

---

**THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS OF MUSIC, BY  
PERSONALITY TYPE, OF A CENTRAL SOUTH AFRICAN  
RADIO STATION'S AUDIENCE**

---

Communitas  
ISSN 1023-0556  
2013 18: 136-155

**Rozanne Kotzee and H.J. Breytenbach\***

**ABSTRACT**

*While music is the main product of many radio stations, this study seeks to gain insight into the music preferences of a central South African radio station's audience. The study into the personality psychology of music has remained mainly mute. Various questions remain regarding individual differences and different uses of music, as well as individual differences and music preference (Rentfrow & Gosling 2003). By examining the patterns of music use and the relationship between music use and audiences' psychographic profiles, and by employing the Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI) and the Uses of Music Inventory (UMI), this study might contribute to the development of a more efficient model in the construction of a radio station's music content and diversity.*

---

\* Rozanne Kotzee completed a Master's dissertation on the topic in the Department of Communication Science at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein. Professor Manie Breytenbach of the same Department acted as her supervisor.

## INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of time, communication has played a vital role in the everyday lives of human beings. Barker (1987: 4) indicates that approximately 70 percent of a person's waking day is spent on one or more types of communication, including talking to others, reading, and listening. He further indicates that the importance of communication may seem obvious, but that communication experiences actually shape the quality of human life. Verderber and Verderber (2008: 1) note that the effectiveness of one's communication with others is important as it may be regarded as the foundation of all personal relationships. In order to communicate effectively, the understanding of communication as a synergetic process central to every person is of great significance.

It is important, firstly, to understand that the communication process consists of various elements, each with a vital role in the goal of communication, which may, in short, be described as the "process of creating or sharing meaning" (Verderber & Verderber 2008: 1). Various approaches to communication (Littlejohn & Foss 2008) exist and may aid the scholar in gaining insight into the communication process and the various elements involved therein. It is of great importance to recognise the various elements in the communication process, as well as the role that the said elements play in the process as a whole.

Secondly, recognising various communicators as elements in the process, as well as the different functions and goals of their communication, may aid the understanding of the formulation of communication messages and possible intentions of communication. Furthermore, gaining insight into the receivers of communication, the messages and motivation of messages, as well as the contextual background of communication may be regarded as significant in the process of gaining insight into communication. The interpretation of messages by the communicators involved – both the source and receiver of the communication – may be important in the effectiveness of the intended communication.

Various methods of communication exist and the understanding of the subtle differences in each form of communication may aid the compassing of this complex process. An example of one of the methods of communication is music. Music is a powerful method of communication as music can be found almost everywhere in our society, from Muzak played in a doctor's office, to music in local nightclubs (Barker 1987: 358).

At this moment, all around the world, in restaurants, houses, offices, vehicles and night clubs, people are listening to music. Music surrounds us, whether we are listening to the radio, being put on-hold during a telephone call or going about day-to-day activities, such as shopping. Music has become a significant part of our lives. Music has become a ubiquitous social phenomenon and is the centre

of various social activities, like concerts, where people gather to listen to and talk about music. Even in social gatherings where music is not the primary focus, such as at weddings, it is an essential component. Music can satisfy a number of needs beyond the social context. Just as individuals shape their social and physical environments to reinforce their dispositions and self-views, the music they select can serve a similar function (Rentfrow & Gosling 2003: 1237).

Radio stations may be regarded as some of the largest users of music as a method of communication. Wimmer and Dominick (2006: 361) indicate that music is the main product of many radio stations and is of utmost importance for their economic sustainability. It is important to gain insight into the preferences of the audience. As music is the main product of a radio station, it is of cardinal importance to be able to identify the music that might be preferred by the audience of the radio station. The audience is the main users of this product and the audience figures for commercial radio stations are directly related to the station's advertising income. These figures, known as RAMS (Radio Audience Measurement Survey), are released by the South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF) every six months in the form of 12-month-data which covers the two most recent fieldwork periods (SAARF n.d.: online).

South African radio broadcasting stretches back to 1923 when the South African Railways presented the first public broadcast in Johannesburg. In 1936 the country's public broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), was established. In 1945 the SABC realised that, in order for radio to be viable, funds had to be generated in order to cover the high costs of equipment and salaries. Due to the strengths of radio, as well as its portability, it has since progressed to being one of the broadest mass media in the country (Mason n.d.: online).

