

Exploring the Relevance of Values Generated by Music Organisations in Consumers

Research article

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Abstract: The digital revolution has significantly changed the way music is consumed, particularly among young people. This technological transformation, coupled with economic and sociocultural shifts, has heightened interest in studying music consumption across various scientific disciplines. However, the identity of music consumers, demographic influences and the diversity of consumption in today's context remain areas ripe for exploration. To contribute to this line of inquiry, this paper employs the arts and cultural organisation (ACO) model (Addis & Rurale 2021) to conduct exploratory research on music values from the consumer perspective. An electronic survey was utilised as the data gathering technique among music listeners. The results highlight the significance of music in fostering personal joy and creating community, along with the considerable value attributed to music as a catalyst for discussion and innovation. Moreover, the well-being value is associated with entertainment, joy and relaxation derived from listening to music. Finally, age emerges as a variable capable of elucidating trends in the assessment of creativity and well-being values.

Keywords: music • values • consumption • arts and cultural organisations • survey

1. Introduction

Listening to music is one of the most popular leisure activities, especially among young people (Cultural Statistic Yearbook, 2022). This activity has significantly evolved in the new century, as noted by authors like Schramm (2006). The digital music revolution, marked by the increased use of electronic resources (devices and media) for producing, distributing and listening to music, has transformed music consumption from physical to digital formats. In 2022, global sales of recorded music reached \$26.2 billion, reflecting a 9% growth compared to 2021 (an increase of \$2.2 billion) and a \$10.5 billion rise since 2008. Of this income, 48.3% came from streaming subscriptions, 18.7% from advertising on streaming platforms and 17.4% from physical music sales (IFPI 2023). In Spain, the digital market accounts for 85.9% of the total, compared to 14.1% for the physical market, reaching 402.24 million euros (Promusicae 2022).

In addition to this technological revolution, economic and sociocultural changes have generated interest in analysing the current state of music consumption. The growth in the global music market underscores its economic significance. Culturally, music serves as a driver of social and local development (De Miguel & Santamarina 2021). Based on these premises, music, as part of the cultural industry, generates and exchanges values and creates specific consumption demands. Research into music consumption has gained momentum over the past 20 years, although interest in the rising trend of electronic consumption is relatively recent. Few studies examine the role of technology in transforming consumption practices and generating new business models (Montoro-Pons et al. 2021).

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Investigating music consumers' identities, habits, opinions, demographic influences and consumption diversity in today's musical context can provide valuable insights.

The music industry involves a complex value chain of functions, agents and resources, including artists, managers, promoters, event organisers (concerts, festivals), booking agencies, ticketing companies, record labels, publishers, technical staff, producers, platforms, social networks (streaming and digital distribution), public administrations, and listeners or audience as the final target market. The organisation of these stakeholders starts with the creation process, producing a value proposition to satisfy an audience eager for new content and loyal to their favourite artists. However, the value generated by artists is completed through the contributions of other agents (managers, public relations, copyright societies, and distributors), enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in the process.

Companies in the music industry compete with different business models (Fjeldstad & Snow 2018), depending on their value chain activities (De Miguel et al. 2021): recording, publishing, distribution and exhibition. The recording sector currently has the biggest impact, primarily driven by streaming services. Publishing companies focus on technologies to improve relationships with artists. Distribution and promotion rely heavily on social networks and digital marketing. Exhibition businesses can focus on innovation, mission and cultural heritage. Thus, the importance of the music sector is influenced by the diversity of musical styles and genres, distribution formats and business models (Europa Press 2022). Specifically, live music has seen growth in concerts, attendees and income in recent years, except during the pandemic. Streaming and online consumption have significantly changed music access over the past decade, with streaming becoming the primary method of music consumption. This shift has been facilitated by Direct Music Services (DMS), which allow direct distribution by bypassing intermediaries. Platforms such as Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube Music, Deezer, TikTok and Tidal play a crucial role in transforming music distribution and consumption, fostering innovation, discovery and diversity among users (Datta et al. 2018).

Arguing that any business model should aim to generate and exchange value and support market orientation, Addis and Rurale (2021) propose a managerial approach for revising arts and cultural organisations (ACOs), introducing a fourfold value model centred on identity, economy, creativity and well-being. These values are defined and justified as complementary. This paper contributes by exploring the measurement of these four ACO values from the consumer's perspective. Specifically, it aims to assess the four dimensions of Addis and Rurale's model, complementing studies on value in the arts (González-Gallarza et al. 2023), within the current context of musical consumption habits.

