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Research Paper

Comparison of Music Preference on Personality and Stress Among College Students

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ABSTRACT

Psychology is a very dynamic field of study. There are a lot of researches going on in this field currently It is necessary to scientifically research on the topics on it. The purpose of the present study is to Compare Music Preference in Indian Classical Music Listeners and Rock music listeners on Openness, Conscientiousness and Agreeableness and Stress among college students. The target participants of the study were adults [College students] of age range 20 to 25. The participants of this study comprise of both males and females. College students [both Undergraduate and postgraduate were included]. The total number of samples [Sample Size] was 151.Total number of Indian Classical Music listeners and Rock Music Listeners are 88 and 63 respectively. All the samples are collected through offline mode. For assessing Music Preference self-designed personal data sheet by researcher, for measuring Openness, Conscientiousness and Agreeableness, The Big Five Inventory [B.F.I], and for measuring stress Perceived Stress Scale [P.S.S.] all these tools were used. Between group design is research method used in this research. It was concluded from the non-parametric distribution of that, there exists no significant difference on Openness and Agreeableness among Indian Classical Music Listeners and Rock Music Listeners and there exists a significant difference on Conscientiousness and Stress among Indian Classical Music Listeners and Rock Music Listeners [College Students].

Keywords: *Music Preference [Indian Classical Music and Rock Music] Openness, Coscientiousness, Agreeableness and Stress*

The psychological effects of music can be powerful and wide – ranging. Music therapy is an intervention sometimes used to promote emotional health, help patients cope with stress and boost psychological well-being. Some research even suggests that your taste in music can provide insight into different aspects of your personality. Past music and personality research indicates as many people listen to music for emotional engagement and that individuals are attracted to music which they find to be congruent with their self- the study may provide additional information on the relation of type of music preference with relation to personality and stress. Major focus of the study is the comparison between music preference in two music styles namely – Indian Classical Music listeners and Rock Music listeners on the variables such as three personality traits from Big five traits – Openness, Conscientiousness and Agreeableness and Stress. music but this study will help us to understand the role of stress

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in our music preference the which type of. Although all age group people tend to listen to music, particularly young generation spends significant amount of time on a daily basis in listening to music, but not so much details are well known about the psychological role of music preference with relation to personality and stress which is a clinical state. That's why, specifically college students' sample is taken for current research study by the researcher. Basically, in order to fill research gap, this comparative research study is undertaken. and they are also done by taking many music styles that people often listen to. But we can clearly notice here that, comparison between any two particular music styles which can easily be compared, like two significantly different musical features and scope is a neglected research area. But, the other two traits of personality besides these three which are Conscientiousness and Agreeableness have been highly a neglected part in all the previously done research studies, curiously the researcher has taken these two traits of personality in order to see how are they related with different personality types and also the levels of stress that people experience. She also included Openness which has been researched but not in this comparative context by taking any two comparable music styles and also for the ease of research being dealt with the three traits would give more valid and reliable findings rather than that which is being dealt with two traits of personality. If we throw light on the past researches regarding music preference and personality traits, Cattell [1954] examined music preferences almost 50 years ago and it was found that there were strong preferences for various personalities to prefer and like certain types of music. Recently, music has been used in the field of Psychology and personality [Dollinger,1993]. More specifically it was found that music as a tool in the Psychology field can aid in the understanding of personality. In order to better understand this, if we look at past research studies regarding music and stress, Jun Jiang, Daphne Rickson, etc. studied 'The Mechanism of music for reducing stress – Music preference as a mediator. Another research for instance, is John Aleigha and Aleigha and Irradiant studied 'The Effects of various types of music on stress levels Results indicated that there is a significant difference between stress levels of males and females. The comparison in turn will provide suggestions to future listeners regarding which music style to refer among these two for having a balanced personality with considerably less amount of stress and a good music taste. This study will add further insight into music psychology research. Last but not least, major significance of this research study is that there are researches done in foreign countries which provides evidence that there is correlation and, in some researches, it has been found that there is no correlation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Objectives of the Study

- To compare Music Preference to Indian Classical Music Listeners and Rock Music Listeners among college students on Openness.
- To compare Music Preference to Indian Classical Music Listeners and Rock Music Listeners among college students on Conscientiousness.
- To compare Music Preference to Indian Classical Music Listeners and Rock Music Listeners among college students on Agreeableness.
- To compare Music Preference to Indian Classical Music Listeners and Rock Music Listeners among college students on Stress.

