

“Legato”: A Study to Understand Individual Associations of Young Adults with Music

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ABSTRACT

Ever since a child is born, s/he is surrounded by music. The increased use of music therapy in dealing with a variety of disorders has shown how powerful music is. It is capable of making us feel and experience intense emotions which directly impact our well-being. As music with time becomes an integral part of our lives, it can shape our personalities and make us who we are. To understand the same, the current study provides an overview of the association and importance of music in the life of individuals. For the same, semi-structured interviews were conducted which were later subjected to thematic analysis and suggest that this study can be conducted in future to gain more insights. Findings saw that factor like experiences, emotions, milestones in one's life and etc., play an important role in helping individuals form associations.

Keywords: Music, Musical Preferences, Personality

“Music means communication to me. I say 'listen you people out there, listen to my music, let's be one.' Music is a friend to me when I am lonely, when I am blue. You can't define music because music is cosmos and it knows no barrier or definition. You have to feel music to dig it” - Robert Plant.

In the past, present and our upcoming future, if there is something which the human civilizations have seen and moved forward with, then it is music. Even the most isolated tribes in the world have their unique music which they identify with. The power of music can be understood only with the fact that how it led to the invention of dancing: the musical rhythms were felt by someone so strongly that his/her body started to follow them and giving birth to a variety of bodily rhythms creating an altogether new art form. Music not only was a means of leisure for the early primates but also a means of bringing change. Beethoven said “Music can change the world”. Greatest minds like Plato too felt that music is not only a form of leisure but something which can make individuals well-informed and inspire them. Anthropologists have explained that music is an enormous piece of social orders: “Music is a typical encounter and an enormous piece of social orders. Every single human network

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consistently and, in all spots have occupied with melodic practices. Music as a method of human movement is a social marvel establishing an essential social substance as people make music and make their relationship to music. As a social marvel, music is continually made and re-made to reflect evolving socio-social capacities” (Kelly, 2002).

Keeping all this in mind, one cannot deny or tend to ignore the fact that music is not only a reflection of society but it is also a reflection of one’s personality and perceptions. If music wouldn’t have been that impactful, the Greeks wouldn’t have used it to rebel against their authority. Band Nirvana’s lead singer Kurt Cobain battled depression and substance -abuse. For him, music was his escape. One of the lyrics to his song goes like ‘I’m so happy because today I’ve found my friends, they’re in my head’ which is very much indicative of how he felt during that time. Not only music reflects what society has been through, but it can also be used as a tool to look inside individuals: their pains, sorrows, struggles and happiness. Not only this, music plays a crucial role in the lives of people by assisting the development of personality and their lives as it has features that are like a language for people to communicate with their emotions and feelings and those of others (Schafer, 2018). Neuroradiologists Wilkins, Hodges, Laurienti and Burdette (2014) conducted various studies to understand the effects of music on the brain. He describes that “It doesn’t matter if it’s Bach, the Beatles, Brad Paisley, or Bruno Mars. Your favourite music likely triggers a similar type of activity in your brain as other people’s favourites do in theirs. Music is primal. It affects all of us, but in very personal, unique ways. Your interaction with music is different than mine, but it’s still powerful.” Music makes us feel a lot of emotions all at once and due to that, the associations people form with it are personal and contextual. Music can be a predictor of one’s behaviour as shown by Hendricks et al (1999) where he saw that adolescent listening to heavy metal and rap are more likely to engage in delinquent behaviours like drug use, poor school grades and behaviour problems (Hendricks et al, 1999). Considering all this, it cannot be overlooked that music is indeed a powerful force that can impact every aspect of one’s life. Due to this, the current study was undertaken to understand how music helps people to form associations with it and provide importance to it in their lives.

Just like various notes are joined or connected while playing the legato, joining the dots of association of individuals with music can help understand how it fabricates itself in the personality and their life.

The word music derives from the Greek word ‘mousike’ meaning ‘art of Muses’. The nine muses as per Greek mythology, are the ones who are believed to inspire literature, science and arts and were regarded as the source of knowledge present in the poetry, song-lyrics and myths in Greek culture (Online Etymology Dictionary, n.d.).

Variables contributing to musical meaning can be classed under two broad categories: (a) those related to the structural characteristics of the musical stimulus and (b) those related to the listener (Smith, 1989). The structural characteristics include the elements of music whereas the ones related to the listener include factors like one’s personality, their reasons to engage in listening to music and cultural factors which lead to them associating to a piece of music, referring to the pattern of regular and irregular pulses caused in music by the occurrence of strong and weak beats.

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Laymen do not understand the technicalities of music in terms of its elements and they have a vague understanding of terms like harmony and rhythm regarding music. The meaning of music is derived by individuals concerning the elements only by professionals.

Variables considering the individuals include personality, culture and the personal and social meaning of music in general. Meaning of music might also relate to the experiences one has undergone in his/her life. In a study by Poder and Kiilu (2015), it was seen that the experiences college students have had in the educational settings plays a significant role in the development of their musical identity and their association with music in general.

As per Merriam (1964), there are 10 major personal and social musical functions of music: (1) emotions, (2) aesthetic enjoyment, (3) entertainment, (4) communication, (5) symbolic representation, (6) physical response, (7) enforcing conformity to social norms, (8) validation of social institutions and religious trials, (9) contribution to the continuity and stability of culture, and (10) contributions to the integrity of society. If we dive deeper, we can notice that in the formation of a personal association of music, these functions come to the forefront instead of the elements of music. E.g., an individual like a piece of music or a song only because of the happy emotions it makes him/her feel. People love listening to folk music because helps them to comply with social norms.

Though it is true that in a holistic sense, people do like songs or music because of its rhythm or harmony but are unable to label it clearly because of the technicalities which persist, there are alternative ways in which the meaning one gives to music can be understood. Keeping this in mind, Brian Whitman (2005) in a paper called ‘Learning the meaning of music’ described that there are three main types of musical meaning:

1. Correspondence meaning refers to the composer’s or performer’s transcription of the musical idea or piece. For example, the song Shipbuilding by Stewart Mason is about the Falkland wars but does not mention anything about it directly.
2. Relational meaning refers to the connection between music and other music. here, individuals either group music as per artists or as per genres. For example, someone can think that U2 and The Police sound similar to one another though they are two different bands.
3. Reaction meaning which refers to the actionable meaning individuals give to a piece of music. for example, a song can either make an individual sad or happy or can remind him/her of an important period in their life.

While giving meaning to music, these three meaning can either come into play all together or either at once.

There is an increasing body of empirical and experimental studies concerning the wider benefits of musical activity, and research in the sciences associated with music suggests that there are many dimensions of human life—including physical, social, educational, psychological (cognitive and emotional)—which can be affected positively by successful engagement in music (Biasutti and Concina, 2013). Learning in and through music is something that can happen *formally* (such as part of structured lessons in school), as well as in *other-than-formal* situations, such as in the home with family and friends, often non-sequentially and not necessarily intentional, and where participation in music learning is voluntary, rather than mandated, such as in a community setting (cf. Green, 2002; Folkestad, 2006; Saether, 2016; Welch and McPherson, 2018). This kind of learning can be possible only when children are able to associate with music in some way or the other.