After reviewing recent research on music consumption and values, an electronic survey was conducted among Spanish music consumers. The objectives and methodology of this survey are described next, followed by results on participants' music consumption habits and values. Finally, the conclusion section highlights the most relevant findings, managerial implications and research limitations.

2. Music Consumption and Music Values

Music, a dominant cultural practice present in ancient civilisations to the present, has been academically studied from different standpoints, such as consumption, but its significance has not been unequivocally determined yet (Refheldt et al. 2021). Categorised into structural (objective and observable qualities of music composition) and affective (emotions, feelings and moods associated with music listening) variables (Herrington & Capella 1994), music offers values to people, as noted by several researchers, producing a significant effect on listeners' experience. In this regard, although household budgets can reflect the cultural impact allocated to music activities (Eurostat 2019), music may not be as culturally valued by people as commonly assumed, suggesting a perceived "value gap" between music's sociocultural and economic values (Marshall 2019). His research presents a theoretical analysis of popular music consumption practices, examining music both as sound and as an object. The study of sound is justified since most contemporary experiences place music as background or accompanying sound. In this regard, the review conducted by Jain and Bagdare (2011) to examine the influence of music on consumption experience in the context of retailing found that influence was produced at cognitive, emotional and behavioural levels, specifically concerning attitudes and perceptions, time and money spent, and moods and feelings. On the other hand, Marshall (2019) considered the social values generated and perceived by recorded music artefacts when examining music as an object, concluding that music operates as a low-value entity for many people, a reflection of the cultural and economic contours of the digital music industry rather than a direct result of digitisation.

It is, therefore, essential to study music values and their relationship with music consumption. Recent research provides interesting contributions in this regard. First, the literature shows four intellectual strands driving music consumption: economics, sociology, management and marketing, as Montoro-Pons et al. (2021) noted after conducting the first systematic appraisal of research on music consumption in the past two decades. Specifically, they identified seven clusters in terms of intellectual structure, namely, most cited references. Among them, the consumer behaviour cluster mainly delineates how markets and social relations interact in constructing music consumption. However, few papers analyse music consumption, focusing on the role of technology and digitisation in generating new consumption practices, business models, music engagement and knowledge. In addition, research from 2010 to 2020 is grouped into three large clusters: social networks in the digital era, streaming and live music, and piracy. The first cluster stands out for providing new consumption possibilities through value co-creation between consumers and the music industry. Key concepts to understand music consumption include social media, value co-creation, collective consumption, engagement, socialisation, transmission of emotions, self-extension and self-expression. The second cluster assembles research on new means of digital consumption and live performances as alternatives to physical devices for listening to music. The third cluster collects contributions on legal and illegal music consumption and streaming's potential substitution effects on piracy with inconclusive results. The authors conclude that while the past two decades of research have focused on understanding the meaning and consequences of digital disruption, few studies have addressed new ways of using and consuming music and their effect on markets. This is a matter of interest due to changes in music markets, cultural and contextual differences, and the evolution of tastes and trends in music demand.

Second, regarding music values, background literature on the experiential paradigm is still far from being applied in the arts as it has been in other sectors. After reviewing specialised literature on the value of customer experience in ACOs, González-Gallarza et al. (2023) noted the small number of studies analysing the value of experience in the arts, highlighting the need for a more systematic application of the concept and a customer-centred business orientation. Similarly, Holbrook (2023) proposed extending the information, cognitions, affect, behaviour and satisfaction (ICABS) model as a new research avenue in the arts. Among studies focusing on analysing determinants of music use, Manolika et al. (2021) have considered personal values along with gender, finding that women are more likely to listen to music for emotional and social reasons. Seongseop et al. (2023) identified that character and visual performance do not significantly influence emotional involvement, and factors such as sex, age, or ethnicity do not significantly vary in explaining responses to music.