Hypotheses

- Hypothesis 1 [H1] – Those who prefer Indian Classical music will be high on openness as compared to those who prefer Rock Music.
- Hypothesis 2 [H2] – There will be no significant difference on Conscientiousness between those who prefer Indian Classical Music and those who prefer Rock Music.

- Hypothesis 3[H3] – Those who prefer Indian Classical Music will be high on Agreeableness as compared to those who prefer Rock Music.
- Hypothesis 4 [H4] – Those who prefer Indian Classical Music will be low on stress as compared to those who prefer Rock Music.

Participants

The target participants of the study were adults [College students] of age range 20 to 25. The participants of this study comprise of both males and females. College students [both Undergraduate and postgraduate were included]. The mean age of the sample is 22. Samples from all the three family types were included [Joint, Nuclear and Single Parent].

The total number of samples [Sample Size] was 151.Total number of Indian Classical Music listeners and Rock Music Listeners are 88 and 63 respectively.

Factors such as education, economic status, religion and pronouns are not controlled. All the samples are collected through offline mode. [Including P.D.S, Consent form and Tools used for the variables under the study]

- **Inclusion Criteria –** College students [Undergraduate and postgraduate, both males and females.
- **Exclusion Criteria –** Married and Working people. Students from Vocational colleges.

Materials under the study

Research design used is Between group design as it is comparative study.
- Tool for Music Preference –
- Personal Data Sheet [PDS] –
- A Self-designed questionnaire having questions –
    1. Do you regularly listen to Music? [Yes / No]
    2. Are you a singer? [Yes / No]
    3. Which Music type will you prefer among Indian Classical Music and Rock Music? [Yes / No]
- Tool for Personality Traits –
- The Big Five Inventory [BFI] –

Given by John O.P and Srivastava. This inventory consists of 44 items. In 1988 Oliver John Berkeley Personality lab and Veronica Barnet Martinez created B.F.I. These 3 scales are all scientifically validated and widely used in academies research into personality. In Psychology, the 5 dimensions 'THE BIG 5' are commonly used which this test contains- 1. Openness to experience 2. Conscientiousness 3. Extroversion 4. Agreeableness 5. Neuroticism Scoring key provided by authors consist of 44 items rated by 5-point Likert scale from 1[disagree a lot] to 5 [agree a lot]. Some items are Reverse scored items and denoted by R in inventory.

- Tool for Stress –
 Perceived Stress Scale [PSS] – The Perceived Stress Scale [PSS -10; Cohen, Kamarch and Mermelstein,1983] is a popular tool consisting of 10 items for measuring psychological stress. It is a self-reported questionnaire that was designed to measure the degree to which situations in one's life are appraised as stressful. The scale includes a number of direct questions about current levels of reexperienced stress. PSS was designed for use in community samples with at

least a junior high school education. Scores are obtained by reversing 4 positively stated items [4,5,7 and 8]. Short 4 item scale can be made from questions 2,4,5 and 10 of PSS 10 item scale. This test has significantly good reliability and validity and norms are matching the Research requirements.

Procedure for data collection
The data was collected through survey method via offline mode. The research form included a consent form and the standardized tools that were used to assess them. The Personal Data Sheet [P.D.S] included their demographic details such as their Name (optional), Age, Gender, Name of college, Current education, Specialization, department, Occupation [Optional], Type of Family, Annual Income [Optional], Marital Status. The sampling technique used was convenient sampling. The study was quantitative in nature.

Variables under study
The Variables used for the study are Music Preference, Openness, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness and Stress.
- Independent Variables – Music Preference [Indian Classical Music and Rock Music]
- Dependent Variables – Personality Traits [Openness, Conscientiousness agreeableness] and Stress.

Statistical analysis
The statistical analysis used was Man Whitney-U test. The study has primarily focused on quantitative research method; and necessitates for use of statistical tools. The scores of the variables were put for normality check and accordingly, use of statistical tools was determined. The hypotheses were rejected so further analysis was not run by researcher. Descriptive statistics i.e., Mean & SD and non-parametric inferential statistics i.e., Man Whitney-U test for Comparison were used for analyzing the collected data. for analyzing the collected data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result –
Descriptive statistics –
Table showing Descriptive Statistics of Music Preference among Indian Classical music listeners and Rock Music listeners on Personality traits [Openness. Conscientiousness and Aagreeableness] and Stress. [N =151].