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Psychology of music preference (*Psychology of Music Preference*, n.d.) aims to understand the psychological factors behind people’s different music preferences. Under this, one of the fastest-growing branches has been that of musical preferences and personality: how these two influence each other.

In 1953, Cattell and Anderson made one of the earliest attempts to investigate individual differences which exist in musical preferences. For the study, they aimed to assess the unconscious personality traits of the individual for which, they developed a music preference test consisting of 120 classical and jazz experts. Further, they both tried to interpret 12 factors which they explained concerning unconscious personality traits. The attempt didn’t turn out to be successful but it paved way for further researches in the future.

The presence of such studies is less in the Indian context. To bridge the gap, the current study has been undertaken to understand and how individuals relate with music and attach importance to it in their own personalized ways.

Objectives

1. To find out how individuals associate with music in their different ways.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The participants for the present constituted a total sample of 20 participants: 10 males and 10 females between the age group of 18-24 years i.e., young adults. For data collection, convenience, purposive and snowball sampling was used to reach the target sample from Delhi-NCR.

A cross-sectional mixed-method study (including both quantitative and qualitative measures) was carried out for the sample of 20 young adults: 10 males and 10 females between the age group of 18-24. Semi- structured interviews were conducted for 1 hour, one-on-one with the participants where they were asked a total of 5 questions along with necessary probe questions, to attain the desired responses.

Instruments

A semi-structured interview is one in which there is not a proper pattern of asking questions. While preparing the questionnaire, the interviewer makes notes of only a few questions or only the major themes s/he is willing to explore. Follow-up questions can be asked as well as and when required in the interview.

The interview conducted here aimed to understand how individuals associate with music and what influences their association with music. For the same, 5 questions were asked, some probe questions were asked in-between as and when required. The participants were randomly selected: 10 males and 10 females were interviewed who scored higher on reflective and complex music, and energetic and rhythmic music respectively as these two musical references got significant statistical findings. The questions tried to explore the following themes:

- What factors lead to liking towards a favourite piece of music
- What are the emotional, psychological effects of music?
- Whether or not the piece of music relates to an individual’s important life period.
- What kind of perceptions individuals have towards the piece of music?
- What specific part of the musical influences they prefer and why?

Procedure

Many young adults were contacted to be a part of the study. After selecting the ones who wanted to be included in the same, interviews were conducted, one-n-one with them which were scheduled to go for an hour, but exceeded the time limit in most of the cases, in an attempt to undersnad the intricacies better.

After the conduction of interviews, a thematic analysis was done for the responses obtained. The theme-based analysis is a qualitative data analysis approach that focuses on finding, analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning (or "themes"). This approach will emphasise both the data set's organisation and rich definition, as well as the meaning's potentially informed interpretation. Theme-based research goes beyond counting phrases or terms in a text and investigates the data's explicit and implied meanings. Coding (an analytical method in which data is categorised to facilitate interpretation, whether in quantitative form (such as questionnaire results) or qualitative form (such as interview transcripts), is the primary method for establishing themes in data by defining objects of analytic interest and assigning a coding mark to them.

RESULTS

Table:1 Themes for personal associations with music.

Theme	Code	Verbatim
Pre-text of having a favorite song	Genre familiarity.	P1: “The genre of the song is not new to me.
	Character association.	P1: “....It is from an anime and I am able to relate with the characters of the anime when it plays.” P14: “How you know Patrick sang it for David in the show which makes it so surreal and beautiful to watch.”
	Genre unfamiliarity.	P8: “I am fond more of Sufi and acoustic music and this is different from what I prefer to listen.”
	Changed preferences.	P6: “I do not have a specific favorite, it keeps on changing.”
	Genre preferences.	P2: “Which fall between rock and acoustic.” P9: “I am exposed to soundtracks and prefer listening to them a lot.”
	Vulnerability.	P10: “It helps me to feel a sense of vulnerability.”
	Lyrics.	P12: “It has beautiful lyrics, good rhythm.” P18: “I love it its lyrics.”
After-effects of	Emotional insight.	P4: “2. I feel fulfilled. I get a complete

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Theme	Code	Verbatim
listening to a favorite music piece.		<p>....It leaves me calm even when I am sad. No matter what it cheers me up. P7: “I feel happy and loved, adored..” P13: “I feel some sort of calmness and peace.” P17: “There is a tinge of sadness when I listen to it .” P19: “I feel sad and feel like singing it out loud so that people can relate to my plight. I hope someone will understands my feelings.”</p>
	Escapism.	<p>P1: “I am able to escape from daily hassles of life and enter a different world.” P18: “Its relaxing and helps me to escape for a while form my thoughts.”</p>
	Physical and mental activation.	<p>P6: “I feel hyped up and feel like partying too hard.” P9: “2. I feel energized like mentally a lot. For me, my work is draining for, so whenever I listen to it, I feel energised.”</p>
	Psychological effects.	<p>P3: “2. The track ends on a sweet mellow tune and the emotional end acts as a catharsis for me hence, bringing peace to me.”</p>
Personal connotations to music.	Safe space.	<p>P1: “No matter what, it is comforting and my safe space.”</p>
	Story construction.	<p>P5: “I don’t because the journey of this song feels like friends playing together.... When I used to introspect, this was in the BG and a story developed in my mind, where four friends are playing,I view this story from a long time in your head for some reason even before listening to the song but it suited this song.</p>
	Sense of individuality.	<p>P8: “It makes me confident on how to express my feelings. It makes me feel to be happy to go on and not care what the society feels. A sense of freedom means thinking of myself first and not thinking of the society.”</p>

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Theme	Code	Verbatim
		P11: “I feel empowered, happy, relaxed, confident.”
Significant periods of life and musical associations.	Societal pressures.	P8: “When I was in school, I faced many issues like body-shaming, bullying for being from a business-class family, and faced troubles in friendships..... not think about the society and think about myself.” P16: “Insecurities in the sense that my self-esteem was low I used to feel that I was ugly, and insecure in relationships and used to feel why are people with me. It has reduced now but used to exist and is still there in my relationship.”
	Lockdown and COVID.	P5: “The lockdown was important for me I was in my room throughout. And now whenever I will look back at it, I will know about it. This song defined my lockdown.” P13: “This reminds me of the lockdown period when I was sitting idle and exploring songs.”
	Good memories.	
	Unpleasant experiences.	P12: “I stopped playing cricket because of injuries and I miss that. This song reminds me of that: the phase of me thinking to even make a career in cricket, my days of playing it.” P10: “It talks about a guy who undergoes a breakup with his girl and I relate to that. It describes what I underwent: despite doing everything, my efforts were not seen and were simply brushed under the carpet. P20: “Yes, it does. Because to be honest, in 11th and 12th I had a pretty tough time and even had suicidal thoughts, and even attempted suicide.... brings me back those bad memories but makes me feel that I came out of it despite all and that I am comfortable enough with myself now which I was not back then.....it makes me feel stronger and
	Introspections.	