From a different standpoint, Addis and Rurale (2021) argued that developing any business model depends on its capability to generate and exchange value. They propose a fourfold theoretical model to review ACO, considering identity, economic, creative and well-being values. Identity value refers to creating the identity of a population and territory. Economic value concerns the revenue streams generated by organisations and is a priority for policymakers and development policies. Creative value pertains to the ability to innovate, determining competitive challenges for companies. It emphasises the role of ACOs as a creative engine for other industries and economic sectors, a key resource for long-term success. Well-being is the ultimate goal of designing and managing the consumption experience (Addis 2023). Individually or collectively, it involves social connections, collective imagination and people's affective reactions to their experiences. Although well-being is positioned at the end of the model, it is the primary goal of every activity, making it essential for designing strategies and policies.

The ACO's fourfold model can be used to understand and analyse the music values of listening to music by consumers. In other words, the values of the model can be translated and adapted to music listeners. To assess them, the identity value would be the ability to create community and interest for current and future generations. Music can be essential to daily life, a lifestyle, an identity sign and not just a way to enjoy moments of listening according to people's tastes. The economic value, related to GDP formation, incomes, jobs supported and other indicators of music's impact and wealth generation, could be assessed using consumers' willingness to pay and their perception of the relationship between value and price. The creative value, emphasising music's role as a creative engine for other industries, could be translated to consumers by considering tasks they do related to music, such as listening to music leading to memorable experiences or sharing and co-creating. It is essential to uncover how to build social identity and creativity as a collective process through higher artist/audience interaction (De Miguel & Santamarina 2021). The well-being value represents the product's effect on an individual's mental state and how listening to different songs depends on context. It would be the final value offered by music to its audience, provoking affective reactions through music experiences. In this regard, Addis (2023) identified performance

indicators related to well-being that are easy to adopt and use, applying customer centricity and considering future customer–technologies interactions in the music realm.

3. Empirical Research

3.1. Aim and Objectives

Empirical research was undertaken about opinions, preferences and music consumption habits to explore the latest trends in music consumption. Further, the research provides measurement and analysis of the four values generated by music organisations in relation to consumption according to the ACO model: identity, economy, creativity and well-being, as discussed before, to understand their effect on music consumption.

Thereby, the proposed research questions are as follows:

About preferences, habits and opinions:

RQ1: What genres of music do people listen to?

RQ2: What media do they use to listen to music?

RQ3: What is the role of technology in music?

Regarding music values from a consumer perspective:

RQ4.1: *Identity value*: How do individuals identify with music?

RQ4.2: *Economy value*: How much do individuals spend on music?

RQ4.3: *Creativity value*: Do individuals comment and share music with others?

RQ4.4: *Well-being value*: How does music affect individuals?

3.2. Methodology

3.2.1. Participants and procedure

The research was conducted through an electronic survey in August 2023. A structured questionnaire was accordingly designed and divided into three parts: (1) music consumption habits, (2) values (identity, economy, creativity and well-being) and (3) classification variables. As an exploratory study, convenience sampling was used to select respondents from the population. The latter was determined to be 15 years old and over. Finally, 19.7% of the sample participants were younger than 18 years, the majority (67.5%) between 18 years and 32 years and 7.7% were older than 32 years. The sample distribution is appropriate in terms of age, as it predominantly consists of young participants, who are more actively engaged in music consumption.

Respondents were informed that participation was voluntary and completely anonymous. The survey took approximately eight minutes to complete. After excluding some questionnaires, the final sample consisted of 117 participants. Once the information was gathered, univariate (frequency distribution and mean) and multivariate analyses (chi-square) were calculated to statistically process the data.

3.2.2. Measurement

Some scales of measurement have been used to design the questionnaire. Specifically, the question about music consumption motives is based on the emotional, cognitive and social aspects of Manolika et al. (2021). Regarding values offered by music, the variables included in the survey leverage the ACO model. Identity, economy, creativity and well-being are values measured from the music consumers' perspective as follows:

- *Identity value* was measured through the following three-response alternative question. *What option do you identify with? 1. Music professional, 2. Music expert, 3. Music consumer.*
- *Economic value* was evaluated by asking a direct question about how much money people spend on music.
- *Creative value* was assessed through a direct question about sharing and commenting on music with others. This innovation perspective considers the value that the listeners receive when listening to music and their potential to create and co-create.
- *Well-being value* was evaluated by asking about specific motives to listen to music, such as relaxation, enjoyment, evasion, fun, company and entertainment.

