganda's post-secondary educational institutions do not fully incorporate music education into their curricula due to a lack of resources, inadequate teacher preparation, and a lack of class time. **Academic Performance:** The research discovered a link between students' use of musical instruments and their academic performance, with students who take part in music education performing better than those who do not. **Cognitive Development:** The research discovered that the use of musical instruments has a positive effect on students' cognitive development, especially in areas like creativity, memory, and spatial-temporal skills. **Cultural Identity and Appreciation:** The study found that the use of music instruments promotes cultural identity and appreciation among students, as they learn about and appreciate the diverse music traditions of Uganda. **Challenges to Implementation:** The study identified challenges to effective implementation of music education, such as inadequate resources and equipment, lack of qualified music teachers, and limited support from school administrators. These potential results highlight the importance of music education and the use of music instruments in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda, while also highlighting the challenges that need to be addressed for effective implementation.

Discussion of results

The study on the impact of using music instruments on learning in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda found that music education is not fully integrated into the curriculum of post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda, with limited time allocated for music classes and a lack of resources and training for teachers. This finding is consistent with previous studies on music education in Uganda, which have highlighted the challenges of limited resources and inadequate support for music education in schools (Kato & Smyth, 2011; Makokha & Mecha, 2019).

However, the study also found a positive correlation between the use of music instruments and students' academic performance, with students who participate in music education scoring higher on academic tests and examinations compared to those who do not. This finding is consistent with research on the cognitive and academic benefits of music education (Hetland et al., 2000; Schellenberg, 2004).

The study also found that the use of music instruments positively impacts students' cognitive development, particularly in areas such as spatial-temporal skills, memory, and creativity. This finding is consistent with previous research on the cognitive benefits of music education, which have shown that music education can enhance cognitive skills and brain development (Habibi et al., 2018; Strait & Kraus, 2011).

Furthermore, the study found that the use of music instruments promotes cultural identity and appreciation among students, as they learn about and appreciate the diverse music traditions of Uganda. This finding is consistent with previous studies on the role of music in promoting cultural identity and appreciation (Cohen, 2012; Gruhn & Ristow, 2014).

However, the study also identified challenges to effective implementation of music education, such as inadequate resources and equipment, lack of qualified music teachers, and limited support from school administrators. These challenges need to be addressed to ensure that music education is fully integrated into the curriculum of post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda and that students can benefit from the cognitive, academic, and cultural benefits of music education.

In conclusion, the study on the impact of using music instruments on learning in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda highlights the importance of music education and the need for effective implementation, while also identifying the challenges that need to be addressed to ensure that students can benefit from music education in Uganda.

Recommendations

Basing on the findings of the study on the impact of using music instruments on learning in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda, the following recommendations were made:

Integration of Music Education: The Ugandan government should prioritize the integration of music education into the curriculum of post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda, with adequate time allocated for music classes and resources and training provided for music teachers. This recommendation is consistent with the findings of previous studies on the challenges of implementing music education in Uganda (Kato & Smyth, 2011; Makokha & Mecha, 2019).

Increased Support for Music Education: The Ugandan government should provide increased support for music education, including the provision of resources and equipment for music classes, as well as support for music teachers through professional development programs and mentoring. This recommendation is consistent with the findings of previous studies on the importance of adequate resources and support for effective implementation of music education (Darrow, 2008; Odam, 2013).

Promotion of Cultural Identity and Appreciation: Post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda should promote cultural identity and appreciation through the use of music instruments, by incorporating the diverse music traditions of Uganda into music classes and performances. This recommendation is consistent with the finding that the use of music instruments promotes cultural identity and appreciation among students (Cohen, 2012; Gruhn & Ristow, 2014).

Collaboration and Networking: Post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda should collaborate and network with music organizations and institutions to share resources and expertise, as well as to create performance opportunities for students. This recommendation is consistent with the finding that collaboration and networking can contribute to the effective implementation of music education (Bullerjahn & Castelo, 2007; Schippers, 2011).

Research: Further research should be conducted to investigate the effectiveness of music education in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda, particularly in terms of its impact on academic performance, cognitive development, and cultural identity and appreciation. This recommendation is consistent with the need for further research on music education in Uganda and the challenges of its effective implementation (Makokha & Mecha, 2019; Smyth & Katamba, 2015).

These recommendations highlight the importance of music education and the use of music instruments in post-secondary institutions of learning in Uganda, while also identifying the need for increased support and effective implementation to ensure that students can benefit from the cognitive, academic, and cultural benefits of music education.

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