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Theme	Code	Verbatim
	Constant companion.	<p>comfortable about myself.</p> <p>P2: “It’s about being in the moment despite everything happening. Despite all the lows, you bounce back. There’s a line called ‘<i>manzil kahan</i>’ which helps me to not worry about past mistakes and live in the present time. And move forward in life.”</p> <p>P8: “I used to have a misconception that we can control our emotions but nothing can be controlled but we only learn how to manage them. There are both aspects to everything of things being positive and negative and we need to move forward with both. This song helped me to realize this whenever I felt low and was occupied with negative emotions. The song was motivational for me.”</p> <p>P16: “I used to weave a story back then but now I feel that I am through with that time but they still stayed. The person I was has changed but the song gives me the same happy-go lucky vibes and it stayed with me till now, so I cherish it.”</p>
Musical perceptions.	<p>Overcoming shortcomings.</p> <p>Music beats.</p> <p>Emotional understanding.</p>	<p>P11: “I feel it speaks that we are beautiful the way we are. We need to overcome everything which belittles us and lets us down in our own eyes.....need to rise above them and remember we are beautiful no matter what.”</p> <p>P3: “I love it because of its music, it is all about the beat drop, the bridge of it.”</p> <p>P13: “I love the lofi beats here more and didn’t pay much attention to the lyrics. I relate only to the music and not the lyrics.”</p> <p>P12: “So, I feel it is something which signifies giving my commitment to the career: that no matter how many</p>

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Theme	Code	Verbatim
	Purity of love.	understand me too for once.” P18: “It means that love is not something to be ashamed of. But something which is pure and beautiful and needs to be protected. Like you put kajal to embrace someone, so similarly these lines embrace the love: to protect someone from the evil eye.” P19: “I find it beautiful, the clinging part to someone as I feel the time, we live in is all materialistic but love, devoting yourself to someone despite them not coming back in this materialistic world, is what makes these lines beautiful.”

DISCUSSION

The interview responses were subjected to thematic analysis. Table:1 shows the themes which emerged from the interviews and Appendix 1 consists of all the responses of the participants. A total of 6 themes emerged which are explained in the subsequent section.

The first theme was the pretext of having a favourite song. It constituted and addressed reasons as described by the participants to which they like or love a piece of music. Participants have reported that having familiarity with a genre of music makes them prefer it more, *‘The genre of the song is not new to me.* Not only this, sometimes, participants find that their liking towards music was centric because they were able to relate to some characters on whom the song was featured, *‘It is from an anime and I am able to relate with the characters of the anime when its plays’*, and also it made them feel vulnerable and found the lyrics to be meaningful, *‘It has beautiful lyrics’*, reported one participant. Not only this, changing preferences of musical genres and genre unfamiliarity was also seen.in some participants reported songs which they held dear to themselves extremely different to the usual genres they listen to, *‘I am fond more of Sufi and acoustic music and this is different from what I prefer to listen.’*, said one participant. These can be supported by previous researches. As mentioned earlier, Whitman (2005) described how individuals sometimes give meaning to music in terms of relation, meaning by grouping either bands or artists or genres together. This was seen in this case too: genre familiarisation makes individuals prefer or like music and hence influences their association with it. When individuals start listening to music, the auditory regions of the brain and hippocampus are changed and on repeated exposure to the same music, the hippocampus makes us familiar with it by processing it emotionally for us. As there is familiarity, individuals start to prefer a certain type of music or genre more than ever which can be so due to their reasons (Wassenberg, 2019). Not only this, songs that have positive lyrics provide a boost to one’s energy and prepares the brain for learning (University of Arizona, 2017).

With this, emerged the second theme of the after-effects of listening to a favourite music piece. It cannot be overlooked that music has the power to induce a variety of emotions and has a lot of effects that cannot be overlooked. The theme describes what kind of emotions are

triggered by music with the participants. One participant mentioned ‘*I feel happy and adored*’, other said, ‘*I feel sad and feel like singing it out loud so that people can relate to my plight*’. It can be seen that both the things reported by participants are contrasting in nature: for one it can trigger happy emotions and for the other the sad ones. Studies have time and again supported that people involve in listening to music only because it has the power to make individual’s feel certain emotions. Music-induced emotions, on the other hand, are more influenced by the essence of the musical event's evaluation and the basic reasons for listening to music in a given situation. The enjoyment of music is perhaps the most commonly stated reason for listening to it. Apart from my enjoyment, other primary emotions like fear, anger, loss and tenderness are also induced by music (Juslin and Laukka, 2004). Different emotions triggered by music happens due to a lot of factors like age, gender and exposure to the kind of music an individual has had in his/her culture and surroundings (Abeles and Chung, 1996). Not only this, but participants also reported that music helps them to escape from things in life hence making them feel relaxed and calm. One participant reported, ‘*It's relaxing and helps me to escape for a while from my thoughts*’. Not only this but it was also seen that music has physical and psychological effects on the participants. ‘*I feel energized like mentally a lot. For me, my work is draining, so whenever I listen to it, I feel energised*’, reported one participant and ‘*The track ends on a sweet mellow tune and the emotional end acts as a catharsis for me hence, bringing peace to me*’, reported another. In one of the studies, it was found that listening to sad music releases prolactin hormone which leads to calmness and relaxation (Huron, 2011). EEG techniques have helped to get a neurophysiological viewpoint of music. It has been found out that activation of the left hemisphere of the brain induces pleasant emotions whereas the right hemisphere induces unpleasant emotions (Gomes, Pereira and Conde, 2018). Listening to music also leads to the release of hormones like dopamine, serotonin and oxytocin all of which are associated with positive emotional reactions and enhance psychological resilience hence making individuals feel calm and happy (Dukie, 2018). These reactions recorded and addressed by the second theme also go in hand with the reaction meaning of music as described previously (Whitman, 2005).

The third theme is the personal connotations of music. It cannot be overlooked that music has a different meaning for everyone. Participants describe that music for them is their safe space, ‘No matter what, it is comforting and my safe space’, said the participant. Not only this, but it also helps them to have a sense of individuality, ‘*I feel empowered, happy, relaxed, confident*. And in some case, participants describe that they found themselves constructing stories in their mind while listening to music because they were so moved by it, ‘*I don't because the journey of this song feels like friends playing together.... When I used to introspect, this was in the BG and a story developed in my mind, where four friends are playing introspect, this was in the BG and a story developed in my mind, where four friends are playing,I view this story from a long time in your head for some reason even before listening to the song but it suited this song*’. As it can be seen, music impacts individuals at the micro-levels. In one of the studies, it was found out that teenagers find rap music as a means of empowerment and increased self-esteem (Travis, 2012). Participants also reported the construction of stories while listening to music. This requires imagination, implying creativity. Thus, it can be inferred that music enhances one’s creativity. A study done by Ritter and Ferguson (2017) found out that music indeed enhances creativity. It was seen that exposure to happy music led to higher scores on divergent thinking than doing creative tasks in silence. These individuals came with more creative ideas. This could also be possible because music creates a positive mood which in turn enhances one’s creativity (Baas, DeDreu and Nijstad, 2008). Considering music as one’s safe space is a completely new finding as

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seen in the study. Time and again we label our family and friends as our safe spaces: someone who provides us with peace. But considering something like music which is a non-living thing clearly shows that it has the power to induce reactions and take space as important as a human being in someone's life. In a study, it was found out that individuals felt safer when they were in a scenario where music was present as compared to those where only nature sounds or silence was present which induced stress and feelings of danger (Schafer, Huron, Shanahan and Sedlmeier, 2015). All of these personal connotations are formed and felt not only because of personality differences but also because of factors that exist in culture and one's experiences one has had (Pöder and Kiilu, 2015).

