

Differences in the benefits of music listening between South Korean teenagers studying in Korea and the United States: A pilot study report

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INTRODUCTION

The further progression of globalization stimulates the increase of foreign students along with a necessity to explore diverse cultures and its effect on those students. One of the ways to investigate the effect of culture and unfamiliar environment on foreign students is to study their music preferences, as teens regard music as an essential part of their life and a crucial way to express themselves creatively (Moore, 2010). Studying the music preferences and the motivation for listening of South Korean students studying in the United States can help understand the students who are adjusting to their new environment, and comparing them with students who remained in Korea can further reveal cultural differences.

METHODS

In this pilot quantitative study, data were gathered from Korean teenagers through a survey questionnaire and analyzed by multiple regression and analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Participants

A total of 31 Korean teenagers (age from 13 to 18) participated in the survey. The participants consisted of

- (A) 14 foreign students studying in the US
- (B) 6 students studying in an international school in Korea
- (C) 11 students in a non-international Korean school

Procedure

The survey was developed during July 20, 2019 to August 4, 2019. Upon completion, it has been distributed and answered by participants between August 4, 2019 and August 28, 2019. The results have been analyzed from August 28, 2019 through September 1, 2019.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were gathered by a survey questionnaire including demographics, music preferences, music and identity, music and peer relation. The questionnaire consisted of 20 selection and short answer questions. The final question of the survey was a long answer question asking what music means to the respondents. The survey was conducted by both online and paper distribution. The accrued quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 22.0 (IBM, 2013) for descriptive statistics, multiple regression, and three-way ANOVA.

RESULTS

In terms of motivation, A and B tended to listen to music for stress management (rest, changing mood, blocking out thoughts) (Hunt & Eisenberg, 2010) and resourcing (inspiring creativity and imagination, fantasizing, boosting the energy, bringing back old memories). On the other hand, C had a tendency to listen to music for stress management, although C listen to music longer than A and B. In particular, inspiring creativity and imagination mean score of A was significantly different than B and C ($\chi^2(2) = 9.21, p = .01$).

To bring back old memories was positively related to reminding a friend when listening to a certain song ($r = .398, p = .026$). Also, the music they listen reflected their identities ($M = 3.13$, three of 4-point Likert scales means “well”) and their present mood ($M = 3.04$).

DISCUSSION

The results of this pilot research indicated that Korean teens studying in the US use listening to music more actively and variously in order to enrich their lives than teens in a non-international Korean school. The use of music for stress management among students attending a non-international Korean school could reflect that the quality of life of Korean children and teenagers was very low level among OECD countries (OECD, 2017).

Further research is recommended to identify the factors that stimulate the foreign students to have a different purpose in listening to music than those who study in their home country. Also, it would be helpful to reveal the difference between music listening of native US and foreign students. Implementing music classes in the school curriculum may improve this quality of life among minors, and future research may facilitate the implementation of music classes.

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