



Music Preferences and Consumption Habits among Students of Hyderabad University: A Study Based on Digital Music Platforms



Mohit Mehta¹

Student, MPA, University of Hyderabad,
Hyderabad



Dr. Pragya Pyasi²

Assistant Professor, Department of Music,
University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad

¹Research Scholar, ²Co-Author

Abstract

The current quantitative analysis investigates the impact of digital music platforms on music preference and consumption among students of Hyderabad University. The study aims to understand students' music preferences and consumption habits at the University of Hyderabad. Data was collected from students aged under 18-25 years and 25 years and above studying various disciplines through a questionnaire that concentrates on their preferences and listening habits. This includes the types of digital music platforms preferred, frequency of music consumption, and preferred genres. The result shows that film music, digital audio music platforms, and melody are the most preferred components among Hyderabad University students.

Keywords: Digital Platforms, Music Preferences, Music Consumption, Hyderabad University, Music consumption.

Research Paper

Introduction

Diverse musical preferences among people have always captivated our thoughts. It's not just a commodity to entertain people. The music they listen to is a reflection of their culture and identity. But unlike in the past, digital music platforms have changed how people access, share, and engage with music. This research aims to explore the pattern of music listening and determine the relationship between age and gender with musical genres, components of music, and digital music platforms preferred by students of the University of Hyderabad. Based on the literature review, the researchers' hypotheses are:

1. Age factors relate to music preference and consumption habits.
2. Gender differences regarding music preferences and consumption will be visible.
3. Digital music platforms will be preferred over other listening modes.

Furthermore, this research explores and showcases the

underlying dynamics of the preferences for various genres, digital music platforms, and frequency of consumption, which determines the musical landscape within this academic community that belongs to a diverse demographic background.

Music Preferences

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, "Preference is the fact of liking or wanting one thing over the other". Musical preference (MP) is an inclination of an individual towards a particular type of music genre that expresses how much one likes or dislikes a specific song or genre of music (Finnas 2). (Greasley & Lamont 263) define MP as a fondness for one particular genre of music compared to another, which reflects the entire pattern of an individual's preference.

LeBlanc (29) introduced an interactive theory, which defines MP as the result of the input information and the listener's characteristics. The listener's cultural environment and the musical stimulus comprise the input information. In other words, music preference decisions are complicated and influenced by various

elements, such as the listener's personality and the input information they are exposed to (Schulten 160).

Gender and musical preference

The gender of a person is more relatable to musical preferences, but some preferences vary due to age factors (Teo 358). In a cohesive youth audience (college students), men and women are two traditions that use and respond to music differently, claim Christenson and Peterson. They Prefer different songs and genres of music in various situations and behave according to them. Usually, they prefer that particular type of genre for emotional involvement and destressing of the mind. Males prefer more devotional and cultural songs, while females listen to emotional and melodious songs (Upadhyay et al., 1).

Additionally, according to (Fox & Wince 216), women tend to prefer "pop hits" or mainstream popular music more than men, whereas, for men, the term mainstream is essentially unfavourable (Christenson & Peterson). Males tend to prefer heavy metal and rap music over pop music. Males' fealty to music is core and subjective, whereas females' use of music is more often secondary e.g., to enhance mood and avoid loneliness. (Christenson & Peterson). Modern (rock, pop, jazz, heavy metal) and adult (rap) music are preferred mainly by males (Hargreaves et al.). In contrast, women listen to melodious jazz, Latin, reggae, and Western music (Lorenzo-Quiles et al.) (Gurgen, 1).

Age and Musical Preference

Several studies corroborate that without any deviation, the intensity of musical preferences is directly associated with age (North;Fricke & Herzberg). With advancing age, everything changes, along with musical preferences. According to North, 2010, age is a relevant variable for Classic, Jazz, Mainstream, Folk, Latin, and Functional metal music style preferences. (Hargreaves 54), in one of his studies, found that children's proneness to allocating music such as 'pop', 'folk', or 'jazz' is enhanced by age. Aged between 12-18 years, 'pop' is the most preferred style of music among children and young adolescents (Crowther & Durkin, 136) Its preference is enhanced over the age range, and a decrement is seen

for most other styles of music (Hargreaves et al., 246). Rap music preference declines suddenly after age 12 or 13 (Hargreaves et al., 247). Researchers revealed that students preferred fast-tempo music over slower ones (Fung, 48; LeBlanc, 283). It was discovered that younger listeners preferred louder music than older listeners (Smith, 28). As people age, the need to use music for social networking (such as expanding existing social networks) also arises (White, 12). Additionally, gender and age interact fascinatingly. Unlike boys, girls have an optimistic temperament towards music at all age levels, which is more defined in the lower age levels (Hargreaves et al., 244). This temperament increased with age, and the gender gap declined with this increase.

