

# Development of Communication Skills in Children with Special Needs (ADHD): Accentuation of the Schoolboy's Personality and Musical Preferences

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**Abstract** In the period of dramatic social changes, the question of the place of art in public life and its role in the formation of a certain socio-cultural atmosphere constantly arises. The authors proceed from the hypothesis that the musical preferences of children, adolescents and young people with special needs reflect not only the General musical identification of young people, but also are an independent process of social identification, the main factor of which is music. We consider musical preferences in children with disabilities, namely those suffering from attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. These children and adolescents experience difficulties in socialization and communication, so we focus on the use of music in the development of communication skills in children with this type of disorders. Under the influence of music is the formation of musical identity, manifesting itself through musical preferences and musical activities. The interaction of group and personal aspects of musical identity is clearly manifested in musical preferences and in musical activity. Russian society at the present stage of its development is particularly in need of active creative personalities, people of high intelligence and spiritual culture. Education of the developing personality is impossible without familiarizing with universal cultural values, without deep assimilation of all experience of world cultural heritage of the past. Universal values are an important factor in the revival of the country and its exit from the spiritual and moral crisis. And in this process, music plays a significant role. Reflecting the reality through the musical image, the system of musical means of expression, it has its own specifics in the formation of universal values. Musical preferences are based in adolescent children on two main forms: 1) psychodynamic form and 2) sociological form.

The authors raise the problem of psychological and pedagogical support of children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The aim of the study conducted by the authors is to find ways to influence the main psychological and motor symptoms of ADHD in children by means of music and musical activity. The objectives of the study include: the search for methodological grounds for music therapy effects, selection and testing in practice of adequate methods and techniques, musical material and psychological and pedagogical conditions of the organization of support for children with ADHD syndrome. The research can give impetus to further development of health-saving technologies of General education and programs of support for children with disabilities. This specificity consists not only in the development of the aesthetic and moral needs of the individual, but also in the development of spiritual culture, which is due to the music with high moral content. In the last decade, entertainment music has begun to prevail over other genres. It does not contribute to the formation of healthy tastes and moral qualities of the individual.

**Keywords** Musical Art, Musical Preferences, Music Therapy, Youth and Adolescents, The Specifics of Personality Accentuation, ADHD, Communication Skills

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## 1. Introduction

The modern education system of all civilized countries is in search of optimal technologies to support children with various problems and limitations. The focus of this study is

a "problem" child with a medical diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and, consequently, with a special personality profile. For psychological and pedagogical support of children with such a diagnosis, an important target is to strengthen the personal potential of a child with ADHD, which could contribute to the implementation of the educational process and improve health indicators. Musical art accompanied people throughout the birth of humanity. Psychological scientists T. Johnson and K. Shaw have shown that music is an important means of relating oneself to a certain group of people [1]. German researcher M. Harnitz emphasizes that identity contains the definition of personality as something unique in both the social environment and the individual, and the awareness of the person himself is a decisive factor. In this regard, the scientist speaks about musical identity [2].

Many children cannot support and develop established contact, adequately express their sympathy, empathy, so the communicative competence of children with disabilities includes:

- the development of children's communication skills in various life situations (with peers, teachers, parents and other people around them) with a focus on non-violent model of behavior;
- the development in children of skills of practical possession of expressive movements (facial expressions, gestures, pantomime) – means of human communication;
- development of children's positive traits that contribute to a better understanding in the process of communication;
- development of creativity and expression in the process of communication;
- development of activity, independence, organizational skills of the child in the process of communicative activity;
- correction of undesirable traits and behavior.

The problem of the prevalence of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children is becoming increasingly important, and according to research, the number of hyperactive children in the world is growing. [3]

A music teacher or music psychologist (music therapist) is also able to have a significant impact on the correction of the behavior of a child with ADHD in the learning process through the multilevel impact of specially selected music and educational musical activities. Music has a healing power. Sound and rhythm are the main components that become instruments of non-drug treatment. V. M. Bekhterev, emphasizing this feature, proved that if to establish mechanisms of influence of music on an organism, it is possible to cause or weaken excitation [4].

The topic is relevant for the simple reason that it examines those musical trends that are most popular with most of the younger generation - pop music and hard rock.

## 2. Materials and Methods

The purpose of the presented study was to identify the relationship between character accentuation and musical preferences of the individual. The object of study: adolescents studying in senior classes in secondary schools of Big Yalta.

Researched - the relationship of accentuation and musical preferences among high school students.

