

IMPACT OF MUSIC PREFERENCES ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF ADOLESCENTS

DR. VINOD KUMAR JAIN

Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, Teerthanker Mahaveer University, Moradabad UP.

Abstract

Music has a remarkable ability to evoke emotions and is one of the most pleasurable human experiences. Psychological well-being involves maintaining positive relationships, achieving personal goals, independence, purpose, and ongoing personal growth. It is attained by balancing life's challenges with rewarding moments, which contributes to overall mental health.

Objective: *To examine the impact of music preferences on the psychological well-being of adolescents and to evaluate any differences in psychological well-being between male and female adolescents based on their music preferences.*

Method: *The sample consisted of 80 adolescents aged 16 to 18 years, using a combination of purposive and incidental sampling methods.*

Tools: *The Psychological Well-Being Scale, developed by D. S. Sisodia and Pooja Choudhary, was used.*

Result and Conclusion: *The analysis found no significant differences in psychological well-being related to music preferences among adolescents.*

Keywords: *Music preference, psychological well-being*

INTRODUCTION

Education is a complex effort aimed at positively shaping students' behavior, a goal that can be achieved by emphasizing simplicity, effectiveness, engagement, and the attainment of desired outcomes. Music, a universal form of expression, has been woven into the fabric of human culture for centuries, serving as a means of communication, celebration, and reflection. Its profound impact on emotions, memory, and sensory experiences has long fascinated researchers, particularly in the context of mental health. One effective strategy to enhance students' emotional involvement and wellbeing is through the use of music. Listening to music has a notable impact on reducing anxiety and enhancing wellbeing among undergraduate students. In modern times, the connection between music and psychological well-being has become increasingly apparent, with mounting evidence suggesting that music can influence mental states in powerful ways. Music provides a platform for children to express and understand emotions through melody, rhythm, and lyrics, fostering emotional intelligence from an early age. (Jain V. K., Examine the viewpoints of preschool teachers toward music as pedagogical tools, 2024)

For adolescents, music plays a crucial role in emotional regulation, acting as a soothing agent during stressful times and offering relief from anxiety, depression, and mood disorders. Different genres and rhythms can invoke a range of emotions, from calmness and relaxation to motivation and excitement. Listening to calming music, for instance, has been shown to reduce cortisol levels, a hormone associated with stress, while upbeat music can elevate mood by increasing dopamine and serotonin levels. This capacity of music to influence emotional states allows individuals to harness it as a therapeutic tool to manage their mental health.

Furthermore, music also reflects personal identity, with the type of music people are drawn to often serving as a mirror of their inner thoughts, experiences, and emotional landscapes. It becomes a form of self-expression, helping people communicate feelings they may not be able to put into words. For many adolescents, music connects them to memories of significant life events or helps them process complex emotions, providing a sense of validation and understanding.

As a result, music therapy has become an important tool in mental health treatment, used to help individuals explore their emotions and cope with challenges. Its ability to promote self-awareness, emotional release, and relaxation makes it an invaluable resource for fostering resilience and psychological well-being.

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Psychological well-being is a multifaceted concept that plays a crucial role in an individual's mental health. It encompasses both hedonic and eudaimonic happiness. Hedonic happiness refers to the experience of pleasure and positive emotions, such as joy and satisfaction. Eudaimonic happiness, on the other hand, involves a deeper sense of fulfillment and purpose, often linked to the realization of one's potential and living in accordance with one's values. Resilience, or the ability to bounce back from adversity, is another key aspect of psychological well-being. Resilient individuals can maintain their mental health even in the face of challenges, making resilience an essential component of overall well-being.

To effectively enhance psychological well-being, it is important to understand the underlying characteristics that contribute to it. This includes recognizing the role of positive emotions, personal fulfillment, and resilience in maintaining mental health. Once these factors are understood, targeted training programs can be developed to strengthen these aspects of well-being, ultimately leading to improved mental health outcomes. Research has shown that music can significantly influence emotions, and these emotional responses to music can, in turn, affect psychological well-being. Different individuals may have preferences for music that evokes specific emotions, such as happiness, sadness, or anger. For example, some studies have found that positive emotions are the most common reactions to music. Experiencing positive emotions through music has been linked to increased well-being, which can have important health benefits.

The connection between music and emotions highlights the potential of using music as a tool to promote psychological well-being. By selecting music that elicits positive emotions, individuals may be able to boost their overall happiness and satisfaction, contributing to better mental health and resilience.

OBJECTIVES

- To determine the effect of music preferences on psychological well-being among adolescents.
- To assess the psychological well-being of male and female adolescents in terms of their music preferences.