The audiences of radio stations – thus the receivers of the communication – play an important role in the communication process employing music specifically as a method of communication. Rayner *et al.* (2004: 108) state that there are several reasons why radio audiences are so important. Firstly, without an audience, the broadcast would not be created for anybody in particular. Furthermore, the audience size and reaction is often seen as a way of measuring the success of a media product. Audiences are also the receivers of the advertisements of products and this provides income for the media companies producing the advertisements, the broadcasters of the advertisements, as well as the advertisers themselves.

Radio is free, but is financed by advertising and the advertisers want to know that they are receiving value for their advertising money. In turn, this means that they want to know which people and how many people are exposed to their advertisements. Barker (1987: 359) states that many small companies cannot

afford to advertise on television, but still can get relatively inexpensive publicity through radio.

After having established that music is the main product of many radio stations, one needs to answer the following question, "What is music?" A lay answer to this question might be that music is singers or musicians performing an arrangement of sounds in a structured manner. However, this is not a definitive answer, as some people may not classify some of these sounds as music, for example some artists screaming, as well as sounds that are used that might not be classified as formal music. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (Wehmeier *et al.* 2005: 966) defines music as "sounds that are arranged in a way that is pleasant or exciting to listen to. People sing music or play it on instruments."

In addition to music being made up of certain facets, music can also be divided into certain genres. The concept of genre is useful when examining the organisation, categorisation and consumption of media. The concept of genre suggests that there are certain types of material that can be recognised through common elements, such as style and structure that are used to make up a particular type of genre (Rayner *et al.* 2004: 55). Furthermore, these authors state that audiences are presumed to like the concept of a genre, because of its reassuring and familiar promise of patterns of repetition and variation and this concept is important in arousing the expectations of an audience and how they judge and select texts (Rayner *et al.* 2004: 56). The existence of a music genre will allow the audiences to select which genres they like and allow them to develop a preference for certain music genres.

Despite the prevalence of music in our lives, the study into the personality psychology of music has remained mainly mute. Various questions remain regarding the individual differences and different uses of music, as well as individual differences and music preference choices. It is a given that people differ. Precisely how and why they differ is less apparent and forms the focus of personality or individual differences research in the social sciences and, in particular, psychology (Rentfrow & Gosling 2003). Personality characteristics are often associated with the type of music that people prefer (Barker 1987: 90).

Furthermore, the perception of communication by audiences may, to a large extent, be influenced by their personality. Perception is one of the tools that human beings use to make sense of the world. It gives meaning to the information that they receive through their senses (Louw & Edwards 1997: 82). These authors indicate that the study of personality is the study of individual differences between people. It may involve the ways in which people think, feel and act, but will also include individual differences in motivation, emotion and coping with stress (Louw & Edwards 1997: 7).

Barker (1987: 122) defines personality traits as qualities that distinguish one personality from another. Early studies in the structure of personality revolved around the identification and labelling of characteristics that might describe an individual's behaviour. Louw *et al.* (1998: 523) describe a personality trait as a relatively constant characteristic of a person that may be responsible for the consistency of his or her behaviour.

Selective perception is another important element and may be described as any characteristic that makes an object, event or message stand out and increases the probability that it will be perceived. Since humans cannot observe and assimilate everything that goes on around them, they engage in this process of selective perception. Information and messages are selected according to interests, background, experience and attitudes and allow an individual to create a shortcut in evaluating information (Robbins 1993: 141).

Studies by Davis and Woodall (in Lichtenstein & Rosenfeld 1983: 99) found that the perception of gratification obtained, rather than actual gratification obtained, seems to be the best predictor of media use. One can conclude that the interpretation and perception of messages that audience members receive from the media will have a large impact on the media they choose, as well as how often this media will be consumed.

This underlines the importance of audience analysis to formulate the most popular music mix the station can offer. Wimmer and Dominick (2006: 361) emphasise the importance of music in the economic survival of a radio station as follows: "Music is the product of a music radio station and failing to analyze the product courts disaster."

Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham (2007: 175) state that there has been increasing research into the study of the psychological aspects of music. However, the authors also indicate that the question of the relationship between individual differences and different uses of music in everyday life remains. These authors (2007:182) further note that there has been a considerable lack of research into the relationship between individual differences of audiences and the uses of music.

