



Music misuse: A review of the personal and collective roles of “problem music”



Jeffrey Lozon, Moshe Bensimon *

Department of Criminology, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan, Israel

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 23 June 2013

Received in revised form 5 April 2014

Accepted 8 April 2014

Available online 18 April 2014

Keywords:

Problem music

Alternative rock

Hard rock

Heavy metal

Hip-hop/rap

Punk rock

ABSTRACT

Literature on musical preferences and their influence on behavior and ideation has primarily focused on specific musical preferences and linked certain music genres with psychological vulnerability and social deviance. The aim of this review was to: (a) gather information about musical preferences and their influence on behavior and thoughts in order to determine both positive and negative influences of each music genre on listeners; (b) present the main literature about genres that have negative influence on listeners; and (c) provide theoretical explanations for the psychological and sociological functions of those genres. A systematic review of the literature identified the following genres as having negative influence on listeners: alternative rock, hard rock, heavy metal, hip-hop/rap, punk rock, rock and trance/house/electronic/techno. Research showed that those genres were associated with substance and alcohol abuse, opposing authority and rebelliousness, impulsive and antisocial traits, violent behavior, and delinquency. Of the few studies that investigated positive aspects of the above genres, some focused on the role of those genres in regulating negative feelings and constructing personal and social identity, while other studies stressed the importance of those genres in constructing group and cultural identity and educating listeners.

© 2014 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Contents

1.	Introduction	207
2.	Systematic search	208
2.1.	Method	208
2.2.	Results	208
3.	Problem music	208
3.1.	Rock and its different subgenres – intense and rebellious	208
3.1.1.	Rock	208
3.1.2.	Hard Rock	209
3.1.3.	Heavy metal	209
3.1.4.	Punk rock	213
3.1.5.	Alternative rock	213
3.2.	Rap music	214
3.3.	Electronic dance	214
4.	Theoretical perspective on PM	215
5.	Conclusions	216
	References	216

1. Introduction

Music can display and induce emotion (e.g., Juslin & Sloboda, 2001; Peretz & Hébert, 2000). For example, studies have shown correlation between fast tempo of music and happiness and fear (Juslin & Laukka,

* Corresponding author at: Department of Criminology, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan 52900, Israel. Tel.: +972 2 6727860; fax: +972 3 7384038.

E-mail addresses: lozon1@yahoo.com (J. Lozon), bensimm@biu.ac.il (M. Bensimon).

2003; Krumhansl, 1997) and between slow tempo and sadness (Balkwill & Thompson, 1999) or tenderness (Juslin, 1997).

Music not only enables its listeners to take a step back from the difficulties that plague their lives, but also ameliorates feelings of loneliness. Thus, music can create, reinforce or alter listeners' mood and state (Lull, 1987). However, the power of music to inspire can be counterbalanced by its equally intense power to aggravate and irritate (Bensimon, 2009; Pieslak, 2007). Irritation and anger arise when people are exposed to music they dislike, fail to understand or even abhor. Researchers have identified heavy metal music as a prototype of aggression-inducing music (Gowensmith & Bloom, 1997) which are related to personality dimensions (Rentfrow & Gosling, 2003), delinquent behavior (Rustad, Small, Jobs, Safer, & Peterson, 2003; Stack, Lester, & Rosenberg, 2012), aggression as a means to solve conflicts (Cundiff, 2013; Johnson, Jackson, & Gatto, 1995), hostility and antagonism (Armstrong, 1993; Mast & McAndrew, 2011; Palumbo, 1997). Consequently, studies (North & Hargreaves, 2006, 2007) have labeled certain music genres as "Problem Music" (PM), music that is associated with psychological vulnerability and social deviance. In this review, we attempted to: (a) gather for the first time information about musical preferences and their influence on behavior and thoughts in order to determine positive and negative influences of each music genre on listeners; (b) present the main literature about the music genres that have negative influence on listeners; and (c) provide theoretical explanations for the psychological and sociological functions of these genres.

2. Systematic search

2.1. Method

We conducted a systematic review of the literature employing the databases APA PsycNET, EBSCO, Google Scholar, ProQuest, Sage Journals, ScienceDirect (Elsevier), and the Wiley Online Library. We chose search terms that focused on effects that certain genres of music may have on behavior, cognition and emotion, and on the theoretical basis behind them. Therefore, the search terms we used were: music and negative behavior, crime, criminal behavior, aggression, misogynistic, substance abuse, drugs, violence, problematic behavior and assault. For this review, we only included studies that were written in English and published between 1990 and 2013. We took into consideration correlation studies between music genre and personality types, and also included all study design methodologies.