HYPOTHESES

- There is no significant effect of music preferences on the psychological well-being of adolescents.
- There is no significant difference in the psychological well-being of male and female adolescents based on their music preferences.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Adolescence is a critical period marked by emotional, cognitive, and social changes, and music often serves as a coping mechanism, emotional outlet, and means of self-expression. Different music genres resonate with various emotional states and social identities, potentially affecting adolescents' mental health, stress levels, and overall well-being. Understanding the relationship between specific music preferences and psychological outcomes can provide valuable insights into how music can either positively influence mood regulation, self-esteem, and social connections or exacerbate issues like anxiety or depression. Given the growing concerns around adolescent mental health, this research can inform educators, parents, and mental health professionals about how to leverage music as a supportive tool, while also identifying any potential risks associated with certain types of music consumption.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dr. Durgesh K. Upadhyay (2014) conducted a research study highlighting the significant correlation between music and psychological well-being. His findings suggest that music plays a pivotal role in enhancing mental health, fostering emotional stability, and promoting overall psychological well-being. The study emphasizes

the therapeutic potential of music in stress relief and emotional regulation, supporting its integration into psychological and wellness interventions for better mental health outcomes.

Erol Demirbatir, Ayhan Helvacı, Nilufer Yılmaz, Gulnihâl Gul, Ajda Senol, and Nazan Bilgel (2013) conducted a study that found no statistically significant relationships between socio-demographic characteristics and psychological well-being. Their research suggests that factors such as age, gender, income, or education level do not have a direct impact on an individual's psychological well-being, indicating that well-being may be influenced more by personal or internal factors rather than external socio-demographic conditions.

Creech, Hallam, McQueen, and Varvarigou (2013) found that listening to music serves as a source of positive emotions and significantly contributes to psychological well-being. Their research highlights music's role in emotional regulation and mental health improvement, emphasizing its therapeutic benefits in promoting psychological well-being across various settings.

Nicola Sigg (2009) observed a correlation between certain music preference factors and specific aspects of psychological well-being. The study suggests that individuals' musical tastes may influence their emotional state and overall mental health, indicating a link between music preferences and well-being.

Petri Laukka (2007) found that listening to music was significantly associated with psychological well-being, particularly in older adolescents. The study provided valuable insights into how older adolescents use music in their daily lives, offering clues about the potential relationship between musical activities and improved well-being, suggesting music's therapeutic role in enhancing emotional and mental health.

Damiano Macona, Carlo Baldari, and Arnaldo Zelli (2006) found no significant effect of music on psychological well-being. Their study suggests that, contrary to other findings, music did not have a measurable impact on enhancing mental health or emotional well-being in their research context.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative research design, focusing on the impact of music preferences on the psychological well-being of individuals. The data is collected using a structured survey instrument, and the psychological well-being of participants is analyzed through the use of descriptive statistics and t-tests to compare mean differences between groups. The study sample consists of 80 individuals, divided into subgroups of 40 participants each, and based on their music preferences. These preferences include Romantic music, Gazal, Rock/Pop, and Melodious songs. Participants are within the age range of 16 to 60 years, making them eligible for the psychological well-being scale used in this study.

Psychological Well-being Scale for Adults and Adolescents (PWBS-AA): Developed by D. S. Sisodia and Pooja Chaudhary, this scale consists of 50 items across five dimensions: Satisfaction, Efficiency, Sociability, Mental Health, and Interpersonal Relations. It is validated for use with individuals aged 16 to 60 years. The scale provides a holistic assessment of participants' psychological well-being. The data was collected in a controlled setting through the administration of the PWBS-AA scale. Participants completed the questionnaire, indicating their preferred genre of music and responding to items assessing their psychological well-being. The survey was administered individually to ensure unbiased responses. The psychological well-being scores were calculated for each group, and descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to summarize the data. To compare the psychological well-being of participants based on their music preferences, an independent sample t-test was conducted for each pair of music genres.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1

Group	Music preference	Psychological well-being			
		N	Mean	SD	t-test
A.	Romantic	40	151.12	41.64	0.20
	Gazal	40	163.81	40.69	
B.	Rock/pop	40	159.27	35.81	1.56
	Gazal	40	137.21	44.41	
C.	Gazal	40	158.24	43.61	0.18
	Melodious song	40	171.22	31.71	
D.	Rock/pop	40	162.82	41.64	1.93
	Romantic	40	129.23	44.23	
E.	Romantic	40	162.81	41.63	0.03
	Melodious song	40	171.24	34.69	
F.	Rock/pop	40	129.32	36.33	1.97
	Melodious song	40	169.24	34.67	