	Mean	Standard deviation	Skweness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std Error	Statistic	Std Error
Music Preference	64.17	4.947	.339	.197	-1.910	.392
Openness	33.05	4.425	-.249	.197	-.067	.392
Conscientiousness	28.93	4.780	-.199	.197	.276	.392
Agreeableness	34.31	6.323	-.290	.197	-.590	.392
Perceived Stress Scale	17.83	5.352	-.182	.197	.741	.392

The mean values of music preference is 64.17, and for openness, conscientiousness and agreeableness ,respective mean values are 33.05, 28.93 and 34.71 respectively and likewise mean value for stress[measured by Perceived Stress Scale] is 17.83.Mean value of Grouping variable Music Preference indicates that all the participants fall under the continuum of Indian Classical and Rock music listening preferences in the middle range.58.28% students are falling

below the mean value and 41.72 % students are falling above the range of mean value for music preference. 42% Students are average in the range. Mean values of Openness, Conscientiousness and Agreeableness are falling within low range according to the Quartile interpretation. 21.88%, 19.15% and 22.72% are the percentage values for Openness, Consientiousness, Agreeableness respectively. And mean value of stress indicates moderate level of stress experienced by general population as it is between the range 14 to 26.11.80% students are having moderate scores for stress.

Table showing Descriptive Statistics of all the demographic variables mentioned in the personal data sheet [P.D.S] like age, gender, type of family, current education, specialization, duration of listening to music and medium of listening music. [N=151]

	Mean	**Standard deviation**	**Skweness**		**Kurtosis**	
	Statistic	**Statistic**	**Statistic**	**Std Error**	**Statistic**	**Std Error**
Age	21.97	1.259	.720	.197	.469	.392
Gender	1.77	.419	-1.329	.197	-.237	.392
Current Education	12.73	4.406	-.801	.197	-.344	.392
Specialization	37.08	8.794	-.179	.197	-.549	.392
Type of Family	55.73	.621	.258	.197	.612	.392
Duration of Listening Music	128.84	111.154	1.998	.197	5.663	.392
Medium of Listening Music	153.21	619.275	5.117	.197	25.012	.392

The mean age of participants is [21.97] 22 years. Majority of sample size is showing higher number of females than that of males as mean value for age is 1.77. 77.48% students are females and 22.52% students are males. Mean value of current education [12.73] indicates that sample is showing average distribution in the graduate and postgraduate courses.11.72% are showing mean value of current education. Considering specialization average students are perusing masters as compared to bachelor's degree as per the mean value is 37.08.7.28% students are pursuing masters as indicated by the mean value in specialization. Mean value of type of family is 55.73 which shows that majority of the students belong to nuclear family.18.4% students are from nuclear family.

Mann Whitney – U test-
Table showing results of Man Whitney – U test performed on the Openness

	Music Preference	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**	**U**	**Asymp sig [2 – tailed]**
Openness	Indian Classical Music	88	77.98	6862.50	2597.500	.509
	Rock Music	63	73.23	4613.50		
	Total	151				

Let's consider the hypothesis formulated by the present researcher for Openness,
Hypothesis 1 [H1] – Those who prefer Indian Classical music will be high on openness as compared to those who prefer Rock Music. But, according to the mean ranks given in the table above [77.98 for Indian Classical Music and 73.23 for Rock Music], there was no significant difference found on Openness in Indian Classical Music Listeners and Rock Music Listeners.

Focusing on the target sample of present study [college students], they must have gone through the impact of covid pandemic adverse situation. As a result of being in a home for constantly for a period of nearly more than 2 years, they were exposed to less exposures, less experiences, less opportunities in order to explore themselves. So, they might have developed less openness to new experiences inspite of preferring to any of the two music styles in this study, be it Indian Classical Music and Rock Music. Covid situation also adversely affected overall Music throughout the globe. Total monthly spending on music decreased by more than 45 % as compared to pre-pandemic, with live music events and physical sales being the most severely affected. Surprisingly, music consumption in hours also decreased during the lockdown even though consumers spent more time at home. Covid-19 had a huge impact on the music industry as well with all live concerts and performances cancelled into foreseeable future, bringing music business to a stand-still. Many college students who are somehow connected to music industry in the present study's target sample might have undergone through these issues and lead to development of less open attitude due to less opportunities and exposures to flourish the musical performances and concerts. One such research study by Angelina R. Sotin, Yannik Stephan, et al [2022], there was notable, significant declines in openness as a result of the changes brought about by coronavirus pandemic as a stressful global event. According to research study done by Medeegoda, Chinthaka P.et al [2013]. There might be people with lack of knowledge though they are fans who are interested to experience and there is also a gap in cultural understanding among the audience. According to another research study performed by Dr. Deepa Pandey and Mrs. Vineeta Sharma, [2016] Indian Classical music listeners showed high scores on Openness as compared to Rock music listeners. Rock music listeners showed low scores on openness according to this study.