A hypothesis was determined and put forward: high school students who prefer pop music have an increased level of emotiveness and anxiety compared to high school students who prefer rock music. The study was faced with the tasks, namely:

1. Identify the features of the musical preferences of high school students.
2. To identify the relationship between musical preferences and accentuation of the nature of their personality.

Defined and created research methods, which included:

- Method for determining the accentuations of the character of K. Leonhard.
- Test to identify the musical preferences of V.P. Morozov.
- Author's questionnaire "Features of musical preferences."

The empirical base of research was made by: Secondary school No. 11, No. 1 of the city of Yalta, Semiizskaya secondary school, school in the urban-type settlement Nikita of the Republic of Crimea the subjects, students 9, 10, 11 classes at the age of 14 to 17 years. In total, n = 280 students from them took part in the study (n = 140 girls and n = 140 boys). At the same time, we distributed these children according to the accentuation of psychotypes. It should be noted that in Russia children with special needs are trained on a par with children without special needs.

Starting from the idea of the influence of music on the balance of excitation and inhibition, which is disturbed in children with ADHD, we can study approaches to music therapy from the position of multidirectional action of music based on the factors of these influences. Such factors can be: 1) the music itself (as the language of sound intonation conveys a sensual image and emotional meaning only through the expression of two main life processes and their combinations-tension and relaxation [5]; 2) specially organized musical activity (musical performance of even the simplest phrases requires continuous exhalation with the voice when singing and rhythmic ordering of chaotic movements expressing musical metrorhythm, when performed on any instrument, all this in the flow of the main two energies-tonic and relaxing [6, 7]; 3) ethnic factor of perception of music of different cultural traditions or, in the medical aspect, anthropological variability of the strength and direction of the impact of musical stimuli [8]. There are certain characteristics in which the music of the West, for example, differs from the music of the East.

Comparing the musical tradition of the West and China, it can be seen that Western music tends to Express dynamic development, it is the music of process, movement and change in time, while Chinese—rather, the music of the state as a stay in any of them out of time [9]. The combination of Western (European and Russian) and Chinese traditions in music therapy became the basis for our pilot study in working with hyperactive children with severe attention deficit and tension.

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### 3. Discussion

The history of the study of emotions in Russian psychology and psycholinguistics has experienced periods of rise and fall. In the late XIX - early XX century, the study of emotions engaged in psychologists such as I.A. Sikorsky, N.J. Groth, N.N. Lange. The researcher Lange calls emotions the "Cinderella of psychology", considering that they are unjustly neglected by researchers in favor of the "sisters-of thought and will".

There is a common opinion: people who prefer rock music have certain characteristic features. It would be especially useful to use such an opportunity in the case of secrecy, isolation of the subject [10].

This is very important in relation to adolescents during their emancipation: due to age peculiarities, they often cannot inform about peculiarities of their own personality, because during the age crisis they did not understand their inner world. The author of the term "accentuated personality" is K. Leongard, a German psychiatrist. Based on the analysis of the works of such psychiatrists as A.E. Lichko, E. Krechmer, and others, as well as his own many years of practice, he identified 10 types of accentuated personalities.

In 1977, Andrei Evgenievich Lichko clarified the concept of "accentuated personality." He came to the conclusion that the concept of "personality", including such layers as intellect, motives and interests, own world perception and world perception, is too broad for accentuation issues, therefore one should speak about character accentuations.

The doctrine of personality accentuation arose in line with the most complicated problem not only of psychology, but also of psychiatry — the problem of the distinction between norms and pathology. There are many criteria for the mental norm for a person [11], but the most common option is an adaptation criterion: an individual is considered mentally healthy, if he can adapt to environmental conditions, he can survive in these conditions.

Against the background of this approach, the definitions

of psychopathy as an anomaly of character, leading to a violation of an individual's adaptation, and accentuation as an extreme variant of the norm. Preferences in music are closely related to the characteristics of the protest behavior of the Russian youth [12, 13].

P. B. Gannushkin made a great contribution to the study of the identified problems [14]. Being engaged in the study of psychopathy, he paid attention to the distinction between norms and pathology (in fact, accentuation and psychopathy - in this context), and together with O.V. Kerbikov developed the following provisions [15]:

- psychopathies are total in their manifestations, but accentuation may not be noted in many aspects of an individual's life;
- with psychopathies, social maladjustment is observed, unlike accentuations (C. Leongard also said this later, noting that accentuations only give a person some features, even oddities, but nonetheless, a person is normal and well adapted).
- psychopathy is stable in time throughout life, accentuation is clearly manifested in one period, and to be almost imperceptible.

