

HIP-HOP "A PILL FOR THE MIND": SPOKEN WORD THERAPY AS AN EMOTION PROCESSING INTERVENTION FOR HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Anh Tuan Le

Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism

Phu Quang Nguyen

Chu Van An High School for The Gifted

Email: nguyenphuquang04@gmail.com

Tuan Nam Dau

Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics; Email: namdautuan@gmail.com

Viet Phuong Vu

University of Economics – Technology for Industries; Email: vvphuong@uneti.edu.vn

Corresponding author: Tuan Nam Dau, Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics. Email: namdautuan@gmail.com

Abstract:

This article discusses the benefits of a school-based Hip Hop and beat production curriculum for students. While a substantial quantity of literature has reported the benefits of Hip Hop programs in North American schools, relatively little is known about the advantages of such programs in Vietnam. This ethnographic study investigated a two-week intensive Hip Hop music curriculum taught to students at Hanoi's Chu Van An High school for the Gifted. The study adopted a purposefully open and emergent methodology to prevent preconceived notions of potential advantages and to permit the emergence of any unforeseen benefits. In addition, the parts of the program that looked essential for producing the stated advantages were analyzed. While time constraints were deemed to limit the program's potential, a number of student benefits were noted, including school community engagement, social connection, and personal growth. The presentation of facilitators, the program's capacity to connect with students' musical preferences, the equipment and location, and the emphasis on Hip Hop culture were deemed crucial to these benefits. While additional research is required to fully investigate these results, they do give crucial evidence for the potential role that Hip Hop and beat making programs can play in Vietnam classrooms.

Keywords: Hip Hop, Chu Van An, Ha Noi

1. Introduction

Hiphop music dates back to the 1970s in the African American community living in the Bronx. When it comes to Hip Hop, people often refer to Hip Hop culture beyond music. Hip hop music is one of the 4 main elements in Hip Hop: Rap, DJ, Breakdance and Graffiti culture.

Hiphop can be understood as an artistic culture and the music of that culture is Rap. Besides, Rap is considered the main material in Hip Hop, Rap can be expressed on the beat of any music or

expressed "vegetarian", and is considered as a cross between speaking and singing.

In Vietnam through many years of development, up to now, Rap is increasingly popular and loved by Vietnamese audiences. Not only are underground artists with low-quality recordings on foreign beat platforms available, many Vietnamese rappers have produced their own beat, producing more "quality" and "standard" products of quality. Some Vietnamese rappers who are interested and loved by many audiences can be mentioned as Binz, Karik, Suboi, Wowy, Bigdaddy, LK, DatManiac ...

Music is a sound art that reflects all the problems around us with musical elements (pitch, pitch, tone,...) ; The content expressed can be a phenomenon , emotions (happy, sad, disappointed, happy), a view of life or even music that expresses the great image of the collective, the country, the culture or even humanity as a whole. Besides, music is also closely linked to mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy,...

In fact, there are many explanations for the origin of music. For example, according to antiquity: "Music comes from the physiological needs of humans as well as animals to attract sexual partners" – Charles Darwin. "Music is the result of an excess of energy, in the strong emotion of human tones born of music" – Herbert Spencer. "Curiosity and joy are the source of musical development – Karl Stumpf. "The origin of music is magic" – Jule Combarieu or "The origin of music is labor" – Marxist aesthetics – Lenin... In fact, to have a completely correct answer is almost unthinkable because the limitation of historical evidence and the time gap between the present and the infancy of music is too large.

However, with the growth of scientific technology, the connection between music, and other art forms; and the close relationship among the origin of music, the formation and development of humanity; we can find a logical and asymptotic answer with far more accuracy. According to the development of humanity from hominids to 2-legged migration, climatic factors, geography, the need to communicate, labor is the most important factor affecting the development of language and music. In addition, different climate and geography leads to different natural approaches of people through labor that have formed different cultures, from which views of music, musical materials and musical genres also differ.

