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# The Impact of Emotionally Charged Music on Attentional Bias Towards Color

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Abigail Mitchell, Khanh Nguyen

## The Impact of Emotionally Charged Music on Attentional Bias Towards Color

### Abstract

This study examines the relationship between listening to music with an emotional valence and attentional bias towards emotion-associated colors. The variables considered in this study are valence of music (positive, negative, or neutral sound), color-emotion association (based on the literature or chosen by the individual), and attentional bias towards color, as measured by a dot-probe task. Previous research suggests that from a young age, humans are able to perceive music as happy or sad and show an emotional response to musical valence (Dalla Bella, Peretz, Rousseau, & Gosselin, 2001). Additionally, bright colors are more often associated with positive emotions, while dark colors tend to be associated with negative emotions, but these associations may differ from person to person. In general people are usually attracted to stimuli that matches their current mood (Hemphill, 1996; Becker & Leinenger, 2011). In this study, 49 undergraduate students completed a color attentional bias task three times while listening to music with either a positive or negative emotional valence or neutral white noise. Half of the participants were given the same task with predetermined colors. The other half were surveyed on their individual color-emotion associations and given personalized tasks based on those results. Preliminary data suggests that people's individual color associations are largely consistent with the literature and each other. Additionally, attention may be drawn towards positive colors regardless of background music.