2.2. Results

We found 170 studies from the various databases, all of which were articles. We excluded articles if they 1. researched music, regardless of genre, which did not directly examine actions, thoughts or feelings; 2. detailed the history of music genres without showing a direct effect on individuals; 3. examined the effect of music genres on consumers in the areas of marketing and advertising. Hence, we only used 92 studies in the final analysis. Of those 92 studies, 48 presented negative effects of music on individuals, 13 presented positive effects, and 31 presented neither positive nor negative effects on individuals.

Table 1 presents 56 articles that were published between 2003 and 2013 (articles between 1990 and 2002 are not presented in order not to burden this article). For each article, the table states the musical genre that was researched, the size and mean age or age range of the population examined and the key findings of the study. The table includes 43 quantitative studies, 2 qualitative studies, 7 studies that used mixed methods, and 4 theoretical studies. Of the 50 quantitative and mixed methods studies, 32 were correlative studies, 12 were causative studies and 6 used descriptive statistics. In addition, of the 50 quantitative and mixed methods studies, 31 focused on adolescents (up to age 21.74), 9 focused on adults (22 years and up), three mentioned age range which left the mean age unclear, and 7 analyzed

songs. Table 2 only includes the quantitative empirical studies and thus presents the sum culmination of the results in Table 1. Table 2 divides the quantitative and mixed methods studies according to music genres and their negative effects (e.g., association with negative emotions, behavior, personal profile or attitudes such as drug abuse, aggression, violence, misogynous thoughts, suicidality or negative messages as reflected from PM songs), positive effects (e.g., association with positive emotions, behavior, personal profile or attitudes such as positive attitudes toward women, increased pro-female behavior, reduction of negative mood and calming effect) and neutral effects. The Table shows that of the cumulative studies, alternative rock, hard rock, heavy metal, hip-hop/rap, punk rock, rock and trance/house/electronic/techno had more than 50% negative association with listeners. Based upon the methodical search and the results shown in Table 2, we suggest that the abovementioned genres be regarded as PM. Detailed description of each PM genre and its effect on listeners appear in the following sections.

We would like to note that the findings presented in Tables 1 and 2 indicate that classical music and jazz, which are often regarded as one genre (see Mulder et al., 2010; Rentfrow & Gosling, 2003), may have a positive effect on individuals. A number of studies have found that listening to classical music reduced negative and anxious emotions (Boothby & Robbins, 2011; Labbé et al., 2007; Smith & Joyce, 2004). Correlational studies have typified the personality of those who prefer classical and jazz music as having a more positive personality, are more spiritual, older, more open to experiences, and more likely to sing and play an instrument (George et al., 2007; Rentfrow, Goldberg, & Levitin, 2011). It is difficult to ascertain why preference for classical music and jazz might correlate with more positive effects than other genres. It is possible that the "Mozart effect," enhanced spatial capabilities after listening to classical music and jazz, might be associated with a more positive personality (Thompson, Schellenberg, & Husain, 2001).

3. Problem music

3.1. Rock and its different subgenres – intense and rebellious

The general term "rock" includes several subgenres: rock, hard rock, heavy metal, punk rock, and alternative rock. Based on studies which conducted factor analysis of music preferences and ratings (Brown, 2012; Liljeström et al., 2013; Mulder et al., 2010; Rentfrow & Gosling, 2003; Schwartz & Fouts, 2003), we can also describe rock and its subgenres as the Intense and Rebellious genre. The following sections discuss the possible impact of each of the rock subgenres on its listeners.

3.1.1. Rock

The meaning of rock music is a study in itself. Researchers have long debated when rock had become an official genre and what qualified as the first rock song or band (Dawson & Propes, 1992). Nonetheless, researchers have agreed that rock as a genre began in the 1950s in the United States with the musician Chuck Berry, who expanded upon rhythm and blues (Evans, 2002). Over the years, rock began to diverge and included famous musicians and bands such as Elvis Presley, Bob Dylan, the Rolling Stones, and the Beatles (Bogdanov, Woodstra, & Erlewine, 2002).

Rock was generally characterized as hard-edged music that was played with electric guitars, bass, drums, and typically included lyrics performed by a vocalist (Théberge, 1997). As opposed to pop music of the era (50s–60s), rock's aggressive style indicated sensual freedom that stood in contrast to the traditional and conservative ideals of the age. Rock singers personified the youths' rebellious and disaffected moods and their desire for a soundtrack to express their fantasies of anti-conformism. Hence, rock music became the voice of adolescents' aspirations (Ammer, 2004; Warner, 2003).

Today, decades after its inception, rock music may still constitute the means of expression for rebellious and alienated youth. Dillman-

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/10252373>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/10252373>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)