Globalization of Millennials’ Music Consumption

A cross-national music taste study of undergraduate students in China and the U.S.

THESIS

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Abstract

The Millennial Generation lives in an ever-changing globalization era when their tastes are subject to various social influences. A “culture cycle”, integrating consumption and production sectors, exerts impact on their music taste, by mediating the meaning-making process for music consumers. Based on concepts from Bourdieu’s cultural habitus and Peterson’s production of cultural perspective, this study adapts a hybrid music taste formation model that includes six factors: cultural convention, education, social network, technology accessibility, industry structure and cultural policy. They all possess significant influence on Millennials’ music tastes in contemporary society.

This research is a pilot comparative study on Millennials’ music tastes in China and the U.S. By choosing this generation, I assume their music taste has an omnivorous tendency due to the globalization impact. Apart from testing the omnivores hypothesis, I also evaluated the types of globalization in each country drawing on the regional specified Millennials’ music tastes, influenced by global-local interactions.

A Millennials’ Music Consumption Survey conducted in two universities in China and the U.S. respectively. The responses suggested distinct music taste patterns. Students from both countries demonstrate an omnivorous taste pattern with music preferences spreading across a wide spectrum of music genres, from Classical music to Pop and Rock music. However, U.S. students preferred Alternative music the most whereas the Chinese students liked Easy Listening.
U.S. students represented multi-culturalism in their music tastes and consumption behaviors, while the Chinese students demonstrated glocalization characteristics in the sample. In contemporary society, the cultural and social backgrounds still play the biggest role in the formation of Millennials’ music taste.

Reflections on the implication of my findings are instructive to policy makers and industry practitioners who are concerned with strategic plans aiming to enhance cultural exchange and cross-cultural understanding in the Millennial Generation’s daily life.

Further research could be done on the different perception of music of Chinese and the U.S. Millennials with larger samples and improved survey.
Dedication

This document is dedicated to my parents Shuiyang Xu and Huiyu Li.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background of the Problem

Globalization

A real music lover must find out one day that every music platform is using almost the same categories for music genres, such as Pop, Rock and Metal, etc., and this practice is not only restricted to one nation. From my experience, not only Spotify from Sweden and Pandora from the U.S., but also Chinese music platforms follow the same categorization standards. The globalization of the music industry is the force behind the scenes for this “golden principle” in music categorization. Would globalization cast a similar impact on music consumption across these nations as well?

Globalization at the industry level is benefiting from technology and media expansion worldwide. The heavily connected world has been having a significant impact on what UNESCO calls “culture cycle”—from creation and production to dissemination, reception and consumption\(^1\), by adding more mediation variances to the receptive processes of consumers through multi-layered social networks. At the regional level, the various global-local interaction dynamics, corresponding to unique local social, cultural, industry and policy environment, have also transformed the presentations of

globalization. Under this circumstance, similarities should be witnessed in music consumption in different nations, when encountering the globalized culture, as are distinctive attributes due to local differences.

**Cultural Industry structure change**

In the globalization era, the cultural industry is facing not merely the force from globalization. In addition, culture is deeply attached to the local environment such as history, arts, social norms and technology, etc.; thus, more and more cultural products carry both globalized features and local ones. The consumer reception of such cultural products, for example, World Music, is subject to diverse social and industrial influences. Thanks to globalization, contemporary cultural industry is merged into the global media and communication network. The birth of media culture in the cultural industry could be attributed to the increasing amount of cultural consumption through media, in the digital revolution. According to the 2012 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, 71% of U.S. adults over age 18 consumed art through media such as TV, radio, handheld or mobile devices, internet, and CDs. The close media connection between consumers and producers in the cultural industry has changed cultural consumption dramatically.

**Music taste and consumption**

Consumption choice is the demonstration of unique personal taste (Virtanen, 2005). Taste study that originated from Bourdieu (1984) has been adjusted and adapted significantly in

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the increasingly globalized contemporary society. The music industry is thus mediated within the global production-distribution-consumption networks.

Music taste is reflected within one’s actualized consumption choices; on the other hand, past consumption experiences have been reinforcing the representation of unique music tastes. However, taste and consumption are not a sequential process. They are interconnected following a reflexive reinforcement mechanism, like a spiral; for example, consumer preference of certain music types could cumulatively influence the production of these music styles in the industry, since producers continuously analyze the popular music trends based on consumer behaviors in order to appeal to their tastes. That said, one’s current music consumption behaviors and choices deeply rooted in social and cultural environments are also prominent forces behind the formation of their distinctive music tastes. The Contemporary music industry also indirectly modifies consumers’ music taste through mediating music consumption behaviors via globalized media culture.

Digital Music Consumption of Millennials

The digital evolution created a “born digital” generation (Palfrey & Gasser, 2010), which is referred to as the Millennial Generation, who are defined by the Pew Research Center as those born after the 1980’s. In the same Pew Millennial research, 24% of the Millennials surveyed distinguished themselves from other generations with their use of technology, and 11% with their music and Pop cultural activities. Their exposure to globalized music culture and industry and their active involvement in online communities

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qualify them as the best representatives of music tastes in the globalization age. In other words, if the globalization of music taste does exist, the Millennials’ music taste should be the most responsive to such taste convergence tendency.

As we have moved into contemporary society, the influence of social class on cultural consumption has been diminished, partly because of changing social mobility and increasing interactions between traditional social classes. As Peterson witnessed a heterogeneous cultural taste patterns in the elite class in the U.S. (1996), homogeneous tastes are dissolving around the world, according to other scholars. The active cultural engagement of the Millennial Generation and the information age they are living in also implies these young people’s eclectic music tastes as well.

**Problem Statement**

Encountering globalization, the Millennial Generation lives in an ever-changing era when tastes are subject to various social influences from within the consumption realm and outside of it. Technology has facilitated these “digital natives” to not only construct their identities through diversified approaches of music consumption in the media culture environment (Palfrey & Gasser, 2010), but has always been contributing to the development of active audience reception—those youth consumers are becoming more active and even proactive with the media cultural products at hands.

Traditional taste theory based on class has been criticized and adapted by various social theorists; however, Millennials’ cultural consumption behaviors have only been addressed in cultural industry market research. There are so far few academic studies on
It is still a mystery whether Millennials’ music taste will follow the eclectic (defined as omnivores by Peterson\(^4\)) tendency as elite classes.

Most contemporary taste studies have gathered empirical evidence from western countries rather than non-western ones (Achteberg et al., 2011). The drawbacks of cross-national cultural consumption research are overlooked by most western researchers, when they are comparing merely western developed societies, which share more similarities than differences (Katz-Gerro, 2011). Unfortunately, there is almost no literature on western and non-western cultural consumption comparison and a lack of standard methodology hinders the progress of such research as well. Cultural globalization could never be fully understood without consideration of developing countries.

Millennial consumers across the world will definitely act differently in the digital music age facing millions of music pieces online, since social conditions, technology accessibility and local music industry infrastructures cast tremendous impacts on their music tastes. The degrees of globalization in music tastes are modified accordingly as well. Would globalization accelerate their musical eclectic transitions? Would these digital natives share a similar music consumption pattern despite their different social and cultural backgrounds? How might music consumption patterns reflect their music tastes?

In order to address these questions, I am integrating music consumption into a larger culture cycle for a holistic overview of Millennials’ music tastes in China and the U.S. in the cultural globalization scenario.

\(^4\) See Peterson & Kern (1996) for in-depth analysis of omnivores.
Thesis Statement
In the Globalization Age, Chinese and U.S. undergraduate students’ music tastes and consumption behaviors are supposedly changing. With influences from technical and cultural globalization, increased integration of cultural consumption and production in global media market and global-local social, cultural and industrial interactions, there are high probabilities that representatives of the Millennial Generation in my study will demonstrate similar taste patterns and consumption behaviors highlighted by omnivorous music taste attributes.

Purpose of Study
Draw on the Millennials’ music taste hypothesis of this study, the purpose of my research is to test my assumption through evaluating multiple strands of influences from globalization in cultural production and consumption on undergraduate students from China and U.S. Consequently, the general research question in my study is “How do local environments impact Chinese and American Millennials’ music consumption patterns?” I am also concerned about the following sub-questions:

1. What are the taste patterns of Chinese and American undergraduate students? Are they projecting an omnivorous pattern?
2. Do they have specific tastes corresponding to their social and cultural backgrounds?
3. Are there any similarities among their musical tastes and consumption behaviors?
4. How do their consumption behaviors affect their taste patterns?
To what degree do local social and industrial differences impact their music tastes and consumption?

This study is more interdisciplinary compared with previous research through bridging the gap left by cross-national research within the parameter of cultural sociology of the Millennial Generation. Focusing on Millennials’ music consumption, the highlight of this research is the investigation of the impact on music tastes across nations, from the interactions between cultural globalization and regional cultural activities. The generational concern is added to the globalization discussion throughout the music taste formation exploration in the two countries.

In line with the research question, the identification of music consumption patterns are indicators of cultural globalization types in specific regions. Different globalization types suggest distinct interaction mechanisms between local factors and globalizing forces. Furthermore, an in-depth analysis of the similarities and differences of music consumption patterns in western and non-western societies might shed light on the dynamics with which local social, cultural, industrial and policy factors interact with globalization forces. The impact mechanism of environmental factors will be evaluated in terms of their degrees of influence on music tastes in different nations.

Theoretical Framework

Based on the omnivores assumption (eclectic music taste patterns) of Millennials’ music tastes cross nations, cultural globalization is a critical underlying concept throughout the
whole discussion of my research. The global-local interactions are presented differently in distinct social environments, the same as music tastes, which are formed within the social system framed largely by local social, cultural, industrial and policy environments. The conflicts stimulated by globalized industrial structure and culture within local scenarios crystalize the different music taste scenes in the U.S. and China.

A systematic mechanism of music taste formation is critical to analyzing the omnivores hypothesis that I proposed. Apart from adapting Bourdieu’s “cultural habitus” which addresses the importance of cultural and economic capital possessed by individuals in the formation of their tastes (1984), Peterson’s “production of culture perspective” addressing industrial impact on the understanding of cultural production also contributes to my conceptual framework. That said, a holistic environment, including cultural, social and economic systems has been synthesized to modify the music consumption patterns individuals hold. Small variances and deviations are unavoidable since everyone could be motivated by random social or emotional settings, when they choose music to listen to. Putting influences from social environment and industry together into the “Cultural Diamond” paradigm (Griswold, 2008), the analytic framework is representing the dynamic among these environmental factors that contribute to the understanding of music taste formation.

Six factors are identified out of the systematic cultural production-distribution-consumption dynamics, which contribute to the discussion of music taste in this study, including education, social network, cultural policy, industrial structure, individualism and collectivism, and technology accessibility. I am going to evaluate these factors’
impact on the distinct music tastes demonstrated by Millennials from China and the U.S. in my study.

Above is the brief introduction of the theoretical framework I will apply in this study. I will discuss the choice and development of my analytical framework in detail in my literature review chapter.

Significance of Study

This study aims to enhance cultural exchange and cross-culture understanding among the Millennial Generation by informing music industry practitioners and cultural policy makers of the important role of local environments. They could learn more about global-local interactions involved in the cultural globalization of Millennials’ music tastes. Taste study has never been correlated with cultural exchange before; however, it is a cutting edge step to consider cultural exchange as cumulative understanding and consumption of globalized music in daily music activities in this digital era.

For arts organizations striving to thrive in the online environment as many of their current audiences are growing old, they are drilling into other audience groups that are more active in the virtual world. Even though digital music online platforms are mostly for-profit, their marketing and audience development strategies are valuable to non-profit arts organizations who are curious about how to attract target groups in the ever-changing social environment. Thus far, by combining the macro-level (industry and policy impact) and micro-level (social and cultural impact) cultural taste development, my study could
provide them a guide for further investigation of Millennial Generation’s arts consumption, in order to cultivate prospective audiences.

In addition, my discussion of cultural globalization types in China and the U.S. adds a piece to the Globalization debates, by extending the focus of subject to Millennials. On the other hand, applying a new angle to the formation of omnivorous tastes in the digital age—globalization, my music taste discussion might address pieces of omnivore evidence from various countries to make contributions for omnivore theses.

Scope and Limitation

The musical taste comparison between Chinese and U.S. undergraduate students is a pilot study in my research. That said, my study will use convenient samples from my undergraduate university and the university where I am currently enrolled. Given the small sample size completely based on voluntary participation of students in each university, my research results could only be generalized at best to the two universities. The objective of this pilot study is not to be exhaustive; rather, it is to explore other possible frameworks or factors that contribute to the explanation of Millennials’ music tastes. Furthermore, it aims to address globalization issues from the perspective of the Millennial Generation.

My study will only cover the observed music genres shared by music platforms in the two countries, in the process of identifying participants’ music taste patterns. There are definitely other principles for genre selection according to academic best practices (Hakanen & Wells, 1993; DiMaggio, 1987; North & Davidson, 2013).
Most of my “Millennials’ Music Consumption” survey questions are based on the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts\textsuperscript{5}; in addition, the variations are in my inquiry of social and industrial influencers on music tastes. The questions covered by the survey are not inclusive, as well, since I used my theoretical framework to design the survey addressing the six dimensions of music taste formation under concern.

The sample size on the other hand limits my methodology. Extensive statistical analysis is not utilized in my data analysis considering the small sample size. Only basic statistical methods are applied to give readers an overall perception of the complex music taste patterns and consumption preferences in the sample and possibly among the Millennial Generation. To leverage the lack of use of statistical analysis in my methodology, I integrated qualitative analysis into the whole discussion by mentioning unique examples observed in my study.

Chapter Overview

My thesis is divided into five chapters. The past chapter introduced the background of my study and the problems this study is concerned about. Addressing the research questions, I also mentioned the significance of my study and its limitations to give readers an overview of my research.

The following chapter is methodology where I discuss the method of this study including research design and procedure, data collection and analysis measurements. Again, I will mention limitations and constrains existing in my methodology.

\textsuperscript{5} See 2008 SPPA questionnaire for detailed information about survey design, retrieved from \url{http://arts.gov/sites/default/files/SPPA-questionnaire.pdf}.
The third chapter is a literature review. I will make an extensive review of literature based on five issues that are related to my topic. The formation of the analytical framework will be introduced with details later in this chapter. At the end, related studies will be listed as a reference point for the discussion chapter.

The fourth chapter is data analysis based on my analytical framework addressing my research questions. The data collected in this study will be presented in multiple ways followed by discussions.