Table showing results of Man Whitney – U test performed on the Conscientiousness.

	Music Preference	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**	**U**	**Asymp sig [2 – tailed]**
Conscientiousness	Indian Classical Music	88	83.78	7373.00	2087.000	.010
	Rock Music	63	65.13	4103.00		
	Total	151				

Let's consider the hypothesis formulated by the present researcher for Conscientiousness – Hypothesis 2 [H2] – There will be no significant difference on Conscientiousness between those who prefer Indian Classical Music and those who prefer Rock Music.

But, according to the mean ranks given in the table above [83.78 for Indian Classical Music and 65.13 for Rock Music], there was significant difference on Conscientiousness in Indian Classical Music Listeners and Rock Music Listeners. The present results showed significant difference in scores of Indian classical music listeners who showed higher scores as compared to rock music listeners which is again a discrepancy in the actual findings and previously formulated hypothesis which was basically null. Core values of conscientiousness are discipline, orderliness and organized daily practices and behaviours and follow specific plan and structured rules. In Indian Classical music which is based on proper improvisation of Ragas involves discipline in both its teaching and learning processes. It goes according to proper notations, swaras, talas and ragas as compared to rock music listeners, by our own observations, we can state that, they are more furious in nature, definitely follow certain methods and

instruments but are not bound to them to that extent. This explanation supports current findings of study.

Table showing results of Man Whitney – U test performed on the Agreeableness.

	Music Preference	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	Asymp sig [2 – tailed]
Agreeableness	Indian Classical Music	88	80.09	7048.00		
	Rock Music	63	70.29	4428.00	2412.200	.509
	Total	151				

Let's consider the hypothesis formulated by the present researcher for Agreeableness– Hypothesis 3 [H3] – Those who prefer Indian Classical Music will be high on Agreeableness as compared to those who prefer Rock Music. But, according to results, there was no significant difference on Agreeableness in Indian Classical Music Listeners and Rock Music Listeners.

But, according to the mean ranks given in the table above [80.09 for Indian Classical Music and 70.29 for Rock Music], there was no significant difference on Agreeableness in Indian Classical Music Listeners and Rock Music Listeners.

When we consider another important personality trait Agreeableness, Those high on agreeableness tend to be more cooperative and helpful; but according to the present study's results, both Indian Classical as well as Rock Music listeners show low scores on this personality dimension and thus they show traits of being more competitive and even manipulative. People who are low in agreeableness tend to experience less empathy and put their concerns ahead of others. Low scores are often described as hostile, antagonistic. They tend to have more conflictual relationships and often fall out with people. Having low scores on agreeableness might mean that, the person is holding grudges. On the other hand, low scores also indicate that being likely to avoid the pitfalls of comparing yourself to others or caring about what others think of you. Also, less agreeable people tend to do a better job in environments that don't expect them to connect emotionally with others. They thrive in careers that are objective and logical, as it allows them to be direct. As we mentioned now that less agreeable people, here both Indian Classical and Rock Music listeners tend to highly competitive in nature. Disagreeableness may be a trait that leads to success. They don't rely on others's approval before taking action and aren't afraid to go against the norm. According to one research study conducted by Produce Brain Glazer [2017], he explains that people use disagreeable strategy to succeed in school and in their career and in this present study, the target sample is college students. These young adults as they are living in today's modern and highly competitive world, they are constantly trying to reach new heights and reaching to greater milestones, meeting newer and challenging societal expectations and achieving greater success in their career paths. So, both Indian Classical and Rock Music listeners might choose to be less agreeable in order to me more successful and to sustain in better way in this competitive era. In addition to this, the covid pandemic situations had shown people in variety of cultural settings to face so many serious challenges and problems at every level of their lives, be it personal, social, or professional. They have tolerated many difficult situations including even deaths of loved ones. So, they might have developed less agreeable attitude towards society as they themselves had gone through so much pain and suffering. Especially, by observing parents, peers and other neighbours, college students in this study might have developed such

less empathetic and less agreeable attitude inspite of preferring to any of the Indian Classical and Rock music. One such research study by Angelina R. Sutin, Yannik Stephan, et al [2022], there was notable, significant declines in agreeableness as a result of the changes brought about by coronavirus pandemic as a stressful global event.

