



Study: Infrasonid Likely Behind Reported Hauntings

Description

A chance discussion with neuroscientist Kale Scatterty led to a new study on how humans respond to infrasonid. In 2023, Scatterty's research showed that zebrafish displayed anxiety and avoided certain areas when exposed to infrasonid. This suggested a physical reaction to infrasonid, prompting researcher Schmaltz to investigate if humans might react similarly. They designed an experiment to test if infrasonid would increase cortisol levels in human saliva, a common stress indicator.

Thirty-six participants were placed alone in a room and exposed to either calming music or unsettling ambient sounds. Some were also exposed to infrasonid from hidden subwoofers. Schmaltz expected that infrasonid would enhance the relaxing effect of calming music and increase the fear from scarier music.

Instead, all participants felt more irritated and unsettled when the infrasonid was on, regardless of the music type, and their cortisol levels rose significantly. Notably, none could accurately detect the presence of infrasonid, suggesting humans can experience a physiological response to infrasonid unconsciously.

Although these findings are promising, Schmaltz notes that infrasonid alone doesn't explain perceptions of hauntings. Other factors, such as suggestibility, also play a role. Schmaltz clarifies, "Infrasonid isn't causing hauntings. It might contribute, especially in old buildings with rumbling pipes. If someone already expects something spooky, infrasonid might enhance that expectation. It's part of the puzzle rather than a complete explanation."

Vocabulary List:

1. **infrasonid** //ˈɪnfɹəˌsaʊnd// (noun): sound too low for most people to hear
2. **cortisol** //kɔːˈtɪsəl// (noun): a hormone made when a person feels stress
3. **subwoofers** //ˈsʌbˌwʊfərz// (noun): speakers that make very low, deep sounds
4. **unsettling** //ʌnˈsetəlɪŋ// (adjective): making someone feel worried or uncomfortable
5. **physiological** //ˌfɪziəˈlɒdʒɪkəl// (adjective): relating to the body and how it works
6. **suggestibility** //səˌdʒɛstɪˈbɪləti// (noun): how easily someone accepts ideas from others

Comprehension Questions



Multiple Choice

1. What did Kale Scatterty's research focus on?
 - Option: Human reactions to sound
 - Option: Neuroscience and anxiety
 - Option: Infrasound and fish behavior
 - Option: Calming music effects

2. What was the main purpose of Schmaltz's experiment?
 - Option: To test if infrasound affects cortisol levels
 - Option: To investigate musical preferences
 - Option: To study African wildlife
 - Option: To explore sound healing methods

3. How many participants were involved in Schmaltz's study?
 - Option: 24
 - Option: 36
 - Option: 48
 - Option: 60

4. What was a notable outcome when participants were exposed to infrasound?
 - Option: Increased relaxation
 - Option: Decreased cortisol levels
 - Option: Increased irritation and unsettled feelings
 - Option: Increased enjoyment of music

5. What does Schmaltz suggest about infrasound and hauntings?
 - Option: Infrasound is the sole cause of hauntings
 - Option: Infrasound can enhance beliefs about hauntings
 - Option: Infrasound has no effect on hauntings
 - Option: Infrasound is irrelevant to human perception

6. Which type of sounds were participants exposed to in the study?
 - Option: Calming and unsettling sounds
 - Option: Only calming sounds
 - Option: Only unsettling sounds
 - Option: Classical music only



True-False

7. Kale Scatterty's research showed that zebrafish exhibited anxiety with infrasound.
8. Participants were able to accurately detect the presence of infrasound.
9. Infrasound can be attributed as the complete cause of perceptions of hauntings according to Schmaltz.
10. Participants felt more relaxed when infrasound was introduced during the experiment.
11. Schmaltz hypothesized that infrasound would enhance fear from scarier music.
12. The study included participants being placed in groups during the sound exposure.

Gap-Fill

13. Kale Scatterty's research indicated that zebrafish showed anxiety when exposed to _____.
14. Schmaltz's study aimed to see if infrasound would increase cortisol levels in human _____.
15. The experiment involved participants listening to either calming music or _____ ambient sounds.
16. Participants felt more irritated when the infrasound was present, regardless of the _____ type.
17. Schmaltz believes infrasound might contribute to perceptions of _____ in old buildings.



18. The presence of infrasound could enhance the expectation of something _____
according to Schmaltz.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Infrasound and fish behavior 2. To test if infrasound affects cortisol levels 3. 36 4. Increased irritation and unsettled feelings 5. Infrasound can enhance beliefs about hauntings 6. Calming and unsettling sounds

True-False: 7. True 8. False 9. False 10. False 11. True 12. False

Gap-Fill: 13. infrasound 14. saliva 15. unsettling 16. music 17. hauntings 18. spooky

CATEGORY

1. Health - LEVEL4

POST TAG

1. B2
2. English learning
3. ESL
4. esl news
5. hauntings
6. infrasound
7. L4
8. Level 4

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