The final chapter is the conclusion, where I summarize the findings in my study and synthesize the discussions for further implications. An assessment of the framework and contemporary music taste study will be discussed as well. Furthermore, suggestions for marketing and policy implications of my study are presented along with suggestions for future studies.
Chapter 2: Methodology

Research Design

Given the fact that this study is a preliminary research of cross-national music taste of Millennials, my thesis focuses on a small scale comparison between two specific case sites--Tongji University in Shanghai, China and the Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, the U.S.

Survey Design

The analytic framework integrating Bourdieu’s “cultural habitus” and Peterson’s “Production of Culture Perspective” derived from the precedent literature identifies six factors mediating the “cultural diamond” system that could have significant impact on the formation of Millennials’ music tastes.

Based on the analytical framework, an online “Millennials’ Music Consumption” survey was designed with forty-nine questions asking students in both universities about their music preferences, music education experience, music consumption habits and social-demographic information (see Appendix A). Most of the questions are multiple choices while some of them have follow-up questions. The six indicators are more or less addressed in the survey.

Choices of Genres

The foundational goal of the survey is to map out the music taste patterns of the U.S. and Chinese undergraduate students in the sample, according to their preferences among
different music genres. According to Peterson, “a pattern is a set of items, which has some kind of general, constant character even though the actual items within the pattern may change over time” (Peterson, 1983, p424); music taste pattern is referred to as the presentation and determinant of music consumption preferences which connect both “cultural preferences and actualized consumption” (Virtanen, 2005, p2). Thus far, taste pattern is the symbolization of the range of one’s “consumption preference” as well as “the consumption repertoire” (2005, p3). A cross-sectional comparison between Chinese and U.S. undergraduate students is valuable only if we have their distinctive music taste patterns at hand. In this case, the different degrees of influence from each indicator shed light on the global-local interactions in the music sector. These impact dynamics then could contribute to the knowledge for enhancing cross-cultural understanding and cultural exchange activities.

Comparing the music genres used by the different platforms in China and the U.S., a globalization trend was observed at the industry level given the standardized music genre categorization across all platforms under investigation in the two countries, in this case, Spotify, Pandora, Xiami and Douban. To improve the validity of the usage of music genres in music taste pattern description, I chose 16 music genre titles, which are shared by most of the platforms, for which students from both countries could rank their preferences. They are Classical music, Pop, Country music, Jazz, Folk music, Alternative, Dance, Techno or Electronica, Rock, Rap or Hip Hop, Reggae, Blues.

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6 Spotify is Swedish streaming music platform which is popular in the U.S., while Pandora is a U.S. based online music radio platform with unique recommendation mechanism. These two platforms are not accessible in China. Xiami is a combination music platform in China of streaming music and music downloading, whereas Douban fm features music radio service. Xiami is only accessible in China.
Rhythm & Blues or Soul music, Metal, World, Easy Listening, New Age and Songwriter. As an additional genre, Religious music is specified for U.S. students considering most of them have religious beliefs.

Data collection

Participants

Undergraduate students in Tongji University and the Ohio State University were encouraged to voluntarily take part in the online survey through Survey Monkey; however, they were recruited through my professors in each university by recruitment letters. Given the limited advertising channels, I was expecting responses of five students from each university at the beginning of the data collection.

Procedure

The Millennials’ Music Consumption Survey was designed and proofed in the summer of 2014. Then I applied for consent documentation exemption from the institutional review board at the Ohio State University in August and got approved on September 17th. Before distributing the survey, I sent out recruitment letters through email and left enough time for participants to ask questions about the study. On the first page of the online survey, the participants were asked to review the consent form before starting the survey. Their approval of consent was automatically obtained as long as they moved on doing the survey. The data was collected through the encrypted survey service website electronically and stored in the encrypted personal laptop of the researcher.
After final revision of the survey, it was distributed to students in both universities by email. Furthermore, member check with the participants was utilized after the completion of this survey to reduce misunderstandings and misrepresentations.

The overall estimated data collection time period was one month, but, in fact, it took me 48 days to receive every voluntary response, from September 22th to November 9th, 2014. The total number of students in each university who participated in the survey significantly exceeded my estimated five responses. There were 44 students from the Ohio State University and 21 from Tongji University in my final samples. The unevenness of sample size in each university is due to the efforts I could put in to do in-class presentation of my study. That said, since I am now in the Ohio State University, I did attend many classes to promote my research ideas and encourage students to participate in the survey. However, as I was not in China during the data collection period, there was no chance for me to introduce my study to students in Tongji University in person.

Measurement

SPSS is the primary statistical analysis software used to measure and present the data collected in my study. Basic data presentation includes table and box and whisker plot. Using a box and whisker plot, I try to visualize the corresponding frequencies of other behaviors when one behavior is set the same for the sample. Thus, the degree of correlation is implied by comparing different behavioral categories.
Other measurements of my data are the automatically generated frequency distribution bar charts and pies in Survey Monkey data analysis service in response to each question I asked in the survey.

The qualitative component of the measurement comes from the follow-up questions about music consumption preferences. I categorized the musicians and music mentioned by students in my survey to get a deeper insight of students’ perception of music.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process underlies the core methodology of my research—mixed methodology. The small sample that participated in the online survey is far less generalizable than national level data; nevertheless, as a complement of using statistical analysis for group level attributes, variances in individual cases are stressed from the qualitative perspective. Second hand data is utilized in the process of applying the six factors to data analysis, such as the national survey of arts participation in the U.S. and the usage of media research in China done by iiMedia Research.

A comparative approach is taken further for a deeper understanding of the dynamics of how the six factors affect music consumption behaviors across the two nations among Millennials. The nature of the cross-sectional research design also provides a unique aspect of thinking about music consumption in the digital evolution and media age. The in-depth comparison of western and non-western social impacts on Millennials’ music consumption behaviors is instructive to policy makers and industry practitioners, whose
intention is to enhance active and high quality consumer and civil engagement through cultural exchange and cross-culture understanding.

Extensive literature review and other national and local public data are taken into account in the analysis to reduce bias and threats to internal validity.

Limitations and Constraints

This preliminary study of cross-national music taste study on the Millennial Generation encountered limitations and constraints in terms of internal and external validity. First of all, there appears to be no consensus, so far, on the definition of Millennial Generation in the field. The Pew Research Center identifies this group based on American generational change as those who were born after the 1980s, whereas Great Britain identifies their Millennials based on purchase power as those born from 1981-1995. For most countries, the Millennial Generation is under-studied or integrated into consumer studies. Moreover, the choices of research sites in my study are convenient sites—Tongji University is my undergraduate university and the Ohio State University is where I am pursuing my master’s degree, which may not be the best representatives of Millennials in each country. Furthermore, the small sample sizes entail bias in the generalization process to the whole student population in each university, not to mention the sampling process is non-random and voluntary-based.

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On the other hand, there are more factors in the social, cultural, industry and policy environments that could have impact on Millennials’ music tastes, such as gender and major, aside from the six factors I have chosen that were addressed with evidence in the literatures. Thus, the results reflected in the data are just a part of the scenario of how the unique Millennials’ music tastes in different countries are formed.

To account for the constraints in this study, the environmental differences are recognized in the analysis by addressing the local vs. national social, industry and policy situations. Furthermore, supplemental information such as social demographic backgrounds of the students in the sample are introduced as control variables. After all, this preliminary study aims to explore the interdisciplinary approach of understanding cross-national music tastes in the Millennial Generation, rather than establish a concrete undisputable theory in contemporary music taste study.

I am expecting to experiment with this methodology (especially with the effectiveness and validity of the Millennial Music Consumption Survey) for future large-scale cross-national music consumption research and contribute to the foundation for more diversified interdisciplinary research on cultural consumption.
Chapter 3: Literature Review

Taste study originated from the 1980s, with Perrire Bourdieu as the founding father. Following him, countless scholars have been devoted to uncovering the secret underneath the formation of taste. In this chapter, I talk about the development of Bourdieu’s taste theory in contemporary society. Moreover, some critical concepts, which are constructive to my conceptual framework for cross-national music taste comparison, are briefly introduced, including cultural habitus, media culture, and audience reception. Concentrating my examination on the younger generation, Millennials and cultural globalization are discussed, as well as their potential tendency in music taste.

Five Issues in Contemporary Music Taste Study

*The Symbolic Meaning of Music Taste*

Taste is shaped by a series of events one experiences before he or she encounters the world of choices (Brown, 2008). According to Bourdieu (1984), these occasions usually enhance and reinforce an individual’s taste following systematic interactions one has in his or her living situations. When media culture emerges as the dominant globalization promoter in contemporary music industry, the consumption environment of consumers is not as purely restricted to local social classes as in the pre-globalization era. The symbolic meaning of music taste, as a reflection of one’s music consumption preference
(Virtanen, 2005), has been changing a lot, which is also a hot-button issue debated by many scholars (Peterson & Kern, 1996; Katz-Gerro, 2006).

A Class Identifier?

Bourdieu’s taste study laid the foundation for how social and cultural variances contribute to the formation of cultural taste, which is then claimed as class identifiers distinguishing high-medium-low brow social groups. In his book Distinction (1984), Bourdieu rejects the traditional Kantian aesthetic regarding taste as merely the result of individualistic choice out of human intellect and emotions, with the aggregated life-style data from France. Instead, his thesis considers taste as a class identifier mirroring people’s social status, which is usually employed by higher classes as a “social weapon “to legitimate culture. Believing that “nothing more clearly affirms one’s class, nothing more infallibly classifies, than tastes in music” (Bourdieu, 1984, p18), he explains in detail how Classical music is appreciated by elites rather than middle and lower classes, contributing to the formation of social stratification.

Two related concepts are crucial to the cultivation of taste as class identifier—cultural capital and cultural habitus, which will be discussed as a preparation for the adaptation of my conceptual framework.

Capital, defined by Bourdieu as “a social relation” (1984, p113), is extended beyond the traditional notion of “material assets”. Boudieu conceives a multidimensional-space of dispositions where people’s taste preferences in daily life are determined by the “capitals” they possess.
Two types of capitals are essential in the formation of taste—economic capital and cultural capital. Volume of capital, composition of capital and change in these two properties over time create a three dimensional space for the production of “cultural habitus” (Bourdieu, 1984, p114). Since this concept is used to showcase one’s “mental habits” (Prior, 2008, p183) within the three dimensional capital space, it is unavoidably the product of one’s social condition, mediated by accessible capital. According to Prior (2008, p183), “it is the system of unconscious dispositions which shape the broad behavioral trajectories and life chances of individuals”.

Though a primary reference point for following scholars to collect empirical data on musical taste, Bourdieu’s taste theory is also criticized as “overly rigid or lacking a convincing account of technology and creativity” (Prior, 2008; Born, 2010). Is musical taste really the perfect indicator of people’s social identities, or is it just a means with which individuals form their identities? A transition from power-relation analysis of taste to a fluid perception of taste culture is brewing in contemporary post-Bourdieu taste studies.

Taste, as a class indicator reflected in people’s distinct consumption preferences in a stratified society, has gradually lost its validity in modern society as well. More and more empirical evidence contrary to the distinction claim has been emerging in other social environments. Peterson (1996) uncovered an omnivorous taste pattern emerging in U.S. higher-class consumers in his Country music consumption analysis. His thesis claims that taste shifts from its distinct attachment to social class, to a phenomenon where higher-class consumers are open to music repertoires spread on a wide spectrum (Peterson &
Kern, 1996). In other countries, such as Great Britain, similar findings suggested potential challenge to the cultural habitus framework.

To be brief, scholars, especially Peterson, expand taste from a rigid identifier formed yet confined within class boundaries, to a concept subjected to fluid cross-boundary class interactions, which is continuously modified by media culture.

**Media Culture as an Impact on Music Taste**

As popular culture is becoming more and more welcomed, due to its appeal to the middle class, the cultural industry promotes it to be omnipresent in order to make profit. In the context of capitalism, Adorno regards popular music as a “sensuous but standardized commodity” (Hesmondalgh, 2007b) manipulated by cultural industries, where consumers are passive receptors of the ideology in material culture. The symbolic meaning of music for consumers is constructed slightly different in the market and in social classes, given the booming connectivity granted by media and communication networks. People can have more resources for obtaining diverse cultural capital, which gradually changes the composition of individuals’ cultural habitus.

Thornton claims a subspecies cultural capital called “subcultural capital” is circulating in popular culture, which functions according to the logic of social distinction, after investigating Dance music clubbers’ tendency to distance themselves from other “mainstream” listeners, by the possession of an insider’s knowledge as a “cultural weapon” dis-tasting other taste groups (1995). He then confirms that symbolic profit of music could be generated through the rare and exclusive knowledge as an insider, noted
by Bourdieu (1993). Subcultural capital obtained by a cultural insider facilitates his/her taste distinction by enriching the knowledge resources in his/her cultural habitus.

After examining how respondents evaluated their music taste in Great Britain around the Millennial year 2000, scholars concluded that the position-taking with Classical music among middle class is declining, while attachments are more intense in the field of popular music. Perhaps it is the subcultural capital that changed the whole dynamics of cultural habitus by adding more easily available knowledge from media networks into individuals' unconscious dispositions.

Other supplementations, mentioned by post-Bourdieu music taste scholars, are moving taste away from its class identifier connotation as well. Antoine Hennion conceptualizes music taste as an activity engaging with the musical property. According to him (2007), music taste is a dynamic set of engagements where people share sensuous and physiological states moment by moment. Thus, Hennion calls our attention back to people’s “inventive strategies of meaning-making” (Hennion, 2008, p41-44). Emerging focus on the performativity and communicativity in contemporary music media culture (McCormick, 2009) draws on the active role taken by consumers, who can make their own meanings out of specific settings constantly, a so-called “aesthetic autonomy” (Born, 2010).

Georgina Born (2010) regards the material properties of music as mediation bridging musicians and listeners through cultural production. Connecting music and consumers through its mediation mechanism, post-humanists advocate for models of “circulation”,

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which tie music taste study into the whole cultural production cycle in the culture industry.

Seeing music industry as a meditation space for active symbolic interactions among youth consumers is changing the perspective to readdress the "circuit of media communication" (Brown, 2008, p391). The interactional audience reception with media, especially social media, reflects the value of “interpretative repertoires” (Liebes & Katz, 1993). Media communication is constantly modifying “cultural habitus”, by providing the overarching context for meaning exchange and formation in the music consumption process.

In this way, the mediation mechanism stimulates interactions between production and consumption, which then transform cultural consumption practices as well as the taste patterns in current society.