Rentfrow and Gosling (2003) also highlight the lack of knowledge and research into the individual preferences of music by stating that "although a growing body of research has identified links between music and social behaviour, the bulk of studies have been performed by a relatively small cadre of music educators and music psychologists". Despite the research that has been conducted in this area, criticism has been raised about the lack of attention to real-world behaviour in personality psychology; the collection of information regarding the relationship between personality and behaviour remains minimal. The authors believe that certain psychological processes, such as the preference of music based on

personality, have remained in the shadow of other mainstream topics in social and personality psychology. They also indicate that they believe that an activity that consumes so much time and resources, and that may be regarded as a key component of various social situations, warrants more attention and that the historical neglect of music and music preference should be redressed. The lack of this knowledge exists universally, including in the South African context.

## **IDENTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Babbie and Mouton (1998: 73) indicate that all research commences with the identification of a research problem. This research problem should be clearly formulated to ensure that the amplitude of the study is comprehended.

In accordance with this, as well as the background information provided, the following research problem has been identified:

- ♦ There is a lack of knowledge and research specifically related to the relationship between personality traits, the uses and gratifications of music, and the music preferences of radio audiences.

### **Formulation of the research question**

Mouton (2001: 53) argues that the formulation of research questions is necessary “to direct one’s thinking toward the solution of the research problem”, or serves “as a way of focusing the research problem”. Research questions are useful, particularly in the study of areas that have been researched only marginally, or not at all. Such studies may be classified as exploratory research, since the researcher does not have an exact idea of what the possible findings may be and predictions cannot be made as to the results of the study. Exploratory research is intended to search for data indications, rather than finding causality. The primary focus may be to gather preliminary data in order to possibly refine the research question and to aid the development of hypotheses. Therefore, “research questions are appropriate when a researcher is unsure about the nature of the problem under investigation” (Wimmer & Dominick 2006: 279).

The following explorative research question has been formulated for this study:

- ♦ What is the relationship between personality traits, the uses and gratifications of music, and the music preferences of radio audiences?

### **Purpose, goal and objectives of the study**

Babbie and Mouton (1998: 79-81) identify three common and useful purposes of research, namely exploration (to explore a topic or to provide a basic familiarity with a topic), description (to describe an observation), and explanation (to

indicate causality between variables or events). In this study, the research will be conducted at an exploratory level, although also containing certain descriptive and explanative elements.

A distinction is made between the following goal and the objectives of the study in an attempt to address the research problem stated:

### *Goal*

- ♦ to explore the relationship between personality traits, the uses and gratifications of music, and the music preferences of radio audiences

### *Primary objectives*

- ♦ to examine the concept of music preference and relate it to radio audiences as receivers of communication in the form of music;
- ♦ to explore the concept of personality traits and relate it to radio audiences;
- ♦ to investigate the uses and gratifications of music and relate it to radio audiences; and
- ♦ to identify and examine existing measurement instruments that could be of use in this study.

### *Secondary objective*

- ♦ to attempt to determine the reliability of the measurement instruments by comparing the music preference examined in this study with the music preference of similar respondents.

The research based on the above goal and objectives has been conducted within the real-life context of a commercial radio station in central South Africa.

## **Delimitation of the study**

In order to meet the goal and objectives of the study, one needs to identify and make use of respondents who are receivers of music as a method of communication. For the purpose of this study, the audience members of a particular commercial radio station in central South Africa were identified as potential respondents. The location of this radio station, as well as ease of access to its audience members, was the primary motivation in selecting this specific station and its audience as role players in the communication process. Furthermore, the radio station that was identified for this study is one of the few radio stations in South Africa that has previously conducted music evaluation research amongst members of their audience, although not focusing on the personality traits of the audience, nor

the uses and gratifications of music. The radio station was approached and the researcher was granted access to certain information about the music and audience of this radio station, as well as information regarding previous music preference research conducted by an independent research company for this radio station.

However, as this radio station is a commercial radio station in the public domain, certain privacy concerns were raised. Placing information about the audience and the radio station's use of music in the public domain may have negative economic implications for the radio station, given the competitive nature of the radio industry. Wimmer and Dominick (2006: 76) indicate that there are two ways to guarantee privacy, namely by assuring anonymity and by assuring confidentiality. The authors define anonymity as a guarantee that a given respondent and/or role player in the research cannot be linked to any particular response or research findings. Furthermore, confidentiality may be the assurance that the names of individuals and/or role players in the research will not be publicly associated with the information provided. Thus, the selected radio station and identifying information about its audience will not be made public.