This study aims to contribute to filling this knowledge gap by exploring a Hip Hop-based music education program taught at Chu Van An Senior High School, Hanoi, Vietnam. By identifying potential ways that Hip Hop programs can benefit Hanoian students, the results are used to inform both international and local academic discourse, as well as the implementation of future school-based programs in Hanoi and Vietnam. The article structure consists of 5 parts: Introduction, Literature review, Method, Result and Conclusion.

2. Literature review

2.1. Hiphop music

Born in New York City, hip hop culture is now a worldwide phenomenon. You'd be hard-pressed to find any country that doesn't have a certain hip hop scene. This new reality is driven by two

factors. One is the commercialization of culture as a commodity, making it one of the most influential industries in the world with its own Forbes Rich List.

The other is that hip hop is still accessible and grassroots. At its simplest, you can create a beat with your mouth – beatbox – or on a desk and create or read lyrics about anything without singing. The development of music-making, cost-friendly software and hardware will help to be more involved in access and allow for creative flexibility and even pathways to entrepreneurship.

Marginal communities around the world resonate with the spirit of resisting exclusion or discrimination and fighting for justice and justice. Others just like the beats and the lyrical flow. In addition to beats and rhymes, there's one thing for everyone: B-Girls and B-Boys dance, scratch and mix DJs, and graffiti artists draw and write. Combined with rapping or rapping, these are the four basic elements of hip hop, with the fifth being Self-Knowledge: motivation for sanity and social consciousness.

In the original sense, "hip" means "in the right fashion", but it also has an additional meaning of "knowing how to manage". And "hop" is an evocative word, taking leaps and bounds. Taken together, "Hiphop" has a positive connotation of "progress and progress through intelligence and resourcefulness."

And in today's conception, Hip hop is a phrase to refer to a trend, a style in fashion, music and art. The hip-hop style has to be healthy, carefree and a little rebellious.

Hip hop culture is very special, because it does not distinguish between age, gender, skin color, religion or social status, ... Anyone can pursue this style in areas of Hip hop culture such as: fashion, street painting art (Graffiti), tattoo, music (hiphop, Rap, DJ, MC, ...), dance (Breaking dance, Hiphop dance, ...)

Hip hop began to emerge as a genre of music, and gradually became a cultural trend that appeared in the 1970s in the Bronx, New York. Their origin is from the ghettos – where the lives of poor people, people of color are associated with many of the darkest sides and social evils of the time.

With rapid growth, Hip hop became the cultural wave that ruled African Americans and the Hispanic community in the 80s. At the same time, in 1982, hip hop was more precisely defined when Afrika Bambaataa and the Soulsonic Force published an electro-funk track called "Planet rock", consisting of simple raps combined with disco tempo.

In Vietnam, **hip hop culture** first appeared in the mid-1990s when BigToe was formed (1992). It took the group a lot of years to stabilize its membership and develop its Hip Hop path.

2.2. The main elements of Hiphop music

Hip hop Dance is divided into many different sub-genres such as Dance Breaking, popping, locking, stepping, house, street dance, ... However, when it comes to hip hop, people often refer more to Dance Breaking as a representation of the culture.

The term "breakdancing" refers to the breakage in the music and the movements that combine to

that tune. The dance appeared in 1969, James Brown is the creator of the dance steps, the origin of which is the Good Foot.

Breakdance was originally based on the original Jazz music, played by skilled African and Latin American musicians. The dance was gradually developed with many complex movements and skillfully slid close to the ground called acrobatic. In which dancers often use their hands and arms as support for the body when spinning and doing acrobatics many times in the background music. The first dance groups to use and develop this dance were Dynamic Rocker and New York City breaker.

Graffiti is a form of street art by spraying paint, painting on walls, subways, cars, etc. or simply places with flat and wide surfaces. Graffiti art first appeared in New York in the 1970s, originating from the inscriptions that black cliques roaming the streets of America painted on the walls to define business territory.

Gradually, they spread to public places such as subway stations, train stations ... From the signatures, the original scribbled rudimentary inscriptions, Graffiti art has evolved into 3-D drawings, sophisticated patterns ... To this day, Graffiti appears mostly on hip-hop culture, clothing, cars, CDs, houses.

Breakdancing couldn't have been more developed if it hadn't been supported by DJs and MCs.