_Educational Impact on Music Taste_

While economic capital corresponds to individual’s economic resources, cultural capital, newly created by Bourdieu, consists of non-financial social assets that could promote social mobility or reinforce social distinctions without facilitation of monetary resources. Cultural capital is a non-material resource including the following properties: “cultural knowledge, skills, experiences and abilities; linguistic competence, modes of speech and vocabulary; and modes of thought, factual knowledge, worldviews, etc.” (Douglas & Paul, 1994, p70) Together with economic capital, they formed a multi-dimensional space
for cultural habitus. As implied by the definition of cultural capital, family and school are two primary settings for cultural capital reproduction (Boudieu, 1984).

Education such as degree level is one of the most significant resources of cultural capital and indicators of music taste. In his empirical work, by scrutinizing higher class cultural reproduction in France (1984; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, 1979), Bourdieu pointed out strong correlations “among family socioeconomic status, educational achievement and attainment, and cultural practices and tastes” (Tepper & Ivey, 2012, p279). After Bourdieu, scholars have continuously been documenting statistically significant associations between socioeconomic status, indicated usually by educational level, and cultural capital (DiMaggio & Mohr, 1985; Van Eijck, 1997; Mohr & DiMaggio, 1995; DeGraaf et al., 2000).

"... it [education] is in fact one of the most effective means of perpetuating the existing social pattern, as it both provides an apparent justification for social inequalities and gives recognition to the cultural heritage, that is, to a social gift treated as a natural one." (Bourdieu, 1974, p. 32)

Gans (1999) promoted formal education as a means for upward social mobility, suggesting that the public education system will give lower status groups more educational opportunities. Eventually, they will form a more legitimate taste by being exposed to higher arts in formal educational settings. Such statements ignored the tension between what is taught in class and what is consumed outside of class; after all, people have to choose what to appreciate in real life.
Ironically, even in Bourdieu’s survey data from French consumers, people from different social classes (different educational levels) tended to listen to music almost at the same rate, except for the lower middle class who were industrial and commercial employees (see Appendix B). The difference between their Classical music consumption rates is minimal compared with their consumption of other cultural products. Such significant empirical evidence implies that formal education was not the perfect influencer of one’s music taste from the very beginning. Other informal settings, instead, have bigger influence on cultural capital reproduction, modifying the dynamics of taste formation.

In a stratified society, cultural capital refers to “familiarity with the dominant culture in a society, and especially the ability to understand and use 'educated' language” (Sullivan, 2002, p145). Bourdieu’s “ideology of natural taste” corresponds to such kind of capital that is limited to privileged social groups, where individuals gain most of the capital by means of social relations within the class. In this case, social class has a key role in maintaining the status quo by ways of informal education through social networking. Children who are immersed in legitimated arts by going to museums, concerts and ballets with their parents will benefit from their early childhood experience at school, since standard arts curriculums put great value on the authentic esthetic in higher art forms (Sullivan, 2002).

Even though Bourdieu conceptualized economic capital and social capital (social relationships and networks) as well as symbolic and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1989), it is the cultural capital that is heavily impacted by economic and social status, in terms of the inherited privilege of cultural knowledge and experience within classes.
Suggested by empirical evidence from previous scholars mentioned above, one’s educational background, including formal classroom education, as well as informal education through social relations within families and classes, has distinct effects on individual’s possession of cultural capital and their cultural habitus structure. Given the variations in the degrees of impact from formal and informal education, people’s music tastes project distinct patterns.

While Bryson (1996; 1997) found that “musical exclusiveness decreases with educational level”, after analyzing the 1992 General Social Survey, parents’ educational level contributes to the elite music taste of high school students (Hakanen & Wells, 1993) and college students as well as their opinion leader characteristics (Tepper & Hargittai, 2009). There is no consensus on what kind of music taste pattern different educational level could lead to in the current academic world.

From Consumption to Production Perspective

Bourdieu conceptualized “habitus” to connect capitals and consumption practices at the individual level, furthermore, implying an “open set of dispositions” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p133) of other factors that is constantly modifying and reinforcing consumption preferences. For example, some of the dispositions in habitus are obtained from family, education and social network (Tepper & Hargittai, 2009; Hakanen & Wells, 1993), which imply the social dimension underlying the construction of cultural habitus.

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In this case, the concept of “habitus” sets flexibility for following scholars to build upon. However, since the cultural habitus concept is related to the capitals accessible to individuals, it implies the exclusivity of consumption from the “culture cycle”: People could obtain cultural capital from education and social networks and economic capital from inheritance or hard work (Bourdieu, 1984), but they could never cross-source capital from the industry and production sector.

But that was in the old days. As traditional cultural capital is dissected and marginalized by subculture capital, the composition of cultural habitus also changes dramatically. In the globalization age, the increasing amount of popular culture knowledge, obtained from approachable informal settings, is reshaping individual cultural habitus to an unforeseeable extent. Nevertheless, people’s social upbringings still contribute to individuals’ music consumption behavior patterns in specific cultural consumption settings, as suggested by Bourdieu.

However, according to Hakanen & Wells (1993), “music ratings were generally not significantly related to social class” (1993, p59-60) for the high school students surveyed in their study. The invasion of the production sector into the consumption sector in affecting music consumption is thus altering the whole situation where people form their music tastes.

Production impact on music taste formation: industry structure

“Cultural industries are systems of organizations mediating flows of cultural goods between producers and consumers.” (Molteni & Ordanini, 2003, p389). Distinct from
other material goods, cultural goods possess symbolic implications, satisfying the
“aesthetic or expressive” desire of consumers (2003, p389), through meaning exchange
and reproduction mediated by cultural industry.
Cultural industry, as the primary meaning making environment for consumers, has been
merging with cultural habitus with regard to expanding the multi-dimensional capital
space, providing more sources for cultural capital reproduction. Furthermore, along with
media channels and communication networks, technology has been taking a bigger role
in the taste formation process, due to the increasing digitalization of cultural products.
The development of media and communication networks are consistently adjusting the
meaning making process of cultural consumption in cultural industry.
Popular culture is circulated through media. Music, the earliest digitized cultural product
at the dawn of the media culture industry, is representative of the unique mediation
process in the digital era. The music industry is where “the most tangible changes”
(Molteni & Ordanini, 2003, p392) are brought about by new digital technologies. Apart
from the introduction of MP3 format to the recording technology at the beginning of the
digital age, the music social network sites provide a flatter platform for more democratic
relationship between artists and consumers (Molteni & Ordanini, 2003). These
technology updates imply an ongoing change in music consumption, and consequently,
more complex music taste preferences of consumers with distinct social and cultural
backgrounds.
As music industry is mediating consumers with its unique structure and symbolic
meanings, it is a significant turn to examine taste culture from the production perspective.
Not only could market regularities be accounted for as the determinants of music consumption, but taste might be able to be independent of class identifier indications.

**Generational Difference**

The center of this study, Millennial Generation, is the second youngest generation we have nowadays. According to the Pew research center (2010), Millennials are those born after 1980, aged 18-29. They are highly addicted to internet and social networks, with 75% of them having at least a profile on a social network site. Their tastes and consumption of music are to a large extent affected by media culture. Music as a unique form of media carries implicit value as interacting with youth. The mediation process in the cultural industry, involving an active participation loop, is exerting a huge impact on youth music consumption behaviors.

Despite the copyright issues of online music file sharing that have always been in the center of music media culture study, youth music consumption has recently caught the eyes of scholars in exploring this new generation of consumers. The vast majority of young music consumers actually treat music consumption sorely as entertainment, and the meaning making process is for them to be distinct culturally rather than socially from others. A “youth entertainment economy since at least the late 1950s” (Brown, 2008, p391) along with fast growing media technologies and consumption activities give rise to an emerging field in youth study.

For Miles (2003), the value of the choice of the consumption concept is that it offers a framework with an economic and cultural process for “exploring how youth negotiate the
fact of their structural situation in terms of the ways that they consume and the meanings that such consumption has in the ‘space’ of youth” (Brown, 2008, p392). The cultural, social and industry structures are stimulating interactions between production and consumption, mobilizing cultural consumption practices as well as cultivating contemporary taste patterns in current society.

From music “production through representation, mediation and consumption” (Brown, 2008, p391), youth consumers take active roles in constructing their own taste identities constantly, thus changing the decision making of producers in the music industry, as in return, the producers provide music products that they consider more appealing to young consumers, reinforcing or changing the music taste of the younger generation. It was the boomers (those born between 1946 and 1965) in the U.S. who set the taste for Rock for the following generation. Moreover, “Rock n’ Roll music continuously serves as a critical meaning resource for its adult fans as they experience the becoming of self throughout life” (Kotarba, 2002, p104). The baby boomers brought popular culture into Americans’ everyday life by practicing it and enjoying it for their whole life. The long life of the Beatles and Rolling Stones reflects this significant change in the U.S. culture scene.

Compared with their former generations, Millennials are most likely to get involved in the emerging media culture, including digital music culture. According to “the UK Music Experience and Behavior in Young People”, music was the most popular entertainment form for 14-24 year-olds in 2009 compared with other cultural products. In 2011, most of the participants in this national study suggested having a “massive size of digital music collection” (Bahanovich, & Collopy, 2013).
It is important to take into consideration the generational perspective in music taste study, as the youth generation tends to be more entertained by music than their previous generations, instead of arming them with music for social issues. Their music tastes are thus most likely to be affected by cultural industry.

Since generation gaps are becoming smaller and smaller, Millennials are specifically named as Generation Y, who were born between 1980 and mid 1990’s (According to Pew Research Center, 2010). The subsequent generation is referred to as Generation Z. Generation Y and Generation Z are two completely different types of Millennials in terms of the degrees of exposure to internet and technology. Simply put, Generation Z, who are now under 18 years old, are born with the internet, whereas generation Y witnessed the digital evolution. Thus, Generation Z’s attitudes towards technology are instinctive (See Schroer, Generations X, Y, Z and the Others - Cont’d 9). Paralleled with technology and internet development, a generational consumption behavior spectrum, when it comes to technology and media consumption, is apparent in our daily life.

Generation X, those parents of Millennials, are more confined to traditional media consumption such as TV, newspaper and radio, and rely more on the off-line social networks. Starting from Millennials, Generation Y spend more time on line, using social media to connect with old friends and benefiting from the infinite information through the internet. Even though they are highly immersed in technology, they still like to hangout in real time and space with friends. On the contrary, Generation Z cannot live

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9 For detailed generational differences, see http://www.socialmarketing.org/newsletter/features/generation3.htm.
without internet and technology. They do everything online and thus, are heavily or even completely influenced by media culture.

The most recent study about how Millennials explore music in the digital age by Tepper and Hargittai (2009) provides us empirical evidence about the comparatively rational media consumption of Millennials. Witnessing that "digital media has changed not only how artist is creative and distributes content, but also how listeners find and access new material" (2009, p227), the authors conducted a survey with a sample of college students, evaluating their music exploration mechanism when there are more options at hand. It is noteworthy that though students use digital media to listen to music, they rely on traditional social networks and media more often to explore new music. This spectrum corresponds to their perceptions of media and technology, and potentially reflects their music tastes. As we have discussed in the previous sections that media culture in cultural industry intersects, to an increasing extent, with cultural habitus, music tastes of young generations are products of both consumption and production. Internalized social and cultural common sense, together with external media environment, create complicated taste making mechanisms.

However, there is a generational gap in China where Chinese baby boomers are Generation X, if we apply the U.S. criteria for generation ages to their Chinese counterparts. Due to the non-Rock experience of Chinese baby boomers, they are not role models for the following generations in terms of music taste. The Generation Y in China thus was completely new to accessing western culture all by themselves.
Compared with their previous generation, the Millennial Generation has the potential to represent unique taste patterns, as opposed to the homogeneous taste preference held by Generation X.

The most popular argument nowadays about cultural taste is the omnivore-univore thesis. It initially claims that higher class consumers demonstrate openness to diverse consumption repertoires rather than being confined to unitary preference of elite culture (Peterson & Simkus, 1992). Though empirical data shows only the omnivore trend in higher class, Peterson and Kern still raise “the tantalizing prospect that consumers might be becoming more open-minded about their styles in general” (Prior, 2013, p187), by examining the widespread omnivore scene from 1982 to 1992 in American society. The point here is, taste, especially musical taste, should never be considered the perfect identifier of social distinctions, rather, “the mapping of culture onto social stratification should be understood in a more sophisticated way” (Chan & Goldthorpe, 2008, p3).

French sociologist Bernard Lahire brought attention to “intra-individual behavioral variations” (Lahire, 2008, p166). For him, our music profiles are subject to contingent social experiences and multiple determinations. Thus, heterogeneous music taste patterns should be taken as normal rather than as dissonance against social stratification and stability.

Taking into consideration Millennials’ educational background, along with their active participation in media culture, I propose the hypothesis that there is an omniore’s pattern in Millennials’ music taste. Cultural globalization that penetrates their everyday rituals could also contribute to the omniore’s music taste pattern assumption.
Globalization Impact

Globalized Media and “A Global Class”

Following the spreading new media and communication technology, Terhi Rantanen (2005) highlights the role of media and communications in globalization by defining it as “a process in which worldwide economic, political, cultural and social relations have become increasingly mediated across time and space” (2005, p8).

New media, such as digital, electronic and internet media, continues to expand the communication flows and networks global wise, which consequently leads to adapting audience reception format, e.g., participatory cultural production through online community with active audience engagement. New global/local interactions are also formed when the flows of information erode the physical boundaries among nation-states. Contemporary societies which are experiencing similar urbanization processes in the late-modern era possess shared global cultural attributes.

A global media culture has been formed at the core of cultural globalization, as a strong force acting upon local communities. China and the U.S., two distinctive nation players in the globalization from non-western and western worlds supposedly share the global media culture given their more and more homogeneous music industry structure and technology.

While globalization has many facets—economic, political and cultural dimensions, “it is cultural globalization that occurs through the media” (Movius, 2010, p6). Cultural globalization “implies that the expanding cultural products exchange among countries
may significantly affect cultural consumers through interactions between foreign and local cultural goods” (Achterberg et al., 2011). It also refers to “the emergence of a specific set of values and beliefs that are largely shared around the planet” (Castells, 2010, p117).

Instead of creating a “mass” society of disconnected individuals, the popular culture industry and the arts production field are in charge of producing the cultural resources that increasingly bind individuals in loosely structured interaction networks (Fiske, 1992). When the nation-state as a major player entered the global stage, a new and identifiable class of individuals who belong to an emergent global culture was being created.

