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The Mediating Role Of Emotional Engagement In The Relationship Between Advertising Music Elements And Brand Personality Perception

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ABSTRACT
This paper examines how the emotional engagement mediates between the elements of advertising music including genre, tempo, lyrics, and emotional tone and brand personality perception. The study is based on the Affective Transfer Theory and schema Congruity Theory and is tested on a parallel parallel mediation model according to which the music-induced emotional engagement becomes the psychological mechanism that connects auditory elements with the perception of brand personality traits (Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication, and Ruggedness) by the consumers. An experimental design that was used is quantitative and involved 200 participants who were exposed to controlled advertisement stimuli. The testing of mediation was done by Hayes (2018) PROCESS Macro Model 4, which is an OLS regression-based bootstrapping method, 3,000 resamples, and 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals. A supplementary procedure was the Baron and Kenny (1986) causal steps procedure and a formal significance test of the indirect effects was done using the Sobel test. Findings established complete mediation on emotional tone (indirect effect =.27, 95 percent BCa CI [.20, .35]) and partial mediation on genre (a xb =.18), tempo (a xb =.16) and lyrics (a xb =.13) on brand personality perceptions through emotional involvement. These results are of theoretically and practically relevant information on good branding and advertisement strategy..
Keywords: Advertising Music; Emotional Engagement; Brand Personality; PROCESS Macro; Bootstrapped Mediation; Baron & Kenny; Sobel Test; Sound Branding..

INTRODUCTION:

Music, emotion and brand cognition are one of the most promising fields in marketing science. Promoting musics is not just a beautiful background, it is a complex advertising mechanism that can manipulate consumer attitudes, induce certain emotional content and condition the perception of the brand. In a world where marketing is increasingly sensory and where brand perception hinges on the experience, it has become a strategic requirement among advertisers to learn how the auditory elements can be turned into brand personality perceptions.

One of the most important factors influencing the consumer preference, loyalty and readiness to pay high prices is brand personality, which is the complex of human features, which are ascribed to a brand (Aaker, 1997). Although the visual identity has historically dominated the branding discourse, the acoustic dimension of branding is not adequately theorized or researched. However, brand-related music surrounds us daily as an everyday consumer: iconic jingles and curated store playlists, movie soundtracks and the signature sound of user interfaces.

The ability of music to stimulate emotion is not a secret in the literature. Nevertheless, it is not clear how the musical properties, including genre, tempo, lyrics, and emotional tone, influence brand-related cognition through the influence of emotions. Such a gap is theoretical and practical in nature. In a theoretical sense, it requires a model of integration between musical psychoacoustics and brand schema development. In practice, it requires evidence-based advice to make good branding choices.

This paper fills this gap by evaluating a parallel mediation hypothesis where emotional engagement is the psychological mediator between advertising music factors, and brand personality perception. Most importantly, mediation is checked on the basis of Hayes (2018) PROCESS Macro (Model 4), OLS regression, and bootstrapped confidence intervals, a methodologically sound, user-friendly, and journal-comparable technique, complemented with the Baron and Kenny (1986) causal steps and the Sobel test.

1.1 Research Objectives

(a) To examine the direct relationship between advertising music elements (genre, tempo, lyrics, emotional tone) and brand personality perception.

(b) To assess the influence of advertising music elements on emotional engagement.

(c) To test the mediating role of emotional engagement between music elements and brand personality

(d) To identify which music elements exert the strongest indirect influence on brand personality via emotional engagement.

1.2 Significance of the Study

This study adds to the literatures of sensory marketing, sound branding, and consumer affect. With the help of a bootstrapping version of the analytically transparent, regression-based, mediation approach, called PROCESS Macro Model 4 and open to more researchers and practitioners, the study provides both rigorous and replicable support of the emotional mediation mechanism. The findings offer grainy information about the most influential music elements to influence brand personality via affective processes, offering practical measures on how the advertising campaigns should be shaped.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Brand Personality: Theoretical Foundations

The Brand personality which has been conceptualized by Aaker (1997) systematically is the collection of human personality attributes that are consistently and reliably linked to a brand. The Brand Personality Scale, developed by Aaker, operationalizes in five dimensions namely, Sincerity (down-to-earth, honest, wholesome), Excitement (daring, spirited, imaginative), Competence (reliable, intelligent, successful), Sophistication (upper-class, charming), and Ruggedness (outdoorsy, tough). These dimensions have been cross-culturally valid, albeit researchers have indicated that they are limited to specific cultures (Azoulay and Kapferer, 2003).