Music Consumption Habits

The patterns and behaviours individuals exhibit in how they engage with and experience music describe Music consumption habits. It includes several activities related to discovering, listening to, and interacting with music across various platforms and formats. Though Consumption Habits cover a vast arena of preferences such as Platform Preference, Genre Preferences, Listening Context, Artist Engagement and Format Preferences, this paper focuses on the Student's preferences based on Genre, Digital music Platforms and the components of music.

Methodology

A convenient sample of 350 students aged 18 to 25 and 25 & above from the University of Hyderabad was selected to ensure representation across genders and various streams like Arts, Humanities, Science & Engineering, and Management Studies. A questionnaire on Google form was distributed through WhatsApp, and QR code was sent to 400 respondents. Researchers got responses from 387 participants, and after removing the incomplete responses and outliers, 350 samples were taken for the analyses in each age group. The final sample includes 106 males (60.5%), 69 females (39.4%) aged between 18 to 25, and 112 males (64%), 63 (36%) females aged between 25 and above. The Data was collected in April 2023.

Results and Discussion

Age and Genres

Age	Classical	Film	Folk	Semi-Classical	Western Music	Grand Total
18 to 25 years	33	87	26	27	2	175
25 and Above	28	81	29	32	5	175
Grand Total	61	168	55	59	7	350

Table: 1



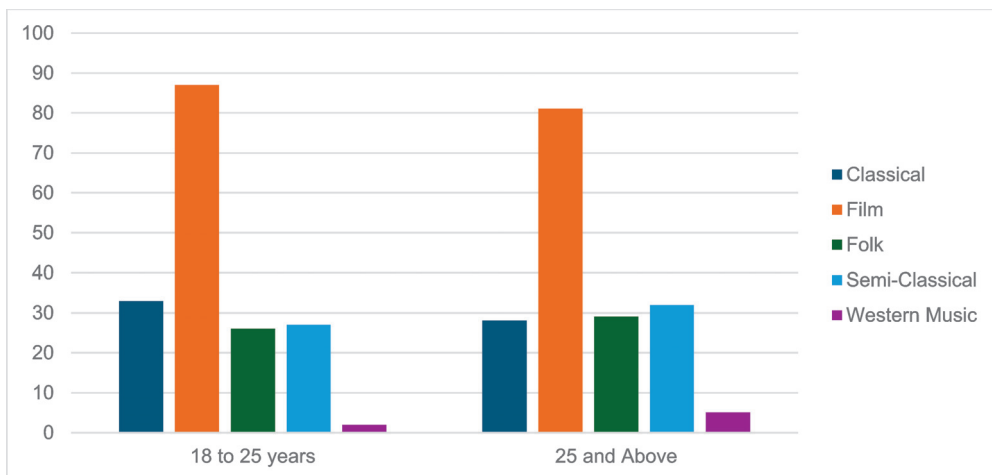


Figure: 1

The analysed data shows that students in the age ranges of 18 to 25 and 25 above have a strong preference for film music. 24.85 % of students under the age range of 18 to 25 are more likely to be exposed to modern popular culture, including films and soundtracks. The 23.14% of students under the age group of 25 and above indicate that their propensity for film music stays the same even as students get older. Second in popularity are genres of classical and semi-classical music. 17.42% of the entire population of students prefer classical, and 16.85% prefer semi-classical music. Folk music is the least preferred genre among the students. 7.42% of students in the 18 to 25 age range and 8.28 % of students in the 25 and above age range prefer folk music. 2% of the entire population prefer Western music.

