

# THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS OF MUSIC AMONG EMERGING ADULTS

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Recording and distribution technologies have disrupted the music industry over the last two decades. Despite financial losses, the music recording industry has witnessed a recent turnaround, but it must consider who its listeners are, how best to reach them, and what needs they seek to gratify. Defined as a period from age 18 through the twenties, emerging adults are immersed in technology and constitute an especially important demographic group for media industries. Taking the perspective that audiences actively and deliberately choose media to satisfy certain needs, the present study explored the listening behavior of emerging adults regarding 21 different music genres via an online survey. It addressed the following research questions: What needs do emerging adults report they satisfy through music? What needs do they satisfy through specific music genres? What are the most popular music genres reported? Seven communication factors were significantly related to listening to 21 different music genres. Implications for the music industry and further research are discussed.

**Keywords:** Music, Uses and Gratifications, Genres, Emerging Adults

## Introduction

In the past two decades, new technologies have disrupted the music industry. It has reason for pessimism about the present but optimism for the future. According to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI, n. d.), recorded music reached a turning point in 2015 as the purchasing of digitally delivered music overtook physical sales by 10.2%. Streaming revenues increased 45.2%, quadrupling what they were five years earlier, and music subscriptions to digital services rose to 68 million people, an eight-fold increase over 2010 (IFPI, n. d.). Despite these numbers, the music industry has witnessed changes in listeners' consumer behaviors that have resulted in lost revenue: "The result is that the music industry finds itself fighting over pennies while waving goodbye to dollars" (Sisario & Russell, 2016, March 24, para. 5).

The music business must reconsider who its buying audience is, how best to reach it, and what that audience uses music for. Musician David Byrne (2012) recounts the old adage, "the musician who doesn't attend to his or her business pretty soon doesn't have any business" (p. 206). Recording companies must determine what needs are satisfied by the product and what genres are most popular. This implies a uses and gratifications perspective and will be the approach taken in this study.

## Literature Review

The uses and gratifications theory is one of the oldest and most adaptive communication theories, dating back to early radio (Herzog, 1941) and continuing through to today's new media (Ruggiero, 2000; Rubin, 2009). It posits that audiences are active and deliberately choose media to satisfy certain needs (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). Audience needs have traditionally fallen into four categories or functions: (1) surveillance (to be informed of news and information); (2) personal identity (to better know who we are); (3) personal relationships (to interact with other people); and (4) diversion (to escape boredom and be entertained) (McQuail, Blumer, & Brown, 1972). The theory has been used to explain how emerging adults use media to gratify autonomy, identity, and intimacy needs (Coyne, Padilla-Walker, & Howard, 2013). Although managers and owners of media institutions exert some control over mass media, the control exerted by audiences is just as important and perhaps even more crucial in today's digital environment where audiences are empowered as never before.

In its first Entertainment Consumer Report, Nielsen (2013) found that "18-24 year olds are driving music consumption in the US, and spend more than 6 hours per week listening to music" (p. 7). The cohort accounts for 19% of all music streamers, and when combined with 25 to 34-year-olds, represents 42% of all music streaming consumption. Nielsen also reports that 40% of music listeners account for 75% of total spending. Buyers of digital music were 45% more likely to be aged 25-34 when compared to the average adults online. The music industry must address how best to market to younger listeners in their digital environment.

Digital media allow users greater control over both the types of music and environments in which they listen. The use of these media has made music more accessible and broadened the types of music emerging adults can experience. Emerging adults are an especially important demographic group for media industries. Defined as a period from age 18 through the twenties (Arnett, 2000), they are prolific users of media (Brown, 2006). College students aged 18-30 average 12 hours a day using some type of media (Alloy Media & Marketing, 2009). Over 90% of adults aged 18-29 are likely to use social media, with higher levels of education and household income being associated with more likely usage (Perrin, 2015). Of all generational groups, millennials (aged 18-34) were the most likely to own cell phones, laptop computers, and MP3 players (Zickuhr, 2011). Bull (2005) makes the case that the iPod allows for the adjustment of mood while on the go.