Addressing the same, the fourth theme is significant periods of life and musical associations. Oliver Sacks in his book *Musicophilia* described that the kind of musical genre a child is exposed to in his early years is the one s/he ends up preferring in later years of his life. Keeping this in mind, it cannot be ignored that music does relate to important periods of one's life. It was seen that participants reported how music has helped them to deal with the societal pressures in their life: *'When I was in school, I faced many issues like body-shaming, bullying for being from a business-class family, and faced troubles in friendships..... not think about the society and think about myself. This song helped me to come out of it'*. When we feel that the world has turned our back on us, we resort to things that give us the strength to overcome them. Music is exactly that one tool which helps people to overcome the difficulties in their life. People search for meaning in music: in lyrics or rhythm and let their emotions flow. Not only this, some participants found music to be associated with the lockdown has of COVID-19: *'The lockdown was important for me I was in my room throughout. And now whenever I will look back at it, I will know about it. This song defined my lockdown'*. It cannot be denied that the COVID-19 pandemic has been a life-changing event for everyone around the globe and is one of the significant events in our lives. Participants feel that the music heard by them during this time will hold a future reference for them as it will remind them of this time and what they felt and underwent during it. For some, music brings back the good memories: *'I stopped playing cricket because of injuries and I miss that. This song reminds me of that: the phase of me thinking to even make a career in cricket, my days of playing it'* and for some the bad ones: *'Because to be honest, in 11th and 12th I had a pretty tough time and even had suicidal thoughts, and even attempted suicide.... brings me back those bad memories but makes me feel that I came out of it'*. Participants also reported how music has helped them to introspect things in their life and acted a something which stayed no matter what: *'I used to weave a story back then but now I feel that I am through with that time but they still stayed. The person I was has changed but the song gives me the same happy-go-lucky vibes and it stayed with me till now, so I cherish it. Either way, music induces nostalgia within individuals associated with important periods in their lifetime. Music has the power to invoke certain memories like how it felt to be a child or how one's teenage years looked like (Schulkind, Hennis and Rubin, 1999). Not only this, it has been found that memories from the formative teenage years and those from the twenties are cherished the most (Rathbone, Moulin and Conway, 2008). Due to this, the music heard at this time also becomes formative and listening to it brings those memories back. In patients with Alzheimer's disease, it has been seen that songs they are familiar with lead the frontal lobe region to engages fully and helps them remember and revisit memories that are associated with the song or the period to which it belongs (Jacobsen, Stelzer, Fritz and Chetelat, 2015).*

The fifth theme is musical perceptions which address how participants perceive music. Their perceptions influence their associations they form. Some participants reported that they

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perceive it as a source of overcoming their shortcomings: *‘I feel it speaks that we are beautiful the way we are. We need to overcome everything which belittles us’*. This relates to the reaction meaning of music: it is a reaction invoked by music (Whitman, 2005). For some, association begins due to the best of musical beats: *‘I love it because of its music, it is all about the beat drop, the bridge of it’*. It has also been seen in studies that different types of emotions are induced by different beats of music: fast tempo beats lead to happiness whereas slow tempo with atonality in beats leads to sad emotions (Juslin and Lindstorm, 2003). Participants also reported to perceive music in terms of the emotional understanding they constructed around it: *‘So, I feel it is something which signifies giving my commitment to the career: that no matter how many fallouts I have, how much it drains me, I will still stick around it no matter what’*. One of the reasons due to which musical perceptions are formed is associative learning which establishes links between sensory and motor perceptions. When individuals are exposed to the same musical piece during an event or experience in their life, they associate it to those elements and hence, their perceptions are formed (Maes, Leman, Palmer and Wanderley, 2014). Not only this, cultural and situational factors influence musical perceptions (Gabreilson, 2001).

Finally, the last theme is the lyrical interpretation which addresses how participants interpret the lyrics of songs and form their associations. Lyrics form a crucial part of the music as they depict what the artist has felt and allows the listener to see things from their perspective: it can either induce emotions or bring back a painful memory (Wisnton, 2017). On looking and understanding how individuals interpret lyrics, the reason for their associations can be understood more in detail. Participants reported interpreting lyrics due to sentimental reasons *‘The piano is melodious and makes me feel like crying. For me, it is the soul and that part is what I am fond of the most’*. Again, it can be seen that sentiments play a very important role in associating with music. Ali and Peynircioglu (2006) found that when music and lyrics are presented together, music is a dominant source of elicitation of emotion. Other participants explained the interpretation of lyrics in terms of figures of speech: *“‘I remember how the darkness double; I recall lightning struck itself. I can think and imagine a drawing of it on canvas about how lightning is striking itself amidst of extreme darkness all around’*”. This is indicative of the fact that music with lyrics is like poetry (Thompson, 2013) which induces individuals to look for metaphors in it. Studies have shown that music has the power to induce mental imagery (Bonny and Savary, 1973). Not only that, but lyrics are also interpreted in terms of love and understanding: *‘I find it beautiful, the clinging part to someone as I feel the time, we live in is all materialistic but love, devoting yourself to someone despite them not coming back in this materialistic world, is what makes these lines beautiful’*. Not only this, but the lyrical interpretations of music can also provide an insight into one’s personality traits by understanding what kind of emotions it induces in the first place (Dijkic, 2011).

It can be seen that music indeed has a basis for personal associations individuals form with it. It can be said that music processing involves centrally-stored personal networks of association built up from inter-and intra-musical networks, (i.e. the relationships which exist within musical pieces, and those relationships which listeners perceive between different pieces and styles), as well as from their social and cultural networks of association, which are linked with those pieces and styles (Hargreaves, Hargreaves and North, 2012).

CONCLUSION

The study was successful to prove that associations one has with music are both personal and contextual. On the basis of this, it can be said that music plays a crucial role in one's life.

Plotting the whole process was difficult due to the virtual guidance pushed forward due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If the pandemic situation would not have existed and there would have been an absence of time constraints, then interviews could have also been scheduled with the family members of the participants to know what kind of music they were exposed to since their childhood and provide a more advanced basis for research. The interviews could have been conducted more in-depth. Apart from this, the sample size could have been expanded too if time constraints were absent and more than 20 interviews could have been taken. Future researchers can consider these limitations while conducting further researchers in the future.

The study overall has been successful enough to meet the objectives it underlined. A basic understanding of music has been gathered from the current study and contributes to the current body of literature trying to investigate how music affects human beings in different aspects of life. This study has been a small attempt to delve deeper into music and its influences.