Gender and Genres

Gender	Classical	Film	Folk	Semi-Classical	Western	Grand Total
Female	23	62	15	28	4	132
Male	38	106	40	31	3	218
Grand Total	61	168	55	59	7	350

Table: 2

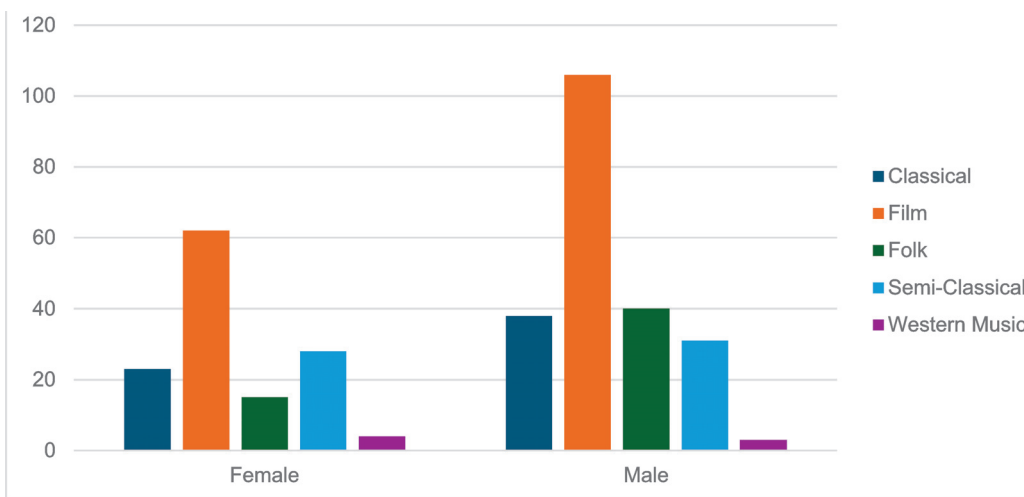


Figure: 2

Both males and females majorly prefer film music in comparison with other genres such as classical, semi-classical, folk, and Western music. 48% of the total population likes film music, which includes 30.28 % of males and 17.72% of females. 17.42 % prefer Classical Music, 16.85% of the total population likes semi-classical music, 15.71 % like Folk music, and 2% prefer Western music.



Preference for the Components of Music

Age	Melody	Lyrics	Rhythm	Grand Total
18 to 25 years	81	55	39	175
25 and Above	125	18	32	175
Grand Total	206	73	71	350

Table: 3

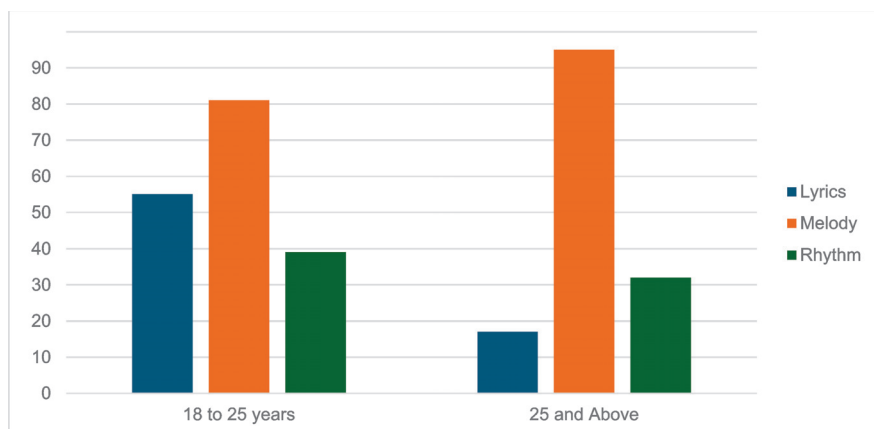


Figure: 3

Among different components of music, Melody is a significant preference in both age groups. In the 18 to 25, 46.28% and 71.42% of the 25 and above category prefer to listen to melody in music. Compared to the 25 and above age group, 31.42% of students in the 18 to 25 age group prefer lyrics. Other components, such as lyrics, rhythm, are preferred by 33.7% of students of the entire population.