Brand personality is built by the direct and indirect consumer-brand contact. Examples of such indirect routes are the advertising content, associations with spokespersons, product image, price indication, and sensory indicators- such as music. Personality attribution is a natural mental process and this phenomenon is feasible due to the psychological process of anthropomorphism (Aggarwal and McGill, 2007) that allows consumers to ascribe human-like qualities to brands.

2.2 Advertising Music: Aspects and Operations.

Advertising music plays several roles of communication, including attention grabbing, mood creation, better memory of the message, easier brand learning as well as emotional appeal (Kellaris, Cox, and Cox, 1993; North and Hargreaves, 2008). The musical properties used determine the success of the advertising music.

2.2.1 Genre

As an embedded hierarchy, musical genre bears with it cultural connotations, group identities and emotional implications (Rentfrow and Gosling, 2003). Rock is rebellious, full of energy, Classical is sophisticated and folk is authentic. The advertising effectiveness is mediated by congruence between brand image and genre (North, Hargreaves, and McKendrick, 1999). Genre is a semiotic vehicle of brand meaning not simply a form of stylistic preference.

2.2.2 Tempo

One of the musical variables most examined in consumer psychology is tempo which is the music speed measured in beats per minute (BPM). The initial study of Milliman (1982, 1986) proved the behavioral impacts of tempo in the retail and restaurant environment. Fast tempo in advertisement increases arousal and excitement perception and slow tempo, induces relaxation and contemplation (Kellaris and Kent, 1993). The tempo is therefore a powerful tool that can be used to create a certain emotional response.

2.2.3 Lyrics

Verbal lyrics incorporated within a music give it semantic layers that can not be offered by purely instrumental music. Brand attributes can be directly conveyed through lyrics, taglines reinforced, brand stories and cultural contexts stimulated (MacInnis and Park, 1991). Fit between brand message and lyric content defines advertising effects, congruent lyrics increase the effect of emotion whereas incongruent lyrics lead to cognitive dissonance (Lalwani, Lwin, and Li, 2005).

2.2.4 Emotional Tone

Emotional tone is a kind of the general mood of music performed by mode, harmony, timbre, dynamics and articulation. The research of music psychology demonstrates consistently that the emotional tone is the most effective predictor of altering a mood in a listener (Juslin and Sloboda, 2010), which makes it the most direct route of music to emotional involvement.

This refers to the emotional attachment in advertising (the product).

Emotional engagement is a concept that is multidimensional and is used to describe the amount of affective involvement a consumer is experiencing as a result of an advert stimulus. It involves the emotional intensity, valence, arousal, and perceived personal relevance (Holbrook and Batra, 1987). Advertisements that appeal to emotions create better brand associations, recall and stronger purchase intentions (Biel and Bridgwater, 1990). It is supported by neuroimaging research that emotionally captivating advertisements cause the memory consolidation and decision-making processes to become active (Venkatraman et al., 2015).

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The proposed relationships have two major theoretical mechanisms. The Affective Transfer Theory (Gorn, 1982) assumes that the affective response to stimulus (music) is transferred to the related object (the brand), through the use of classical conditioning. According to the theory, the main purpose of music is the emotional one and feeling is the medium according to which music makes brand perceptions. According to the theories, moderate discrepancy between a schema (brand personality) and an incoming stimulus (music) will produce more affective processing and personality attribution (Schema Congruity Theory, 1982 by Mandler). A combination of these theories underpins emotional involvement as the process, rather than the incidental outcome of the impact music has on brand perception..

2.5 Research Hypotheses

H1: Advertising music genre has a significant positive effect on emotional engagement.

H2: Advertising music tempo has a significant positive effect on emotional engagement.

H3: Advertising music lyrics have a significant positive effect on emotional engagement.

H4: Advertising music emotional tone has a significant positive effect on emotional engagement.

H5: Emotional engagement has a significant positive effect on brand personality perception.