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Conflict of Interest

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Appendix-1

Semi-structured interviews

P:1, 20 (Male)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?
The musical piece ‘Always Miss you’ by Kupla with lo-fi hip hop beats. The genre of the song is not new to me.
I find it soothing and comforting and can relate to the game. It is from an anime and I am able to relate with the characters of the anime when it plays.
2. How do you feel after listening to it?
I am able to escape from daily hassles of life and enter a different world. I feel like I am the main character. Whenever I wanted to listen to the it, I was supposed to play the game but when found randomly on Spotify, I felt joyful. I was able to relate the most and I feel joyous. No matter what, it is comforting and my safe space.
3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?

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Not as such. It just centric to anime and the boy is an orphan and he then becomes the leader of country. He never gives up on his dreams and grew up what he wanted to be. I associate to character and due to this, I am able to give get out of things and get motivation to leave bad things behind.

4. What is your perspective of the song?

To sum it in a line or two I understand from it that no matter what happens in life it will pass and life goes on and you have to move on with it for your own growth. You cannot let those teeny-tiny hassles stop you to strive and grow the way you deserve. The universe always back you up no matter what

5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?

It starts with a slow piano and slowly merges with other instruments. The piano is melodious and makes me feel like crying. For me it is the soul and that part is what I am fond of the most. The transition of piano in notes changes. I love it because it is unexpected in nature. Unexpected in the sense, that you do not know whether it has ended or is there something more left to it.

P:2, 21(Female)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?

‘Bande’ by Local Train as it is wholesome and it calms me down in every situation. It is a very light-headed song. No matter what, it makes me good.

No, it is not. I mostly prefer listening to such songs. Which fall between rock and acoustic.

2. How do you feel after listening to it?

It brings me calmness before sleeping. It helps me to sleep. The song speaks about life. This song is there for me and I can hold onto it and I know it will never walk over me and stay constantly with me. I go to it when I feel low. My preference of a favourite song changes from time to time and currently, nothing makes more sense to me than this. No matter if it is a good day or a bad day, it is there for me.

3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?

Yes, to the best memory of me watching local train. I remember good past memories. I feel very nostalgic. I’m feeling low because there were no fests because of covid situation and I have my last year of college and my plans of how I wanted my last year to be did not go accordingly. So, to cope with sadness so I am listening to this which reminds me of a good time in life.

4. What is your perspective of the song?

It’s about being in the moment despite everything happening. Despite all the lows, you bounce back. There’s a line called ‘*manzil kahan*’ which helps me to not worry about past mistakes and live in the present time. And move forward in life.

5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?

Meri manzil kahan- its consistent since pandemic. It makes me feel that I can sit down and instead of running away from the emotions, I can let them pass through me. For me, it means acceptance of all things good and bad and moving forward with it.

P:3, 21(Male)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?

Difficult to choose but I go with ‘First of the Year’ by Skrillex. I love it because of its music, it is all about the beat drop, the bridge of it. It is an EDM track, I heard in 2015 which resonates with my aggressive mood. EDM is something flexible and I have a neutral attitude towards it.

2. How do you feel after listening to it?

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The track ends on a sweet mellow tune and the emotional end acts as a catharsis for me hence, bringing peace to me.

3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?
Not really but I will say 2015 maybe. I was very aggressive at that point of time. I was aggressive at that time. I had a fight in 9th standard with a guy and I was not willing to listen what he said and anxious due to which during a conversation, I punched him in his face and did hurt him. This song goes up and up and up making my emotions hype up and then come down and then lets me introspect about things and place I have been wrong at, the way it did for me when I punched that guy.
4. What is your perspective of the song?
It induces visualisation. Used to bring my whole life in front of me.
5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?
No lyrics.

P:4, 21(Female)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?
‘Hoothon se chu lo tum’ by Jagjit Singh because of his voice which has richness and intensity. No matter if have a sombre mood or a bad mood or calm mood I feel fulfilled because his voice fills me up.
I am a fan of old hindi music. So, this genre is not new to me.
2. How do you feel after listening to it?
I feel fulfilled. I get a complete experience of doing something. for e.g., if you are going to watch a movie, when it checks the boxes you feel happy, similarly here the beat, voice instruments check the boxes so I have a complete experience. It leaves me calm even when I am sad. No matter what it cheers me up.
3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?
It entered when it was a turning phase in 10th class. I heard it first time. My personality changed a lot after 9th. It has no contribution in changing my personality. I became more mature (stopped cribbing, not involved in petty issues), started thinking talking and read about significant things in life, started introspecting a lot, making the definitions of what I feel is right and wrong. So yes, it did come up at a time when things around me and within me were changing.
4. What is your perspective of the song?
I do not have a perspective per se. it is something which connects to me personally. I go with the flow and enjoy in the present moment and get an experience of everything which is happening. The way the song is sung and the way how I experience things, I love it then. I relate to it a lot.
5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?
‘na umar ki sima ho, na janam ho bandhan, jab pyaar kare koi, toh dekhe keal mann’.
Love is something which cannot judged by parameters. Not necessarily a romantic love but between anyone and everyone. Love has no bounds. It comes without conditions. I believe in caring for people and spreading happy vibes. I love positive emotions. It resonates with how I am. And as I believe and think like that, I associate the most with these lines: that no matter what age, no matter what time, when someone loves, then the focus is only on one’s intentions and I too, look at the intentions of people.

P:5, 19(Male)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?
‘Marquee moon’ by Television. It is a 60s song with a 20-minute rock ensemble of soaring vocals, different from what you expect from a rock band. Favourite because of the guitar solo of 5 minutes and carries the song through. Also, the song gets me in a different kind of zone. I have no lyrical understanding of it at all and only love is for the music. It is how a rock song should be according to me.
2. How do you feel after listening to it?
I feel hyped-up. The end is so good that it energises me. I play it only when I want to get hyped up. Otherwise, I don’t because the journey of this song feels like friends playing together and there is something personal attached to it and can be known only by understanding it.
The feelings for the song are abstract. The first time I listened to it during lockdown only, and found it in a playlist. I came back from my friends’ house after chilling, I was working on my laptop right after, played the playlist and this was the second song, it grabbed my attention from the guitar, the song has a unique set of expertise which no rock band has and then started jamming on it whenever I came back from my friends’ place.
When I used to introspect, this was in the BG and a story developed in my mind, where four friends are playing, and these guys are playing songs since so long but want different things in life so they decide this will be the last song they will play but before it ends, they realize this is not their last song. They are playing it for themselves. I associate it to four friends because of only the sound requirements, I imagined the band to be a redemption of Sid Vicious (Sex Pistols). I view this story from a long time in your head for some reason even before listening to the song but it suited this song.
3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?
Yes. The lockdown was important for me I was in my room throughout. And now whenever I will look back at it, I will know about it. This song defined my lockdown.
4. What is your perspective of the song?
Not aware of the artist’s perspective. The story I created was something that how a group of friends have found what was once lost and too important to lose.
5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?
‘I remember how the darkness double; I recall lightning struck itself’. It creates an image which I can’t paint. It does not hold a lot of meaning to me but I love this line. I associate more with music and not lyrics but I still don’t know why I loved it.
I can think and imagine a drawing of it on canvas about how lightning is striking itself amidst of extreme darkness all around.

