

**Recognizing the Relation between Individuals' Class-based Perception  
and their Tendencies toward Music Consumption (Case Study:  
Kermanshah City)**

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**Extended Abstract**

**1. Introduction**

As the most abstract of arts, music can have a profound effect on its listeners; music can provoke feelings and stimulate its users, and it can bring about joy and sadness to its audience. Consequently, the functions of music in terms of leisure and spirituality has significantly become the focus of other social institutions such as religion, politics, sports, etc. The Iranian society in general and Kermanshah in particular have witnessed changes and formations of specific consumptions of arts, given their course of history and geographical location and subsequently, in terms of artistic perspectives. The presence of different ethnic cultures on one hand and the introduction of the Western culture on the other have resulted in creation of a variety of micro-cultures, needs, and tendencies across the society. Conversely, traditional music can no longer respond to the diverse needs of various classes considering its specific simplicity and monotony. These circumstances would place the members of the society under repression in which they are either content with the existing music or attempt to meet their needs through means other than clear, legal paths; a number of such instances could be associated with the formation of underground music or the increasing, irregular consumption of foreign music. These issues point to the necessity of conducting extensive and comprehensive studies on the matter. The main purpose of the study is to recognize the relation between individuals' class-based perception and their tendencies toward music consumption in Kermanshah City.

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## **2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

Based on examinations into theories, Peterson believes there is a direct relationship between the class of individuals and diversity of taste; i.e. the higher the class, the more diverse the choice of music. On the other side, Adorno completely overlooks the aesthetics of art and music, viewing music solely as a means for decreasing individuals' mental stresses and limiting its function to this very purpose. Nevertheless, Pierre Bourdieu observes a direct relationship between cultural capital and individuals' mentality, and the type of the music they choose; this cultural capital can be economic assets, level of education, social status, or any other possessions of an individual. Accordingly, anything could be viewed as social capital. Therefore, it can be concluded that there are both consensus and disagreement among sociologists in this context. Bourdieu's theory is, to some extent, more comprehensive and inclusive than those of the other theorists, positing that with higher cultural capital and class, people would have different choices of music. In this study, factors including how one becomes familiar with different genres of music, family's opinion on one's favorite genre of music, the purpose of listening to music, the reason behind consuming music, the mental and spiritual conditions of listening to music, the subsequent feelings after listening to the expected music, the type of music, and social class affect the tendency towards music consumption.

## **3. Method**

The present inquiry was conducted using surveys and the descriptive method. Data collection was carried out through questionnaires and interviews. Total population of the study included the residents of Kermanshah. Sample population was indicated using Cochran's sampling formula. In this study, Kermanshah city was examined based on the 2016 census across eight zones. Considering the insignificant difference between 2016 and 2018 censuses, the 2018 census was considered as the estimation basis; next, sample population was calculated as 385, according to the total population of each zone and using Cochran's formula. The reliability of the data collection instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha which shows alpha values of interest in music, musical knowledge, musical activity, and total tendency towards music as 0.88, 0.74, 0.83, and 0.86, respectively.

## **4. Results and Discussion**

The data were obtained from questionnaires filled by 360 individuals over the age of 15 in Kermanshah city and prepared for analysis. Following data collection, questionnaire information were transferred to a computer. Then, the statistical software package for social sciences was employed for analysis. Results show that

13.6%, 41.9%, 34.4%, and 10.0% of participants became familiar with their favorite genre of music through parents or teachers, friends, media, and themselves, respectively. As for the purpose of listening to music, findings show that 29.7%, 48.3%, 16.1%, and 5.8% of participants expressed their reasons as professional listening to music, leisure and fun, latest trends, and interest in a particular singer, respectively. Among the sample population, 171 individuals listen to traditional music while 189 listen to modern music. Based on the results, the extents of tendency towards music were found to be 74.95, 73.28, 83.60, and 81.52 for individuals who became interested in music through parents or teachers, friends, media, and themselves, respectively. Findings also point to differences between various groups.

## **5. Conclusion**

Results of examining the hypothesis of the study demonstrates that the manner of familiarization with genres of music has a significant effect on tendency towards music consumption. It can be argued that people may have different consumptions of music, originating from their own personal nature and given their social status and surrounding environment. The cultural family setting provides a context that affects the members of the family to become inclined towards the type of music that is consistent with their family values. Results also show that the purpose of listening to music influences the tendency towards music consumption. Such a purpose may stem from a variety of different factors such as musical taste, knowledge of music, following trends, leisure activities, etc. Individuals' reasons for listening to music naturally results in their tendency towards music; people cannot have an interest in or tendency towards music until they use it. This, their consumption of music naturally results in their tendency towards a specific genre of music. According to studies, there can be a number of reasons behind the tendency towards consuming music such as reducing depression, stress, and anxiety along with improving brain functions, mood, state of emotions, etc. Considering the role of music in decreasing stress, depression and anxiety and improving mood and brain function, it is recommended to the cultural authorities and professionals to provide particular educational programs and classes for the youth. Given the importance of music and its role in satisfying the needs of the youth and adjusting their morale, it is recommended to provide the means for playing appropriate, legal music within public spaces such as markets, shopping centers, and during school recess; there should also be proper information included in students' curriculum.

**Keywords:** Music, Social Class, Music Knowledge, Music Activity, Music Consumption

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