Research

THE RELATION OF MUSIC PREFERENCE AND PERSONALITY TYPE

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Abstract

The study attempts to examine the relationship between music preferences and personality types. Sample was drawn conveniently from the universities of Karachi (N = 70, respondents were between the ages of 18 to 35 years). Music preferences were assessed through the administration of The Short Test of Music Preferences by Rentfrow & Gosling, (2003) and Big Five Inventory by John & Srivastava, (1999) *was used for assessing the personality types. To find out the relation between these two variables Pearson product moment correlation was calculated through SPSS 18.0.*

Keywords: Music preferences, personality types

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Introduction

There is a commonplace statement that "Music is the food of soul". All over the world and throughout the history people used music to express their inner feelings, be it sad or happy. Besides variation in music, people differ with regard to the choices of music. People report great impact of music on them, psychologically and physiologically. Disharmonic music causes a number of negative behaviors have been reported as a result of disharmonic music. People seem to be addictive of music who often listens to Rock music and if they no longer listen they report that they feel depressed and tensed. Withdrawal from such music results in negative symptoms, like depression, which might be due to the heightened state of arousal caused by the rhythm and tempo of disharmonic music. Whereas shifting from disharmonic music to harmonic music results in feeling better. It is only made possible by consciously listening critically to the music and forcing it into the conscious mind.(Torres & Torres)

The purpose of this research was to reveal the relation of the choice of music to personality style and how the change in their music choice can impact their personality.

Knowles, who researched on "The correlation between music preference and personality (2013) stated that music is a medium through which humans exhibit their ideas and feelings. Chamorro, Tomas, Fagan & Furnham (2011) researched on "Personality and uses of music as a predictor of preference of music consensually classified as happy, sad, complex and social". They stated that music fulfills three psychological functions which include improvement of performance of certain task, intellectual curiosity and influencing the person's emotional state to achieve the desired mood. According to Rentfrow& Gosling (2003) people who like intense and rebellious music have creative ideas, introverted nature, and gentle feelings and reduced self-esteem. People who like upbeat and conventional tend be extrovert, emotionally stable and have high self-esteem. People who listen to energetic and rhythmic are extroverted, assertive and have high self-esteem and people who listen to complex and reflective are energetic ,creative and easy going.

The purpose of this research was to reveal that personality style impacts the choice of music. People like the music according to their personality, mood and culture. Their iPods are full with different genres of music which they listen to according to the situation but most of the songs in iPods represent individual's personality. The present study is attempted to test the hypothesis in Pakistani culture.

Literature Review

Music listening is the most leisure activity of human behavior. The basic function of music is its potential to produce pleasure in the listener's behavior. Music contributes to social relation and thereby increases the effectiveness of group action. Work, war, and national songs have bound together families, groups, or whole nations. Consequently, it becomes a mean to reduce social stress and aggression. There are four main reasons people listen to music; social, emotional, self-related, and arousal-related (Schafer, Sedlmeier, Stadtler, & Huron 2013).There are many researches which describe the relationship between music preferences and personality types and its psychological impact. Cattell was the first to explore this topic. He used the procedure of factor analysis to discover the common factor. The results revealed 16 personality factors; each individual was tested on these 16 major traits. The result of high or low on these traits determines the types of personality of the individual. Another attempt to develop an extensive personality assessment was done by McCrae and Costa (1992). They used the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI) to develop the five factors model which they used to assess the most salient personality factor in a person. These factors include extraversion, agreeableness, emotional stability conscientiousness and openness to experience.

In 2013, Rentfrow, and Gosling used exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis to determine the associations of music preferences with the Big Five Personality Factors. According to Aristotle (350BC/1997) music is the most influential phenomenon that an audience can be affected. According to Psychoanalytic theory music is the sublimated form of sexual instincts into socially accepted activity. Creed & Scully 2000& North & Harg(1999) have found that adolescents and young adults prefer to listen to music that their coworkers and friends listen to. These researches describe that

preference for particular music is the effect of social identity.