Lichko notes that there are critical ages for the formation of certain accentuations. For schizoid this is childhood, for psychasthenia - the first classes of the school, for the unstable - 11 - 13 years, for the sensitive - 16 - 17 years, for the paranoid - 30 - 40 years [16]. As for external influences on the degree of manifestation of psychopathy, Gannushkin attached great importance to this phenomenon, saying that completely disoriented and unsuitable psychopaths are extremely rare. K. Leongard, developing his own classification of personality accentuations, showed interest in the theory of Ernst Kretschmer (1888 - 1964), which was based on the relationship between character traits and body features.

The basis of the theory of E. Krechmer can be represented as follows [17]:

**Table 1.** The main types of psychophysiological constitution

Constitution type	Characteristic features	Body type
Schizoid	Closure, introversion, daydreaming, vulnerability, restraint	The predominance of elongated proportions (asthenic type)
Cycloid	Prone to mood swings from active feelings of joy to periods of passivity and pessimism, sociable, loving earthly pleasures	The predominance of rounded proportions, the tendency to corpulence (pyknic physique)
Epileptoid	Explosive emotions, the tendency to aggression, the viscosity of thinking, increased self-esteem	Athletic physique with well-developed musculoskeletal system
Histeroid	Artistic, sociable, inconsistent in affections, with the features of infantilism, emotional and labile	Gracile body type (short stature, childish features, small hands and feet)

C. Leongard and A.E. Lichko created their own typologies of accentuations, but the descriptions of individual accentuations, despite the different names, are the same.

The typology of K. Leongard is taken separately and examined in sufficient detail, since it is based on the method used in this presented study.

**Table 2.** Comparison of the classifications of personality according

№	K.Leongard	A.E.Lichko
1	-	Astheno-neurotic type
2	Dysthymic type	-
3	Demonstrative type	Hysteroid type
4	-	Unstable
5	Stuck type	-
6	The pedantic type	Psychasthenic type
7	-	Schizoid type
8	Hyperthymic type	Hyperthymic type
9	Excitable type	Epileptoid type
10	Anxious and timid type	Sensitive type
11	Cyclothymic type	Cycloid type
12	Affective exalted type	Labile type
13	Emotive type	Labile type
14	-	Conformal type

Emotion is not just a reaction of our body, it can be a stimulus or cause of our actions. Emotions do not arise spontaneously one after another, they are more or less steadily connected with each other, so it is better to consider emotions as a system. Each emotion can strengthen or weaken the action of another emotion. For example, surprise can turn into amazement or stupor.

Thus, the results of modern research show that different hemispheres of the brain are involved in the formation of "positive and negative" emotions.

#### 4. Results

Music therapy influence performed the following functions in medical and psychological support of children: 1) calming of the increased excitement of the child through

musical-motor working off of tension and gradual braking in the slowing down musical stream; 2) retention and expansion of volume and time of attention at performance of musical phrases on an exhalation; 3) conscious management of movements and speech through musical rhythmization. Methods and techniques included: musical and plastic intonation of music by children, singing techniques and active spatial movement to the music.

Tracing the "sensory program" of a musical work involves mental operations-comparison, analysis, synthesis. The formation of a child's figurative "dictionary of emotions", allowing to expand the idea of human feelings expressed in music, to connect them with life, it is possible in the process of various types of musical activity.

The most frequently listened to music in the following areas: pop and rock. Therefore, the total sample (n = 240) was divided into those who preferred pop music to rock, and those who preferred rock music to pop music.

