

Levels of Multitasking and Cognitive Performance

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Abstract

Multitasking has been identified and termed as a tendency (Poposki and Oswald., 2010). Like most tendencies, it has an individual differences continuum. There are some heavy and some light multitaskers. Also, apart from the category of easy and difficult tasks is the category of cognitive conflict type of tasks. E.g. Stroop task has been used to measure the cognitive conflict linked performance levels (Chhabra and Parveen, 2018). Also, it is believed that heavy multitaskers suffer from cognitive conflict (Viitanen et al., 2012). Soothing music as the name suggests, soothes the nerves, calms the mind and stabilizes performance (Schellenberg, 2015). The present study sought to probe the Stroop performance of heavy and light multitaskers. The presence and absence condition of Soothing music was introduced across Congruent and Incongruent conditions of Stroop task. The study was carried out on a sample of 150 girl students from the Government schools of Chandigarh in the age range of 13-17 years (mean age= 14.7 years). Repeated measures ANOVA was used. Results reveal that soothing music has been found to play a facilitative role in performance. The study has implications for the performance prediction of light and heavy multitaskers confronted with complex task conditions.

Keywords:Soothing Music, Cognitive conflict, Multitasking, Stroop Task, Attention

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