Music has been reported to have an effect on mental states and moods. Wells (1985) studied and found that music helped individuals to calm down and relax. In 1995, Steele and Brown's sample reported the enhancing effect of music on mood.

Nicola Sigg(2009) researched on music preference and personality and psychological wellbeing. The study indicated no relationship among music preference, self- esteem and social identity, but a definite relationship was found between music preferences and personality traits. North (2008) stated that a person's preference for particular music is linked to his personality. Furthermore, McCown,Keiser, Mulhearn, & Williamson(1991) found that extraverts prefer Rock or Hip-hop music.

All the researches so far have described that there is relation between music preferences and personality types. The present study is conducted to explore the music preferences of Pakistani people and their related personality types.

For this purpose the following hypotheses have been formulated:

H1: Scores on Extraversion highly correlate with Energetic and Rhythmic music.
H2: Scores on Agreeableness correlate negatively with Upbeat and Conventional music.
H3: Scores on Consciousness correlate with Intense and Rebellious music.
H4: Scores on Neuroticism correlate with Reflective and Complex music.
H5: Scores on Openness to experience correlate with Intense and Rebellious music.

Methodology

Sample

A convenient sample of 70 participants were approached**.** There were 35 female and 35 male participants. Their age range were from 18 to 35. All participants were students.

Research Site

Two public and three private sector universities of Karachi were approached.

Inclusion Criteria
- Students who expressed willing to participate.
- Students whose ages were between 18 to 35 years old.
-Students who listen to the music and has knowledge of music genre.

Exclusion Criteria
- Students who were not willingness to participate.
-Students who report that they do not listen to the music.

Measures:
Short Test of Music Preference

The Short Test of Music Preferences (STOMP) was developed by Rentfrow and Gosling in 2003. It allows researchers to measure music preferences. There were 14 genres of music which were divided into Four factors; intense and rebellious, upbeat and conventional, energetic and rhythmic and reflective and complex. This is seven point Likert scale where 1 equals to not at all and 7 equals to very much.

The Big Five Inventory

The Big Five Inventory (BFI) was developed by John & Srivastava in 1999. It is consisted of 44 items that measure five personality domains. Traits of extraversion, agreeableness, emotional stability, conscientiousness and openness to experience are rated on a five point scale where 1= disagree strongly and 5=agree strongly.

Demographic Information Form

The demographic information form collected the information about age, gender, birth order, qualification, socioeconomic status and a question was asked about which music you like the most.

Procedure

Permission from the heads of universities was sought; the students were approached through the teachers. Nature and aims of the study was briefed to the students. They were assured that participation was totally voluntary and anonymous and they could withdraw at any point. Potential participants were requested to fill the

survey form relating to their musical preference and personality type. They were requested to answer all items honestly.

Ethical Considerations

Students, who agreed to participate in the study filled out a consent form. All the students were assured of confidentiality. The study was conducted after approval from the concerned authorities.

Statistical Analysis

Data were analyzed by using SPSS version 18. Basic descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to determine the properties of the sample. Pearson's Product Moment correlation coefficient was calculated to assess the relationships among study variables.

Operational Definition

Personality

The Big Five Personality includes five personality types such as Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness. In Neuroticism, people are worried, insecure, nervous and high-strung. In extroversion, people are sociable, talkative, fun-loving and affectionate. In openness to experience people are original, independent, creative and daring. In agreeableness, people are good-natured, softhearted, trusting and courteous and in conscientiousness, people are careful, reliable, and hardworking and organized (John &Srivastava, 1999)

Music

There are four musical genres such as Reflective & Complex, Intense & Rebellious, Upbeat & Conventional and Energetic & Rhythmic. Each genre consist of different type of music such as Intense & Rebellious has Alternative, Heavy Metal, and Rock ; Reflective & Complex has Classical, Blues, Jazz and Folk; Upbeat & Conventional has Country, Pop, Religious and sound tracks and Energetic & Rhythmic has Electronic/Dance, Soul/Funk and Rap/ Hip-hop

Results

Table No 1:

Table No 1 shows the descriptive statistics. It shows mean, standard deviation, maximum and minimum of age, birth order,gender,scoring of rhythmic, conventional and upbeat, intense and rebellious and complex and reflective.