The aim of this study was to investigate the possible development of a predictive measurement tool in order to predict the music and genre preference for different psychographic groups of respondents who represent the audience of a typical radio station, as well as their uses and gratifications of the music. It may enable a radio station to manage their database of music more cost effectively. As the research examined the patterns of music use and the relationship between music use and psychographic profiles, it may contribute to the development of a more efficient model in the construction of a radio station's programme content and diversity. However, it should be noted that this was by no means an exhaustive study into the exact influences on music preference, nor the patterns of music use amongst the audience of this radio station.

As previously mentioned, the radio station had agreed, on certain terms, to allow access to data from previous studies which tested the music preference of its audience. However, these studies only provide information regarding the demographic profile of the audience and how the respondents evaluated certain songs.

As there is no way of determining the personality profile for the audience members who participated in the previous studies on music preference, nor their patterns of music use, the data collected from previous studies will only be employed as a possible validation instrument.

## **Defining terms**

The following are definitions of the key terms as contextualised in this study:

- ◆ Uses and gratifications: The goal-oriented communication behaviour of the radio station's audience members in terms of their direct experience with music, as well as the active utilisation of music as a form of communication.
- ◆ Music: A form of communication that may be regarded as the main product of commercial radio stations and that may be categorised in various genres and music dimensions.
- ◆ Personality types: Constructs that are employed in order to explain the modes of perception and behaviour within and across various individuals according to similarities and differences.
- ◆ Central South African radio station: A radio station broadcasting mainly in central South Africa.
- ◆ Previous study: A study conducted by an independent research company for the selected radio station. This study focused on the music preference of audience members and was conducted over a period of 23 months.
- ◆ Current study: The study conducted by the researcher in order to answer the research question and to meet the goals and primary objectives.

## **THEORETICAL POINTS OF DEPARTURE**

Information regarding communication and music as a method of communication was examined in order to investigate how music may be employed as a method of communication. Furthermore, the uses and gratification of communication, especially music, was examined to gain insight into how and why audiences listen to music and how this may be influenced by individual differences. Personality traits in individuals were also investigated in order to gain insight into how personality may influence the behaviour of individuals. This may provide valuable insight into the preferences of communication and music as communication method, and the reasoning behind the uses and gratifications of music as a method of communication.

Studies related to the influence of personality on music preference and the use of music by audience members, such as those by Sigg (2009), Delsing *et al.* (2008), Zweigenhaft (2008), McCown *et al.* (1997), and Baker and Bor (2008) will be used as points of departure. Special emphasis will be placed on the research findings of especially Rentfrow and Gosling (2003) and Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham (2007).

## **VALUE OF THE STUDY**

If music preference and use of music is even partially determined by the personality of an audience member, then determining the personality aspects of the radio station's audience may serve as a clue to the types of music preferred by the audience members in general. Determining the personality aspects of a radio station's audience may provide valuable information that may be used in determining which music could be received more positively by the audience members, which may in turn lead to greater revenue and market share. The research that will be conducted may provide certain suggestions regarding the music preferred by the audience of a central South African radio station.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **A quantitative approach**

For the purpose of this study, a quantitative approach to research was followed. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2006: 50), the questioning involved in this method is static or standardised, meaning that all respondents are asked the same questions. The authors further indicate that quantitative research requires that the variables under consideration be measured.

### **Survey research**

Both descriptive and analytical surveys were combined in this study. Wimmer and Dominick (2006: 179) indicate that, while descriptive surveys attempt to describe or document current conditions and attitudes, analytical surveys attempt to describe why situations exist. The results of analytical surveys may allow researchers to examine the interrelationships among variables and the development of explanatory inferences.

The advantages of survey research, according to Wimmer and Dominick (2006: 179-180), include the use in realistic settings, reasonable cost, large amounts of data that may be collected, and helpful data that already exists. The disadvantages include the fact that independent variables may not be manipulated in the way that they are in laboratory experiments and that survey research may be difficult to conduct, especially in the case of telephone surveys.