However, as globalization also makes individuals more aware of the diverse national cultures (Tomlinson, 2003), this new class bears multiple identities with the modern culture and local culture co-existing in the local settings. The imagined communities are “post national locations”, based on collectively imagined landscapes of commercial marketing, and not the local culture. The “digital native” Millennials are making connections worldwide, in this case, as the majority of this new global class in virtual communities. They are thus more likely to develop identical cultural attributes given the information Millennials access on the global platform. However, just as the global products are competing with local products, the newly emerged global cultural conventions influenced by cultural industry, are conflicting with deep-rooted local cultures. The interactions between the two contribute to unstable cultural consumption behaviors, and thus unpredictable music tastes.
In the realm of cultural globalization studies, among all these cultural products, popular music is also an important and practical domain for cultural globalization research “because of its visibility of changes over time” (Fiske, 1998; Hall, 2010). There are not many cross-national music consumption researches focusing on the impact of globalization, especially Millennials’ reaction to cultural globalization. It might be due to the difficulties in obtaining timely empirical data from large samples of Millennials in this ever changing digital age, let alone people from different nations.

Moreover, there are many obstacles in cross-national/cultural study. According to Katz-Gerro, not only must one pay attention to unique social matrices in each cultural context, but also the influence of different “market and state mechanisms and cultural policies” (2004, p356) should be taken into consideration in cross-national cultural consumption research. Diverse unstandardized methodology and measurement choices also complicate the process of cross-national consumption study (Katz-Gerro, 2004). The difficulty of collecting data on music consumption is also a big concern for researchers. After all, such research is not a national priority; thus, there is limited existing data accessible for cross-national Millennials’ music taste study.

North & Davidson (2013) identified “three-way interactions between education, employment, and region in the uses to which participants put music and also their typical emotional reactions” (2013, p432) in their cross-national cultural consumption study on
four nations. The findings highlight the potential of “culture” as a variable in future research, as well as the complexity of cross-national music taste study.

There are three views on Cultural Globalization: Cultural imperialism, Glocalization, and Multiculturalization. Cultural imperialism claims “Certain dominant cultures threaten to overwhelm other more vulnerable ones” (Tomlinson, 2000, p80), whereas the process of globalization is seen as “a dynamic in which global cultural forms are not simply unilaterally imposed worldwide but are actively adapted according to local circumstances” by glocalization proponents. The most ideal type of cultural globalization is “Multiculturalization”, whose advocates believe transnational cultural exchange leads to cultural diversity (Crane, 2002).

By investigating the music consumption behaviors and music taste patterns of Chinese and U.S. Millennials (in my study, they are specified as undergraduate students), the interaction mechanisms between local culture and global culture will be implied by the degrees of homogeneity of music tastes between the two groups of students. The types of cultural globalization in each country will be identified based on the overall assessment of music taste and consumption, and hopefully, my research could contribute to the unsettling cultural globalization debate by adding a piece of Millennials’ reaction to it.

Analytic Framework

It is innovative to refer music consumption back to the culture cycle—creation, production, dissemination, reception and consumption (defined by United Nations
Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization\(^\text{10}\), in order to get rid of the class implication of taste. Bourdieu has left us with the valuable “habitus” concept trying to address consumer autonomy in the context of consumption with cultural capital. Though not applicable in contemporary society, his framework could be integrated with production perspective in today’s digital media era, introducing more factors that improve our understanding of taste.

To adapt “cultural habitus” in contemporary society, which emphasizes the importance of economic and cultural capitals in the formation of personal tastes, Peterson builds his explanation of how cultural practices take form around “the production of culture perspective”. “It views both culture and social structure as symbolic elements in an ever-changing patchwork” affecting the formation of cultural practices (Peterson, 2004, p312). The Six facets of this framework include technology, law and regulation, industry structure, organization structure, occupational careers, and market (2004). This approach takes into consideration the criticism against cultural consumption from Frankfurt thinkers (Agger, 1991) and organizational sociology (Peterson, 2004), claiming “cultural consumption is not only self-selective within individual cultural habitus but manipulated by collective activities within the overall production system” (Crane 1992; Peterson 2001). Such theory is highly effective in analyzing the interactions between consumption and production during a transitional era, which then is perfect for the ever-changing Digital Age.

\(^{10}\) See the complete definition of “Culture Cycle” from UNESCO, retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/cultural-diversity/cultural-expressions/programmes/global-alliance-for-cultural-diversity/culture-cycle/.
Music is not merely a symbolic cultural product; rather, as Tia DeNore points out, it “gets into action” (DeNora, 2000, p8) through its musical properties, such as memory and emotion activation. In this case, to take music seriously doesn’t mean applying it to social distinction by reducing it to an indicator; instead, music taste formation should be investigated from diverse perspectives addressing more agency (individual) autonomy. Other potential social regularities that have significant impacts on cultural taste and consumption have been drawn from plenty of empirical studies since Bourdieu; they include education, income, technology development, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and individualism-collectivism dimension in a society (North & Davidson, 2013; Tepper & Hargittai, 2009).

The cross-cultural consumer research conducted by Cornwell and Drennan (2004) offers a four dimensional framework that addresses the forces of globalization and localization: environment, identity, wellbeing, and market structure and policy.

The adapted cultural habitus concept in my study integrates with Peterson’s production of cultural perspective, which covers social and industrial factors from the whole cultural production, distribution and consumption cycle. In my study, education, social structure (primarily social network,), individualism and collectivism, cultural policy, technology accessibility (Prior, 2013; Katz-Gerro, 2004; Brown, 2008) and industry structure are the structure level influencers of music taste (As shown in Figure 1), while social demographic identifiers such as age, gender, race and nationality also play an important role in taste formation by mediating consumption behaviors.
Figure 1. Six Factors in Music Taste Formation

Drawing on the concept of the Cultural Diamond (Griswold, 2013), which addresses “the culture/society connection in terms of ‘cultural objects’” (2013, p10), all the cultural and social factors proposed by this study contribute to the interacting dynamics and impact mechanism of social context on cultural consumption and taste patterns. By adding all these components to the “cultural diamond”, I am looking at taste study from the consumption and production perspectives through making connections between “habitus” and “media”, where technology, social network, laws and regulations, cultural and industry structures are contributing to the increasing convergence between the two sectors in the cultural cycle (See Figure 2).

The cultural diamond framework demonstrates the movement among the six factors,
and thus, serves as the analytic model for potential degrees of change within these dimensions.

Figure 2. Cultural Diamond Connecting Consumption and Production in Interpretations of Music Taste Formation
Chapter 4: Data Analysis

Demographic Characteristics

Analysis of the demographic characteristics helps to evaluate the level of representativeness of the sample with regard to the larger population.

The U.S. Respondents

Gender Distribution

There are 25 females and 19 males who participated in the survey. The similar numbers of each gender in this study provide an objective presentation of U.S. students’ music taste in the Ohio State University.

Age Distribution

The average age of participants from the U.S. is 19.3, which falls within the Millennial age range. However, a large number of them are 18 years old, suggesting the year of birth is 1996 (See Figure 3). Located on the boundary of the Millennial Generation and Generation Z, this sample might reflect a younger generation’s rather than Millennials’ music tastes.
Hometown

Out of 43 students who reported their hometown in the survey, nine of them are from the three big cites in Ohio—Cleveland, Cincinnati and Columbus, while 36 respondents (See Appendix D, Table 7) come from Ohio. The data collected is thus fairly representative of certain characteristics of the young generation (aged from 18 to 24) in Ohio.

Major Distribution

Though from the same geographical area, people who are interested in distinct subjects are projecting different ways of thinking, values and personalities. The majors of the 44 undergraduates imply their potential divergent preferences in music, given the typical mindsets possessed by those dealing with science or arts every day. What is worth noting
is that 34 of them major in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics\textsuperscript{11}), whereas the other 10 are mostly in business and education (See Appendix D, Table 7). Given this unbalanced distribution of majors among the respondents, the validity of an unbiased music taste pattern of Ohio State undergraduate students by this dataset is decreasing. The diversity of students’ majors contributes to the authenticity of the data when it comes to the validity of the discussion.


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\textit{Chinese Respondents}

\textit{Gender Distribution}

There are 11 males and 10 females in the total 21-participant sample. The even distribution of gender ensures the validity of the result from data in terms of demonstrating objective music tastes possessed by the Chinese students in Tongji University.

\textit{Age distribution}

The average age of this sample is 22.81 (see Figure 4), which falls within the Millennials’ age range. The youngest people are 20 years old, born before 1995. Thus, the data could accurately reflect Chinese Millennials’ music tastes in this university.

\textsuperscript{11} For more information about STEM education, see Gonzalez, H. B. & Kuenzi, J. J. (2012).
Though all of the 21 respondents are current undergraduate students at Tongji University, Shanghai, China, most of the respondents are actually from other provinces. Seven of them are from central China, five from northern China, seven from southern China and only two come from Shanghai (See Appendix D, Table 8). Given such demographic dispersion, the data might hold bias in that it may not reflect the accurate impact from Shanghai’s local cultural attributes including social environment, education and cultural regulation system.

Major Distribution

In terms of the majors of these undergraduate students, the data collected by the survey suggests a well-balanced science-arts distribution. Twelve students are in STEM
programs while others are mostly in humanities such as cultural policy and philosophy (See Appendix D, Table 8). There will thus be less impact from similar ways of thinking on the music taste of undergraduate students from Tongji University.

Cultural Impact

This section of data analysis is focused on the influence on Millennials’ music taste from cultural conventions in each country. Cultural proximity and individualism vs. collectivism as cultural paradigm are examined to address the perception gap of music genres in Chinese and U.S. students’ understanding of music. This section sets the stage for the music taste pattern analysis in the next section and also provides the deeply rooted mindsets with the most significant influence on the distinct music taste of Chinese and the U.S. undergraduate students in my study.

Culture Proximity

Language is considered as an important component in the construct of cultural proximity, which has impeded the diffusion of global culture on the local level. The lyrics of music are cultural-oriented in terms of their linguistic attributes. Thus, cross-cultural music consumption is subject to the command of other languages of the consumers, or global music culture will not be recognized and penetrate across borders.

U.S. students’ Language Preference in Music Consumption

In the U.S., the effect from cultural proximity with regard to language barriers and advantages is significant. English is indisputably their top choice for the lyrics of music
(Average rating 3.72; as seen in Table 1). In contrast, U.S. students’ preferences for music in other languages are surprisingly low. The average preference rating of music with Spanish lyrics is the highest at 1.78, whereas the lowest (1.17) is Chinese songs (See Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistics</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Japanese</th>
<th>Korean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
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<td>2.26</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skewness</td>
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<td>-.261</td>
<td>.729</td>
<td>1.722</td>
<td>.856</td>
<td>1.681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Error of Skewness</td>
<td>.361</td>
<td>.378</td>
<td>.378</td>
<td>.414</td>
<td>.403</td>
<td>.398</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Globalization Impact and Cultural Proximity in the U.S.

In contrast with the Chinese students’ ability to understand and speak English as the second language, the second language learned by most U.S. students is Spanish (with 72.06% national foreign language curriculum enrollment of K-12 public schools in
2011\textsuperscript{12}, given the large Spanish speaking population in the nation (about 37 million, according to the 2011 US census\textsuperscript{13}). The language barriers might reduce the cross-cultural understanding between Chinese and the U.S. Millennial Generation.

U.S. students might benefit from the fact that English is the most popular language in the world, and thus, huge number of songs in English. However, from the globalization perspective, the U.S. Millennial Generation might not be fully exposed to a global culture in terms of acknowledgement of non-western culture. Instead, their music preferences are limited to western cultures. In comparison, cultural proximity casts a larger influence on U.S. students’ music tastes than it does on the Chinese students’; it is the foreign language ability of undergraduate students in each country in the sample that to some extent leverage their music consumption characteristics, openness to global culture, and cross-cultural understanding potential.

\textit{Chinese Students’ Language Preference in Music Consumption}

In contrast to the U.S. undergraduate students’ unanimous choice of English as the top language for music consumption (See Table 1), the Chinese students in the sample rated Chinese (3.43) and English (3.14) as their top two language choices for music (See Table 2).


\textsuperscript{13} For detailed data about 2011 US census, see \url{http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/acs-22.pdf}. 

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Table 2. Chinese Students' Preferences of Language in Music Consumption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>-1.441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
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<td>1.89</td>
<td>988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
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<td>3.14</td>
<td>-827</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
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<td>French</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Globalization Impact and Cultural Proximity in China

The choices suggested their potentially inclusive music tastes and the heavy impact of globalization. There seems to be no close correlation between preferences for Chinese and Japanese or Korean music, which is implied by cultural proximity theory. Instead, English is preferred by more students who choose Chinese as their favorite language for music, with a rating of 3.43 (See Table 3), followed by Japanese (2.08) and Korean (2.07).
Conversely, those who choose English as their favorite language prefer Chinese (Average rating 3.75; as seen in Table 4) the most, followed by Korean (2.13) and Japanese (1.88). Americanization could be used to explain such a phenomenon, on the global industry level, when global popular culture is dominated by American culture. On the other hand, the Chinese government’s promotion of English for international economic, political and cultural diplomacy might also have facilitated the younger generation’s acceptance of English and related western cultures.
Table 4. Chinese Students Preference of Other Languages When English is Their Favorite Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>-1.440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>.277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>.662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>-.374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since Tongji University students are all required to have two years general English education, and most of them have been through the Public English Test System (PETS) in College, the high preference of English songs when the respondents’ native language is Chinese sheds light on the significant globalization impact on language choices with respect to music tastes in China. The deeper implications include good global distribution channels in China, and an open cultural policy orientation. Some special attributes in English songs such as straightforwardness, genre specific rhythms and western instrument arrangements might also be attractive to college students.

Nonetheless, this preference pattern does not reveal the inclusive acceptance of western music among the Chinese students in the sample. The possible superficial perception of genres among undergraduate students in China suggested the necessity to delve in-depth into the core dynamic of the “Globalization” scene.
Cultural Paradigm

Even though globalization has reduced the communication style gap between Chinese and the U.S. Millennials, their social networking ability and perception are still heavily affected by the culture they grew up in.

Individualism vs. Collectivism

Individualism and Collectivism are two dimensions used by cross-cultural psychologists to describe cultural paradigms in different societies. Historically, the western world is categorized as exhibiting individualism, whereas non-western world represents collectivism. As we are evolving into a more connected world in the digital age, there are no pure collectivistic or individualistic societies. However, people’s ways of communicating reflect the cultural paradigm in the society.