## **Moods, Emotions, and Behavior**

The use of music to affect one's mood has been widely accepted. North, Hargreaves, and Hargreaves (2004) report that people use music to produce various psychological states resulting in a range of types of engagement. Listening to music has been reported successful at changing a bad mood, raising energy, and reducing tension (Thayer, Newman, & McClain, 1994). Saarikallio (2010) has developed a psychometrically sound scale, the Brief Music in Mood Regulation scale (B- MMR), to measure this phenomenon.

Scientists have used Experience Sampling Methods (ESM) to identify what sort of emotions music elicits. These methods involve people wearing devices that measure their emotional responses to stimuli from the environment such as music. Several ESM studies of music have demonstrated that people tend to experience more positive moods than negative moods when they listen to music (Harwood, 2015).

Music has been suggested as a means for self-therapy (DeNora, 1999; Sloboda & O'Neill, 2001). It has been shown to reduce stress (Pelletier, 2004) and improve moods in

adolescents (Saarikallio & Erkkilä, 2007) and throughout adulthood (Saarikallio, 2010). Wells (1990) found that college students used music to change their moods and emotions and concludes, “It is not just noise or entertainment, but a self administered psychotherapy—that works” (p. 116). Music therapy has been practiced for many years as a non-intrusive measure to enhance positive changes in mood and emotional states (Davis, Gfeller, & Thaut, 2007).

A number of studies over the last two decades documents that music can produce specific emotions in listeners (Balkwill & Thompson, 1999; Brattico & Pearce, 2013; Fritz et al., 2009; Juslin, 2003; Juslin & Laukka, 2004; Juslin & Västfjäll, 2008). Ferguson and Sheldon (2013) found that listeners could improve their general mood and empower positive feelings. Participants who focused on improving their happiness reported greater levels of happiness than those who focused solely on the music. Carlson et al. (2015) found support for the relationship between mental health and music, neural responses to music, and music listening habits. State hospital clients were found to exhibit more inappropriate behavior with hard rock and rap music than they did with easy listening or country music (Harris, Bradley, & Titus, 1992).

## **Identity**

Much of the research on media and identity has focused on adolescents. Arnett (1995) explored media and self-socialization among adolescents. A study of 13 to 14-year-olds revealed that teenagers used to music to enforce their self-identity, portray their social image to peers, and satisfy emotional needs (North, Hargreaves, & O’Neill, 2000). Another study concluded that English and American teenagers listened to music to fulfill self-actualization and social and emotional needs (Tarrant, North, & Hargreaves, 2000). Additional studies have revealed that individuals seek media out to explore their identity regarding gender, sexuality, and ethnicity (Arnett, 1995; Coyne, Padilla-Walker, & Howard, 2013; Phinney, 2006). Media’s role in identity development during emerging adulthood has not received as much attention; however, emerging adulthood would seem to follow adolescence in identity exploration and music would likely continue to play a major role.

## **Social Interaction**

It has long been accepted that music contains lyrics that are useful in people’s social and personal lives (Horton, 1957). Analyses of lyrics have demonstrated the influence of music on society at different time periods (Carey, 1969; Chesebro, Nachman, Yanneli, & Foulger, 1985; Cole, 1971; Denisoff & Peterson, 1972; Harmon, 1972; Pichaske, 1979). Lyrics become focal points for listeners when they provide personal meaning or social relevance. It is likely that listeners will share the content with others, thus spreading and reinforcing the messages contained in the music (Lull, 1988). Interaction also extends to the musicians as performances provoke reactions from the audience providing feedback regarding listeners’ feelings about their performance. Performers experience a sense of enjoyment when this interpersonal connection or “co-presence” with the audience is established. This may explain why audiences tend to develop parasocial relationships with performers as they become interested in their favorite artists’ lives (Harwood, 2015).

Several other uses in music have been identified over the decades. People can create rapport with other individuals using music as a means of connection beyond moments in contact

with music (Riesman, 1950). Clark (1973) claims that music diminishes people's inhibitions in social contexts, helps listeners gain acceptance and approval from other peers, provides an appropriate background for certain interpersonal or social exchanges, generates entertainment for audiences, and transmits warm feelings in foreign environments, among other uses. Through music, listeners can externalize feelings and mental states that lead to satisfactory experiences (Panzarella, 1980). Listeners from certain subcultures can identify strongly with a music genre or artists, outlining lifestyles, group values, and ways of expression that appeal to that audience (see The Subcultures Network, 2014). Sharing musical habits and preferences provides the potential to build group membership, even in large-scale groups where people do not know each other (Harwood, 2015).