### **Literature review**

A review of literature may contribute to the clarification of the nature of the research problem. The literature review for this study mainly focused on examining information regarding communication and music as a method of communication in order to investigate how music may be employed as a method of communication. The uses and gratifications of communication, especially music, was examined

to gain insight into how and why audiences listen to music and how this may be influenced by individual differences. Personality traits in individuals were also investigated in order to gain insight into how personality may influence the behaviour of individuals. This may provide valuable insight into the preferences of communication and music as a communication method, and the reasoning behind the uses and gratifications of music as a method of communication.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research participants and sample selection**

The proposed sample type for this research was a purposive sample. The research participants who were included in the study included audience members of the selected central South African radio station who were purposively selected to meet a predetermined quota of respondents in accordance with the listener profile of the radio station based on RAMS figures. The participants include male and female respondents belonging to three ethnic groups, namely white, Coloured and black. Respondents were segmented into four age groups, namely 25 – 30 years, 31 – 36 years, 37 – 42 years, and 43 – 49 years.

A sample of 151 respondents was used to represent the radio station's listener profile. A sample of 151 respondents calculates at a standard error of  $\pm 8.02$  and a confidence level of 95%. Wimmer and Dominick (2006: 102) argue that standard error, or sampling error occurs when measurements taken from a sample do not correspond to what exists in the population. The authors also note that an error-free sample is highly unlikely and that computing standard error may determine, with a certain amount of confidence, the difference between a sample and the target population. This number of respondents ( $n = 151$ ) was deemed to be representative for the purpose of this study.

### **Ten Item Personality Inventory (TIPI)**

The Ten Item Personality Inventory (TIPI) was developed in order to measure a person's personality traits according to the Big-Five dimensions of personality (Gosling *et al.* 2003: 525). Each of the ten items in this inventory consists of two signifiers, separated by a comma. Each of these two signifiers is prefaced by the phrase, "I see myself as". Each TIPI item is then rated on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). An overall score for each dimension is obtained by summing the two items representing each scale. The higher the score, the more prominent the personality trait is within the individual. The TIPI takes about a minute to complete (Gosling *et al.* 2003: 516). Rentfrow and Gosling (2003: 1250, who also employed the TIPI, provide norms

(mean scores) for each of the personality traits. Respondents could either score “low,” “medium low,” “medium high” or “high” on each of the personality traits.

Extensive and intensive research have been undertaken into condensing long and confusing lists of personality traits into five basic personality dimensions, namely the Big Five personality dimensions. These dimensions are characterised by certain human traits. The Big Five personality dimensions include extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness to new experiences, and emotional stability as opposed to neuroticism (Schultz *et al.* 2003: 41).

### **Uses of Music Inventory (UMI)**

The Uses of Music Inventory (UMI) is a measurement instrument that comprises of 15 items which are rated on a five-point Likert-type scale, measuring views regarding music, when it is listened to and why people listen. This inventory has three subscales: Emotional use of music (M[Emot]), cognitive, intellectual or rational use of music (M[Cog]), and background or social use of music (M[Back]) (Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham 2007: 178-179). Cronbach's Alpha for these subscales are as follows: M[Emot]  $\alpha = .78$ ; M[Cog]  $\alpha = .85$ ; M[Back]  $\alpha = .76$  (*ibid.*). The Cronbach's Alphas for each of these subscales indicate high reliability of the scale. The relationship between the three different uses of music and the personality dimensions was then established in order to determine the possible influence that the various personality dimensions may have on the uses of music.

### **Data and data collection**

A TIPI (Gosling *et al.* 2003) and a UMI (Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham 2007) were administered simultaneously by means of a telephonic interview to a sample of 151 respondents who were recruited from listeners who fit the profile based on the RAMS figures of the particular radio station and who served on a panel for the collection of the original data provided by the radio station. A list of ten hooks (short music clip) was played to the respondents in order to determine their music preference. These ten hooks were representative of the four music dimensions outlined by the Short Test of Music Preference (STOMP) (Rentfrow & Gosling 2003).

Respondents were then asked to rate the songs on a semantic differential scale with a range from 1 to 10, where 1 indicates that the song is disliked very much and 10 indicates that the respondent likes the song very much. The mean and standard deviation scores for each song was calculated and summated to determine an average preference score for each of the four music dimensions.

The preferred music genres were represented by different music dimensions outlined by Rentfrow and Gosling (2003: 1241). These authors found that very

few respondents are familiar with specific subgenres of music, but a large number of respondents are familiar with broader music genres. These findings suggest that the genre-level of measurement is appropriate to examine music preference (*ibid.*). They categorised different genres of music into four different dimensions of music by means of component analysis, as indicated in Table 1. The four dimensions are: Reflective and Complex; Intense and Rebellious; Upbeat and Conventional; Energetic and Rhythmic (Rentfrow & Gosling 2003:1243).