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	70	18	35	22.69	3.969
Birth Order	70	1	6	2.56	1.451
Gender	70	1	2	1.43	.498
Extroverted	70	16	36	27.27	4.628
neuroticism	70	9	40	24.36	6.413
consciousness	70	20	44	30.87	5.280
experience,	70	26	46	34.84	4.464
Agreeableness	70	23	44	34.59	4.605
uc	70	9	25	19.06	3.795
er	70	4	21	13.59	4.172
rc	70	7	24	16.81	4.126
Ir	70	3	21	12.40	4.196

Table No 2: shows the relation between the personality types (Extravert, Agreeableness Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness to experience) and different music genere (Energetic & Rhythmic, Intense & Rebellious, and Upbeat & conventional and Reflective& Complex).

	Intense & Rebellious	Reflective & Complex	Energetic & Rhythmic	Upbeat & conventional
Extrovert				
Pearson correlation	.171	-.006	.398**	.018
Sig. (1-tailed)	0.78	0.479	.ooo	.441
Agreeableness				
Pearson correlation	-.244**	-.231	-.157	-.080
Sig. (1-tailed)	.021	.027	.097	.255
Conscientiousness				
Pearson correlation	-.077	.037	-.077	-.094
Sig. (1-tailed)	.264	.381	.262	.220
Neuroticism				
Pearson correlation	-.141	.206*	.082	.120
Sig. (1-tailed)	.122	.044	.250	.161
openness to experience				
Pearson correlation	.027	.260*	.159	.337**
Sig. (1-tailed)	.413	.015	.094	.002

Extravert has highly positive correlation (.399) with Energetic &Rhythmic and has 0.00 level of significant.

Agreeableness has highly negative correlation (-.244) with Intense &Rebellious and has .021 level of significant.

Conscientiousness has highly negative correlation with Upbeat &Conventional and has .220 level of significant.

Neuroticism has highly positive correlation with Reflective &Complex and has .044 level of significant.

openness to experience has highly positive correlation with Upbeat &Conventional (.337) and with Reflective &complex (.260) and has 0.002 level of significant.

Pearson's correlation for music genres and personality types:

* Results significant at the 0.05 level.
* Results is significant at the 0.01level.

Discussion

The first alternate hypothesis is accepted that there is a highly positive correlation between the extroverts and Energetic &Rhythmic. It shows that Extroverts people prefer Energetic & Rhythmic music because they are active, social, assertive and outgoing. Steele, Anita & Louise(2011)studied the relation of professional music on cognitive performances of introverts and extroverts by using MBIT (developed by Myers & Briggs in 1975) .The study found that music teachers and therapists believed that people who like to study music are more extroverted. The scores of music teachers and therapists was high on extroversion than introversion. The result shows that Energetic & rhythmic music shows a strong positive correlation with extroversion; negative correlation to agreeableness, slightly negative correlation with conscientiousness and positive correlation to openness and emotional stability.

The result shows that Agreeableness has negative correlation with Upbeat & Conventional music. In 2012 Glenne wrote on "Effect of felt emotion and individual differences". According to

Glenne high scores on agreeableness generally reveal a tendency to be more emotionally reactive to all music, as table shows that scores on upbeat & conventional music shows positive correlation with extraversion's highly negative correlation with agreeableness; a negative correlation with conscientiousness; a positive correlation with emotional stability and a strong correlation with openness to experience.