## Music Genres

Music genre is a term used to refer to a type of music or several music pieces that are associated with similar musical properties and shared musical conventions (Samson, 2012). Scholars have had conflicting opinions establishing academic definitions of the genre due to the artistic nature of music and subjective musical classifications. Moreover, music genres may overlap with one another, making the delimitation of certain genres even more complex. Genres also can be defined or classified by musical techniques, style, cultural context, geographical location and content (Moore, 2001). Fitzpatrick (2014, claims that there are 1,264 genres of modern music. Apple lists 60 genres and 193 sub-genres on iTunes (Apple, n. d.). For the purposes of this study, a much smaller grouping of 12 popularly recognized genres (Music genres list, n. d.) was used (See Appendix B).

## Research Questions

From these findings and perspectives, the following research questions are posed:

**Q1:** What needs do emerging adults report they satisfy through music?

**Q2:** What needs do emerging adults report they satisfy through specific music genres?

**Q3:** What are the most popular music genres reported by emerging adults?

## Method

The sample was composed of 95 adults majoring in subjects taught within the College of Liberal Arts at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). Their ages ranged from 17 to 30 years of age with an average and median of 21. As with most college students, the respondents fit the description of emerging adults.

An online questionnaire was hosted by an RIT survey site. Questions on the same topic were grouped together to follow "conventional wisdom" in questionnaire design (Krosnick & Fabrigar, 2006). Questions were grouped according to how similar they were to each other, but the exact grouping of the factors on the instrument reported in the North et al. (2000) study (See Appendix A) was not followed in order to avoid the potential bias of order effects.

Lonsdale and North's (2011) 48-item scale was used to measure the uses and gratifications. However, instead of using an 11-point semantic differential, a 7-point scale was used instead (Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1957). The number of response options was

reduced since the 7-point scale seemed to adequately allow for fine-grained distinctions. Although not experts, this cohort tends to be familiar with current music genres. A five-point Likert-type scale measured how often respondents said they listened to specific genres of music with the responses “always,” “often,” “sometimes,” “rarely,” and “never.” The music genres were as follows: (a) alternative music, (b) blues, (c) classical, (d) country/western, (e) dance, (f) easy listening, (g) electronic/techno, (h) European, (i) hip hop/rap, (j) indie, (k) inspirational (gospel), (l) Asian pop (j-pop, k-pop), (m) jazz, (n) Latin, (o) new age, (p) opera, (q) pop, (r) rhythm and blues/soul, (s) reggae, (t) rock, (u) world music/beats (see Appendix B). These music genres have been selected because they are easily recognizable and popular among young people. They appear on <http://www.musicgenreslist.com>

The media use items employed in this study were taken from Lonsdale and North’s (2011) 8-factor model:

- Factor 1 (personal identity): Music is used to enforce self-identity or to project a social image to peers.
- Factor 2 (negative mood management): Music is used to improve mood states and to lighten negative feelings.
- Factor 3 (positive mood management): Music is used to create or enforce positive mood states and entertainment.
- Factor 4 (reminiscing): Music is used to revive nostalgic feelings by reminding individuals of a person, time, or place.
- Factor 5 (diversion): Music is used to pass the time or avoid boredom.
- Factor 6 (arousal): Music is used to regulate levels of arousal in individuals.
- Factor 7 (surveillance): Music is used to keep up with social trends and current events.
- Factor 8 (social interaction): Music is used to interact with others.

Since the five-point Likert-type scale was used to assess how often respondents listened to the different genres, and the uses were measured by a 7-point semantic differential, a Spearman’s rank correlation coefficient was run using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software. The number of respondents (95) was not large enough to adequately employ an ordinal regression analysis.

## Results

A number of significant correlations between the seven factors and music genres were found.