For the purpose of this study, the categorisation of songs into various genres was done by identifying the genre or sub-genre categorisation of songs by making use of Wikipedia. Although Wikipedia may not offer an entirely reliable way of classification, using this method standardises the categorisation of the songs according to a popular medium. Because these songs were categorised into different genres, Wikipedia was also used in defining the genres and subgenres. A limitation of this method of categorisation is that songs do not mutually exclusively belong to a single genre or music dimension.

By using this method, various genres could be identified, consisting of several subgenres. The main genres that were identified are Rock; Afro-fusion; Hip Hop; Pop; Anti-folk; Country; Jazz; Dance; Electronica; Folk; Funk; R&B; Soul; Punk and Post-punk Revival; Reggae; South African Music; South African Music - Afrikaans; Blues; and World Music.

**TABLE 1: GENRE CLASSIFICATION ACCORDING TO STOMP DIMENSIONS**

	<b>Reflective and Complex dimension</b>	<b>Intense and Rebellious dimension</b>	<b>Upbeat and Conventional dimension</b>	<b>Energetic and Rhythmic dimension</b>
Genres included:	Folk	Punk and Post-punk Revival	Country	Dance
	Jazz	Rock	Pop	Electronica
	Afro-fusion	Anti-folk		Funk
	World Music			Hip Hop
	South African Music			Reggae
	South African Music – Afrikaans			Soul
	Blues			R&B

Each music dimension was represented by four songs. However, it should be noted that from the ten songs that were chosen to test music preference, only five songs could be categorised exclusively within single music dimensions. Four of the ten songs could be classified in two music dimensions, while one song was classified in three music dimensions. Therefore, due to some songs being representative of more than one music dimension, only ten songs were selected in order to test the evaluation of four songs per music dimension. The selection of the songs for the particular evaluation was done by examining the playlists and “hit parades” of the radio station and selecting songs that were played frequently by the station at that stage.

Wimmer and Dominick (2006: 199) state that a disadvantage of telephone research is that respondents may become suspicious about telephone calls. Another disadvantage of administering a measurement instrument telephonically is that respondents may, at any time, simply hang up and not complete the interview. For this reason, ten songs which were representative of the four music dimensions were selected to be evaluated. Due to the fact that the TIPI and UMI were also administered during the interview, the aim was to keep the duration of the interview to a minimum. Due to the exploratory nature of this research the need for extensive evaluation of the songs did not arise.

The results from the TIPI were then used to examine the personality profile of each of the demographic groups that respondents belonged to. This was done according to the guidelines provided by Gosling *et al.* (2003) and Rentfrow and Gosling (2003). The results from the personality profiling were measured against the music dimension preference to examine the possible correlation between personality traits and music preference. The results from the TIPI were also measured against the results of the UMI to examine the possible correlation between personality traits and the uses of music amongst the respondents.

A secondary analysis of data that was previously collected over a period of 23 months for the central South African radio station was performed in order to examine the reliability of the measurement instruments employed in this study. Access was provided to data that was collected for the radio station for music evaluation purposes. During the period of 23 months, call-out research was conducted by a research company for the radio station in order to evaluate the popularity of certain songs that were tested. A total of 250 songs were evaluated by a panel of 314 respondents from which a revolving sample of respondents was selected. Hooks of these songs (determined by the music producer of the radio station) were tested on a two-weekly basis. Respondents evaluated the songs on a semantic differential scale with a range from 1 to 10, where 1 indicated that the song was disliked very much and 10 indicated that the respondent liked the song

very much. The mean and standard deviation scores for each song were calculated and summated to determine an average preference score for each of the songs.

The songs were categorised into different genres, again employing Wikipedia as a tool for the categorisation of the songs. The songs were also categorised into the four music dimensions, determined by Rentfrow and Gosling (2003), by employing the STOMP. The music dimension preference of respondents in the current study was then compared to the music dimension preference of respondents in the previous study. Two sample t-tests were performed in order to determine whether any statistically significant differences between the preference of music dimensions existed between the two data sets.

### **Data analysis**

Wimmer and Dominick (2005: 26) state that the time and effort required for data analysis and interpretation of data depends on the purpose of the study and the methodology used. Baxter and Babbie (2004: 9) indicate that the analysis brings logical and observational aspects together in the search for patterns in what is observed.