MC stands for Master of Ceremonies, which means cheerleaders – people who maintain the exciting, fun atmosphere of the party, give a quick introduction to a song, or invite guests to something.

DJ is an acronym for Disc Jockey, used to refer to people who choose and play music at parties/competitions/events, etc., mainly funk and disco music of the 1970s. The first DJs considered the father of hip hop were Grandmaster Flash and Kool Herc. DJ's tools today are a pair of "turntables" consisting of two plastic disc readers attached to audio mixers connected to amplifiers and speakers. And sometimes the DJ also plays the role of an MC, helping to maintain a fast and vibrant atmosphere according to the music.

Rap stands for 3 words Rhythm – and – Poetry, which is a very popular music genre in Hiphop culture. Rap is performed through speaking or chanting lyrics and lyrics in a rhyming way, combined with DJ mixing music and Breakdance dance. In popular language, "rap" refers to a quick, light, and gentle knock. When switching to African-American slang, "rap" refers to a person with sharp language abilities, quick and flexible language skills.

Beatboxing is an art form in which a beatboxer uses the sounds coming from his mouth and voice to create drum beats, melodies, or imitations of various types of sounds (drumming, percussion, robotics, disc rubbing, or other sounds, ...)

2.3. The role of Hip hop music – the spiritual medicine

This accessibility and inclusion makes hip hop an effective therapeutic tool for working with young people. It's a style that feels most comfortable and it provides a way to build a relationship

between the client and the therapist. Lyrical content is a means to build self-reflection, learning, and growth. Whether analyzing existing songs or creating new content, the range of topics found in hip-hop songs allows therapists to access topics that can be difficult to talk about.

The repetitive, predictable nature of hip hop beats is also said to provide a sense of security, especially while writing songs, and lyrical and musical improvisation. Therapists suggest this gives a sense of reliability to people who are less frequent or safe in their daily lives; something supported by research links that engage music and self-regulate.

In U.S.-based research, Dr. Travis pointed out that, despite the negative association, many hip hop listeners see it as a powerful source of both self-empowerment and community. More specifically, the benefits of individual mental health, in the areas of coping, emotions, identity, and personal growth, can help promote resilience in the community.

In Australian schools, Dr Crooke has found hip hop to be a positive way for students of different backgrounds to engage with their wider community, academic missions and schools in general. In a recent (unpublished) study, he also explored the benefits of a short-term intensive hip hop and beat program for young people who are labeled opposite, severely disengaged, or at risk of exclusion.

The results showed that the students not only engaged in learning through the program but also demonstrated positive self-expression, built important relationships with instructors, and strengthened social connections with each other.

2.4. Hip hop is a tool for self-expression

Hip hop emerged as a response to the gang culture and violence of the South Bronx in the 1970s, and daily experiences of poverty, racism, exclusion, crime, violence and neglect. It necessarily embodies and values resilience, understanding, community and social justice.

However, the hip hop project has not escaped these difficult circumstances. Many communities around the world remain resistant to the impact of discrimination, discrimination and injustice. Hip hop is often a powerful voice for these life experiences. One of its early strengths was allowing young, creative black and Latino youth to create art that reflected the realities of their lives, of surrounding neighborhoods, and of the broader social circumstances they found. In the words of NWA U.S. artists, they made the most of their basic human rights to express themselves.

Hip hop is neither a panacea nor a cure. It's not perfect, but its promise is undeniable. It's a culture with complex social and historical roots. And it should not be appropriated without acknowledging, respecting and addressing these things, because these very sources are very important. Its complex history allows us to critically reflect on our society and forces us to confront issues of race, privilege, class, and cultural appropriation.

2.5. Hip Hop in the field of education

The area where contemporary Hip Hop proliferates the most is education. Petchauer (2009) explains how this has happened across many aspects of education, from playing a central role in

primary and secondary curricula, to full higher education courses. For Petchauer, this has to do with the ability of Hip Hop culture to inform pedagogy that critiques, informs, and empowers marginalized groups, while teaching learning skills. He further argues for the distinct role of music: "The creative practices of hip-hop and the messages built into music are interwoven into the identity-forming processes through which young people and young adults conceive of themselves, others, and the world around them" (p. 947).