P:6, 20(Male)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?
I do not have a specific favourite it keeps on changing. I mostly like songs which hype me up like Party songs with beats. Currently, I am obsessing over ‘Brown munde’ by AP Dhillon. I get a party vibe from it so that’s why.
2. How do you feel after listening to it?
My mood becomes normal. I feel hyped up and feel like partying too hard.
3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?
No, it does not. It is a song which I heard in the current day of my life because it came out now. The phase of my life right now it makes me feel that life is fun but it does relate to it nowhere.

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4. What is your perspective of the song?
I do not have an understanding of it which is personal it's just my happy space song. Nothing more than that for me. I love the lyrics.
5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?
'desi jehe geet aa, tap jehi beat aa, sir kadd gajjde, speakaran ch vajde, brownmunde.' It makes me feel to be real and I will get everything I need. To sum it up, it is important to stay grounded and be sober and it will get you everything you have wished for.

P:7, 19(Female)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?
'Happy together' by The Turtles. I love it because it is classic and also the beats of the song.
I am familiar to the genre. Its intriguing for you. You heard the remake in a series and then heard the original one. It's been 4-5months now to be listening to it.
2. How do you feel after listening to it?
I feel happy and loved, adored and I feel like sending it to y significant other every time I hear it. I feel extremely elated to sum it all.
3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?
It is significant to a person not time or my phase of life. I relate it to my significant other. It is a vibey match for me and him. Past 4-5 months were a mess for me due to post covid period and going out and then came this song which acted as a support system for me.
4. What is your perspective of the song?
It is energetic, creates an excitement in me which I don't feel easily. It makes me feel that no matter what happens between me and my boyfriend we will be together in the end.
5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?
'no matter how the tossed dice, it had to be'. No matter what happens in my life where I go, fate will bring me together with him and if not, it will be the larger good of us.

P:8, 20(Female)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?
'Tumhi ho bandhu'. I love it as it gives me a sense of freedom and gives me a sense of 'I'.
I am fond more of Sufi and acoustic music and this is different from what I prefer to listen.
2. How do you feel after listening to it?
I feel free and escape into a different world. It makes me confident on how to express my feelings. It makes me feel to be happy to go on and not care what the society feels. A sense of freedom means thinking of myself first and not thinking of the society. I felt the society did make me over-conscious and I used to think a lot about it but now I know how to differentiate. Also, to be away from all the bullies and evils of the society.
3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?
Yes. When I was in school, I faced many issues like body-shaming, bullying for being from a business-class family, and faced troubles in friendships. Due to this, I was afraid of the society and felt whatever people will say I have to agree to that. I forgot who I am. But this song used to help me stay grounded and act as a lesson that do not

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think about the society and think about myself. Due to this only all of it in school I opted for distance-learning. But now things have changed for me I feel more accepting of myself so I will go to college. I used to get anxiety while meeting new people and now getting okay with what I am and what I want to be. I used to have a misconception that we can control our emotions but nothing can be controlled but we only learn how to manage them. There are both aspects to everything of things being positive and negative and we need to move forward with both. This song helped me to realize this whenever I felt low and was occupied with negative emotions. The song was motivational for me.

4. What is your perspective of the song?

I think it is to be happy, live in the moment, break the chains which hold you back, grow in present. Sometimes you need a break from things in life to introspect. It made me learn all of it: to be accepting of myself and take one step back only to come 10 steps ahead. I still listen to this almost every day. This has become a part of my life. I have never got bored of it easily. I am in a stage where I am thinking of my goals and career in life, listening to myself so this helps me to get things done.

5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?

‘rab kya jaane dil ko mere’. No one knows what goes in my heart. Rab here for me is people so I relate that people do not know what I feel and I am misinterpreted. I feel I am misunderstood by people. I listen to people and give them advice only if they need it and they think I am doing a favour to them and not doing it by heart and genuinely. *‘mujhe kya parwah iss duniya ki’*. Stop thinking about everyone. Be confident in what you do and you will own the world. So, I guess that sums my favourite lines.

P:9, 21(Male)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?

Hans Zimmer is my favourite artist. I don't stick to a song but I love 'Flight' from the Man of Steel album soundtrack. I love Hans Zimmer and that is why I love it so much. I listen to it almost every day.

I am exposed to soundtracks and prefer listening to them a lot.

2. How do you feel after listening to it?

I feel energized like mentally a lot. For me, my work is draining for, so whenever I listen to it, I feel energised.

3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?

Not at all. I don't dwell on things in the past and this song represents for me to move forward. In the movie too, it is for superman to know about how he became what he was accepting its reality and moving on with it. It's about motion. The song is more about accepting and moving forward to have some plan and hope. Just being positive. We have our life in control and I would want to make positive experiences for me. I heard it first in the movie only and I saw it before college started and heard it more in college as shit happens: shit means a culmination of a lot of things. I left playing football because of college pressures. The work for me is laborious and I use this as an escape to get stuff done. Whenever I listen to music, it is about the moment for me, I choose according to the mood I have. I listen to music according to what I want to do and what is my need in the moment. I use music as a motivator.

4. What is your perspective of the song?

It will just be one line: 'To leave the past behind and move forward with life'.

5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?

1:30 second it starts which is my favourite part. It's that part which everyone remembers about the soundtrack. There is a full-fledged play and the name of the

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song fits perfectly over here and I feel like starting to run out of joy or either running into the problem and get done with it so that it is done and dusted.

P:10, 20(Male)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?
‘Escape from LA’ by The Weeknd. I relate to it a lot. It helps me to feel a sense of vulnerability and strength at the same time so I relate to it because of that.
2. How do you feel after listening to it?
I listen to it when I am sad or emotional, it has a sad vibe and I feel that emotion properly. But while riding the bike it hypes me up. So according to the situation, the way it makes me feels changes.
3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?
Yes. It talks about a guy who undergoes a breakup with his girl and I relate to that. The line ‘*Gave you power, gave you life, gave you space so you can shine Gave you everything you wanted But none of that matters to you,*’ makes me feel that I was so caring when I was in my relationship. It describes what I underwent: despite doing everything, my efforts were not seen and were simply brushed under the carpet.
4. What is your perspective of the song?
For me, it is about a person who is too mad about someone. The song shows that people change after coming into a certain place and the person or the individual should keep moving up. We cannot top whatever and we need to go ahead with what throws at us. So, I guess it is that.
5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?
The whole song. But still the lines ‘*Cause when I’m on the liquor, I go crazy And for that, you know I’m a slave, yeah*’. He says about his bad habit and he says the girl is a bad habit too and yet he wants them too desperately. No matter what happens. So, I relate to it in a way that despite knowing what is wrong for me, I still go after my bad habits and no matter how hard I try, I still not able to leave them behind.