The data presented examines the psychological well-being of individuals based on their music preferences across different groups, using a t-test to compare the means between pairs of music genres. The sample size for each group is 80, with subgroups of 40 participants each. The psychological well-being scores, means, standard deviations, and t-test values are provided for comparison. In Group A, individuals who prefer Romantic music have a mean well-being score of 151.12 (SD = 41.64), while those who prefer Gazal have a slightly higher mean score of 163.81 (SD = 40.69). The t-test value is 0.20, indicating no statistically significant difference between the two groups. For Group B, those with a preference for Rock/Pop music have a mean well-being score of 159.27 (SD = 35.81), while Gazal listeners have a lower score of 137.21 (SD = 44.41). The t-test value is 1.56, suggesting a noticeable difference, though not statistically significant. In Group C, Gazal listeners have a mean score of 158.24 (SD = 43.61), and those who prefer Melodious songs have a higher mean score of 171.22 (SD = 31.71).

However, with a t-test value of 0.18, this difference is not statistically significant. For Group D, individuals preferring Rock/Pop music have a higher mean score of 162.82 (SD = 41.64) compared to those preferring Romantic music, who have a mean score of 129.23 (SD = 44.23). The t-test value of 1.93 indicates a marginally significant difference, with Rock/Pop music associated with higher well-being. Group E compares Romantic music lovers, with a mean score of 162.81 (SD = 41.63), to Melodious song listeners, who have a mean score of 171.24 (SD = 34.69). The t-test value of 0.03 suggests no significant difference between these two groups. Lastly, Group F shows that Rock/Pop listeners have a lower mean well-being score of 129.32 (SD = 36.33) compared to Melodious song listeners, who have a higher score of 169.24 (SD = 34.67). The t-test value of 1.97 points to a significant difference, with those preferring Melodious songs reporting better psychological well-being than Rock/Pop listeners. In summary, the analysis reveals variations in psychological well-being based on music preference, with Melodious songs and Gazal generally associated with higher well-being scores. However, many of the differences between groups are not statistically significant according to the t-test results.

Table 2

Music Preference	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-test
Gazal	Male	40	165.13	43.51	0.23
	Female	40	151	36.54	
Romantic	Male	40	154.21	57.46	0.43
	Female	40	179.86	36.19	
Rock/pop	Male	40	143.14	23.02	0.46
	Female	40	123.33	49.23	
Melodious song	Male	40	168	17.7	0.41
	Female	40	177.46	36.11	

Interpretation of Table 2: Music Preference and Psychological Well-being Based on Gender

The data examines the differences in music preferences between male and female participants (N = 80) across four music genres: Ghazal, Romantic, Rock/Pop, and Melodious songs. The sample includes 40 males and 40 females for each category, and t-tests are conducted to determine if there are statistically significant differences in preferences based on gender. Ghazal Preference: Males (Mean = 165.13, SD = 43.51) show a slightly higher preference for Ghazals compared to females (Mean = 151, SD = 36.54). However, the t-test result ($t = 0.23$) suggests that this difference is not statistically significant, indicating that both genders have a similar preference for Ghazals. Romantic Songs: Females (Mean = 179.86, SD = 36.19) have a higher mean score compared to males (Mean = 154.21, SD = 57.46), indicating a stronger preference for romantic music among women. However, the t-test value ($t = 0.43$) shows no significant gender difference, suggesting that although females scored higher on average, this difference is not statistically conclusive. Rock/Pop Songs: Males (Mean = 143.14, SD = 23.02) appear to have a higher preference for rock/pop music compared to females (Mean = 123.33, SD = 49.23). Despite this, the t-test result ($t = 0.46$) does not indicate a significant gender difference, implying that both genders show comparable levels of interest in rock/pop music. Melodious Songs: Females (Mean = 177.46, SD = 36.11) have a slightly higher mean preference for melodious songs compared to males (Mean = 168, SD = 17.7). However, the t-test result ($t = 0.41$) shows no significant difference, meaning both genders generally prefer melodious songs similarly.

In summary, while there are slight differences in the mean preferences across different genres, none of these differences are statistically significant according to the t-test results. This suggests that gender does not play a significant role in determining music preferences across these categories in this sample.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data presented in Table 1, there is no statistically significant difference in preferences among the music genres studied, including old songs/melodies, romantic, rock/pop, and gazal. This indicates that any observed variations in genre preferences are likely due to random chance rather than inherent factors influencing preference.

Similarly, the results in Table 2 show that there is no significant difference in how music preference affects psychological well-being across different genders. This suggests that the relationship between music preferences and psychological well-being is consistent regardless of gender, meaning that males and females alike experience similar impacts from their musical tastes. In summary, the study concludes that music genre preferences do not significantly vary among the genres examined and that these preferences do not differentially influence psychological well-being based on gender. These findings imply that other factors may be more critical in shaping music preferences and their effects on well-being.

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