For scholars like Ladson-Billings (2015), providing students with access to Hip Hop culture through music education is not only a valuable tool for social justice, but also critical to the identity development of marginalized youth. Others such as Emdin (2008) see Hip Hop as a valuable interactive tool, especially when viewed in the context of contemporary youth culture. Through the lens of culturally responsive education (Lai, 2012), scholars have shown how the use of rapping can help engage students from across different cultures in academic fields such as science (Emdin, 2008) and philosophy (Sciullo, 2014). It has the potential to be recognized in the educational environment; some scholars have proposed (and in some cases) taken a whole approach to schooling through the lens of Hip Hop culture (Seidel, 2011).

While the number of both research and educational programs exploring the benefits of Hip Hop in students' lives continues to expand exponentially, literature and discourse remain firmly rooted in the North American context (Petchauer, 2009). This may seem plausible at first, as it is also the birthplace of the culture, but it does not reflect the fact that Hip Hop culture has long spread across the globe (Mitchell, 2000, 2002; Travis, 2013).

3. Method

This project aims to explore the potential benefits of students participating in the Hip Hop program and creating rhythms offered at school by Hip Hop coordinators and a registered music therapist. This is guided by the main research question: "Does a school-based Hip Hop program have any identifiable benefits for students?" The exploratory nature of this question is intended to avoid the presumption that the benefits will be experienced and what stereotypes of these might be.

The study also explores how specific program elements are connected to the student experience to help understand the potential benefits in the context of the program. This is intended to identify the benefits and challenges of Hip Hop programs at schools, thus providing information for future programs and research.

The program takes place at Chu Van An High School, Hanoi, Vietnam for students aged 15 to 18 years old in Hanoi, and is taught in two continuous weeks, full school day (9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.), in the last two weeks of August 2022. The program sought to teach students the basics of Hip Hop pacing using laptops and Ableton Push MIDI controllers provided by the organization. This includes teaching students about beat and song structures, step sequences, sampling, as well as drum recording, bass and melody using MIDI drum pads and arpeggiators. Using a sequential workshop format, students are supported to use these skills to create their own original rhythms and remixes. Each practitioner did this from their own workstation (laptops connected to Push controllers and headphones). Students have the opportunity to present or

"show" their beats to the group at the end of each day and choose a beat to be "mixed" by the Hip Hop Instructor, and provided to students on a USB stick. Students were also invited to participate in a rapping workshop that took place alongside the beat-making on the first day, with two participating students invited to perform their rap for the group. There were 38 students participating in the program, including 12 girls and 26 boys, in grades 10 through 12.

The data collection follows an ethnographic approach, combining participant observation and focus groups. Observational data collected by the first author during program sessions through notes to record key events, Participants were introduced to the program by school leaders and welfare staff. A grade level coordinator explained that they were the most disengaged students in the school, for reasons including: social withdrawal; low intelligence; acts of opposition; inappropriate conduct towards persons in positions of authority; and absenteeism due to "cultural and family factors." Staff noted that differences in faith posed a potential source of conflict within the group. Along with supporting the needs of these students, the allocation of participants to the program has also been associated with reduced disruption in regular classes during the final weeks of the school year.

Data analysis

In line with an ethnographic approach, data analysis follows an emerging and iterative process (Reeves et al., 2008). Both authors discussed observation notes in Skype interviews after each session, collaboratively identifying topics that arose throughout the program, which were used to inform focus groups.

After all the data was collected, a second iteration was conducted in which key moments and interactions were encoded in both observation notes and focus group recordings. This represents a combined inductive topic analysis and inference; Topics identified in the first iteration were further explored, and new topics were allowed to appear that supported or challenged existing topics. The codes are then sorted into loose categories of Benefits and Program Factors Affecting Results to address the research question. The third type is created for codes related to the Program Challenge. Fereday and MuirCochrane (2008) argue that this hybrid approach provides the structure to address predetermined research questions, while allowing unexpected topics to emerge.