Gender and Components of Music

Age	Melody	Lyrics	Rhythm	Grand Total
Female	76	32	24	132
Male	130	41	47	218
Grand Total	206	73	71	350

Table: 4

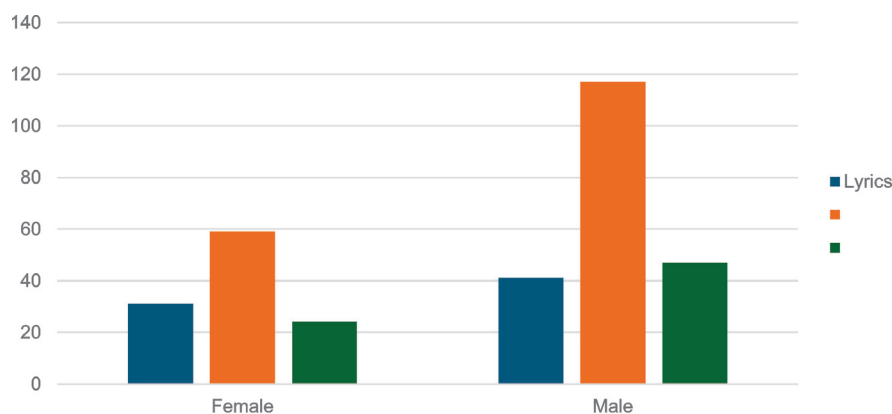


Figure: 4

In contrast, other musical elements like lyrics, rhythm, and the melodic part are primarily favoured by both males and females. Of the total population, 21.71% of females and 37.14% of males prefer melody. Female preference is 6.85% for rhythm and 9.14% for lyrics. On the other hand, males prefer 13.42% rhythm, and 11.71% lyrics.

Preference for Digital Platforms

Age	Audio-Visual Platform	Digital audio music platform	Grand Total
18 to 25 years	34	141	175
25 and Above	37	138	175
Grand Total	71	279	350

Table: 5

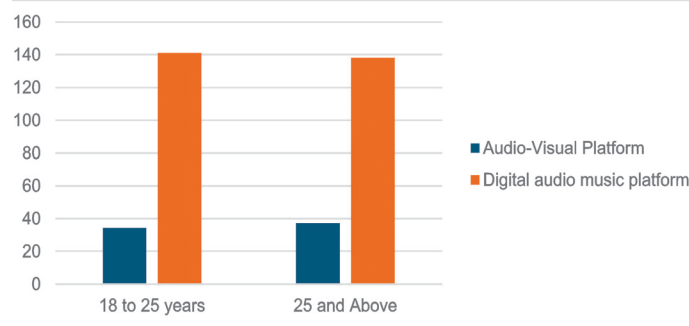


Figure: 5

Both age groups strongly prefer digital audio music platforms such as Spotify. Digital audio platforms are preferred by 40.28% of respondents aged 18 to 25, 39.42% aged 25 and above. Of the total student population, 20.28% prefer audio-visual platforms like YouTube.

Gender and Digital Platforms

Gender	Audio-Visual Platform	Digital audio music platform	Grand Total
Female	23	109	132
Male	48	170	218
Grand Total	71	279	350

Table: 6

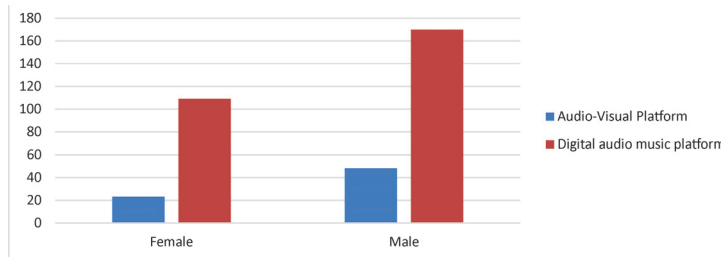


Figure: 6

Unlike other digital platforms, audio digital platforms like Spotify are primarily preferred by both genders. Of the total population, 31.14% of females and 48.57% of males prefer digital audio-visual platforms, while 6.57 % of females and 13.71% of males prefer audio-visual platforms.

Age and Music Consumption

Age	While Break	While Driving	While Sleeping	While studying	While working	While Workout	Grand Total
18 to 25 years	10	15	14	9	117	10	175
25 and Above	9	19	19	9	111	8	175
Grand Total	19	34	33	18	228	18	350