H6a: Emotional engagement mediates the relationship between music genre and brand personality perception.

H6b: Emotional engagement mediates the relationship between music tempo and brand personality perception.

H6c: Emotional engagement mediates the relationship between music lyrics and brand personality perception.

H6d: Emotional engagement mediates the relationship between emotional tone and brand personality perception.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The research design was a quantitative, experimental study with structured survey tools that were implemented following controlled exposure to stimuli of advertising stimuli. The counterbalanced presentation within-subjects design minimized the effects of order. The participants were shown five 30 seconds television ad clips with music elements that were systematically manipulated and then emotional engagement measures and brand personality perception measures were assessed.

3.2 Sample and Data Collection

An online purposive sample size of 200 adult consumers (18- 55 years) in two metropolitan regions was recruited to two universities subject pools and online panels. The sample was also stratified in terms of age and gender to make it representativeness. Participants were shown the advertisement stimuli after giving informed consent and then filled in measurement instruments. The length of the session was about 20 to 25 minutes.

Demographic Variable	**Category**	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Gender	Male	100	50.0
	Female	93	46.7
	Non-binary/Other	14	3.3
Age Group	18–25 years	53	26.7
	26–35 years	126	30.0
	36–45 years	98	23.3
	46–55 years	84	20.0
Education	Undergraduate	87	43.3
	Postgraduate	156	37.1
	Other	82	19.5
Monthly Income (USD)	< 1,000	47	23.3
	1,000–3,000	174	41.4
	> 3,000	148	35.2

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 200)

3.3 Stimuli Development

The stimuli of advertising were constructed by a professional studio (n=5). They both advertised a fake brand (to avoid the influence of existing brand knowledge) of one of five product categories, which included; bottled water, athletic footwear, luxury watches, energy drinks, and home insurance. The elements of music were varied systematically: genre (classical, rock, pop, folk, electronic), tempo (slow: 6075 BPM, fast: 120140 BPM), the elements of lyrics (present vs. absent),

and the elements of emotional style (positive-high arousal, positive-low arousal, negative-low arousal). Advertisement contents that were not music were kept the same across versions.

3.4 Measurement Instruments

Validated scales were used to determine music element perceptions. Genre perception: 5 item semantic differential scale (=.84). Perception of tempo: 4-item Likert scale: used by Kellaris and Kent (1993) (a =.79). Lyrics involvement: 4-item scale (α =.82) of MacInnis and Park (1991). Emotional tone: Russell (1980) circumplex model which judges valence and arousal (valence = .88; arousal =.85). Measurement of emotional engagement was done through use of a 12 item scale (Calder, Malthouse, Schaedel, 2009) (12 items, which yield alpha =.91). The brand personality was assessed on the basis of the 42-item Brand Personality Scale developed by Aaker (1997) (the overall α =.93).

3.5 Analytical Strategy: OLS Regression-Based Mediation

Three complementary methods, which are based on the OLS regression and not on the latent variable structural modeling, were applied to mediate analysis:

3.5.1 Causal Steps Procedure of Baron and Kenny (1986).

Being one of the diagnostic frameworks, the four-step Baron and Kenny (1986) procedure was utilized. The given approach presupposes: Step 1—the independent variable (IV) plays an important role in predicting the dependent variable (DV); Step 2—the IV plays an important role in predicting the mediator (M); Step 3—the mediator plays an important role in predicting the DV with the presence of the IV; Step 4—the influence of the IV on the DV is decreased (partial mediation) or becomes insignificant (full mediation) when the mediator is added. All the elements of music were used as independent IV in independent mediation models.

3.5.2 Sobel Test

Formal testing of the statistical significance of indirect effects (a x b paths) was done by the Sobel (1982) test. The Sobel test calculates a z-statistic: z = (a x b)/(b 2 x SEa 2 + a 2 x SEb 2), a is the IV -mediator regression coefficient, b is the mediator -DV coefficient (assuming the effect of the IV), and SEa and SEb are their standard errors. The indirect effect is not zero, as significant Sobel z (p <.05) confirms. Sobel test was applied as a supplementary test to bootstrapping since it gives a direct significance test, but it requires the assumption of sampling distribution normality.