The study also finds out that conscientiousness is positively correlated with Reflective& Complex music and highly negative correlation with Upbeat &Conventional music. Many researches revealed that conscientiousness is correlated with Intense & Rebellious. It could be possible that people who chose these genres were not aware of these music and they just chose them because they were feeling social desirability that what other think about themselves that they do not have information about music. It is also possible that in Pakistani culture people do not listen heavy metal and alternative music. Many people did not know about alternative and heavy metal so it is also possible that lack of knowledge about music brought this result.

As the study proved that Neuroticism is highly positively correlated to Reflective and complex music. They choose Rock. Folk. & Jazz music. Neurotic people tend to be insecure, sad, worried and nervous so they like to listen to slow and sad music. Neuroticism is found to be positively correlated with emotional use of music.

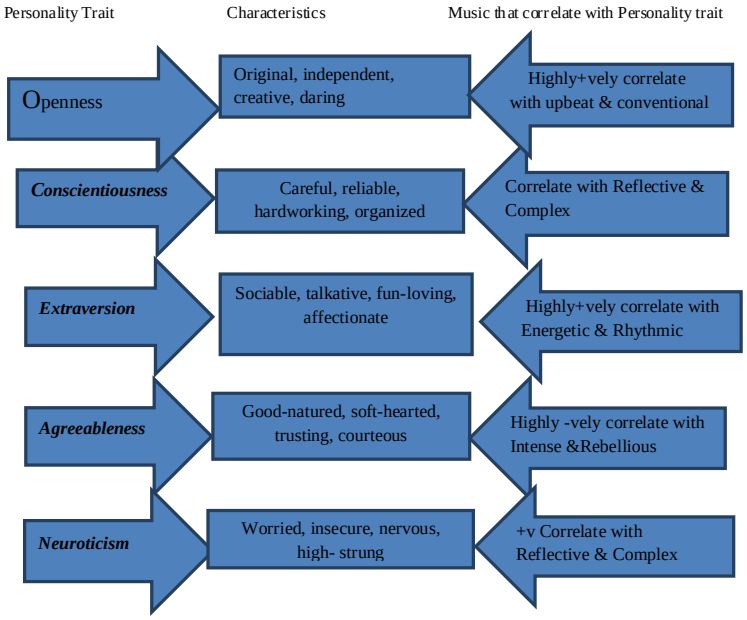
As the study shows that Openness to experience has no correlation with Intense & Rebellious music instead of these students of Karachi who are Open to experience chose Upbeat & Conventional and Reflective & Complex music because they are open to experience .They try new thing to get experience that's why they listen to both of them instead of only one.

As the researches have revealed that there is a link between personality and music preferences. Camorro –Premuzic stated in his research on "Psychology and musical preference"(2011) that music preference is influenced by the individual thought that how they might be perceived by others.

As it is discussed that mood can also influence the preference of music; the finding of Vuoskoski and Thomas on "Who enjoys sad music and why" (2011) showed that whether people are in bad or good mood when listen to the music it affects on mood and responds according to that type of music which they listen to. Results of some of the studies are in line with Rentfrow and Gosling's study (2003) while others are not. This shows the relationship between particular music and personality type may be dependent on the cultural, region, current music standard and knowledge of music. With the passage of time personality of individual does not change but the trend of music changes so it affects the result so future researches should also take into account the current trends of music.

On the basis of the present study the following model has been developed.

Working Model of Personality and Music



Conclusion

- The first alternate hypothesis is accepted that extroverted positively correlates with Energetic & Rhythmic.
- The second alternative hypothesis is accepted that Agreeableness negatively correlates with Conventional & Upbeat.

- The third alternative hypothesis is rejected that Consciousness correlates with Intense and Rebellious.
- The fourth alternative hypothesis is accepted that Neuroticism highly positively correlates with Reflective and Complex.
- The fifth alternative hypothesis is rejected that openness to expirence correlates with Intense & Rebellion.

Recommendation and Limitations

It is recommended that sample size should not only be taken from universities. There should be a good representation of population that finding can be generalized to the whole population of Pakistan. The ratio of male and female should be equally taken. The music genres should be asked which are being listened to and known in Pakistani culture.

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