Table: 7

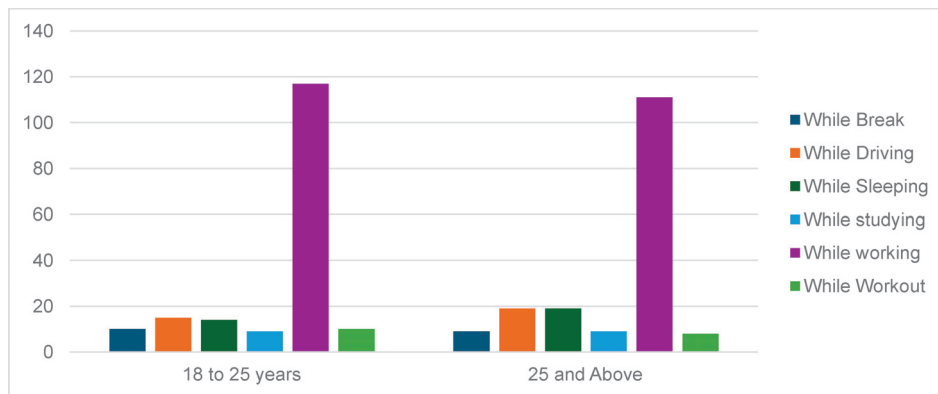


Figure: 7

Studies show that music can improve efficiency while working. This is evident in the present research findings, too. 65.23% of the total population prefers to listen to music while working. 9.71 % listen while driving, 9.42 % listen while sleeping, and rest while working and studying.

Gender and Music Consumption

Gender	While Break	While Driving	While Sleeping	While studying	While working	While Workout	Grand Total
Female	7	13	11	3	99	4	137
Male	12	21	22	15	129	14	213
Grand Total	19	34	33	18	228	18	350

Table: 8

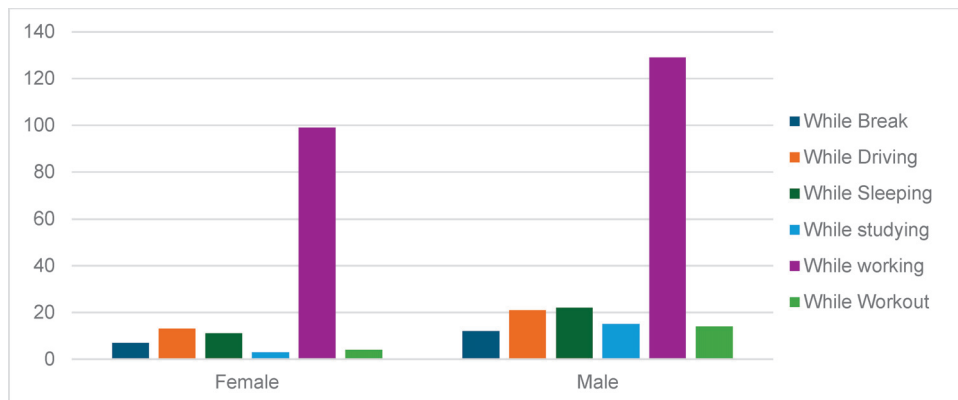


Figure: 8

28.28% of females and 36.85% of males, which incorporates 65.13 % of the total sample size, prefer to listen to music while working. Additional findings related to the duration of music consumption and the relation of music preferences to the stream of study were found.

Duration of music listening

Age	1 hour	Less than 1 hour	More than 1 hour	Grand Total
18 to 25 years	29	52	94	175
25 and Above	33	56	86	175
Grand Total	62	108	180	350