### Identity

Although the role of media in developing an identity in emerging adulthood has been somewhat neglected, the present study discovered a number of relationships between identity and listening to music. Six genres of music were significantly and positively related to identity: rock ( $r_s = .280, p = .006$ ), indie ( $r_s = .258, p = .011$ ), alternative ( $r_s = .258, p = .012$ ), world music ( $r_s = .243, p = .017$ ), new age ( $r_s = .208, p = .043$ ), and jazz ( $r_s = .202, p = .050$ ). These genres range in popularity from first to sixteenth, so there is more to the relationship than just popularity. However, the most popular genre, rock, had the strongest relationship to identity.

One's identity can be defined in opposition to what one is not. Rock and roll began in defiance to conformity in the 1950s. Rock promoted protest in the sixties (Rosen, 1972) and often embodied anti-establishment themes. Alternative and indie are considered out of the mainstream of popular music and culture. Indie music takes its name from "independent," meaning independent ownership of major labels. Both alternative and indie often refer to lifestyles defined in opposition to the mainstream. World music would seem to define identity in opposition to locality. It has been argued that world music "deterritorializes" identity (Connell & Gibson, 2004) so that where one lives becomes independent of who one is. David Byrne (1999) takes it even further, "The term is a catchall that commonly refers to non-Western music of any and all sorts, popular music, traditional music and even classical music" (para. 1). "New age" music took its name from a spiritual movement of the 1970s that positioned itself in opposition to "old time religion." Although it originated in the west, it was influenced by eastern religion and occult practices. Jazz has been placed in opposition to classical since it does not adhere to a standard text, and improvisation is a key element. It is also said to privilege the performer over the composer. Gerard (2001) has explored the relationship between jazz, race, culture, and identity and concludes that although jazz is intrinsic to African-American identity, it is shared by all Americans.

## Behavior

Easy listening ( $r_s = .306, p = .003$ ), dance ( $r_s = .289, p = .004$ ), world music ( $r_s = .279, p = .006$ ), hip hop/rap ( $r_s = .274, p = .007$ ), pop ( $r_s = .277, p = .007$ ), new age ( $r_s = .215, p = .037$ ), were all significantly and positively associated with how music relates to one's behavior. Although easy listening and country music have been shown to have positive effects on the behavior of state hospital clients (Harris, Bradley, & Titus, 1992), the present study confirms the relationship between easy listening and emerging adults in an academic setting. Given that dance is a behavior, the relationship makes intuitive sense. It is hard to imagine dance without music. The statement, "It's got a good beat and you can dance to it," was a cliché often heard on the early music performance show *American Bandstand*. Although hip hop has come to signify a culture, it has also inspired dance styles such as breaking, popping, and locking (Rode, 2006) as well as exercises such as hip hop aerobics. World/beats music can also inspire dance and exercise and even energize listeners but in a more imagined, exotic setting—especially for people residing in first world countries. New age music is often used for relaxation, practicing yoga, and inducing states of consciousness. The feeling of "oneness" and "sense of belonging" is part of the yoga experience.

## Interaction

Only two genres of music related to interaction: pop ( $r_s = .259, p = .011$ ) and easy listening ( $r_s = .204, p = .049$ ) music were significantly and positively related to interactions with others. As its name indicates, "easy listening" the genre may be the least demanding of listeners. The two genres allow for more interaction by providing background or "sonic wallpaper" that can easily be disregarded when one's focus is on other people. One's choice of music can also be used to convey an image of oneself to others.

## Knowledge and Information

Surprising, seven genres of music were significantly correlated with knowledge: world ( $r_s = .367, p = .000$ ), dance ( $r_s = .261, p = .011$ ), easy listening ( $r_s = .243, p = .018$ ), hip hop/rap ( $r_s = .240, p = .019$ ), pop ( $r_s = .233, p = .023$ ), rhythm and blues/soul ( $r_s = .219, p = .034$ ), and alternative ( $r_s = .217, p = .036$ ). World/beats music had the strongest relationship, and that may be due to the need to understand others, particularly those who in a remote or distant location. In describing world music, Nickson (2004) explains, “It’s sociology, a look at the traditions of a country or region, and the way music can express ritual, sacred ceremonies, or politics” (p. 2). It is also the genre that is the most broadly defined in terms of geography and has the greatest number of offerings. Another use of music is to provide conversational currency in everyday discussions. Whether the subject is new styles, trends, and events or dances, attitudes, or fashions, these genres can serve to keep people informed and updated.