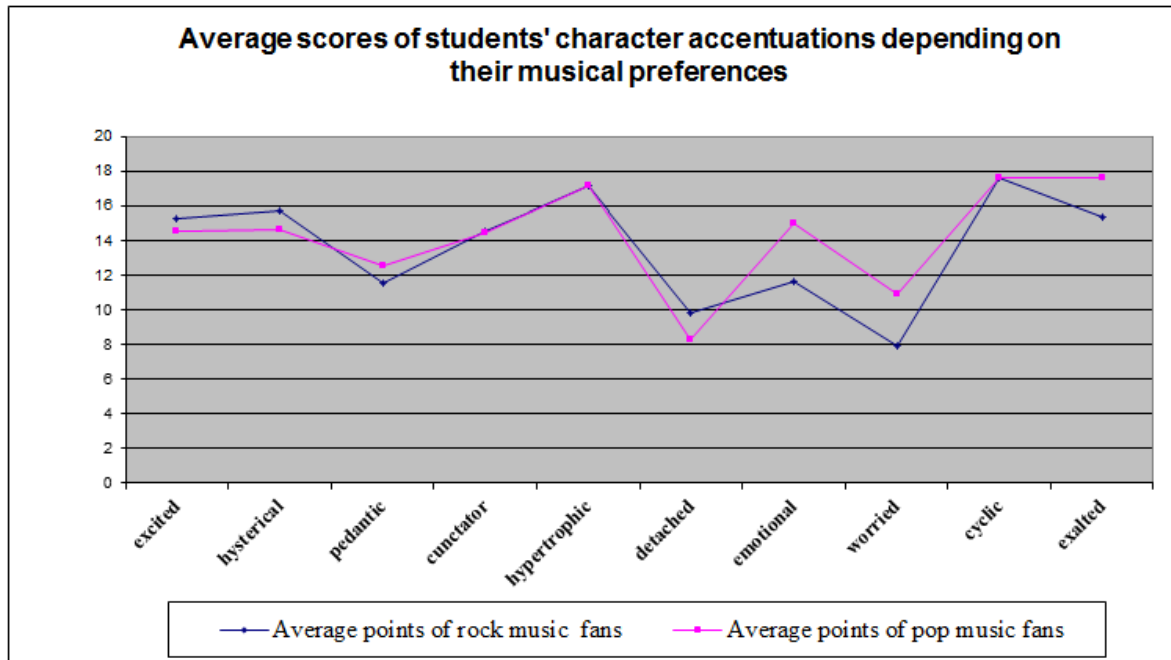
So, in the table number 3 and figure 1 presents the average scores of accentuations of the nature of schoolchildren, depending on musical preferences.

**Table 3.** Average accentuation scores of students' character depending on musical preferences

Accentuation	Average score for those who prefer rock music	Average score for those who prefer pop	$\sum_{\text{эмп}}$
Excitability	15,24	14,55	437,5
Demonstrative	15,72	14,67	482
Pedantry	11,52	12,58	373,5
Jamming	14,56	14,48	412,5
Hyperthymicity	17,16	17,18	819
Distinct	9,84	8,27	501,5
<b>Emotivity</b>	<b>11,68</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>282,5</b>
<b>Anxiety</b>	<b>7,92</b>	<b>10,91</b>	<b>289</b>
Cyclothymia	17,64	17,64	404,5
Exalted	15,36	17,64	335

$\sum_{\text{эмп}} < 307 \Rightarrow 307$  differences are significant ( $\rho = 0,05$ ).

Each person perceives something in his own way, but it cannot be denied that there are some common criteria for choosing a particular genre for a particular audience.



**Figure 1.** Average scores of accentuations of the nature of schoolchildren depending on their musical preferences

**Table 4.** Average scores of accentuations of the nature of male students, depending on their musical preferences

Accentuation	Average score prefer rock music	Average score prefer pop	$\chi^2$
Excitability	15,16	16,09	58
Demonstrative	13,67	13,55	62,5
Pedantry	9,83	12,73	40,5
Jamming	13,33	13,46	68,5
Hyperthymicity	16,0	18,0	52,5
Distinct	10,75	9,55	55
<b>Emotivity</b>	<b>7,08</b>	<b>10,91</b>	<b>33,5</b>
Anxiety	4,75	7,64	46,5
Cyclothymia	13,2	16,09	59,5
Exalted	14,5	15,27	71,5

$H_{\chi^2} < 38 \Rightarrow$  the differences are significant ( $p = 0,05$ ).

On average, young people give music about 4 hours a day, which has a significant impact on the formation of personality accentuations. More than a third (37%) of the respondents listen music from 1 to 3 hours a day, 27% from 3 to 5 hours, another third (30%) - more than 5 hours. Only 6% of respondents listen to music for less than an hour a day. Most often, music is listened by means of playing devices (phone, player, etc.) - they are preferred by 68% of respondents. Another 21% prefer Internet sources. Radio is the favorite music compiler for 9% of respondents. Television preferred only 2%.

For the audience from 16 to 20 years old, Russian rap and hip-hop is a favorite direction in music (22% vs. 8% for 21-25-year-olds). Older listeners - 21-25-year-olds have different tastes - their favorite style of music is Russian pop music (14%).