According to Hofestede (1991), “Individualism stands for a society in which the ties between individuals are loose; everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family only” whereas “collectivism stands for a society in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people’s lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty” (1991, p260-261). Correspondingly, nine behavioral differences are identified across individualistic and collectivistic societies—social perception and cognition, emotions, attribution and moral reasoning, social interaction, self-serving bias and self-focusing, achievement motivation, distributive justice, cooperation-competition and communication. Among the nine attributes held by people from different cultural
paradigms, social perception and cognition, emotions, social interaction and communication aspects are related to music taste formation of Chinese and the U.S. undergraduate students in my study. People in the individualistic society, in this case the U.S. should be more “ego-centric” in self and social perception, and the Chinese, from a collectivistic society, should be more “socio-centric” instead (Shweder & Bourne, 1982; Forgas & Bond, 1985). “Ego-centric” emotions, such as “anger, frustration, and pride” (Berry, Sagall & Kagitcibasi, 1997, p23), are always Individualists’ primary reference point, whereas collectivists prefer “other-focused” emotions (e.g., sympathy and shame) as their primary preference point. Based on Wheeler, Reis and Bond (1989), Hong Kong American students showed “longer but fewer interactions, higher percentage of group and task interaction, and greater self-and-other disclosure” (Berry, Sagall & Kagitcibasi, 1997, p24), in contrast, Hong Kong Chinese students had longer interactions, more group interactions and greater self-disclosure, which suggested their “social orientation” in their social interaction process. As for communication styles, Individualists use more low-context communication approaches derived from their independent self-construal, while collectivists prefer high-context communication given their desire to feel interdependent in the groups (Berry, Sagall & Kagitcibasi, 1997).

Reflections on the circumstances under which students usually listen to music imply a similar cultural scene among the Chinese and U.S. students. Statistically, music is more likely to be the background music for U.S. students (93.02% listen to music when they are doing house work, see Appendix C, Figure 23). In contrast, the Chinese students prefer to listen to music in their leisure time (80.95% listen to music when they are bored;

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see Appendix C, Figure 24). The significant difference, that also goes in-line with the Individualism-Collectivism division, is the use of music when they hang out with friends. The U.S. respondents who report listening to music with groups of friends is 60.47% (See Appendix C, Figure 23). In the low context communication setting, music might help to fill out the context as well as brings up individuals’ emotional reactions to combine social and individual orientations in social interaction.

On the other hand, the heavy music listening habits in almost all the settings reflects U.S. students’ heavy music consumption habits; one of them even reported “I listen to music all the time”. Given the omnipresent music in their life, their music tastes are more likely to be intensified toward two extremes—omnivore or univore.

Comparatively, the Chinese students’ social-centric emotional orientation makes them prefer sympathy and being around people. Thus, they might value serious high-context communication, regarding music as a distraction rather than as an atmosphere builder. Their infrequent use of music as background for casual daily activities (See Appendix C, Figure 24) suggested the non-multitasking nature of Chinese students in the sample and perhaps their serious ways of taking part in daily activities. Moreover, there might be other types of entertainment that they choose as background for study, house work and workouts, such as podcasts and radio. Music scatters in Chinese undergraduate students’ life, and does not seem to attach to their social networks, their life styles and their interests, according to the responses from the Chinese students in Tongji University in my study. It is merely a common type of entertainment one could choose from when he or she is “bored”.

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Perception of Music Genres

There is no consensus on the definitions of most music genres as more and more music genres have split into sub-genres almost every day, since the rise of Rock n’ Roll. People from different field identify genres based on completely distinct criteria, such as popularity, musical attributes, or political implication. DiMaggio (1987) defined three approaches to classification in arts, accordingly—“commercial classification, professional classification, administrative classification” (1987, p450-452). Furthermore, identifying taste as “a form of ritual identification and a means of constructing social relations” (1987, p443) in different social settings, DiMaggio proposed tastes are symbols for the variances in the classification of arts. Especially in the popular music arena, managed mostly by music industries, “it is better to accept the fluidity that seems indelibly to mark our understandings of the ‘popular’” and there are “no permanent musical characteristics or social connections” in popular music (Middleton & Manuel, Chapter 1).

Cross-nationally, because of the “cultural proximity” effect, popular music genres are perceived completely differently if we can only categorize these genres based on “popularity”. Cultural proximity is defined as “nationally or locally produced material that is closer to and more reinforcing of traditional identities, based in regional ethnic, dialect/language, religious, and other elements” (Straubhaar, 1991, p51). Western popular

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music is thus very probably not seen as popular by non-westerners. However, the irony is that both Chinese and U.S. online music platforms are utilizing the standard music categories for consumers to search for music. Though it is not unusual people seldom choose their favorite music based on genre and they may never recognize their tastes, their awareness of genres decides the quality of their music consumption in terms of active exploration of untapped music.

To some extent, their perceptions of music genres affect the result of taste pattern analysis in my study as well. Analysis of the examples given by students from the two countries suggested the gap in cross-national understandings of music genres. After all, all the genre names originated from the western world.

**Chinese and U.S. students’ Perception of Music Genres in the Study**

Hakanen and Wells (1993) recognized in their study that “no respondents questioned the validity of the classification but it should be noted that the respondents may have interpreted the terms differently”. I witness the same response when interpreting the follow-up questions asking about students’ interpretation of different music genres. Nevertheless, there was indeed one Chinese student who complained about unfamiliarity with these music genres.

Most U.S. students identify Classical music as western Classical music written by Beethoven, Mozart or Chopin, with some of them identifying it as contemporary symphony such as Incantation and Dance. However, the Chinese students’ perception of Classical music includes western Classical music and Chinese traditional music.
As for Country music, the Chinese students in the sample only recognize Pop Country music such as Taylor Swift, and some falsely identify “Yesterday Once More” as Country music. In contrast, U.S. students recognized more contemporary Country music in the sample.

Chinese students seem not to be able to identify Jazz, Alternative, Reggae, Metal, World Music and New Age in my study, whereas most U.S. respondents categorize music correctly under the corresponding genres. Although they have similar perceptions of Folk music, Dance and Techno, Rock, Hip-Hop, Blues, Easy Listening and Songwriters, the music of these genres they identified in the survey usually reflect geographical impacts. In the other words, the Chinese students may be less likely to connect the genres with their western origins, since the Chinese music industry provides them products with cultural proximity, that is, with Chinese cultural components. It is difficult for them to have the same perceptions as U.S. students about every genre originating in the west, given the “cultural gap” created by history, geography and language.

Music Taste Pattern

This section of data analysis is the foundation of the whole discussion about how the six factors in my analytical framework influence the formation of Millennials’ music taste. I will address two of the sub-questions in my research:

1. What are the taste patterns of Chinese and American undergraduate students? Are they projecting an omnivore pattern?

2. Are there any similarities among their musical taste and consumption behaviors?
The U.S. Undergraduate Students’ Music Taste Analysis

Out of the 44 completed surveys gathered from the Ohio State University undergraduate students, 15 claimed strong preferences of Rock and Alternative music, while 19 students dislike Metal the most (See Appendix C, Figure 25). Since we assigned numbers to the level of preferences—1 for “strongly dislike” and 5 for “strongly like” of a certain music genre, there is an obvious tendency that the overall preference of Rock is the highest for the 44 respondents (3.79), followed by Alternative (3.76). On the other hand, the lowest preference rate is 2.14 for Metal. Interestingly, Pop and Classical music are weighted almost the same for this group of undergraduates, rated as 3.64 and 3.61 respectively. This general pattern of music preference by U.S. undergraduate students corresponds with America’s music preference distribution in 201415.

When we took a close look at the preference distribution of each music genres, most of the 44 U.S. undergraduates do not seem to care about New Age and Easy Listening, which have the most neutral preferences among other music genres (27 and 30 “neither like nor dislike” preference; see Appendix C, Figure 26). Country music is the most strongly contrasting one with the same number of students who strongly like and dislike it. Other music genres with similar heterogeneous preference distribution include Folk music, Dance and Techno, R & B and Easy Listening.

The possibility that the respondents will choose certain music genres when they are big fan of one specific genre is given close inspection through basic statistical analysis in the

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following discussion. The higher the probability, the more distinct are the music taste patterns revealed and possessed by the undergraduate students surveyed.

Rock

Starting from Rock, which is the most popular music taste in the 44-students sample, the following boxplots (See Figure 5) suggested that students who like Rock are most likely to favor Alternative and Classical music. They have no unique feeling towards Folk, Dance, Reggae and religious music, yet hate Metal and New Age instead.

Figure 5. U.S. Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Like or Strongly Like Rock
Alternative music ranks second in terms of the average preference of the students surveyed. By comparing their corresponding rating of other music genres (See Figure 6), there is a high probability that they like Rock, Hip Hop and Songwriter. On the other hand, they dislike Jazz and religious music.

Figure 6. U.S. Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Like or Strongly Like Alternative Music
Classical music

Classical music is a unique genre which needs more attention given its historical status as a class identifier. If we are assuming that our subjects are omnivores in music taste, they should have widely spread music taste including Classical music. Interpretation of the boxplots (See Figure 7) implies preferences of Classical music, Rock, Alternative and Hip Hop most likely at the same time for U.S. students in my survey. These genres cross traditional culture, popular culture and progressive culture; thus, this indicates the potential omnivore characteristics of the young generation aged from 18 to 24 at the Ohio State University. This heterogeneous taste pattern might have been influenced by local cultural and social environment as well as a globalization force, which will be discussed in the following sections.
Figure 7. U.S. Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Like or Strongly Like Classical Music

**Pop Music**

Pop music is the product of mass culture and thus is heavily influenced by cultural globalization, meanwhile, the third most popular music genre for the survey takers in the U.S. In this case, the music taste pattern dominated by Pop music is worth speculation for better understanding of global-local interactions. From the boxplots below (See Figure 8), we can see that Alternative music, Rock and Hip Hop are highly preferred by Pop music lovers, whereas Jazz and Reggae share the exact same dislike patterns from the 44 respondents, probably because of the feelings of exotic differences in the rhythms of
these two music genres. World Music also is on the low end of preference ranking for Pop music lovers among U.S. survey respondents, considering the possible unfamiliarity with other cultures among students. Nevertheless, Alternative, Rock and Hip Hop seem to be increasingly popularized and even personalized these days through diversifying niche market music for small groups of listeners, thus, the high correlation among the preference of these music genres is not unexpected.

![Figure 8. U.S. Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Like or Strongly Like Pop Music](image)

**Metal**

It is understandable that most people find Metal unacceptable given its progressive instruments, sound effect and voice choice. Though 28 students demonstrated intolerance
of Metal, there are still 6 who stated they like Metal. Since we are exploring the music taste patterns that could be applied to the majority of respondents, it is necessary to know the music preferences of those who do not like Metal. Suggested by the boxplots below (See Figure 9), the Metal haters tend to be Pop, Rock and Hip Hop lovers. They are also not big fans of Folk or religious music. On the contrary, the 6 Metal lovers dislike Pop and Easy Listening; rather, they have a strong preference for Classical music, Jazz, Dance and Techno, and Alternative, partly due to the similar complexity, technology and experimentation shared by these genres (See Figure 10).

![Figure 9. U.S. Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Dislike or Strongly Dislike Metal](image)

Figure 9. U.S. Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Dislike or Strongly Dislike Metal

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Country Music

The most controversial genre, Country music, which has the least neutral preference, is also put into scrutiny here for the purpose of disentangling the polarized preferences towards Country music. Among the 44 respondents, those who dislike Country music are fans of Hip Hop, Rock, Pop, Alternative and Classical music (See Figure 11). On the other side, interestingly, Country music lovers are more likely to prefer Pop and Rock than non-Country music lovers, perhaps because Country music has been integrated with popular music components in the contemporary music industry. Hybrid genres such as Country Pop and Country Rock are then created, which make Country music more acceptable to Pop music lovers. The revitalization of Country music is expected, suggested by our data (See Figure 12). The Millennial Generation is benefiting from the...
diversified genres to meet their expectation and preferences in the information age, compared with past generations. It is thus not difficult for people to be omnivores under this circumstance when they do not need to change personal taste preferences to adapt to the music industry orientation; instead, the market has been adjusting to infinite personal music tastes to make individuals as “omnivorous” as possible.

Figure 11. U.S. Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Dislike or Strongly Dislike Country Music

Figure 11. U.S. Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Dislike or Strongly Dislike Country Music
Figure 12. U.S. Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Like or Strongly Like Country Music

Religious Music

In my conversation with my English conversation partner, I found religion a strong influencer on one’s music taste. She is a committed Christian, who only listen to religious music but does not reject Rock at all. The reason she told me is that in the church choir, Rock style gospel music is quite popular. On the other hand, the soothing and comforting melodies of religious are close to Easy Listening; consequently, many love it not for religious purpose. The taste pattern of undergraduate students who have a special preference for religious music might be distinct from the other students’.
The positive relationship between religious music and Classical music, Rock and World Music might be attributed to the fact that they are mostly used in church choirs nowadays. However, preferences for Alternative, Country and Songwriter at the same time suggested the listeners’ potential usage of religious music as meditation. It is also implied that as Dance and Techno, as well as Metal might create more hearing distractions for religious believers, and thus, the U.S. respondents react negatively to most of them (See Figure 13).

Figure 13. U.S. Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Like or Strongly Like Religious Music
Chinese Undergraduate Students’ Music Taste Analysis

Twenty one undergraduate students from Tongji University, Shanghai completed the Chinese version survey about their music consumption and taste. The data represents a completely different taste pattern for the Chinese students. Eleven of them express preference of Easy Listening, while ten prefer Rock the most (See Appendix C, Figure 27). The highest frequency of dislike of Reggae (9 out of 21; as seen in Figure 27) among these respondents suggests the status of this genre as the most unpopular music genre for undergraduate students in Tongji University.

The average rankings of Pop and Easy Listening music are the highest (3.71; as seen in Figure 27), thus they are the most popular genres among these respondents. Undoubtedly, Rock and Classical music, which are preferred by their American counterparts as well, also belong to the top-four most popular types of music for Chinese undergraduate students in my study. It is worth noticing that Country music is the only genre with average rating higher than three except for the top four genres, whereas the rest of music genres have more “dislike”s than “like”s weighted below 3. On the other end, the lowest rated music genre is Reggae, which has an average rating of 2.07 (See Figure 27).

Delving into the preference distributions of individual genres, no “like” for Alternative music is witnessed in our data. Students surveyed also show indifferent preferences for Folk, New Age and Songwriter (See Appendix C, Figure 28). The respondents’ preferences for these music genres are very clear-cut, with no polarizing preference patterns on any of them. Just as Hakanen and Wells (1993) observed in their study, “responses indicated the intensity of their feelings for music by heavily using the
extremes of the progressive scale” (1993, p59), the middle (indicating indifference) was hardly used by the Chinese students in the sample for the above music genres. After the overview of the general music taste preferences of the 21 undergraduate students, we will begin interpreting systematic taste dynamics, by assessing the possibility of students’ taste choices given their other known preference. Since we are looking at the music taste pattern shared by the majority in the sample, it would be reasonable to avoid the specific and unique taste cases. For the authenticity of music taste pattern analysis of the undergraduate students in Tongji University, and of younger people in Shanghai, I am focusing on the most popular and unpopular music genres for taste analysis, on which the vast majority of people surveyed shared the same level of preferences.