Table: 9



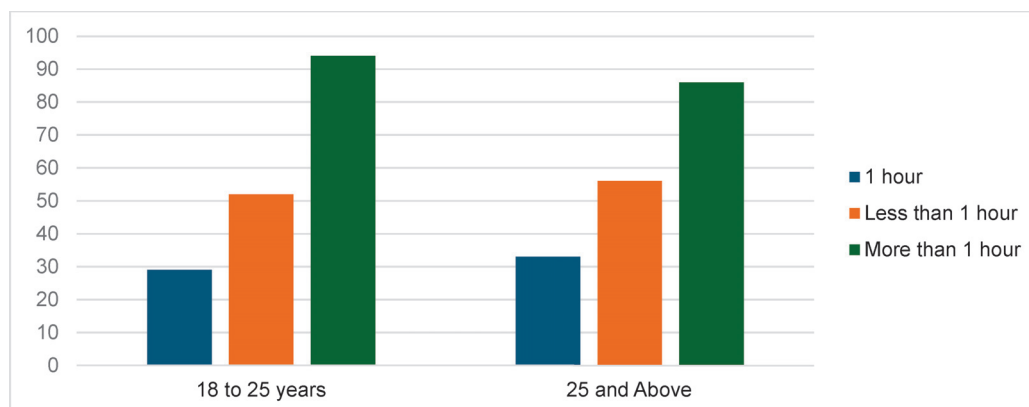


Figure: 9

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study revealed various intriguing facets of how young individuals interact with music in today's digital age. University students are more willing to prefer film music, melody, and digital audio music platforms to consume music across all age groups. This suggests that the original music, movie themes, and online music services are more desirable. Furthermore, Students' music consumption habits are also motivated by various factors, which reveals a complex relationship with music. A maximum number of students listen to music for over one hour and most of them listen while working. This proves that listening to music helps them to feel engaged and relieves stress. Music profoundly affects students' mental and physical health, as evidenced by the emotional connection many feel. It is a therapeutic outlet that offers relaxation as students navigate the difficulties in academic life and personal growth.

A significant majority, or 82.8%, of the population surveyed in this study expressed a preference for vocal and instrumental music, which is one of the study's most startling findings. This finding implies that students have a diverse appreciation for music, recognising the subtleties and beauty in lyrical and instrumental compositions.

Acknowledgement

The authors thank Pandit (Professor) Sanjoy Bandopadhyay for his support and guidance during the data analysis. His valuable input and immense knowledge of statistical tools guided us through out the research work.

References

- Finnäs, Leif. "How can musical preferences be modified? A research review." *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* (1989): 1-58.
- Greasley, Alinka, and Alexandra Lamont. "Musical preferences." *The Oxford handbook of music psychology 2* (2016): 263-281.
- LeBlanc, Albert. "An interactive theory of music preference." *Journal of Music Therapy* 19.1 (1982): 28-45.
- Schulten, Marie Luise. "Musical preference: A new approach to investigate its structure and development." *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* (1987): 160-165.
- Teo, Timothy. "Relationship of selected listener variables and musical preference of young students in Singapore." *Music Education Research* 7.3 (2005): 349-362.
- Christenson, Peter G., and Jon Brian Peterson. "Genre and gender in the structure of music preferences." *Communication Research* 15.3 (1988): 282-301.
- Upadhyay, Durgesh, Ridhima Shukla, and Aheli Chakraborty. "Factor structure of music preference scale and its relation to personality." *Journal of Indian Academy of Applied Psychology* 43.1 (2016): 104-113.
- Fox, William S., and Michael H. Wince. "Musical taste cultures and taste publics." *Youth & Society* 7.2 (1975): 198-224.
- Hargreaves, David J., Chris Comber, and Ann Colley. "Effects of age, gender, and training on musical preferences of British secondary school students." *Journal of Research in Music Education* 43.3 (1995): 242-250.
- Lorenzo-Quiles, Oswaldo, João F. Soares-Quadros Jr, and Johanna E. Abril. "Musical preferences of Brazilian high school students." *Plos one* 15.9 (2020): e0239891.

- Gürgen, Elif Tekin. "Musical preference and music education: Musical preferences of Turkish university students and their levels in genre identification." *International Journal of Music Education* 34.4 (2016): 459-471.
- North, Adrian C. "Individual differences in musical taste." *The American Journal of Psychology* 123.2 (2010): 199-208.
- Fricke, Kai R., and Philipp Y. Herzberg. "Personality and self-reported preference for music genres and attributes in a German-speaking sample." *Journal of Research in Personality* 68 (2017): 114-123.
- Hargreaves, D. J. (1982). The development of aesthetic reactions to music. *Psychology of Music* [Special Issue], 51-54.
- Crowther, Robert D., and Kevin Durkin. "Sex and age related differences in the musical behavior, interests and attitudes towards music of 232 secondary school students." *Educational Studies* 8.2 (1982): 131-139.
- May, William V. "Musical style preferences and aural discrimination skills of primary grade school children." *Journal of Research in Music Education* 33.1 (1985): 7-22.
- Fung, C. Victor. "College students' preferences for world music." *Contributions to Music Education* (1994): 46-63.
- LeBlanc, Albert, and Jan McCrary. "Effect of tempo on children's music preference." *Journal of Research in Music Education* 31.4 (1983): 283-294.
- Smith, David S. "Preferences for differentiated frequency loudness levels in older adult music listening." *Journal of Music Therapy* 26.1 (1989): 18-29.
- White, Christine Gifford. *The effects of class, age, gender and race on musical preferences: an examination of the omnivore/univore framework*. Diss. Virginia Tech, 2001.