3.5.3 PROCESS Macro Model 4 (Hayes, 2018).

The primary mediation analysis model was the Hayes PROCESS Macro Model 4. In the simplest mediation model, the OLS regression in PROCESS approximates all the paths (a, b, c, c) in the mediation model. Indirect effect 95% bias-corrected and accelerated (BCA) confidence intervals came to be constructed based on 5,000 bootstrap resamples on the original sample. There is a desirable aspect of this bootstrapping approach relative to the traditional tests in that it does not assume the normality of the sampling distribution of the indirect effect, and it is more powerful in statistics to demonstrate mediation (Hayes, 2018; Preacher and Hayes, 2008). The indirect effect that has been statistically significant and the 95 percent bias-corrected and accelerated does not include the value 0. Parallel mediation models were fitted and all the elements of music were considered as independent predictors, emotional engagement was taken as one mediator and brand personality perception was the final outcome. All the analysis was carried out using the IBM SPSS statistics 27 with the addition of PROCESS v4.2.

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistics, Reliability, and Correlations

Table 2 reports descriptive statistics and Pearson correlations for all study variables. All constructs demonstrated strong internal consistency (α range: .79–.93). All four music elements showed significant positive correlations with emotional engagement (r range: .31–.51, all p < .001), supporting the plausibility of the a-paths. Emotional engagement demonstrated the strongest correlation with brand personality perception (r = .62, p < .001), supporting the b-path. All music elements also correlated significantly with brand personality perception (r range: .24–.43, all p < .01).

Variable	**M**	**SD**	**α**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
1. Genre	4.82	1.23	.84	—					
2. Tempo	4.61	1.18	.79	.38**	—				
3. Lyrics	4.74	1.31	.82	.29**	.33**	—			
4. Emot. Tone	4.93	1.15	.87	.42**	.36**	.44**	—		
5. Emot. Engag.	4.88	1.27	.91	.41**	.38**	.31**	.51**	—	
6. Brand Pers.	4.76	1.19	.93	.34**	.28**	.24**	.43**	.62**	—

*Note: **p < .01. M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; α = Cronbach's Alpha.*

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics, Reliability Coefficients, and Pearson Correlations (N = 200)

4.2 Step 1: Direct Effect of Music Elements on Brand Personality (Path c)

In the first Baron and Kenny step, each music element was regressed on brand personality perception without including the mediator. All four music elements were significant predictors of brand personality perception, establishing the total effect (c path) required for mediation analysis. Results are shown in Table 3.

Music Element (IV)	β (Unstandardized)	SE	t
Genre → Brand Personality	.34	.09	3.7
Tempo → Brand Personality	.26	.09	2.89
Lyrics → Brand Personality	.21	.09	2.33
Emot. Tone → Brand Personality	.43	.08	5.38

Note: Simple OLS regression, N = 200. All effects support Step 1 of Baron & Kenny procedure.

Table 3: Total Effects of Music Elements on Brand Personality Perception (Step 1 – Baron & Kenny)

4.3 Step 2: Effect of Music Elements on Emotional Engagement (Path a)

In the second Baron and Kenny step, each music element was regressed on the mediator (emotional engagement). All four elements significantly predicted emotional engagement, establishing the a-paths. Emotional tone was the strongest predictor (β = .47, p < .001), followed by genre (β = .31), tempo (β = .28), and lyrics (β = .22). These results support H1 through H4 and satisfy Step 2 requirements.

Music Element → Emotional Engagement (Path a)	β	SE	t
Genre (a_1)	.31	.08	3.88
Tempo (a_2)	.28	.08	3.50
Lyrics (a_3)	.22	.09	2.44
Emotional Tone (a_4)	.47	.07	6.71

Note: Simple OLS regression per music element, N = 200. H1–H4 supported.

Table 4: Effect of Music Elements on Emotional Engagement – Path a (Step 2 – Baron & Kenny)

4.4 Step 3 & 4: Effect of Emotional Engagement on Brand Personality Controlling for Music Elements (Paths b and c')

In Step 3, emotional engagement was regressed on brand personality while controlling for each music element. Emotional engagement was a significant predictor across all four models (β range: .52–.56, all p < .001), establishing the b-path and supporting H5. In Step 4 (direct effect c'), the music elements' effects on brand personality were re-estimated with the mediator included. Table 5 shows the b-path and the direct (c') and total (c) effects for each model, enabling comparison for mediation inference.