## Needs

Five genres of music related to needs: Asian pop (J-Pop, K-pop) ( $r_s = .325, p = .001$ ), pop ( $r_s = .278, p = .006$ ), classical ( $r_s = .255, p = .013$ ), electronic ( $r_s = .228, p = .026$ ), and world ( $r_s = .210, p = .041$ ). The needs gratified by these types of music are as wide-ranging as the genres themselves. Whether it be to focus on or distract from work, stay awake or go to sleep, relieve boredom or pass time, music stands ready to gratify and satisfy needs.

## Negative and Positive Moods

Four genres of music were found to relate to negative moods: rock ( $r_s = .230, p = .026$ ), alternative ( $r_s = .229, p = .026$ ), rhythm and blues/soul ( $r_s = .215, p = .037$ ), and Asian pop (J-Pop, K-pop) ( $r_s = .204, p = .047$ ) music. Although these are not strong correlations, it appears that emerging adults used the genres to relieve tensions and stress, alleviate feeling of loneliness and anxiety, and to escape realities of everyday life and get through difficult times. Surprisingly, blues was not significantly related ( $r_s = .101, p = .331$ ) even though rhythm and blues/soul was.

Six genres of music were found to relate to positive moods: indie ( $r_s = .310, p = .002$ ), electronic ( $r_s = .265, p = .009$ ), rhythm and blues/soul ( $r_s = .261, p = .011$ ), Asian pop (J-Pop, K-pop) ( $r_s = .231, p = .025$ ), alternative ( $r_s = .217, p = .036$ ), and world music ( $r_s = .209, p = .042$ ). Four genres (rhythm and blues/soul, Asian pop, alternative, and rhythm and blues/soul) were also significantly correlated with negative mood management. Rock approached significance ( $r_s = .202, p = .051$ ). There appears to be an overlap between positive and negative mood management, but the correlations are stronger for negative mood management for each genre. It may be that respondents more likely used music to lift themselves out of a bad mood rather than to place them in a good one.

## Genres’ Popularity

It should come as no surprise that rock and pop music tied as the most popular genres in this sample (see Table 1). Listening to rock music was significantly and positively related to sense of identity ( $r_s = .280, p = .006$ ) negative moods management ( $r_s = .230, p = .026$ ) and approached

significance with needs ( $r_s = .200, p = .051$ ) and positive moods management ( $r_s = .202, p = .051$ ). Pop music was significantly and positively related to needs ( $r_s = .278, p = .006$ ), behavior ( $r_s = .277, p = .006$ ), interaction with others ( $r_s = .259, p = .011$ ), and knowledge ( $r_s = .233, p = .023$ ). There was no overlap in what needs were gratified by these genres, but some were held in common with the second most popular genre, alternative. Although less popular, easy listening overlapped pop music by relating to behavior ( $r_s = .306, p = .003$ ), interaction with others ( $r_s = .204, p = .049$ ) and knowledge ( $r_s = .243, p = .018$ ).

Like rock, alternative was significantly and positively related to sense of identity ( $r_s = .258, p = .012$ ) and negative moods management ( $r_s = .229, p = .026$ ); like pop music, it was related to knowledge ( $r_s = .217, p = .036$ ) and positive moods management ( $r_s = .217, p = .036$ ). Although alternative was once defined as be something out of the mainstream of rock and pop, it appears to gratify a number of the same needs and may have become part of the mainstream. Perhaps it has become a sub-genre of rock.

Hip hop/rap were combined into one genre and reported as the third most popular genre. It was significantly and positively related to behavior ( $r_s = .274, p = .007$ ) and knowledge ( $r_s = .240, p = .019$ ). Dance (fifth in popularity) satisfied the same needs of behavior ( $r_s = .289, p = .004$ ) and knowledge ( $r_s = .261, p = .011$ ). Although considered separate genres for this study, they may share more than just the needs they gratify. Since dance constitutes such a large part of hip hop events, there may not be much of distinction between the genres. It may be that the term "dance" is too broad or vague to define a genre of music.