4. Results

4.1. Music Genres Preference

Pop music (77.8%) is by far the most preferred music genre among participants, closely followed by reggaeton (64.1%), as shown in Table 1. Other genres, although less popular, include urban music (44.4%), indie music (36.8%), rock (35.9%), electronic (34.2%) and rap/hip hop (29.9%). Classical music is preferred by one-fifth of the sample. Additionally, participants mentioned other genres within the “Others” category, such as house, grunge, jazz, K-pop or salsa, but these were chosen by <2% of respondents. Results also indicate an age-related influence on music genre preference. Specifically, pop, reggaeton, urban, indie, electronic and rap are significantly more popular among those aged 18–32 years old.

These results show, on the one hand, that people have quite a wide range of music genres they seem to like. On the other hand, aligning with Cuadrado-García et al. (2023), music preferences are wider when genres are listed (expressed preferences) than when individuals must recall them independently (underlying preferences).

4.2. Media used to Listen to Music

Digital media are undoubtedly the most preferred way of listening to music among participants. Specifically, apps are the top choice, selected by 91.5% of the sample. They are followed by social networks (41.9%), as shown in Table 2. Surprisingly, radio (35.0%) and CDs (22.2%) are still used by a significant portion of the sample, most of whom are young. Podcasts (16.2%) and vinyl records (12.0%) also show some appeal, indicating an interest in both new and vintage formats. Finally, cassettes have practically disappeared, with only 0.9% of participants using them. Additionally, only apps show a significant age-related preference, with those aged under 32 years using them much more than older individuals.

Music genre	N	%
Pop	91	77.8
Reggaeton	75	64.1
Urban	52	44.4
Indie	43	36.8
Rock	42	35.9
Electronic	40	34.2
Rap/hip hop	35	29.9
Classical	25	21.4
Country	11	9.4
Flamenco	3	2.6
Trap	3	2.6

Table 1. Preferred music genres

Music media	N	%
Apps	107	91.5
Social networks	49	41.9
Radio	41	35.0
CDs	26	22.2
Podcasts	19	16.2
Vinyl	14	12.0
Television	8	6.8
Cassette	1	0.9

Table 2. Music media used

4.3. Perception about the Role of Technology in Music

Another question asked respondents about the role they believe technology will play in music. Almost all participants (98.5%) affirmed its influence. Unlike previous research questions, age does not affect their opinions on the role of technology in music.

4.4. Music Values by Listeners

4.4.1. Identity value or involvement with music

Of the three roles provided to respondents regarding their involvement with music (Table 3), most participants (75.2%) identified as non-expert consumers who choose music based on their personal tastes, indicating casual involvement for personal enjoyment. The rest of the sample identified as experts (15.4%) or professionals (8.5%). Additionally, age does not influence these opinions, as there are no differences across age groups.

4.4.2. Economic value or how much people spend on music

All the response alternatives in this regard received similar scores (Table 4). However, the highest percentages were for those not spending any money (26.5%) and those spending <20 euros per year (27.4%). Thus, nearly 54% of respondents spent <20 euros annually. This indicates that the target market is divided into similar groups of music consumers with varying willingness to pay. Analysis shows that age does not affect how much money individuals spend on music.

Additionally, given that digital media, especially apps, are the most preferred way to listen to music, we investigated whether this preference is related to paying for music. The chi-square test revealed an association only between the money spent on music and the use of CDs and vinyl. In both cases, those using CDs and vinyl spent between 20 and 50 euros significantly more than others, at 42.3% and 71.4%, respectively. This finding prompted further investigation into the reasons behind such behaviour, specifically its association with identity. However, the chi-square analysis indicated that identity was not explanatory.

4.4.3. Creative value or discussion music with others

Sample respondents appear to enjoy discussing music, as shown in Table 5. Specifically, around 41% of the sample engage in music discussions frequently (35.0%) or constantly (6%). Additionally, another 29.9% do so occasionally. Participants aged between 18 years and 32 years are the most active in discussing music, both frequently and constantly. This is the only case where age significantly influences the activity of music discussion.

