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The Identity of Musical Taste

Musical taste to me is determined from where you grow up in the world, who you grow up with and what kind of person you are. Music can be described as the great divider due to its vast amount and variety. Many major genres such as Hip Hop/Rap and R&B are very influential to communities and to people how just enjoy the music selection. It splits people ‘s opinions more than only other forms of art or media. I personally love to listen to Rap and R&B music and it helps me go to a place of comfort and serenity. Dr. Caitlin Anderson previous told me that she gets the most excited and thrilled about the genre K-Pop. She loves the diversity of music and the variety of artists who put each own’s flare inside their songs. I began researching for what music taste represents and the impact they have on communities that embrace them. Kendra Cherry, the author of “Music Preferences and Your Personality**:** What does your taste in music reveal about you?” uses claims of facts from one large-scale study performed by researchers of Heriot-Watt University who asked 36,000 participants all over the world to rate 104 different musical styles. With similar topics, Author Katlyn Kritz from Youngstown State University ‘s “The Jambar” wrote “Music’s Influence on Culture” using the credibility of his peers and teachers for his claims. With the information put out by these sources, I can create my stance from the two articles on how music contributes to a person’s identity and culture.

Music is not subjective, but the taste itself is subjective. Most people understand musical taste as one’s preferences in music: particular genres, styles, music bands. Music can create your own world without interfering, while being an excellent way to connect with others.

Listening to your favorite genre music everyday can somehow actually affect your personality. Depending on the style of music and how much influence the artist has, not just your personality but even the clothes you wear can change. Professor Adrian North of Heriot – Watt University conducted a study of how one’s music taste impact one’s personality. This study is also the same study that was introduced by Kendra Cherry in her article. Some results from Professor North’s research were that for the participants who enjoyed Reggae have “high self-esteem, are creative, not hardworking, outgoing, and gentle.” With participants who enjoy Rock/Heavy Metal have, “low self-esteem, not hardworking, and not outgoing.” I believe that people who prefer to dance to music are usually outgoing and more assertive. It can show that they feel good comfortable with who they are even if it is while being around others. Both of these authors believe that music taste is a very unique characteristic in which can touch a variety of communities and societies.

Kendra Cherry, from *VeryWell mind,* uses claims of research and facts to showcase the results of the extensive survey determining the personalities associated with genres of music. She begins by stating how music plays a very important role in peoples lives around the world and the who the influence can give a ripple affect going throughout generations. Kendra speaks on the research done by Professor Adrian North stating, “the reason people sometimes feel defensive about their taste in music might be related to how much it relates to attitudes and personality.” Along with music taste playing an important part, Kendra also believes that people use music as a way to set the mood, to motivate a workout, or even to gain inspiration. I agree with her because I use my selection of music to accompany most of my everyday activities. Rap/Hip Hop is my most enjoyed genre so I instantly gravitated to Dr. North’s research on the subject.

According to the study, Dr. North found that despite the stereotype that rap lovers are, “more aggressive or violent,” but his results gave no such indication. Instead, most rap fans tend to have, “high self-esteem and are usually outgoing.” I feel that way towards rap as well because a lot of songs give off the energy to get up and take action or become confident in who you are and what you are about. Cherry’s article uses facts brought about from the large-scale study to bring light on the impact that music preferences can have on people.

Secondly, Katlyn Kritz, from *The Jambar,* uses her peers and instructors to bring in opinions and insight on the impact music can have on different cultures. Music plays an important role in the lives of people from all over, which is why many people wonder what individual factors might influence musical preferences. No one’s musical taste fully aligns with anyone else’s. We can live with the understanding that we all enjoy different artist. In Katlyn’s article, we can view excerpts from her music theory instructor, Clay Colley. “Music is more ubiquitous now, but not more influential,” Colley said. “Our constant ability to access any music we want has actually diminished its power.” I don’t fully know the range of this quote but I understand where he is coming from about our constant access to any type of music. Without that access, people would have to depend on their environment to display what genre of music is available to them. Jay Jones, a senior psychology major, speaks on how music can change his mood in almost the snap of a finger. “Music can be the sun that brightens my darkest hours,” Jones said. “I can be completely outraged, and music will change that in a heartbeat.” I agree with his statement because I can calm myself from a prior situation by taking a step back and encompassing myself in my favorite songs. Jones also states that artist such as Michael Jackson and Kendrick Lamar have brought about a social change in recent years. The lyrics in songs can make you realize that you have to be strong, kind, brave, and independent.

In conclusion, both sources give insight on what music taste can inspire in people and communities alike. Music means a lot of different things to different people. No matter your race, where you live, or your culture, its very likely that music can make up a large part of your being. Kendra describes how much music can change a person’s experience in the world. While Katlyn constructs perspectives of her culture to show what music can give to society. Music helps express our own identity. It may also influence the type of friends you have, the type of clothes you wear, and the type of activities you may like to enjoy. I believe that musical taste is a large part of who we are as people and it can connect us to the world in so many different ways. Both authors delve into what music really means and how it can be a voice of a people. Music isn’t just a sound; it can strengthen the spirit and inspire hope for tomorrow.

Work Cited

Cherry, Kendra. “What Does Your Taste in Music Reveal About Your Personality?” *Verywell Mind*, www.verywellmind.com/music-and-personality-2795424.

Kritz, Katlyn. “Music's Influence on Culture.” *The Jambar*, 22 Feb. 2018, thejambar.com/musics-influence-culture/.