Indie placed fourth and was significantly and positively related to sense of identity ( $r_s = .258, p = .011$ ) and positive moods management ( $r_s = .310, p = .002$ ) but only approached negative moods management ( $r_s = .192, p = .062$ ). Like indie, alternative was also positively related to sense of identity ( $r_s = .258, p = .012$ ), positive moods management ( $r_s = .217, p = .036$ ), and negative moods management ( $r_s = .229, p = .026$ ). Like dance and hip hop/rap, they may not be all that dissimilar, and their distinctions might too fine to constitute separate genres.

The odd couple of electronic/techno and classical music tied for sixth place. Electronic was related to needs ( $r_s = .228, p = .026$ ) and positive moods management ( $r_s = .265, p = .009$ ) but not negative moods management ( $r_s = .199, p = .053$ ). Classical was only related to needs ( $r_s = .255, p = .013$ ). These are clearly separate genres that gratify separate needs.

Country/western and easy listening followed in popularity, but country western did not relate to any of the uses or gratifications. Its strongest correlation was with interaction with others ( $r_s = .103, p = .319$ ) and that was far from significant. Reggae placed ninth in popularity but, like country and western, it too was unrelated to any of the uses and gratifications of this study. Perhaps these genres can maintain popularity among emerging adults without having to gratify any of the needs tested. However, neither blues, Latin, inspirational, nor opera related to any of the uses and gratifications. Note that they were all in the bottom third in popularity.

Rhythm and blues/soul tied with jazz for eighth place. Rhythm and blues/soul related to knowledge ( $r_s = .219, p = .034$ ), negative moods management ( $r_s = .215, p = .037$ ) and positive moods management ( $r_s = .261, p = .011$ ), but Jazz related only to sense of identity ( $r_s = .202, p = .050$ ). There is an old expression, "A blues guitarist plays three chords in front of thousands of people, and a jazz guitarist plays thousands of chords in front of three people." Despite the expression, these three genres were similar in popularity among this sample of emerging adults, although rhythm and blues gratified needs and blues did not. Although these genres are among the most interrelated in this study, they differed widely in terms of needs gratified.



Although not among the most popular (it placed 11<sup>th</sup> out of 14), World/beats related to more needs than any other genre: sense of identity ( $r_s = .243, p = .017$ ), behavior ( $r_s = .279, p = .006$ ), knowledge ( $r_s = .367, p = .000$ ), needs ( $r_s = .210, p = .041$ ), and positive moods management ( $r_s = .209, p = .042$ ). It may be that in trying to find their place in the world, emerging adults find this genre a gentle means of exploring exotic cultures with little danger or difficulty. Although not particularly popular, it is undeniably useful for these emerging adults.

New age music related to sense of identity ( $r_s = .208, p = .043$ ) and behavior ( $r_s = .215, p = .037$ ). Given its relation to spirituality and the practice of yoga, this is not surprising, nor is the fact that it placed one spot above inspirational (gospel), which was unrelated to any of the needs measured.

Asian pop related to needs ( $r_s = .325, p = .001$ ), negative moods management ( $r_s = .204, p = .047$ ) and positive moods management ( $r_s = .231, p = .025$ ). Given that it is a fusion of genres including rock, hip hop, rhythm and blues, and electronic music, it overlaps the needs satisfied by those genres. Given the increasing number of Asian students studying in the US, its unpopularity might be more surprising than the needs satisfied. It placed just above opera, which failed to relate to any of the needs tested.

## Limitations

The present study was limited by its sampling method and size ( $n = 96$ ), so it is difficult to generalize to a larger population. Furthermore, the small sample called the use of multivariate analysis into question. Given the level of data, an ordinal regression would have been appropriate, but there were too many observed cells with zero frequencies to make such an analysis meaningful. Consequently, univariate analysis was employed.

The sample was limited to only students majoring in a subject within the College of Liberal Arts at RIT. Although that college has the widest range of general education courses within the Institute, a larger and broader sample of emerging adults from universities across the country (or other countries) would be preferable. Perhaps cross-cultural, or international studies would produce more generalizable results.

The present study's findings are limited by a convenience sample and self-reported data about behaviors and expressed preferences. Another limitation might be the sample's understanding of genres. Genres are hardly concrete or well defined. This is particularly the case with broad conceptions such as "World" music or unclear distinctions such as those between rhythm & blues and blues.