*Pop Music*

As the most popular music genre preferred by the 21 undergraduate students, Pop music has high correlations with several music genres including Easy Listening, Rock and World Music. However, Pop lovers have a hard time appreciating Reggae, New Age and Metal (See Figure 14).
Figure 14. Chinese Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Like or Strongly Like Pop Music

Easy Listening

With the same popularity, Easy Listening is encountering a slightly different situation. Chinese students in my study who love Easy Listening tend to prefer Classical, Rock and World Music, but despise Folk, Alternative and Reggae (See Figure 15).

By comparing the preference patterns related to the two most popular music genres, there is an obvious positive relationship among Pop, Easy Listening, Rock and World Music, but a negative one between Reggae and both of the two popular genres for 21 Chinese undergraduates in Tongji University.
Figure 15. Chinese Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Like or Strongly Like Easy Listening

Rock

Rock music, though ranked the third most popular music genre, has a large amount of indifferent preferences among the Chinese respondents (11 out of 21; as seen in Appendix C, Figure 28). The following boxplot suggests high probability of Liking Pop, Classical, Country, Jazz and Easy Listening for someone who likes Rock. They are more likely to hate New Age and Reggae instead (See Figure 16).
Figure 16. Chinese Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Like or Strongly Like Rock

**Classical Music**

Classical music is another common genre shared by Chinese and American undergraduate students in the survey. Those who like Classical music ironically only have a high probability of appreciating Easy Listening and Rock among Chinese respondents (See Figure 17). Otherwise, there is a negative relationship among Classical music and other genres, including Pop! Since the music genres preferred by the Chinese students in my study only fall on the extremes of a broad spectrum of music styles—
Classical on one end, Pop on the other, the omnivorous attributes of their music taste are thin and superficial. This might have something to do with the unique status of Classical music in Chinese culture promoted largely by Chinese music industry history. Rock resurged in the 1990’s in China while Classical music was the most heavily promoted western music genre in China since the beginning of the Chinese music industry.

Figure 17. Chinese Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Like or Strongly Like Classical Music
Reggae

As the most unwelcome music genre, Reggae still gains votes for like in the survey among Chinese undergraduates. It is highly possible that it is the unfamiliarity with this genre (the Chinese translation of this genre even creates a negative aura around it) that contributes to the indifferent and despising reaction. The data below suggests preferences of the most popular genres—Classical, Pop, Rock and Easy Listening—go directly with rejection of Reggae (See Figure 18) for Chinese respondents. However, from the other perspective, those who dislike Reggae also dislike quite often Alternative, Dance, Metal, New Age and Songwriters, which possess the same characteristic—unconventional and experimental. Though influenced by Jazz in the early years, Reggae, from Jamaica, is categorized as exotic, and thus, often put along with the genres above. This pattern, on the other hand, implies some cultural conventions in China: though the Country has been “open” for 25 years, a huge desire for harmony and comforting cultivated by the cultural and political environment might help formulating these undergraduate students’ unique music taste. The lack of a bar culture and immigrant history in China might also make people uneasy about the rebellious and individualized musical elements in these genres.
Dislike or strongly dislike reggae

Figure 18. Chinese Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Dislike or Strongly Dislike Reggae

Alternative

Similar to Reggae in terms of the unfamiliarity to the 21 Chinese students, Alternative music gains no votes for like in the survey. Those who dislike Alternative music have more likely to like Classical music and Easy Listening, but hate all the other genres (See Figure 19). This pattern suggests the triumph of Classical music and Easy Listening in music taste of the Chinese respondents.
Figure 19. Chinese Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Dislike or Strongly Dislike Alternative Music

Country music

Country music, originating from the U.S., actually gains more approval than any other U.S. genres among Chinese students in my study. Partly perhaps because most Country music accessible in China consists of popularized versions, such as Taylor Swift and Carpenter, it makes this genre more acceptable than others. Taylor Swift is the most often mentioned musician by the 21 undergraduate students. In order to increase the statistical validity of the Country music taste pattern, here I am selecting cases including those who have neutral preferences for Country music as well as those who like and strongly like
this genre. The data below reflects a positive correlation between Country music and Classical, Pop, Jazz and Rock Music, whereas Alternative, Reggae and Metal are hardly being preferred for Chinese respondents (See Figure 20). The interactions among these genres have increased their musical similarities recently in the Chinese music industry, and thus, they are attractive to similar listeners.

Figure 20. Chinese Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Like or Strongly Like Country Music

*Songwriters*

The music genre that most people have neutral feelings towards is Songwriter. There are only two of the respondents who express preferences for this genre, and two said they
dislike Songwriters. The preference distribution is thus perfectly symmetrical, which makes this genre worth close investigation. Such indifference to Songwriter is unusual, considering the rising awareness of Songwriters in the Chinese music industry. It is probably the case that such a concept is still fairly new and unclear to the students, since Songwriters in China are closer to independent musicians creating either self-produced work or under independent labels. However, their themes are not the same as Alternative music, but focus on inspiring positive attitudes to life.

Those who take neutral stance on Songwriters present scattered taste patterns among Chinese students in my study, given the data at hand. They like Classical, Country, Jazz, Rock, blues, world and Easy Listening, but dislike Alternative, Dance, Reggae, Hip Hop and Metal (See Figure 21). The inspirational and innovative attributes of Songwriters might have more connections with the former group of music genres, and thus, they are often appreciated together by these students.
Figure 21. Chinese Students' Preferences of other Music Genres When They Like or Strongly Like Songwriters

**Music Taste Pattern Comparison**

**Taste Pattern**

Taste patterns give an in-depth description of one’s music taste, through representing the range of consumption preferences and the number of consumption repertoire (Virtanen, 2005). In my taste pattern investigation, I focus on the basic illustration of taste range, in order to evaluate my hypothesis of Millennial’s omnivorous music taste.

**Mapping Methodology**

In statistics, covariance is a measure of the extent to which two variables change together (Howell, 2009). In order to map music taste patterns, I am following a similar logic:
What is the probability for a person to like another music genre if he or she likes a certain music genre? Following the covariance theory, changes in the same direction suggest positive covariance relationship and the opposite direction suggests a negative relationship. I define “like” and “dislike” as two opposing changes and observe the direction of changes between music genres. Despite the fact that covariance is usually considered to be between two variables, I define music taste pattern to include three genres which change in the same direction together.

The approach of interpreting the general music taste pattern is to evaluate the “directional” preference of music genres. That is to say, for the majority, if preference for one music genre has positive connection with preference for the other, and vice versa, the likelihood of favoring the two genres at the same time for an individual is high. The taste pattern is thus two-directionally valid. On the other hand, a weaker connection exists between two genres when the preference is only one-directional.

The U.S. Undergraduate Students’ Music Taste Pattern

Following this criterion, strong connections are witnessed in the Classical music-Rock-Alternative combination, as well as Rock-Pop-Alternative. Similarly to Chinese students from Tongji University in my study, American undergraduate from the Ohio State University have the one-directional Country music taste pattern as well, with the preference for Rock and Pop among Country music lovers.
**Chinese Undergraduate Students’ Music Taste Pattern**

Instead of focusing on unique cases, the music taste pattern analysis in this section is based on the majority of respondents’ preference for music genres. Following the same pattern analysis criteria, it is obvious that Pop, Easy Listening and Rock constitute one music taste pattern for 21 Chinese undergraduate students in Tongji University. Another pattern is within Classical, Easy Listening and Rock music. On the other hand, a directional taste pattern is formed between Country music and Rock, Pop and Jazz. Other music genres suffer from unfamiliarity, thus with low preference and response rate among Chinese undergraduate students in the sample.

**Music Taste Patterns Comparison**

Table 5. Differences and Similarities between Chinese and U.S. Undergraduate Students’ Music Taste Patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Differences</th>
<th>The U.S.</th>
<th>China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Differences</td>
<td>Rock - Alternative – Pop</td>
<td>Pop-Easy Listening-Rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alternative - Rock- Classical</td>
<td>Easy Listening-Rock-Classical Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similarities</td>
<td>Country Music---Rock and Pop</td>
<td>Country Music---Rock, Pop and Jazz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This comparison table presents the different and similar taste patterns between Chinese and U.S. students in the sample (see Table 5):

1. U.S. students usually like Rock, Alternative and Pop music at the same time, whereas the Chinese students like Rock, Easy Listening and Pop at the same time.

2. U.S. students demonstrate a preference for Alternative music if they like Rock and Classical music, while the Chinese students who like Rock and Classical music prefer Easy Listening.

3. Both the U.S. and the Chinese students in my study project a taste pattern of preferring Rock and Pop, if they like Country music.

By putting the U.S. and Chinese undergraduate students’ music taste pattern together, there is a moment that I almost think the total 65 students have the same music taste pattern, except that US students’ taste patterns substitute Alternative for Easy Listening. Rock music is appreciated more than Pop among the U.S. undergraduates in the sample, whereas Pop music dominates the Chinese music industry as well as its college students’ music taste. Classical music is still holding its status in this highly educated group (in this case, our subjects are undergraduate students), but is not the dominant preferred genre for them. The co-existence of preference for Rock and Classical music implies the omnivorous music taste of undergraduate students in my study in the two universities. Furthermore, the popularity of Rock and Classical music is attributed to the cultural globalization from the western world. Though we could not assert the existence of Americanization, 21 Chinese students’ taste in Country music implies the potential power
of American culture breaking into China, to some extent, might diverting the popular music trend among Chinese Millennials.

Though investigation of the impacts of social variables and media on the formation of the unique “Alternative-Easy listening” paradigm is the aim of this study, the almost identical taste pattern among Country Music and Rock, Pop And Jazz (Chinese undergraduates’ unique taste in Jazz in my study) deserves no less speculation in terms of students’ perception of music genres, as well as industry evolution influence.

**Brief History of Music Industry in China and the U.S.**

As the birth place of Rock n’ Roll in the 1950’s, the U.S. Rock culture is featured as a cultural tool among baby boomers to construct identities. Absorbing components from other music genres and subcultures, Rock kept evolving throughout the last century until now. It had split into diverse subgenres such as punk, hard core, Metal and today’s Alternative. Even though all subgenres are different in terms of instrumental arrangements, voice choices and rhythms, their contents are mostly related to social issues with rebellious and experimental musical spirits. Rock music is thus a role model for the following music experiments in the U.S., which furthermore frames the fundamental perception of music among the young Millennial Generations. Just like the younger generation in the 1950’s, U.S. students’ music tastes are prone to more individualistic styles which distinguish them from their peers—just like what could be seen as today’s rebellious and experimental spirit of the younger generation. Alternative music, also known as “indie music”, is not restricted to popular music creation criteria,
but is always experimenting. Such a style matches with U.S. Millennials’ intention to be identified as unique individuals. Thus, Alternative stands out as the representative of U.S. students’ music taste in the sample.

The Chinese music industry has been immersed in western music since the beginning of the Chinese recorded music industry in 1903. However, it was not until the end of the 1980s that Chinese youth were “increasingly familiar with Rock” (Richard, 2013). Before that, both western controlled and state controlled music companies had been promoting western Classical music, Jazz, Chinese opera and popular music. The state-owned company was primarily concerned with “Chinese heritage”, thus, focusing on production of “folk music, patriotic songs and operas as well as recordings of traditional music of the country” (Richard, 2013). Chinese popular music experienced fast development almost at the same time with the introduction of Rock music in the 1980s. Since Rock music was basically “underground” under the government’s censorship, the fast spread of popular music occupied Chinese younger generation’s musical life. Along with their impression of music, which is derived from the heavy promotion of Classical music and Chinese folk music, their music tastes are favoring a relaxing and easy-to-sing music style. Popular music and Easy Listening are thus fit into Chinese Millennials perception of music, representing their music taste.
Educational Impact

Education is a significant source of cultural capital, though not the only one (Bourdieu, 1984). Social networks and other means of informal education are also of great importance in obtaining cultural capital. Educational effect has been the most influential on music taste formation across nations, according to numerous pieces of empirical evidence (Hakanen & Wells, 1993; North & Davidson, 2013) since Bourdieu. Though scholars nowadays still address formal education as the key to increase social mobility and diffuse legitimate culture, it is not always the same in western and non-western cultural and political environment. Social network vested in family bonds and social groups (either real life or virtual) sometimes exert more impact on music taste patterns, through contributing to one’s accessible cultural capital.

Educational Influence on the U.S. and Chinese Students’ Music Tastes

Voice Training and Instrument Playing Education

Starting from accessing students’ ability to play instruments, 60.47% of U.S. students could play one or more instruments (mostly piano, guitar and symphonic instruments; as seen in Figure 29), while only 47.62% of the Chinese students responding to the survey are Chinese folk music instrument masters (See Appendix C, Figure 30). Instrument mastery to some extent suggests one’s ability to appreciate music but also attachment to certain music genre with the instrument one can play. In this case, the strongest preferences of Pop and Easy Listening music might be the result of the Chinese students’
mastery of different instruments and their early connections with the smooth melodies of Folk music.

The music educational environment might largely affect the younger generation’s capacity to understand and appreciate music, and thus, may also influence their music taste. The majority of U.S. respondents in the sample has had music skill lessons, including instruments and voice training (88.37%; as seen in Figure 31), mostly from extracurricular classes in and outside of school (See Appendix C, Figure 33). By comparison, only 61.90% of the Chinese students in the sample ever took such music classes (See Figure 32), which are most often required and out of formal school settings (See Appendix C, Figure 34). It is subject to argument whether we can claim a positive relationship between the experience of learning musical skills and music taste; nevertheless, the distinct U.S. and Chinese music skill and education structures implied by the students’ learning experience may have a significant impact on students’ perception of music, and thus, their further music consumption.

Music History, Appreciation and Theory Education

If we take a look at their music appreciation education experience, it is oddly almost the opposite of the music skill education in the two countries. Somewhat more Chinese students reported music history, appreciation, or theory education experience (47.62%; as seen in Figure 36) than U.S. students (44.19%; as seen in Figure 35), whereas the majority of U.S. students got formal music education in school: elective courses are the popular music education approach (See Appendix C, Figure 37). Not surprisingly, the
Chinese students seem to have fewer choices when it comes to music education in school settings—theyir music education is mostly in the form of required courses (41.67%; as seen in Figure 38). Since Chinese formal music education usually focuses on small musical instruments, mostly harmonica, those who prefer to learn larger traditional Chinese or western instruments or theory have to take classes outside of school. Consequently, considerable numbers of Chinese respondents reported a combination of required courses and out-of-school experiences of music education.

