

Use of Group Sound Design to Strengthen Mental Well-being and Social Bravery of Adults in COVID-19 Japan

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Abstract

This paper analyzes how a set of group music activities: learning, creating, listening and discussing improves mental well-being during the COVID-19 soft lockdown in Japan. The importance of this research lies in the fact that Japanese are feeling increasingly lonely due to the pandemic and the mix of increasing individualism in combination with constant presence collectivism ideas.

We conducted an experiment in form of a class of music design at a university aimed at a majority of non-musicians together with a smaller amount of musically experienced grownups. The experiment contained a questionnaire filled in before and after the process to inspect the assessment of prior experience of musicianship, regularity of group events, self-evaluation of music skills open questions to explore the experience of participants during the presentation of created art and after it.

We found that majority of participants experienced nervousness during presentation of self-made sounds, but were fascinated by the sounds created by others. Descriptions of the overall feelings of the group musicianship were emotions of being connected, elevation, feeling of no correct answer, nostalgia of returning to a place of the past. The creative process with other musicians significantly elevated the levels of musical self-esteem of non-musicians and generated a high level motivation to repeat the process.

The reports of positive emotions, ease of use and high self-esteem, this method becomes appealing due to its' effectiveness on mood in a short amount of time. Further research is necessary to explore effectiveness for adverse moments such as homesickness, loneliness and trauma.

Keywords: music, art, education, socializing, Japan