## Future Study

The prevalence of media technologies among emerging adults has allowed them to gratify their entertainment needs independent of time and space. Where once listeners had to be within proximity of a radio, record player, or performing musician(s), today anyone with an MP3 device can listen to almost any kind of recorded music just about anywhere. They can also choose from a bewildering array of genres and styles of music in order to influence their moods, emotions, and even the way they perceive the world. At a time when the music industry has suffered

greatly from the effects of new technologies, their application has enabled audiences access to a wider range of music as well as the gratification of needs to an unprecedented degree.

The present study has produced a number of significant relationships between listening to various genres of music and needs gratified. Although Lonsdale and North (2011) have produced a psychometric scale to assess the reasons for listening to music, the genres themselves have yet to be refined. Given the expansion of musical genres available to listeners today, it is conceivable that there may be more genres than respondents (Fitzpatrick's [2014, September 4] report of 1,264 genres of modern music is actually larger than most national sample sizes). Genres need to be more clearly defined. As their definitions multiply, the risk is that we will produce more statistically significant but less meaningful results. Future research should focus on developing the concept of genres, but instead of relying exclusively on key terms to define music, perhaps it is time to harness the power of media and use examples of music to provide an illustration of what type of music is being examined. At the very least, a method that includes music (live or recorded) would provide a richer form of media and perhaps a more accurate indication of what is being experienced.

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## Table 1

Most Popular Music Genres by Popularity

Place	Genre	Mean	n
1	Rock	3.5	95
1	Pop	3.5	96
2	Alternative	3.3	95
3	Hip hop/Rap	3.0	96
4	Indie	2.9	96
5	Dance,	2.7	96
6	Electronic/Techno	2.4	96
6	Classical	2.4	95
7	Country/Western	2.3	96

7	Easy listening	2.3	95
8	Rhythm & Blues/Soul	2.1	95
8	Jazz	2.1	96
9	Reggae	2.0	96
10	Blues	1.9	95
10	European	1.9	95
11	World/Beats	1.8	96
12	Latin	1.7	95
12	New Age	1.7	96
13	Inspirational (gospel)	1.6	96
13	Asian Pop	1.6	96
14	Opera	1.4	96

## Appendix A

### Reasons why people listen to music

#### **How music affects your sense of who you are**

- To create an image for myself
- To construct a sense of identity for myself
- To express my identity
- To explore possible identities
- To discover who I really am
- To reminisce about the past
- To bring back certain memories
- To remind me of happy times

#### **How music affects your moods and feelings**

- To reflect how I feel
- To express my feelings and emotions
- To alleviate feelings of loneliness
- To cheer me up
- To make me feel better
- To enjoy the music

#### **How music helps you**

- To help get through difficult times
- To relieve tension/stress
- To take my mind off things
- To escape the reality of everyday life
- To relieve anxiety
- To relax
- To brighten up my day
- To create an atmosphere
- To set the "right" mood

#### **How music affects your behavior**

- To help me exercise
- To give me energy

To sing along to  
To wake me up in the mornings  
To dance to  
To learn how to behave in the future

### **How music affects your interactions with others**

To remind me of someone  
To socialize with friends  
To spend time with friends  
To spend time with family  
To portray a particular image to others

### **How music addresses your needs**

To "fill" uncomfortable silences  
To help me concentrate on work  
To help me get to sleep at night  
To pass the time  
To distract me  
To relieve boredom  
To be entertained

### **How music relates to knowledge and information**

To obtain information for daily life  
To keep up with current events  
To stay in-touch with current fashions and trends  
To have something to talk about with others  
To learn how other people think  
To learn how to do things



## Appendix B

### Genres of music

Alternative  
Blues  
Classical  
Country/Western  
Dance  
Easy Listening  
Electronic/Techno  
European  
Hip Hop/Rap  
Indie  
Inspirational/Gospel  
Asian Pop (J-Pop, K-pop)  
Jazz  
Latin  
New Age  
Opera  
Pop  
Rhythm & Blues/Soul  
Reggae  
Rock  
World Music/Beats