The difference between required and elective music lessons are that one leaves no room for the development of personalized music taste, by cramming students with the “required knowledge”, while the other allows growth of interest in music and diversified music preferences. I myself only remember a few songs about appreciating the beautiful world I learned in middle school and western Classical music in high school. It turns out that most Chinese students have the same experience as me especially in middle school, after double checking with the respondents. They were taught children’s songs in elementary school and random Classical music classes in junior and senior high, while surrounded by Chinese Pop music offered by the music industry. This educational background might leave them no interest in exploring music genres, and thus, their music tastes are homogenous towards Pop. Similarly immersed in Classical music since primary school, U.S. students usually have a longer music education span, persisting throughout middle school and high school. In this case, they developed a comparatively better ability of music appreciation and more chances to explore music genres. Their diversified
music tastes presented by the popularity of Alternative music, are more or less prompted by their educational opportunities.

*Family Tradition and Self-Teaching as Approaches of Music Education*

Family and social networks are other resources of cultural capital which precondition individual music taste. As descendants of western stratified social structure, the U.S. people are more likely to value family tradition, whereas Chinese society, deeply-rooted in Confucian culture, is more collective, so that family traditions are more likely to be passed on as well. Among the 60.47% of U.S. students and 38.10% of the Chinese students in the sample who had informal education of music theory (See Appendix C, Figure 39 & 40), about 20.93% of the students from the U.S. reported informal music education from family members (See Figure 41) compared with 17.31% of Chinese respondents (See Figure 42). The data suggests an almost identical chance of family and social network impacting music taste of students from both universities.

Another significant difference revealed by this dataset is that 39.54% of the U.S. respondents reported self-teaching of music, whereas only 20.78% of the Chinese students had similar experience (See Appendix C, Figure 41 & 42). U.S. students’ interests in music could have stimulated their proactive self-learning activities; moreover, the abundant music learning resources circulated in the market is another prerequisite for such activities scene among these students. Taking the visual-audio channel as an example, educational or commercial videos on YouTube exceed accessible resources on
Youku (which is only accessible in China) in China by a large amount, given the contributions from people across nations.

Social Impact

In this section, online and offline social network and sharing activities of undergraduate students in the U.S. and China will be assessed in terms of their impact on Millennials’ music tastes in the two cultures. Moreover, fandom as a branch of subculture among younger generations will be discussed with regard to its relationship with music taste homogeneity.

Social network

Technology development improved the communication and media network both on the local and global level. Millennials growing up in the digital revolution environment have been witnessing and getting involved in the process of transferring social network from geographical communities to the virtual world. Despite the online platform as mediation in this new “social network”, the core communication and interaction mechanism online are kept the same. Furthermore, new types of communities based on interests rather than location are emerging and expanding to the global level. People could still get in touch with their friends online, but what benefits them more from the virtual global community is that they get more opinions from strangers thanks to the convenient connections. Consequently, their social network is spreading, though the network is becoming fragile and less dense. You can make connections in a minute, and you will lose it eventually if there is no real life interaction with your connections.
The Amazon business model demonstrates how recommendations are valued in an online community (Dubossen-Torbay, Osterwalder, & Pigneur, 2002), but does this mechanism apply to the music online community as well, since we know music is more of an experience-based cultural product? Besides, how are people’s music tastes affected when confronting recommendations from the virtual world, rather than word-of-mouth communication from real world friends?

According to Kane (2012), “Gen Y is all about sharing”. Almost all music platforms are encouraging “sharing” as a recommendation mechanism, mimicking the real world “word-of-mouth”. Others like Pandora are working on programs that could explore music for listeners on its own based on their listening history and music genre characteristics. It is too early to evaluate this new model’s influence on music taste, though the impact is believed to be significant. In this section, data collected about respondents’ music sharing behaviors will be compared to assess how the social network as a factor affect the formation of music taste of undergraduate students in each university.

Music Recommendation from Students to Their Friends

Regarding “sharing” as a type of social networking activity, the U.S. and Chinese students are using this network quite often in exploring new music (See Appendix C, Figure 43 & 44). However, the frequency of U.S students recommending music by word of mouth last month is comparatively high—51.16% of the respondents recommended music to their friends over five times whereas nobody did this over five times among the Chinese students (See Appendix C, Figure 45 & 46). In this case, more opportunities
might be there for U.S. students to get influenced by the variety music tastes from their friends. Their preference of diverse music genres could be partly due to their exposures to diverse music styles.

Music Recommendation from Students to Their Friends Online

Extending the sharing activities to the virtual world, the U.S. and Chinese undergraduate students in the sample are having almost the same sharing rates around 70% (See Appendix C, Figure 47 & 48), which implies their good adaptability of online social networks. Such “digital native” traits might grant them potential openness to diverse music genres when facing the excessive information online. In a way similar to word of mouth sharing, U.S. students shared music information more often than the Chinese students in the virtual network (See Appendix C, Figure 49 & 50) given 24.24% of U.S. respondents in the sample shared music over five times last month (See Figure 49).

Music sharing and recommendation online seem not to follow the Amazon business model, where customer review determines the popularity of products. Instead, with impact from social and cultural habitus, music seems to hold more intrinsic values, and consequently, music tastes tend to be more personalized for these undergraduate students in the sample. The fact that fewer students in the U.S. sample are recommending music online might suggest the different mechanism of social networking for music in virtual platforms. That said, opinion leaders, who are “early adapters” in music consumption with distinct music taste, are less likely to guide the direction of music consumption of
fellow young consumers online. This might leave more room for individuals’ unique music exploration as well.

**Music Recommendation from Their Friends to the Students**

In comparison with the frequencies of music recommendation from respondents to their friends, all U.S. students in the sample have friends who recommend songs to them, whereas 5% of their Chinese counterparts do not have friends who like to share music interests (See Appendix C, Figure 53 & 54). Their friends are also correspondingly more active than the Chinese students’ in terms of their music recommendation frequencies last month (39.53% of their friends recommended music to them over five times last month; as seen in Figure 53). Interestingly, Chinese undergraduate students seem to have more active friends who are opinion leaders of music, suggested by the fact that 16.57% reported their friends recommended music over five times (See Figure 54), whereas they themselves all made less than five music recommendations last month (See Figure 50). This result mirrored the opinion leader phenomenon in Tepper & Hargittai’s study (2009). Even coming from different social and cultural backgrounds, the undergraduate students more or less might be influenced by their influential peers on music taste and consumption.

**The Number of Friends Who Share Similar Music Tastes With the Students**

Contrary to the Chinese students’ popular music preference influenced by the crowd, the U.S. undergraduate students in my study are more attached to peer groups, reflected by
the data that 28.57% of them have over 7 friends with similar taste (See Figure 55). In contrast, the Chinese students do not form their friend circle based on music taste, given that 60% of them have only 1-3 friends with similar music taste in the sample (See Figure 56). Thus, there are more possibilities that U.S. students get social network influences from their peers, whereas Chinese students have less interest in exchanging music tastes with friends. Thus, the Chinese music industry might exert more power in the formation of younger generations’ music taste, while such power is likely to be shared by social network attached to music communities in the U.S.

Music Consumption Behaviors

The similar and different music taste patterns of the U.S. and Chinese undergraduate students are partly due to the external regional and global environments. For other external environments, social, cultural and market factors contribute to their idiosyncratic and stereotypical perceptions of music forms and reactions to them. Thus, the specific environment casts impacts on Millennials’ music consumption behaviors in different settings. Their tastes are to some extent framed by their choices. In this case, regional and Global approaches of situational influence should be taken into consideration for an in-depth discussion and understanding of music taste formation dynamics.

Daily Social Network Usage

A quick look at the potential of these students’ “social networking” desire, gives us an overall idea of to what extent online and offline social networks could affect their music
choices. Most Chinese and U.S. undergraduate students in the sample are rational social network users: almost three quarters of the respondents spend one to three hours on these websites everyday (See Appendix C, Figure 57 & 58). Under this circumstance, this generation might be able to get a balanced influence from online and off-line social networks. They might be a member of some interest group online with peers from other countries, at the same time, sharing feelings with close friends in the neighborhood. The data correspond to my observation of generational differences in terms of social networking—compared with our parents’ generation and Generation Z, we were not born in the digital era but were mature enough to tackle the internet rationally when we were exposed to it. Consequently, we should have more expertise in dealing with both real life and virtual social networks.

Music lovers carry various characteristics, but the basic attribute residei in music consumption frequencies: heavy music listeners are more likely to be music enthusiasts, compared with those who merely listen to music. The following discussion reflects a more active music consumption scene among the U.S. undergraduate students.

**Daily Music Consumption**

On average, the U.S respondents could be categorised as heavier music consumers than Chinese students in the sample: 22.26% of them listen to music over three hours every day and half of them (51.16%) consume music one to three hours a day (See Appendix C, Figure 59). On the contrary, listening to music less than one hour a day is the dominant consumption choice of most Chinese students in my study (66.67%; as seen in Figure 97).
What is most amazing is that no Chinese undergraduates commit over three hours per day to music consumption. The opposing daily music consumption structure implies more chances for U.S. students to explore more music genres, and this might result in diverse and personalized taste patterns. Most Chinese students in the sample, due to limited interest in music consumption, might have less exposure to encountering new music and accepting broad music genres.

In terms of daily use of internet as a music listening portal, U.S. students demonstrate higher frequency of music listening behaviors, with prevailing 48.84% of them listening to music online several times a day (See Figure 61). Instead, the Chinese students are moderate online music listeners since most of them (90.48%; as seen in Appendix C, Figure 62) consume music only on a daily to weekly basis.

Comparing the daily social media usage and music consumption tendencies, it is obvious that U.S. students’ music consumption behaviors might be closely related to their social media usage, given their similar frequency distribution. Conversely, the Chinese students seem to get no impact from their social network online on their music consumption choices. More data needs to be interpreted in future research to uncover deeper social and cultural implications of such impact.

**Music Consumption Frequency through Portable Devices**

Though all students in the survey own portable devices such as smart phone, tablet and laptop, a further investigation about their usage of these devices for music consumption reflects a conflicting situation against the consistent consumption structure presented by
previous data. On the U.S. side, one respondent, Matthew, is believed to have made a mistake in choosing his preference after member check. As the only exception in the data, he suggests he never uses internet to listen to music preferring audio-visual channels like Youtube as information portals; on the contrary, consuming music through portable devices several times a day! 4.76% of the Chinese students in the sample (see Figure 63), who choose not to use portable devices to listen to music could be non-music lovers who merely consume music, or perhaps music lovers who only enjoy high quality music from CDs. Or, the portability of music might not be attractive enough for them. Upon checking the exceptions, I found that Qiang is actually a moderate music consumer, who listens to music almost everyday. However, he is confined to the unportability of his favorite music website, which does not have a corresponding app for mobile devices. The technology choices set a lot of limitations on one’s music consumption behaviours. Nevertheless, in this case, it might not be the portability of music that does not attract Qiang, rather, it could be his intentional indifference to music that limits his music consumption structure, thus reducing his potential to be a music omnivore. It seems that interests in music could be more or less attributed to cultural conventions and social environments.

Apart from the exceptions, the U.S. and Chinese students spend the same amount of time on portable devices as on the internet (See Appendix C, Figure 63 & 64), which suggests a similar degree of technology development and students’ accessibility to the updated technology in both countries. Globalization would have catalyzed the technology
diffusion process among college students in my study, along with homogenous media culture consumption behaviors.

Streaming Music Consumption Frequency

When being asked about streaming music consumption, respondents in China and the U.S. gave almost the same rate of having streaming music apps on their portable devices (See Appendix C, Figure 65 & 66). However, their preferences of consuming streaming music via these apps are completely different. Generally speaking, U.S. students in the sample from The Ohio State University prefer streaming music more than Chinese, given over half of them (55.81%; as seen in Figure 67) spend every day using streaming music apps such as Pandora, Spotify and iTunes. Comparatively, the 21 Chinese students are consistent with their moderate music consumption behaviors when it comes to streaming music (See Figure 68). Those who have never used these apps turn out to be the ones who do not have streaming music apps; thus, there are no unique cases for special attention.

Music Playlist Habits

Examining one’s music listening habits such as whether he or she like to make playlists and use them for different reasons, could help obtain an insight into their experience with music as well as their recognition of personal music taste. In my study, the Chinese students definitely are unaware of their music taste in most cases, since only 38.10% of the respondents have systematic lists to arrange their daily music listening experience (See Figure 70). Furthermore, the playlists they have are mostly categorized by musicians
and moods; only one categorizes his music playlists simply into Classical and popular music. On the other hand, U.S. students seem more experienced in music and like to take control of what they are listening to; 69.77% of the U.S. respondents reported having multiple playlists for different functions (see Figure 69). Most of those who have playlists usually have at least five categories, which is far more than 3 playlists owned by average Chinese students. And 10 of the 27 U.S. respondents have genres as one category on their playlists, while all of them make playlists for certain moods and activities, like for studying and partying. The underlying message is that U.S. students might be active music consumers, who consciously know their interests and tastes. Though it is not always the case that those active consumers develop diversified tastes, since they might also become avid fans, their active involvements to a large extent could grant them more opportunities to be valued by the music industry, and might affect the music industry eventually.

Fandom

Fandom has been a scene in the younger generation ever since the “super-star effect” was launched by the popular industries. The fan is thus defined as “a response to the star system” (Lewis, 1992, p7). In the digital age, fandom is facilitated by mass media to connect celebrities and loyal fans, who often consider celebrities as their role models. The eagerness to learn more about their role models is a critical incentive for fandom to thrive.
It is in the music sector that fandom projects its significant phenomenon; e.g., big concert and music festivals are sites for fans to cheer for their superstars, while online communities of certain musicians’ fans keep in constant touch with the musicians through a variety of on and off-line activities. Getting involved in the fandom scene could also cast great impact on individuals’ music tastes, often times reinforcing their preference of the music they follow but reducing their likelihood to like musicians with opposite styles or rivalries with their models. Under this circumstance, the level of fandom one is involved with could cast important impact on his or her music tastes. Though people download albums bundled with their favorite songs from different musicians online, traditional CD albums are still categorized by musicians, not even by genres. The fewer DIY options, which are centered on certain musicians rather than genres, make CD purchase behaviors our perfect test field for fandom.

