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by Asd Asd

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Caffeine and Learning Ability

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Caffeine and Learning Ability

Caffeine help many students get through their learning days and mostly in the afternoon. According to the US Food and Drug Administration, it has expounded that about 80 percent of leaners in the United States take caffeine every day. This fact has also been backed by several non-governmental organizations in the country concerned with the psychological wellbeing of the learners and caffeine use. Besides, it is clear that caffeine does not only keep learners awake but also function as a stimulant to nervous system therefore affecting the body in many ways. Literature will discuss extensively how caffeine affects learning ability by focusing on the effect of caffeine on memory, alertness and mood.

Since caffeine is a stimulant, it tends to affect the brain directly. Various studies in the past indicate caffeine improve short and long term memory. Also, it has been noticed that caffeine has state-dependent effect. This informs that caffeine can only improve memory when taken at the time when the learners are absorbing the information and during when they are recalling the same information. Hence, if the leaners fail to take caffeine at the time certain information is presented, effect of caffeine on memory is minimal at time when they are trying to remember same information. On the other hand, if learners take caffeine when some information is presented and try to remember later the same information without taking some caffeine, the results are worse than when they take caffeine to remember the same information (Kaster et al., 2015). Hence for learners to have maximum recalling of the information presented to them, they have to take caffeine at the time when information is presented and also when trying to recall the same information later. On the contrary, although caffeine has been associated with improving memory it can pose negative effects to the mental health of the leaners. Higher doses of caffeine tend to affect the long term memory of leaners hence making some health practitioners to

discourage regular intake of caffeine (Trunzo et al., 2014). Nevertheless, for those critics against use of caffeine in learners should know that the psychological effects of caffeine are reversible and thus there no need to worry much about it.

Consequently, caffeine intake tends to increase learners alertness in terms of selective and sustained attention. However, it is worth to note that higher intake of caffeine results to additional increase in alertness. Narrowing on the caffeine effect on alertness of learners, it has been found to have an inverted u-curve relationship between task performance and level of arousal (Rogers, 2014). Thus, taking the required levels of caffeine can help a student be more alert when performing both complex and simple attention tasks. Also, for learners to have maximum alertness, caffeine intake must be habitual. Making caffeine intake as a habit to learners improves the rate of detecting errors and real-world language processing. On the contrary, caffeine is confirmed to have harmful negative effects on alertness where learners may experience disrupted sleeps which ends up affecting their day time performance and alertness hence raising criticism on regular intake of caffeine towards learners' performance in school (Park et al., 2015). In spite of that, learners should take caffeine regularly for maximum performance in their studies.

Caffeine and mood are also related. Past research has elaborated that learners taking a cup of caffeine after every 4 hours tends to enable them have a pattern of sustained mood improvement. This translates that in a day for a learner to have improved mood they must take in between 2-5 cups of coffee every day. Taking 2-5 cups of caffeine per day is equivalent to 75mg of caffeine per cup thus resulting in maximum mood improvement (Richards & Smith, 2015). Following the intake of the recommended amount ends up improving the hedonic tone which refers to the degree of unpleasantness or pleasantness associated with a given state which in turn

reduces anxiety. On the contrary, learners taking caffeine blindly to improve their mood without considering the right amounts may lead to increase in tension, jitteriness, anxiety and nervousness (Azagba et al., 2014). Notwithstanding, taking the right amount can be achieved with the help of the learning institutions management to organize how the learners will be taking a cup of coffee for the recommended times a day.

In summation, having discussed extensively how caffeine affects learning ability by focusing on the effect of caffeine on memory, alertness and mood, it is undeniable that caffeine should be used regularly by learners. This is justifiable from the increase in level of memory, alertness and mood improvement whenever caffeine is taken in rights amounts. Again, due to having contradicting findings from various researches carried out in the past, psychologists should come together and clear the mist between the positive and negative effects of regular intake of caffeine among learners.

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