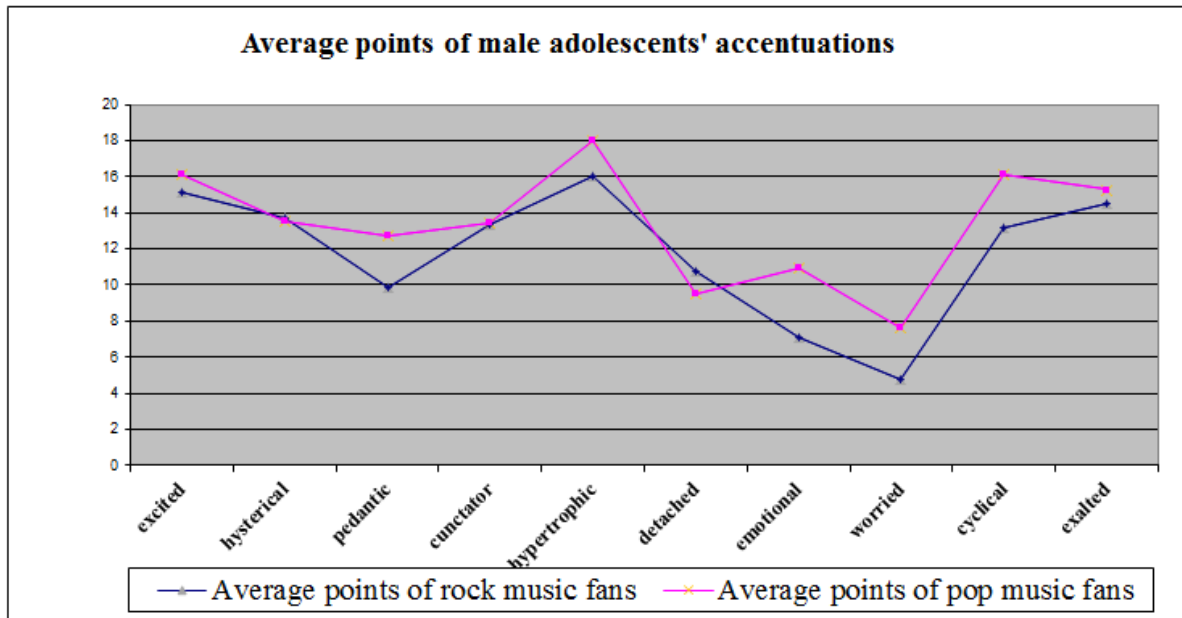


Figure 2. Average points of accentuation in male adolescents

To the greatest extent, music comes close to speech, more precisely, to speech intonation, which reveals the inner state of a person and his emotional attitude to the world by altitude changes and voice characteristics [18].

The most frequently listened to music in the following areas: pop and rock. Therefore, the total sample (n = 240) was divided into those who preferred pop music to rock, and those who preferred rock music to pop music. For the audience from 16 to 20 years old, Russian rap and hip-hop is a favorite direction in music (22% vs. 8% for 21-25-year-olds). Older listeners - 21-25-year-olds have different tastes - their favorite style of music is Russian pop music (14%).

In a quantitative analysis of the results, the Mann-Whitney test was used.

Exploring music as part of popular culture, modern sociologists argue that the diversity of musical styles influences the appearance of a teenager who tries to imitate his idol [19]. Scandalous hairstyle, make-up, stigmas (tattoos, piercings, etc.) mean separation from society. The main function of this image is to strengthen the feeling of inferiority in the imitating teenager, to cause shock, rejection, ridicule, to separate groups of young people from society.

The teenager is confident that, by imitating his idol, he is striding toward life success, well-being, love and recognition of others. It is driven by the first motive of imitation - the hope to adopt a successful experience and good taste. Deceived by advertising, he finds himself outside of society. Social discomfort and desire to find support make teenagers unite in groups. Street party or yard company become their main support [20].

Emotional states and processes (as well as volitional aspirations) play a dominant role in the content of music.

Their leading place in the music content is predetermined by the sound intonation and temporal musical nature, which allows it, on the one hand, to rely on the centuries-old experience of external revealing of emotions by people and transferring them to other members of society primarily and mainly by means of sounds, and on the other - adequately express emotional experience as a movement, a process with all its changes and shades, dynamic increases and declines, mutual transitions of emotions and their collisions.

In different types of musical activity, the ratio of reproducing and creative actions is different, depending on the age of children, the type of musical activity itself. Music perception is a creative process. Performing requires a combination of reproductive and creative activities. Creativity is based on the development of a certain Arsenal of performing skills, as well as the experience of combining, transferring, applying them in new situations.