The steps that were followed in the process of data analysis were as follows:

- ♦ collecting and recording of data;
- ♦ managing the data;
- ♦ classifying and interpreting data; and
- ♦ representation of the data.

### **Validity**

According to Wimmer and Dominick (2006: 61-62), validity refers to a measuring device that measures what it is supposed to measure and the assessment of validity requires some judgment on the part of the researcher. In the case of this study, concurrent validity played an important role. The authors indicate that concurrent validity involves checking the measuring instrument against some present criterion. In this study, the measurement instrument in question consisted mainly of a combination of the TIPI and UMI that were already constructed and tested.

Furthermore, construct validity (*ibid.*) involves relating a measurement instrument to the overall theoretic framework to ensure that it is logically related to other concepts in the framework. Again, by following the guidelines provided by the developers of the TIPI and UMI, this might have been ensured to some degree.

It should, however, be noted that there was an important difference in the measurement instrument employed in this study and the measurement instruments employed in previous studies by Rentfrow and Gosling. This difference was that the respondents were not asked to provide an evaluation of music genres. Different songs were tested and were categorised into genres by the researcher. This might have contributed positively to the validity of the study.

Furthermore, because there has been no similar research in the domain of the radio station and its audience who was selected for this study, a secondary analysis on the original data, collected for the radio station for music evaluation research, was done. Although music evaluations have been done by the radio station, no investigation into the relationship between personality traits and music preference of the audience members of this radio station have been done. However, the secondary analysis of the data that was collected for the radio station may have provided certain indications of the reliability of the measurement methods of the current study. By examining the music dimension preference of the respondents conducted for the radio station one might gain insight into the music preference of the panel.

## **MUSIC PREFERENCE BASED ON PERSONALITY ASPECTS AND MUSIC DIMENSIONS**

When examining the correlations between personality aspects and the music dimensions, certain predictions regarding music preference may be made. It may be predicted that listeners with high levels of agreeableness may not prefer music in the Energetic and Rhythmic dimension, while listeners with high levels of conscientiousness may not prefer music in the Upbeat and Conventional dimension. Furthermore, it may be assumed that listeners scoring high in emotional stability, but low in neuroticism, will not prefer music in the Energetic and Rhythmic dimension.

When measuring scores of personality traits of the respondents interviewed in the current study with the norms set out by Rentfrow and Gosling (2003), certain recommendations may be made to the radio station, should the respondents be regarded as representative of the overall audience of this particular station. Even though many respondents indicated a preference for music from the Energetic and Rhythmic dimension, the statistically significant correlation between music from this dimension and the agreeableness trait suggest the contrary. A total of 49.67% of the respondents interviewed had high scores on agreeableness. Statistically, when examining the respondents in totality, it may be assumed that the listeners of this radio station may not be inclined towards music from this dimension.

Furthermore, 60.93% of the respondents interviewed had high conscientiousness scores. This may, when considering the statistical significance, lead to the assumption that the audience of the radio station may not prefer music from the Upbeat and Conventional dimension. A total of 37.09% of the respondents scored high on emotional stability. Again, when considering the statistical significance of the correlations found, this may lead to the assumption that the audience of the radio station may not prefer music from the Energetic and Rhythmic dimension.

## **USES OF MUSIC BASED ON PERSONALITY ASPECTS**

When examining the correlation between personality aspects and uses of music, it may be assumed that listeners who score high on neuroticism, but low on emotional stability may use music for emotional purposes, such as emotional regulation. As previously mentioned, 37.09% of the respondents interviewed in the current study had high Emotional Stability scores, which would suggest that the audience of this radio station does not use the music played on this station for emotional purposes.

## **RELIABILITY OF THE MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENTS**

From the t-statistics and probability levels performed on the data, it may be deduced that there were no statistically significant differences in music dimension preference between respondents participating in the music evaluation research conducted for the radio station and the respondents participating in the current study. This lack of statistically significant differences in music dimension preference may indicate the reliability of the measurement instrument used in the current study. This might also indicate the reliability of employing ten songs as representative of the four STOMP music dimensions. Because there were no statistically significant differences in the music dimension preference amongst the respondents, one might infer that the personality profiling of the respondents, as well as the uses and gratifications of music by the respondents, may be accurate to a certain extent and that the sample of respondents selected to participate in the current study may be representative of the panel members who participated in the previous study.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In concluding this study, the following recommendations are made:

- ♦ that a more generalisable tool for categorising music into genres be developed;

- ♦ that a more comprehensive study into the full theory of music preferences, focusing on the influences of personality, cognition, self-views and other possible determinants should be executed; and
- ♦ that a more comprehensive measurement instrument measuring of uses and gratification of music in a South African context be developed.