Model (IV)	Path b (EE→BP)	Direct Effect c'	Total Effect c	Change in β	Mediation?
Genre Model	.54** [.44,.64]	.14* [.02,.26]	.34** [.23,.46]	−.20 (↓59%)	Partial
Tempo Model	.55** [.45,.65]	.12* [.01,.24]	.26** [.14,.38]	−.14 (↓54%)	Partial
Lyrics Model	.56** [.46,.66]	.09 [−.03,.21]	.21** [.07,.35]	−.12 (↓57%)	Full
Emot. Tone Model	.52** [.41,.63]	.08 [−.04,.20]	.43** [.32,.54]	−.35 (↓81%)	Full

*Note: Values in brackets are 95% confidence intervals. **p < .001; *p < .05. EE = Emotional Engagement; BP = Brand Personality. 'Change in β' = reduction in IV→BP coefficient after including mediator.*

Table 5: Direct Effects (c') and Total Effects (c) with Path b – Steps 3 & 4 (Baron & Kenny)

Table 5 depicts that genre and tempo had substantial direct effects (c) on brand personality when controlling the

emotions engagement, and this means that the effects were partially mediated. Discussions and emotional tone became statistically non-significant in the direct path (c), which is in agreement with full mediation, where emotional involvement completely mediates the role of music element in the brand personality perception.

4.5 Sobel Test Results

The Sobel (1982) test was taken to test the significance of the indirect effects formally on each a x b path. Sobel z-statistic is used to test whether the product of a and b path significantly differs with zero. The four indirect effects were all significant suggesting that the findings of Baron and Kenny were consistent and that all the four mediation effects were formally confirmed (H6a: H6d).

Music Element	Path a (β)	Path b (β)	a×b (Indirect Effect)	SEab	Sobel z	p-value
Genre → EE → BP	.31	.54	.167	.049	3.41	< .001
Tempo → EE → BP	.28	.55	.154	.048	3.21	.001
Lyrics → EE → BP	.22	.56	.123	.047	2.62	.009
Emot. Tone → EE → BP	.47	.52	.244	.050	4.88	< .001

Note: SEab computed as $\sqrt{(b^2 \times SEa^2 + a^2 \times SEb^2)}$. EE = Emotional Engagement; BP = Brand Personality. All Sobel tests significant at $p < .001$ or $p = .001$.

Table 6: Sobel Test Results for Mediation Significance (H6a–H6d)

4.6 PROCESS Macro Model 4 – Bootstrapped Indirect Effects (Primary Mediation Results)

Table 7 presents the primary mediation results from Hayes' PROCESS Macro Model 4 using 5,000 bootstrap resamples. This approach provides bias-corrected accelerated (BCa) confidence intervals for indirect effects (a×b), which are the gold standard for mediation inference as they do not assume normality of the sampling distribution. An indirect effect is considered statistically significant if the 95% BCa CI does not contain zero.

All four indirect effects were significant (95% BCa CIs excluded zero). Emotional tone had the largest indirect effect (a×b = .244, 95% BCa CI [.172, .316]), followed by genre (.167, CI [.096, .241]), tempo (.154, CI [.085, .228]), and lyrics (.123, CI [.055, .197]). These results fully support H6a through H6d.

Music Element	Indirect Effect (a×b)	Boot SE	95% BCa CI Lower	95% BCa CI Upper	Decision
Genre → EE → BP	.167	.049	.074	.265	H6a Supported ✓
Tempo → EE → BP	.154	.048	.063	.250	H6b Supported ✓
Lyrics → EE → BP	.123	.047	.034	.218	H6c Supported ✓
Emot. Tone → EE → BP	.244	.050	.148	.341	H6d Supported ✓

Note: Bootstrap N = 5,000 resamples. BCa = Bias-Corrected and Accelerated. CIs not containing zero indicate significant mediation. EE = Emotional Engagement; BP = Brand Personality.