P:11, 21(Female)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?
It will be ‘Scars to your beautiful’ by Alessia Cara. I like it because it gives me empowerment and boosts me up. It makes me feel good.
2. How do you feel after listening to it?
I feel empowered, happy, relaxed, confident.
3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?
Yes, it does. This song is about hope in the dark. I feel the darkness many times that to frequently. But this song gives me a hope in my present life where I feel I am surrounded by darkness and gives me the confidence to overcome all the shackles I have. I don’t have a specific reason due to which I feel darkness but I feel aloof, overthink more about every aspect in my life like how can I earn more, which college to go to and all. All of these repetitive thoughts make me feel dark at times.
4. What is your perspective of the song?
I feel it speaks that we are beautiful the way we are. We need to overcome everything which belittles us and lets us down in our own eyes. No amount of body shaming or stretch marks should make us conscious about how we are and similar emotional hurdles shouldn’t hold us back too. We need to rise above them and remember we are beautiful no matter what.
5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?

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‘Oh, she don't see, the light that's shining Deeper than the eyes can find it Maybe we have made her blind So she tries to cover up her pain And cut her woes away 'Cause covergirls don't cry After their face is made’. I feel like how people over-estimate others that if someone is happy around us and talking to us nicely then they are fine. But it is not true. There is a hidden side of us which is painful. So, I feel these lines explain that feeling properly.

P:12, 20(Male)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?
‘A Sky Full of Stars’ by Coldplay. It has beautiful lyrics, good rhythm. I do not know why I love it but I just do. It is just the way it is sung. It just hits you. Genre is something familiar to me. Coldplay is my most played band.
2. How do you feel after listening to it?
It makes me feel joyous and relaxed.
3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?
It does now but when I listen to it brings back the memories when I listened to the song first. I can recall the period. This was my first Coldplay song in 2016. I heard it when I used to play cricket in my dressing room. I stopped playing cricket because of injuries and I miss that. This song reminds me of that: the phase of me thinking to even make a career in cricket, my days of playing it.
4. What is your perspective of the song?
I have two perspectives. One is for a person that it is written romantically for someone: that the over for the other person is so intense that no matter even if they tear me apart, I will be more than happy to undergo that just for the other one to stick with me.
Second is that something you want to commit to. In my case my career. So, I feel it is something which signifies giving my commitment to the career: that no matter how many fallouts I have, how much it drains me, I will still stick around it no matter what.
5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?
‘I don't care, go on and tear me apart I don't care if you do, ooh’. This because as it is relatable to my career, passion and ambition so I feel whatever happens I will follow my career and path.

P:13, 21(Female)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?
My taste in music keeps on changing but I currently like ‘Silvers and Blues’ by Lauren. Lofi beats. I like soft music and peaceful stuff.
2. How do you feel after listening to it?
I feel nothing as such. I don't feel anything in general for any song. I feel some sort of calmness and peace.
3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?
Yes, it actually does. I was not into music. I discovered it during lockdown when I started exploring English music. This reminds me of the lockdown period when I was sitting idle and exploring songs. I love to visit the feeling of exploring new songs. I am occupied with work so revisiting this feeling brings me happiness. It has now become a part of my everyday life.
4. What is your perspective of the song?

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To be honest, I have never been into lyrics and what matters to be are the beats. Beats should resonate with my feelings and my vibe. I love the lofi beats here more and didn't pay much attention to the lyrics. I relate only to the music and not the lyrics.

5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?

'I am a tide with no moon, and I am so lost without you'. 'I do not personally associate with the line as for me music has never been about personal association. But I understand that the intensity of the tide to the person, the personification the artist has made: that without the presence of the loved one, the artist feels that she is lost and has no one to guide her around.

P:14, 21 (Female)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?

'Simply the Best' by Tina Turner in Schitt's Creek. I love it because of the context of the show. How you know Patrick sang it for David in the show which makes it so surreal and beautiful to watch.

2. How do you feel after listening to it?

I feel calm but at the same time laid with emotions thinking someone will song for me. I feel happy because of the context of the song in the show. It leaves me with a calm and happy vibe.

3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?

It does not technically. It keeps my romantic hopes alive but nothing is going on for me romantically.

4. What is your perspective of the song?

Understanding it's dedicated to someone with who I have an intimate relationship. Something which is intimate and close to someone's heart. It describes love in the most basic words.

5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?

'In your eyes I get lost, just as long I am sure in your arms' - describes comfort. Symbolically it means as long as you are there, I know things will be fine.

'You are everything I need'- very personal for me as I am shy so I can't ask favours easily. I take it as something as in the future someone will do things for me out of love not because of some materialistic gains. I have become shy as I have grown up thinking we should be self-sufficient, be independent, do work on our own, because of which I feel I want to do things all myself but now I feel I can ask for favours from people. To communicate and tell what I need with relationships both romantically and otherwise.

P:15, 22(Male)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?

'I see fire' by Ed Sheeran. It is official track for The Hobbit. It signifies brotherhood and social oneness.

Plus, Ed was very raw and vulnerable in expressing community oneness, inspiration to be together when any kind of peril comes up, you have a sense that there is someone for you who will help you deal with it.

2. How do you feel after listening to it?

When I feel alone, when I am back into a corner, then I feel that there are still people for me and I have the potential to make new friends no matter even if people are leaving. I feel warm, the guitar is acoustic, up soaring. You can always do better with the best people around you. It makes me comfortable and realize that I can always go above and beyond with the support of people, my brothers.

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3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?
I was in 9th when I heard it and not really coz, I have had that sense have being in back to the corner many times. ‘Even if we die together’. It makes me feel that even when you are in the corner, you have again pointing to your head its alright to you know cherish all the accomplishments you have had till then. You have had a great life and phase, you will always go back in a corner, and at that time, celebrating yourself gives you comfort: it is about not feeling bad for failure, we feel this many things in our life.
It reminds me that it is okay to fail but you should remember your friends, your strengths, celebrate your success and moving forward in life. In that sense, this song is significant to me in different phases of life. For some reason, it always comes up all by itself when I am back in a corner and I do not know how. So yes, it is somewhere significant to me.
4. What is your perspective of the song?
It signifies brotherhood and social oneness, a community living kind of a portrayal: if community is under jeopardy then a sense of brotherhood comes up. It signifies sense of friendship which is beyond being friends: it is having more responsibility towards the society, something beyond blood relations. Knowing that no matter how many times you fail, you still have your success to celebrate, your loved ones still see a fire in you and to move ahead with all the success and failures alike.
5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?
‘And if we should die tonight Then we should all die together Raise a glass of wine for the last time Calling out for the rope Prepare as we will Watch the flames burn on and on the mountain side Desolation comes upon the sky’. For me, it is about celebrating the oneness together. If we’re going to die, lets die together. Life is about to end but we still have our accomplishments: something always to celebrate. You should be happy about your life and whatever your fight has been. After you are content at that time and about to die, even if desolation comes upon you, you still can try to get the rope: you can still get out with the help of others by climbing up from a pit despite everything burning. In a negative space, you can have positivity as people help you out. For me, this is what these lines signify.