4. Results

Although the duration of the program appears to limit potential outcomes (see Challenges section for further discussion), a number of benefits have emerged across both observational and focus group data. They are presented here to indicate the areas where this program shows the most potential, along with the program elements that emerge as the most prominent to support these.

Benefits of the program

The concept of participation is always present throughout the program. This began with an initial briefing from school staff that each student on the team be referred to the program due to participation issues. However, while the issues addressed by staff are somewhat explicit in the

program, student engagement is considered a strength of the program:

"Yes, look, normally people think we're the worst kids, we're doing well" _ 11th graders.

"To me, they are exemplary students. I don't see them being too drastic or anything. You know, they took notice when we asked them to pay attention. Sometimes they lose it but it's natural for young people." _ 12th graders

Respectful behavior

Extending the more general concept of participation, students are also often presented as thoughtful and respectful towards instructors, programs, schools, and each other. An example includes the student's approach to finding a breakout space for a rapping workshop:

"We feel respected, recognized" _ 10th graders.

"At first, we thought that the teachers did not like hiphop games without learning, but when we joined this program, we felt that teachers and friends appreciated the students participating in the program" _ 12th graders

Social connections and support

The initial data that seems to challenge these benefits are observations that students often appear distracted from activities; share headphones or leave their workstation to move around the room and talk to others. However, as the program progresses, it becomes clear that these are important opportunities to build social connections.

When doing this training course, we were very worried about losing the social connection of the participants, because if they are not interested, they will still participate but they will go elsewhere. However, when the program took place, most of the students were very focused and did not use other personal devices such as headphones, personal phones. And when interviewing students, the interview results are as follows:

"I found through the program that I found people who share the same frequency, the same interests and passions in music as well as learning and life, which is exciting," said one 11th grader.

Learning outcomes

"After participating in the program, I feel very relaxed in my mind, feel satisfied in life and more positive, from which I learn to understand more fruitfully" _ 12th graders

"Before I joined the show, I was very nervous and had to rehearse before my old lesson to get together with my dance partner, so that motivated me. I must finish lessons more effectively, faster" _ 10th graders

Cultural understanding

"When we joined this program, we learned about the birth and development of Hip Hop music and the cultural values that music has. this brings" _11th graders.

"Behind Hip Hop music is a fierce and burning cultural foundation" _10th graders

Despite significant limitations, the above results show that the rhythm-making and Hip Hop program investigated in this study has brought many benefits to students. While these relate to different areas of student experience, the topic of student engagement emerging is important; is both the reason why students are considered "at risk" and referred to the program, and the most obvious benefit present in the data. Consistent references to participation throughout the project led us to consider different interpretations of the concept. This includes whether staff use the word referring to more traditional notions of a well-behaved student and whether this notion fails to account for students who participate in different ways.

In this case, it seems that while students are likely to engage in a variety of activities — from academic tasks and active social interactions, to discussions about careers and races — it requires context and themes that are conducive to their participation. Hip Hop appearances played an important role; It provides a central theme and theme that students note is both relevant to their own life experience, and something most of them feel knowledgeable about or confident in. As scholars argue, this gives students a sense of connection and a basic level of proficiency around a topic – the basis from which they can engage and expand themselves.

As Stovall (2006) states, since Hip Hop is linked to students' lived cultural experiences, it can "introduce educational relevance. Developing relationships based on familiarity and importance, students tend to grasp concepts that were initially considered unfamiliar or 'uninteresting'" (p. 586).

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5. Conclusions

This study explores the potential benefits for students of school-based Hip Hop and welfare programs. Although significant limitations regarding program duration and structure are thought to reduce the program's potential for impact on students' lives and learning experiences, the results suggest significant benefits. observable in several key areas, including engagement, learning, social connection, and intercultural understanding. Furthermore, it was determined that teacher support for Hip Hop, the creation of a non-traditional learning environment, and Hip Hop's focus on the curriculum, were considered valuable for promoting students' interests. Although more research is needed to further explore these findings, they provide important evidence on the potential role that Hip Hop and rhythm programs can play in schools in Hanoi and Vietnam in general.

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