### **FINAL WORD ON POTENTIAL VALUE OF THIS STUDY**

There appears to still be a long way ahead in the complete juncture of theories regarding music preference and music use. Despite the methodological limitations of this study, it is believed that the results presented may have laid a foundation on which to build future research. This research may be regarded as groundwork in the process of understanding the music preference of audiences, as well as the uses of music, an important form of communication in most individuals' lives.

## REFERENCES

- Babbie, E. and Mouton, J. 1998. *The practice of social research*. (South African Edition). Cape Town: Oxford University Press Southern Africa.
- Baker, F. and Bor, W. 2008. Can music preference indicate mental health status in young people? *Australasian Psychiatry* 16(4): 284-288.
- Barker, L.L. 1987. *Communication*. (Fourth edition). New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Baxter, L.A. and Babbie, E. 2004. *The basics of communication research*. Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Chamorro-Premuzic, T. and Furnham, A. 2007. Personality and music: Can traits explain how people use music in everyday life? *British Journal of Psychology* 98: 175-185.
- Delsing, M.J.M.H., Ter Bogt, T.F.M., Engels, R.C.M.E. and Meeus, W.H.J. 2008. Adolescents' music preference and personality characteristics. *European Journal of Personality* 22: 109-130.
- Gosling, S.D., Rentfrow, P.J. and Swann Jr., W.B. 2003. A very brief measure of the Big-Five personality domains. *Journal of Research in Personality* 37: 504-528.
- Lichtenstein, A. and Rosenfeld, L.B. 1983. Uses and misuses of gratification research: An explication of media functions. *Communication research* 10(1): 97-109.
- Littlejohn, S.W. and Foss, K.A. 2008. *Theories of human communication*. (Ninth edition). Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Louw, D.A. and Edwards, D.J.A. 1997. *Psychology: An introduction for students in South Africa*. (Second edition). Sandton: Heinemann Higher & Further Education.
- Louw, D.A., Van Ede, D.M. and Louw, A.E. 1998. *Menslike ontwikkeling*. (Derde uitgawe). Cape Town: Kagiso Tersiêr.
- Mason, W. n.d. *Radio broadcasting in South Africa*. [Online]. Available at: [http://myfundi.co.za/e/Radio\\_broadcasting\\_in\\_South\\_Africa](http://myfundi.co.za/e/Radio_broadcasting_in_South_Africa) [Accessed on: 05/12/2011].
- McCown, W., Keiser, R. Mulhearn, S. and Williamson, D. 1997. The role of personality and gender in preferences for exaggerated bass in music. *Personality and Individual Differences* 23(4): 543-547.
- Mouton, J. 2001. *How to succeed in your Master's and doctoral studies*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

- Rayner, P., Wall, P. and Kruger, S. 2004. *AS Media Studies: The Essential Introduction*. (Second edition). New York: Routledge.
- Rentfrow, P.J. and Gosling, S.D. 2003. The Do Re Mi's of Everyday Life: The structure and personality correlates of music preferences. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 84(6): 1236-1256.
- Robbins, S.P. 1993. *Organizational behavior: Concepts, controversies, and applications*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- SAARF. n.d. *FAQ's* [Online]. Available at: <http://saarf.co.za/saarf/Faqs.asp> [Accessed on: 14/09/2012].
- Schultz, H., Bagraim, J., Potgieter, T., Viedge, C. and Werner, A. (eds). 2003. *Organisational behaviour, a contemporary South African perspective*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Sigg, N. 2009. *An investigation into the relationship between music preference, personality and psychological wellbeing*. Unpublished Master's dissertation, Auckland University of Technology.
- Verderber, R.F. and Verderber, K.S. 2008. *Communicate!* (Twelfth edition). Belmont; Thomson Wadsworth.
- Wehmeier, S., McIntosh, C., Turnbull, J. and Ashby, M. (eds). 2005. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. (International Student's Edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wimmer, R.D. and Dominick, J.R. 2006. *Mass media research: An introduction*. (Eight edition). Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Zweigenhaft, R.L. 2008. A Do Re Mi Encore: A closer look at the personality correlates of music preferences. *Journal of Individual Differences* 29(1): 45-55.