## 5. Conclusions

This largely depends on the sound of musical works, which should be artistically valuable, figuratively fascinating, close to children in content, accessible in language and at the same time should meet the need of students to communicate with the beautiful.

In the course of the empirical study, the following significant differences were identified: 1) among the fans of pop music, the level of emotiveness is higher than that of the fans of rock; 2) fans of pop music anxiety level is higher than that of rock fans.

Emotiveness - sensitivity in the field of subtle emotions, kindness, sentimentality. Indeed, rock music often carries

aggressive messages that are far from softheartedness: this musical direction reflects the toughest aspects of human existence, for example, the theme of death very often manifests itself in rock art. Pop music basically touches the themes of relationships between people: love, separation, etc., romanticizing them, therefore, adolescents are drawn to listening to such music, for which these values are relevant, which is reflected in the results of empirical research. Political technologists of the "Islamic State" make extensive use of these aspects when creating video materials to attract young people to their ranks [21]. Differences in emotion levels are most pronounced in males.

Rock music reflects, even imposes precisely such qualities, as evidenced by the following fact: female representatives prefer pop music more than rock (98 against 22).

In practice, one can observe evidence that rock music is the more favored direction among adolescents of the male sex: sometimes you can hear disrespect for those young people who prefer the stage (from peer rock fans) - words of contempt or simply non-verbal signals, expressing the same attitude. Therefore, there is an assumption that fans of rock music are more susceptible to social, in particular, gender stereotypes, rather than fans of other musical directions (in particular, pop music). Another significant difference relates to the level of anxiety, which is also lower for rock fans than for pop fans.

A person with a predominance of pedantic power in the structure of his personality in the process of improvisation finds a certain rhythm (often repeated) and tries to follow it to the end of improvisation. It is important to note here that both rock and pop music are identical in this attribute: repetitive rhythmic structures are characteristic of them.

As for people with a predominance of hysterical power in the structure of their personality, they try to find new ways of sounding: perhaps too harsh or loud, but the main goal of such improvisations is to satisfy the need for others to draw attention to themselves (group training). In this case, the fact that rock music attracts much more attention than pop music is obvious: the presentation style is more aggressive, the hard vocals, the harshness of the sound production cause a pronounced negative reaction in most of the public, while the majority of pop music people are mostly neutral.

Often, fans of rock (especially teenagers) are attracted by external attributes: an abundance of metal items in clothes, original hairstyles - all this is also partly intended to impress others, even negative ones. Their aforesaid implies that rock music attracts more public attention than the variety direction, therefore, it must "attract" demonstrative people. However, the study showed the absence of significant differences between the admirers of the discussed musical directions. There is only a tendency to increase demonstrativeness among rock fans.

Perhaps the foregoing fact is explained as follows: rock

music, in addition to hysteria, carries other components as well: for example, excessive aggression may not be accepted by a demonstrative person. States such as dissatisfaction, anger and aggressiveness are accompanied by excitability, but they do not constitute this accentuation: feeling any need, an excitable accentuant can break accepted moral and social norms that would stop individuals with other characteristics. Epileptoid, at the moment of affect, experiences all of the above states, but is not aware of them.

Thus, listen to the usual musical directions, the emotional mood is mostly negative (the music is intended to correct it), and the situations are the most diverse, indicating that music can accompany almost any life situation.

The study showed that high school students have a need for musical influence, listening to music to relieve tension. In stress situations, they often resort to listening to classical music, however, there is a tendency to listen to the musical direction of the individual.

According to the level of anxiety in adolescents, significant correlations were revealed towards the lower level of this accentuation in high school students who prefer rock, since it, according to subjective opinion of adolescents, reduces the sense of danger and anxiety. In addition, the study showed a lower level of emotionality in adolescent rock fans, obviously, this is due to the fact that rock music causes aggressive emotions, while pop music does not have a significant impact on the emotional sphere of a person. A psychodiagnostic study conducted by K. Leongard showed that individuals who prefer rock music, as well as individuals who prefer pop music, did not identify differences in the level of the following accentuations: hypertimacy, dysthymicity, cyclometry, exaltation, pedantry, demonstrativeness, jam, excitability.

Of the various types of emotions, music embodies mainly moods. The emotional aspects of the intellectual and volitional qualities of the individual (and the corresponding processes) are also widely represented in the musical content. This allows the music to reveal not only the psychological states of people, but also their characters. As a result, the content of music includes a huge and continuously enriched circle of ideas.

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