

Research Brief**March 2022****ASSOCIATION BETWEEN MUSIC ENGAGEMENT AND EPISODIC MEMORY AMONG MIDDLE-AGED AND OLDER ADULTS: A NATIONAL CROSS-SECTIONAL ANALYSIS****CROSS-SECTIONAL ANALYSIS****IMPORTANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Though memory decline is a normal aspect of aging, severe memory decline can be a sign of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. Some research demonstrates that music can be used to improve cognitive function among older adults both with and without dementia. For example, playing an instrument can positively impact executive processing and verbal memory, and listening to classical music can have an overall positive impact on memory. However, previous research has been limited to small study populations. This study assesses the impact of music engagement on memory among a diverse, national population of middle-age and older adults.

STUDY METHODS

Researchers analyzed data from music and memory interview questions among 4,592 cognitively healthy middle-aged and older adults in 2016. The data come from a larger-scale study that selects participants across the nation to be representative of the diverse adult population in the US. Participants were asked the number of hours they listened to music and sang/played an instrument in the past week. They were also asked to recall a list of ten words read aloud by the interviewer both immediately and five minutes later. Researchers also collected health and sociodemographic information about the participants. Researchers used multivariable linear regression to assess the impact of music engagement on memory recall.