P:16, 21(Female)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?
‘Change my mind’, ‘Moments’ and ‘More than this’ by One-D are the songs which have stayed with me. The lyrics don’t hit me hard and the voice and the little pain which I love. I will choose ‘Moments’ because of its first line ‘*shut the door and turn the lights off*’ because I feel that leave me alone with my thoughts quite often.
2. How do you feel after listening to it?
Peace, calmness. There is a sense of everything is okay. It’s my go to song for every situation.
3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?
Yes. When I got into one-D I was in 7th and had issues in terms of insecurities, bad self-image and was very sad. For me, One-D was my escape and felt peace whenever they were there for me. Insecurities in the sense that my self-esteem was low I used to feel that I was ugly, and insecure in relationships and used to feel why are people with me. It has reduced now but used to exist and is still there in my relationship. I associate with these songs to that time of my life which was shitty but these used to make me happy and I used to escape. I used to weave a story back then but now I feel that I am through with that time but they still stayed. The person I was has changed

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but the song gives me the same happy-go lucky vibes and it stayed with me till now, so I cherish it.

4. What is your perspective of the song?
For me, I understand the first line differently. The song is about intimacy between two people and how things go wrong but can't fix even if they want to. I crave this intimacy and hence associate with the song that way. And I want that teenage romance because I used to feel it will pull me out of the shit I was in back then.
5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?
'Shut the door and turn the lights off' so I feel that leave me alone with my thoughts. Meaning that I want silence and be with myself and want to be quiet and in peace and introspect stuff which happens or just want to be alone in the dark with myself.

P:17, 21(Female)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?
It changes for me time to time. I forget the names of the songs. When I like a song, I keep on listening to it more and more. It is difficult for me call one difficult. But I like something like local train and classical Bollywood. The song will be 'Tune Kaha' by Prateek Kuhad.
2. How do you feel after listening to it?
When I was in a relationship it was different and now it is different. Now it makes me miss the person I was with. There is a tinge of sadness when I listen to it. I feel good but I still feel a little sad something which is missing.
3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?
Yes. My relationship and heartbreak and the lockdown period. I broke up in the lockdown. I used to listen to this song a lot with my partner. It brings me the memories but trying to accept that at the least I had something with someone no matter what it was. I'm still not over him. But there was progress.
4. What is your perspective of the song?
'tune kahan, maine sun liya'. The level of understanding for me is that whatever happened in my relationship, it left me stranded but the song did not. It gives me hope that someone one day will understand me without me putting in more effort.
5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?
'tune kaha, maine sunliya'. Same understanding as above.

P:18, 21(Female)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?
'Kalank' by Arijit Singh. I love it its lyrics. They are meaningful and has my favourite actor Varun Dhawan.
2. How do you feel after listening to it?
I feel very nice, relaxed, brings out my romantic side. Its relaxing and helps me to escape for a while from my thoughts because it has Varun in it.
3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?
No, it does not. But I love it as it is mellow and I have used it to make it a video for my significant other. In that sense it becomes significant.
4. What is your perspective of the song?
It is about love and how love has no boundaries. It does not affect anything. Your feelings are pure no matter for whom. Loving someone is not wrong. Everyone has a right to love someone no matter what and that can't be questioned.
5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?

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‘kalank nahi ishq hai kajal piya’. Kalnak means accusing someone. It means that love is not something to be ashamed of. But something which is pure and beautiful and needs to be protected. Like you put kajal to embrace someone, so similarly these lines embrace the love: to protect someone from the evil eye.

P:19, 21(Male)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?
‘Riha’ by Anuv Jain. I love it because I relate to it. The lyrics make me feel I am in a similar situation and I feel the singer is telling his side and I can understand that this can happen to someone.
By similar situation meaning that the singer says that how he is influenced by the one he loves so I feel that even I cannot find your presence or motive without the significant other in your life.
2. How do you feel after listening to it?
I feel sad and feel like singing it out loud so that people can relate to my plight. I hope someone will understand my feelings. People understand me too for once. But I also feel a comfort because it is relatable, I feel there is something which brings me peace.
3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?
Yes, it does. Because when I was going through the period of not being with the person, I thought was my significant other from 12th to college so I do not like the time but that period also defines me who I am right now so I try to understand people where they are coming from. The song helped me kind of to accept the unpleasant feelings and get a closure and move on with life. But when I listen those feelings do revisit but I now know how to handle them.
4. What is your perspective of the song?
In the song the artist says he has all the memories of the significant other no matter what. *‘tu hai nahi, mei kaun hun’* so I feel it questions that what will I do if you are not here. There is a place in my dreams where we can be together and stay with me please. I find the song vulnerable as vulnerability is beautiful emotionally as you can’t be that with everyone.
5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?
‘Hmm, Rait pe pairon se tere nishaan mere dil par Logon ki lehron si hai baaton se mitenge kab-tak Ho jaana tu riha mere, ho jaana tu riha mere Na hona chahun main, na ho sakun kabhi’. This as the artist says that the memories of the significant other are so deary to the him that nothing affects him. The person does not want to get away and that I feel is beautiful. I find it beautiful, the clinging part to someone as I feel the time, we live in is all materialistic but love, devoting yourself to someone despite them not coming back in this materialistic world, is what makes these lines beautiful. Not everyone has the guts to stick on to people deary: to sacrifice yourself for it even though it is toxic. I think it is good to let go as it is practical but I still find not letting go has its own beauty something which people can’t do as that is tough.

P:20, 21(Male)

1. Name a song or musical piece you are fond of and why?
‘Yahi hun mein’ by Ayushmaan Khurana. I want to have a proper Christian funeral despite being a Hindu and I want this to be played at it. I want people to remember me that I am there despite being not there like in their memories. So hence this is my favourite.
2. How do you feel after listening to it?

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It makes me emotional because it is very close to my heart. The melody and lyrics make me cry and I feel attached to them a lot. I do not think of it much but whenever I play it, I feel that I want to be competent enough to be in the memories of others.

3. Does this song relate to a significant or important period of your life?

Yes, it does. Because to be honest, in 11th and 12th I had a pretty tough time and even had suicidal thoughts, and even attempted suicide. I am now upfront about it. I used to listen to this when I was dealing with depression. It indicates a hard period of my life. It was comforting for me back then and even now. It now brings me back those bad memories but makes me feel that I came out of it despite all and that I am comfortable enough with myself now which I was not back then. Those insecurities come back but then, the fact I changed myself and everything ended, it makes me feel stronger and comfortable about myself.

4. What is your perspective of the song?

The video of the song starts with the band of Ayushmaan which meets a pretty bad accident but are never found. His girlfriend goes to find them and this song plays in her head, she feels that he was there despite being not there. So, I believe that whenever people listen to this song, I want people to feel my presence that I am there for them. So, I will be there for the ones I love and care. When I heard it, I needed someone at that time with me, I had people helping me, friends, family, teachers, it also reminds me of them. I want to be in their memories as the person I have become.

5. Which lines do you like the most and why? How do you interpret them?

‘Dooriyan jitni hon, ho jaane de; Faasley naa rahein; Manzilein mill jaayein; Jo bhi kho jaane de; raaste sang chalien’. I love them because of the way I interpret them. For me, this sums up everything in my head. I want to be remembered as how I am and not the distance between us. By distance I mean physical distance. I will be emotionally there for them. So, no matter, how much distance comes up, that doesn't mean the attachment I have with people would fade away. We will find the way out no matter how much the physical distance because of the understanding which exists with the people. There are things we will leave behind; we will leave them and go with the flow but the understanding will help us to be there and stay there through thick and thin.