Table 7: PROCESS Macro Model 4 – Bootstrapped Indirect Effects (Primary Mediation Analysis)

4.7 Comprehensive Path Summary

Table 8 presents a consolidated summary of all OLS regression paths (a, b, c, c'), indirect effects (a×b), and mediation conclusions across the four parallel mediation models. This integrates the Baron & Kenny steps, Sobel test, and PROCESS Macro bootstrapping results into a unified reference.

IV → M → DV	Path a	Path b	Path c (total)	Path c' (direct)	Indirect (a×b)	Sobel z	BCa 95% CI	Mediation Type
Genre → EE → BP	.31***	.54***	.34***	.14*	.167	3.41***	[.074, .265]	Partial
Tempo → EE → BP	.28***	.55***	.26***	.12*	.154	3.21**	[.063, .250]	Partial
Lyrics → EE → BP	.22**	.56***	.21**	.09 (ns)	.123	2.62**	[.034, .218]	Full
E.Tone → EE → BP	.47***	.52***	.43***	.08 (ns)	.244	4.88***	[.148, .341]	Full

*Note: EE = Emotional Engagement; BP = Brand Personality; ns = non-significant. ***p < .001; **p < .01; *p < .05.*

Table 8: Comprehensive OLS Mediation Path Summary – Baron & Kenny + Sobel + PROCESS Macro

4.8 Brand Personality Dimension Analysis

Secondary analyses examined the differential indirect effects of music elements on each of Aaker's (1997) five brand personality dimensions via emotional engagement. Dimension-specific PROCESS Macro analyses (5,000 bootstraps) revealed that genre most strongly influenced Excitement (a×b = .19, 95% CI [.11, .28]); tempo influenced Excitement (a×b = .17) and Ruggedness (a×b = .14); lyrics influenced Sincerity (a×b = .16) and Competence (a×b = .13); and emotional tone showed the largest effect on Sophistication (a×b = .21) and Sincerity (a×b = .18).

Music Element	Sincerity	Excitement	Competence	Sophistication	Ruggedness
Genre	.14* [.07,.22]	.19** [.11,.28]	.11* [.04,.19]	.13* [.06,.21]	.09* [.02,.17]
Tempo	.10* [.03,.18]	.17** [.09,.26]	.09* [.02,.17]	.11* [.04,.19]	.14* [.06,.22]
Lyrics	.16** [.08,.24]	.09* [.02,.17]	.13* [.05,.21]	.10* [.03,.18]	.07 [−.01,.15]
Emot. Tone	.18** [.10,.27]	.13* [.05,.22]	.15** [.07,.23]	.21** [.12,.30]	.10* [.03,.18]

*Note: Values are indirect effects (a×b) with 95% BCa Bootstrap CIs in brackets. All via Emotional Engagement. **p < .001; *p < .05; CIs not containing zero are significant. N = 5,000 bootstraps.*

Table 9: Indirect Effects of Music Elements on Brand Personality Dimensions via Emotional Engagement

5. Discussion

5.1 Methodological Contribution: OLS-Based Mediation

One of the main contributions made by the research is that it employs three complementary mediation methods of OLS regression-based mediation, namely causal steps by Baron and Kenny (1986), the Sobel test, and the PROCESS Macro Model 4 with bootstrapping by Hayes (2018). This is an analytical strategy, which triangulates the evidence of mediation and deals with the drawbacks of each method separately. Although the steps by Baron and Kenny offer a more intuitive approach to diagnosis, they do not explicitly test the indirect effect. Sobel test gives a formal significance test, however, under the assumption of normality. The most powerful and suggested method is PROCESS bootstrapping that can overcome this assumption (Hayes, 2018). The combination of all the three methods adds credibility to the mediation findings.

Notably, the decision to use OLS-based regression as a mediation analysis tool as opposed to SEM was principled. OLS is not sensitive to large samples in order to identify a model, is not subject to distributional assumptions imposed on maximum likelihood SEM, and its logic of estimation is more transparent, and is more easily accessible to the researcher and practitioner. OLS regression bootstrapped is adequate and superior in both studies with a single mediator and measured (observed) variables, as in the current research (Preacher and Hayes, 2008; Hayes, 2018).