Taking into account another significant study in this regard, performed by Sulakshana Khatoniya, [2020] on Music preference and its association with personality. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between Music preference and the Big Five personality traits. As per the results, the resulting demanding dimensions showed negative correlations with agreeableness and emotionality stable people in case of both Indian Classical and Rock Music listeners. Agreeableness is also a good predictor of emotional intensity experienced from all types of music, both positive and negative. Brown [2012] performed such another study on Music preferences and personality among Japanese university students this negative correlation with agreeableness, both showed low scores on agreeableness.

Table showing results of Man Whitney – U test performed on the Perceived Stress Scale [Stress].

	Music Preference	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	Asymp sig [2 – tailed]
Perceived Stress Scale	Indian Classical Music	88	70.09	6168.00	2252.000	.049
	Rock Music	63	84.25	5308.00		
	Total	151				

According to the significance value 0.049 [less than 1] given in the table above there was significant difference on Stress in Indian Classical Music Listeners] and Rock Music Listeners.

When we consider another important variable in study which is Stress, the Effectiveness and there uptic use of Indian Classical Music as a stress buster comes into play here as a valid and notable reason of significant difference in scores of stress for both the music types and especially, scores of Indian classical music being less than rock music. Benefits of Music therapy include improved heart rate, reduced anxiety, stimulation of brain and improved learning. Music therapists use their techniques to help their patients in many areas, ranging from stress relief before and after surgeries to neuropathologies such as Alzheimer's disease. According to the study by M. R. Kotwal, Diagn Ther Endose et al [1998] – Stress reduction through listening to Indian Classical Music during gastroscopy. This signifies effectiveness of Indian Classical Music interventions in the medical; field.

According to other study by Elise Labbe et al [2007] – Listening to classical or self-selected music is more powerful for reducing stress, anxiety than heavy metal music.

If we particularly take into account, the target sample of this research, various studies have also shown that Indian Classical Music is an effective cure for reducing anxiety about exams and other competitions in student's life. If we talk about moderate scores in both music listeners, The sample [college students] encounter many experiences, situations, people in daily life, deal with different levels of challenges, problems. Mainly focusing on the present study's sample [college students], many things students commonly cite as causes of stress which include, examinations, deadliness, returning to study, pressure of combining paid work and study, difficulty in organizing work, poor time management, leaving assignments to the last minute, out of control debts, poor housing, overcrowding, noise. adjusting to life in narrow environment

or even country, difficulties maintaining interpersonal relationships [splitting up], balancing the demands of a family with studying, problems related to parents, peers or at home and family level. These factors nicely put a picture of all factors including within self and those present outside the self [in environment]. Another major issue in the present real world scenario is increased tendency towards smoking and related consumption behaviours of drugs and alcohol especially among the young adults which is actually the target population of this study. The statistical data clearly shows that, in present day Indian context, about 16 % of young adults [between age group 20 to 29] smoked regularly this year. Smoking as it injurious to health leads to various health issues from tooth decay to stroke to cancer and in turn adversely affects body. As per the current statistics, about 20 % college students suffer from Alcohol Use Disorders [A.U.D] and 60 % of students ranging from age 18 to 22 engage in drinking in past month and drug nearly 2 students in every 100 ones engage in binge eating addiction. Thus, we can definitely make a point that, all these increased addiction behaviours can be definitely a major contributing factor leading to stress for college students. Hence, to summarize, Music preference is just one factor, not solely it can reflect changes in the levels of stress. In this study, both Indian Classical and Rock Music listeners showed moderate amount of stress and significant difference, which is as per the actual findings and previously formulated hypothesis according to which it was expected that, classical music listeners would experience low stress as compared to rock music listeners.

CONCLUSIONS

A. There is no significant difference in Openness between Indian Classical Music Listeners and Rock Music Listeners among college students.
B. There is no significant difference in Agreeableness between Indian Classical Music Listeners and Rock Music Listeners among college students
C. There is significant difference in Conscientiousness between Indian Classical Music Listeners and Rock Music Listeners among college students and Indian Classical Music Listeners were high on Conscientiousness as compared to Rock Music Listeners.
D. There is significant difference in Stress between Indian Classical Music Listeners and Rock Music Listeners among college students and Indian Classical Music Listeners were low on stress as compared to Rock Music Listeners.

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Conflict of Interest

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