Identity/involvement	N	%
I consider myself as a professional. Music is extremely important to me	10	8.5
I am an expert in music genres (non-professional)	18	15.4
I am a consumer no expert, I get music following my tastes	88	75.2
Total	117	100

Table 3. Identity value

Euros spent	N	%
Nothing	31	26.5
<20 euros	32	27.4
Between 20 and 50 euros	29	24.8
>50 euros	25	21.4
Total	117	100

Table 4. Economic value

Frequency	N	%
Never	6	5.1
Rarely	28	23.9
Occasionally	35	29.9
Frequently	41	35.0
Constantly	7	6.0
Total	117	100

Table 5. Discussion on music

Reasons	N	%
Entertainment	95	81.2
Joy	94	80.3
Fun	83	70.9
Relax	83	70.9
Evasion	66	56.4
Inspiration	50	42.7
Company	33	28.2

Table 6. Reasons for listening to music

These results are related to discussions on music content from specialised press, with most respondents engaging in this activity sometimes (36.8%) and some doing so often (11.4%).

4.4.4. Well-being value or how music affects

The well-being value that music provides is reflected in the main reasons respondents give for listening to music (Table 6). The top reasons are entertainment (81.2%) and joy (80.3%). Close behind are relaxation and fun, both at 70.9%. Evasion (56.4%) and inspiration (42.7%) are also significant but somewhat less prominent. Only one-third of the sample considers avoiding loneliness as a reason for listening to music.

The motive of evasion is influenced by age, being more important for those aged 18–32 years. Similarly, relaxation is more relevant for younger respondents (under 32) than for older ones (over 32). Additionally, individuals' involvement with music influences the importance of joy as a motive for listening. Specifically, those who consider music extremely important place significantly more emphasis on joy than others. Finally, 33.2% of respondents listen to music to socialise. This is more common among those who consider themselves music professionals, although this relationship is not statistically significant.

5. Conclusions and Implications

This paper underscores the need to deepen the analysis of habits, opinions, demographic influences and diversity of consumption in the contemporary musical landscape. It specifically highlights the importance of studying the values that music provides from the consumer's perspective. While data on music supply are valuable for assessing the industry's health, identifying trends in music consumption is crucial for anticipating adaptive changes and ensuring the sector's continued development. This research aims to generate insights into music consumption and its impact on markets, emphasising the necessity of recognising changes and differences across cultures and contexts as literature suggests.

To this end, the ACO model has been employed. This model supports the development of the music business by generating and exchanging value through four factors: identity, economy, innovation and well-being, as provided by ACOs. In this study, the model is used to assess the value of music consumption from the consumer's perspective, focusing on their experiences and decisions.

The research proposes feasible measurements of habits, preferences and values of music for users through several research questions: preferred musical genres, listening media, the role of technological innovations, identification with music, annual expenditure, creative comments and reasons for listening. Among the most preferred music genres by respondents, pop ranks first, followed by reggaeton. Digital media, especially apps, are predominantly used for listening to music. Additionally, respondents indicate that technology is crucial for the music sector's evolution, consistent with the observed low willingness to pay for music. This is linked to the high use of digital means, as expenditure on music is higher for physical units, indicating that digital consumption is perceived as less costly. A more inelastic demand could hinder the marketing of future innovations linked to advanced technology, such as AI, which often requires skimming pricing. Music firms may face potential resistance to high prices at launch, highlighting the importance of strategic marketing.

The analysis reveals age-related differences in the influence on music values. The age group from 18 years to 32 years is the most active in sharing and discussing music topics and shows a preference for pop and reggaeton. They also seek escape and relaxation through music. These findings suggest that demographic variables may behave differently depending on the market context, reinforcing the need for specific research for each target market.

Regarding managerial implications, identifying and measuring the music values of the target market can help music professionals better understand their consumers and enhance their ability to attract and connect with them. Identity, creativity and well-being values act as triggers for higher economic value.

Although the results are not generalisable due to the non-probability sampling method used as well as the small sample size, they shed light on the current state of music consumption and offer a valuable approximation of what this type of study could achieve with a representative sample. To overcome the exploratory nature of this study, future research should advance in this direction. The model could be extended by adding variables related to other music values such as education, health and transference to other industries. It is also essential to further investigate the relationships between all the values involved in the model and their role as precursors of changes, particularly in the context of technological applications. In addition, refined measurement scales should be designed and validated to assess music value dimensions. This approach would enhance the understanding of music consumption in relation to the role of technology and digitalisation in generating new consumption practices, a gap identified in the literature review.

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