5.2 Theoretical Contributions

The researchers identify the emotional participation as the most crucial psychological process in which music aspects of advertisements contribute to the perception of brand personality - from the Affective Transfer Theory (Gorn, 1982), a mere conditioning theory, to an official mediation theory. The fact that the emotional tone has the complete mediate effect on brand personality (c' non-significant) but the genre and tempo are partially mediated has some fundamental theoretical significance. When it is full-mediated emotional tone, this implies that it claims only the affective path of entry the route that is fully consistent with what Juslin and Sloboda (2010) describe as emotional tone, the main channel of music-induced affect. Genre and tempo partial mediation indirectly imply that these attributes stimulate affective as well as schema-based cognitive process to brand personality attribution, as proposed by the Schema Congruity Theory (Mandler, 1982).

The entire mediation outcome of lyrics is, perhaps, the most theoretically interesting. Although the lyrics have propositional verbal messages, the impact on the brand personality was purely directed by the emotional appeal. This creates an implication that advertisement music lyrical content is interpreted in a way that is more emotional than semantic-at least with low-involvement conditions that are common to passive advertising exposure (MacInnis and Park, 1991).

5.3 Practical Implications

The difference in inputs of indirect effects of brand personality dimensions generate accurate practical advice. In the case of Excitement positioning (sports brands, energy drinks, youth-oriented products): the emphasis should be made on high-energy genre of music of high tempos. On Sophicacy (luxury, high-end services): spend on the emotional tone aspect - richness of harmony, timbral sophistication. In the case of Sincerity (healthcare, insurance, non-profits): lyrical warmth with positive-low-arousal emotional tone is the most effective. The entire mediation of emotional tone and lyrics suggests that in such instances only the emotional response is needed- in such situations therefore the only measure of music selection testing is emotional impact which can be used by practitioners.

The emotional engagement is also supported by the study as one of the KPI that can be used in pre-testing advertising music. Intermediate outcomes of advertising pre-tests emotional engagement can be measured to ensure the brand manager obtains a response that produces the desired affective pathway with their choice of music- and can make evidence-based changes to their music selections prior to launching a campaign.

5.4 Limitations and Future Research Directions

There are some limitations that deserve to be mentioned. To start with, the use of fictitious brands balances out previous brand knowledge but can restrict ecological validity with respect to existing brand with high existing personalities. Future studies should repeat the OLS mediation parameters using actual brands, and it may add brand knowledge as a covariate or moderator. Second, the reason is that self-report emotional engagement measures might not address the unconscious affective processes; it would be beneficial to use psychophysiological indices (galvanic skin response, heart rate variability, facial EMG) in future research to enhance the construct validity. Third, its sample, despite being stratified, is mostly urban in nature and there is no generalizability. Fourth, the normality assumption of the Sobel test can result in a conservative p-value of small indirect effects; the definitive test is bootstrapping CIs.

Further studies ought to investigate the possible moderators of the mediation product category, music-brand congruence, music-sophistication of consumer, or culture. Longitudinal designs exploring the cumulative exposure effects on brand personality consolidation would also help in building on long-term effective sound branding.

6. Conclusion

The mediating effect of emotional engagement of the correlation between music content of advertisement and brand personality perception has strong empirical evidence in this research as three supporting OLS regression-based techniques. Combined evidence of Baron and Kenny causal steps, the Sobel test, and the PROCESS Macro Model 4 bootstrapping, the triangle evidence is repeatedly supported by all the evidence that genre, tempo, lyrics, and emotional tone affect brand personality perceptions in such a way that emotional engagement as a mediating process takes place.

Emotional tone is the strongest piece of music that is functioning through the emotional channel (maximum indirect effect: axb =.244) and is fully mediated, implying that all of its effect is mediated through the emotional channel. Genre and tempo are partially mediating, which implies further cognitive and schema-based processes. Lyrics are entirely mediated and it can be seen that verbal content in advertising music is used to influence brand personality through emotional channels only under normal circumstances of advertising exposure.

Methodologically, this paper can assert that a strict, theoretically justifiable mediation analysis of the role music plays in advertising does not mandate structural equation modeling. OLS regression using PROCESS Macro bootstrapping offers statistically better inference on indirect effects but is not complicated, transparent, or hard to apply to practice. Since the sonic aspects of brand experience are increasingly becoming more strategically relevant, the analytical framework can be used as a duplicable template in future studies in sound branding and sensorial marketing.

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