_Fandom Potential Analysis of Chinese and U.S. Students_

Of all the 33 U.S. students who have CDs, their criteria for choosing a CD is comparatively stricter than the 11 Chinese students, given that 51.52% of the 33 students will only buy the CD if most songs on it are their favorite (See Appendix C, Figure 71). In contrast, the Chinese students would still choose to purchase the CD even if only several or one of the songs on it fit their tastes, since the vast majority (90.91%; as seen in Figure 72) of the 11 respondents would value the CD as long as at least one song on it were their favorite. It cannot be conclusively asserted that the strict standard of U.S. students’ CD purchase decisions is made merely on their rationality in music
consumption, since it could be that they care more about the economical aspect of the
purchase. Nevertheless, U.S. students CD purchase behaviors suggest two potentially
distinct fandom approaches: they are either the most avid fans who like all of the
musicians’ work, or they are just not as fanatic as their Chinese counterparts in my study,
who will buy CDs even though the songs are not all their tastes.
Their concert participation frequencies reflect the in-depth fandom scene among these
undergraduate students. The 11 Chinese students who have been to concerts attended as
many as two concerts and most of them were popular music concerts of certain musicians
in China. In contrast, 29 U.S. students who reported past attendance of concerts spread on extremes of the spectrum. One student went to 15 concerts ranging from popular music to independent bands, and another had only been to one music festival mixed with big and small bands. Moreover, two of them expressed attending one musician’s concerts several times, while those who attended less than five concerts all reported having been to Pop stars’ concerts such as Justin Bieber, Taylor Swift and Beyoncé.
The difference between Chinese and U.S. students’ fandom activities might be reflections in part of the music performance market structure. Having 15 concerts experience would sound luxurious to an ordinary Chinese student given the price ranging from 80 to 160 dollars for superstars and at least 40 dollars for music festivals. The usually free performances of underground bands are not well-promoted to the public; thus, seldom would a Chinese student get the information about them, especially when he or she is not that into music.
Moreover, the fandom scene in the U.S. projects more diversity than that in China with more feverish audiences as suggested in our data. Having 15 attendances to various concerts reflects one’s omnivorous taste. Rather, the repetition of attendance to one musician’s concerts and preference of all music from one musician reflect their fandom attributes. Chinese students, in contrast, tend to keep their tastes attached to single pieces of music rather than genre or musicians. Their tastes are “the one” popular songs, to some extent.

Technology Impact

This section consists of music-related technology developments in China and the U.S. and the corresponding accessibility and preference of music platforms for undergraduate students.

Technology Accessibility and Preferences

The various means of music consumption also include technology choices, since we have been in the digital revolution of cultural products for over a century. From the first vinyl LP in 1917, to the first cassette in 1978, until 1982 with the first release of the commercial CD in the world16, digitalization of music has been growing into the rapidly developing golden period when we entered into the Millennial Age. The internet accelerated the spread of compressed digital music MP3, which then stimulated a trend of P2P music sharing online. The 1990s’ U.S. witnessed the ups and downs of illegal music sharing in P2P online communities, while the 2000’s started a new age for music

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16 For a holistic discussion of the evolution of record industry, see [http://www.soc.duke.edu/~s142tm01/history4.html](http://www.soc.duke.edu/~s142tm01/history4.html)
copyright revitalization. Music streaming and downloading have been two critical music consumption behaviors, since the beginning of the 21st century, with their unique payment system competing against the trespass of illegal music copying. Streaming music uses the subscription model, which allows certain premium rights such as unlimited music streams or no ads interruption. On the other hand, people can still download music online, but only from online distributors such as iTunes (Beekhuyzen & Hellens, 2008; DangHuyen, Dejean, & Moreau, 2012). The copyright issue of online music sharing is a global one; however, as different countries have distinct IP laws and reactions to such issues, the anti-P2P sharing strategies are taken to various priority levels. Needless to say, just as the Chinese proverb says “where the devil gets wicker, would the exorcist be wiser”, the illegal P2P music sharing platforms co-exist with legal ones even under the monitor of national copyright laws.

As the pioneers of the online music piracy movement, college students are now exposed to the mix of legal and illegal music consumption environments. What would they choose to access music and how would the platform choices influence their music taste? The following data will provide in-depth information on these unpredictable issues.

**Music Consumption Channel Preferences**

Amazingly corresponding to the political attitudes towards music copyrights, the U.S. and Chinese students demonstrated preferences of streaming music and music downloading respectively in the sample (see Appendix C, Figure 73 & 74). CDs might not be their choices for music consumption anymore, due to the evolution in the music
industry—from traditional distribution channels to online distribution, facilitated by the
digitalization movement in music creation.

Having similar music distribution platforms, the Chinese students demonstrated a delayed
reaction to the streaming music service which is popular in the U.S., since 76.19% of
Chinese undergraduate students in my study prefer to download music for further
consumption (See Figure 74). Such phenomenon suggests the possible lack of IP
regulation in China, given the fact that undergraduate students are usually a low-income
group who could never afford to purchase that much music. Furthermore, along with the
comparatively low coverage of wide bandwidth internet in China, streaming music
consumption has not been popularized among Chinese undergraduate students in the
sample. However, according to iiMedia Research\footnote{For a complete 2014 media consumption report from iiMedia, see \url{http://www.iimedia.cn/37722.html}.}, 344 million people in China accessed
music through music apps on their smart phones in the second quarter of 2014. Since
most smart phone music apps are streaming music-oriented, this music consumption
channel is supposed to be trendy. The combination of music downloading and streaming
platforms in China might contribute to the slow adaptation toward streaming music
consumption of undergraduate students. Distinct from the clear separation between
streaming music and music downloading platforms, notably Pandora and iTunes in the
U.S., the Chinese digital music industry combined the two distribution channels on one
singular platform such as Xiami. People can choose to stream or download music on one
single platform most of the time for free or by using virtual currency. It is obvious that
students will still stick to illegal music downloading even though the new streaming
music service is added to the platform, since the subscription model is not well implemented—no promotion for premium benefits in the streaming music service, and free music downloading service is cheaply available at the same time.

The technology choice of music consumption implies the unique music tastes of the U.S. and Chinese students. People who choose to download music to listen to might already have a clear preference of music in mind, whereas streaming music provides listeners a new way to explore new music based on a complicated recommendation system, such as Pandora’s Music Genome Project. In this case, the U.S. undergraduate students in the sample might have developed more diversified music tastes, suggested by their biggest preference for Alternative music, whereas the Chinese students are following the popular music current.

*Music Downloading Activity*

When being asked about their music downloading activities, most Chinese students in fact made only a few downloads (1-5 pieces of music) every month (See Appendix C, Figure 76), compared with their preference for music downloading as primary consumption approach. Such contradictive responses suggest that first of all, most Chinese students are not that interested in music, since most respondents expressed low frequency of listening to music (less than one hour a day). Secondly, by comparing their music exploration on streaming music platform, there might be an exploration-sorting-downloading process going on for the Chinese students, which suggests the active role
taken by Chinese undergraduates in identifying their personalized music tastes in the sample.

Corresponding to their streaming music consumption habits, the U.S. undergraduate students from the Ohio State University demonstrated a low music download rate (51.28% downloaded 1-5 music pieces every month on average; as seen in Figure 75). However, there is also a surge in downloading over 20 pieces of music every month. It is usually uncommon for a poor student to purchase so many songs through distribution channels every month. Therefore, the huge amount of downloading is highly possible to come from the co-existing P2P file sharing network.

**Online Music Platform Preferences**

Though both use the internet to access music, Chinese and U.S. undergraduate students in my study have distinct platform preferences. Currently, students in the sample from both universities use and prefer the streaming music platform the most (See Appendix C, Figure 79 & 80), whereas U.S. students access more audio-visual platforms such as YouTube more often than the Chinese (See Appendix C, Figure 77 & 78). Even though Apple has a larger and heavier user group in the U.S., the Chinese students in the sample use iTunes to listen to music more frequently than their U.S. counterparts perhaps due to technology globalization.

Nevertheless, their preferences of online music channels reflect the technological environment in both countries. U.S. students hope to use the music selling platform (Such as iTunes) more often, partly maybe due to the convenience of purchase and music
ranking service (See Figure 79). Chinese students’ music platform preference goes in line with this assumption: 12.5% of the respondents express changing their use of music selling platforms to streaming music platforms for diverse musical genres and cheaper expenses (In this case, no fees for listening to music or even downloading music on most of the streaming music platforms; see Figure 80). Thus, it is reasonable to suggest that it is the service that is attractive to students rather than other attributes of music-related technology.

Industry Structure

Music taste is modified through the culture cycle, where a reflexive inter-influence among production, distribution and consumption complicates the cultural habitus system. Rapid industrial structure changes in the past decades have gradually mediated consumers’ music consumption habits. At this late phase of music digitalization, the musical property of music has been revitalized among music consumers since physical music carriers, such as cassettes and CDs, withdrew from distribution channels and public access to internet has increased dramatically. Since music is evaluated by its intrinsic value, the evolution of distribution mechanisms from the industry to the target markets not only addresses the core copyright issues, but also influences the creative process in the music industry. Production and consumption of music are merging with each other when active consumer-musician interactions and open forums open a space for collaborative creation of music; i.e., musicians could work more creatively by interrogating the immediate online feedback from consumers into their new music pieces.
Compared with the previous passive music reception of consumers by exposure to limited recorded music carried by physical formats, the online media platform has increased the digital music choices for consumers by a large amount (Parikh, 1999; Graham et al. 2004; McCourt & Burkart, 2003).

While we are moving into a wider bandwidth internet age, the copyright violation from P2P networks has been diminishing. A ground breaking new music distribution paradigm is growing popular. Streaming music service not only addresses the copyright issues in the music download online communities, but also promotes another profit-making model through subscription (Bockstedt et al. 2005; Hardaker & Graham, 2001). Meanwhile, streaming music service breaks the monopoly of music creations from “Major Four” labels—Warner Music Group, Sony BMG, Universal Music Group and EMI group (Brown, 2008). Along with the thriving of independent music labels and independent Songwriters, several distribution formats co-exist in the music industry. Cross-national labels are still holding the majority of distribution channels including physical and online releases of music, but at the same time, local independent labels are supporting creativity autonomy of local artists, cultivating their own niche markets. The availability of online music publishing has also stimulated musicians to do the creation-production-distribution line all by themselves. Alternative music is the collection of music styles from independent labels, which receives less recognition of mainstream broadcasting systems, such as radio, TV and newspaper. Originating from underground music, Alternative music has been continuously developing niche music markets through online publishing and music festivals (Fonarow, 2011). The contemporary music market is more
fragmented than one can expect, given that diverse music styles are penetrating through the internet to reinforce people’s music tastes on a daily basis.

The music industry structure changes have made people argue whether CDs will die in the digital age since the late 1990s (Kusek & Leonard, 2005), and researchers have already pointed out the diminishing CD sales in the past decades. The assessment of CD ownership of the Chinese students in my data could to some extent reflect such a trend correspondingly. How would Millennials’ music tastes and consumption behaviors be influenced by such a change in the music sector?

Even though the U.S. seems to have a more well-developed online music distribution system, given the globalized iTunes and Pandora, it is a fact that the majority of the Chinese students (42.86%; as seen in Figure 82) in the sample reported having no CDs. In comparison, the majority of U.S. students reported having more than five CDs (39.53%; as seen in Figure 81). As for the question of where they purchase CDs, online retail stores like Amazon are most Chinese students’ first choice in my study (See Figure 84), whereas U.S. students prefer going to large department stores instead (see Figure 83). It is also interesting to notice that Chinese respondents never go to online fan sites and large department stores for CD purchase.

The significant difference between Chinese and U.S. undergraduate students’ CD consumption behaviors to some extent reflects the different structures of the music industry in each country. Traditional and online music consumptions might hold equivalent status for U.S. students, with the support from corresponding distribution systems in the industry. In contrast, the Chinese music industry might have been evolving
into the domination of online structure, where students are used to getting everything online. However, it is arguable to claim that those who value CDs are more likely to be really into music given their collection habitus. Music is after all about intrinsic values. Nevertheless, the distinct CD vs. online music consumptions of Chinese and U.S. students in the sample suggest the dramatic impact from music industry structures. With different distribution infrastructures, students from the two countries are cultivated into different audiences of music unconsciously. For the Chinese students, onsite experience and random encountering of music is not as necessary as it used to be in the 1980’s, so their music tastes are highly possible to be subjected to online marketing of whatever labels and publishers exist there. U.S. students in the sample value high-quality music experience and onsite exploration much more, which is shown in the number of concerts students from each country have been to as well. Their music tastes thus might be influenced by other social factors rather than mere industries. Consequently, the heavy online promotion of mainstream music from Chinese big labels might have been guiding Chinese students’ music tastes towards Pop, whereas U.S. students are attached to their own niche groups listening to Alternative.

Impact from Technology, Social Network and Industry Structure
Music exploration largely affects Millennials’ music taste formation by exposing them to other music styles in the process of finding new music. This section discusses the influences behind the distinct music exploration approaches employed by Chinese and
U.S. students, and further impact on their music tastes. Potential influences come from technology preferences, social network usage and industry structure.

Music Exploration

The music exploration channels have a significant role in shaping one’s music taste, by gatekeeping the amount and types of music information available to listeners. Generally speaking, there are six most common approaches to exploring music in the digital age. Music recognition software such as Soundhound allows immediate music detection whenever listeners randomly encounter the music they prefer in public space. The serendipity method of music exploration most accurately catches listeners’ music taste by self-choice, however, it is usually uncommon for people to love a piece at the first hearing. The most popular audio-visual platform YouTube is another place for music exploration. Choosing this channel to find music could distort listeners’ preference sometimes, since visual effects of music videos would to some extent change one’s view on the music. There are no certain positive or negative effects from the visual components given the quality of music videos; thus, people’s music tastes are somewhat uncertain after encountering new music through this channel. Streaming music channels introduce many more music genres to consumers than any other types of platforms. Even though some of them try to appeal to the potential tastes of listeners by narrowing the streaming radio to fewer genres, like Pandora, most streaming music services combine self-searching functions into other types of recommendation mechanisms, such as playlists and popular ranking. In this case, though people are immersed in the most diverse music ever, they will not feel annoyed since they are not likely to encounter their
least favorite genres. They can take initiatives to cultivate their own music tastes. Comparatively, music selling platforms like iTunes are not as friendly as streaming music services. You can only get a sample of the piece of music that you might like, then you need to purchase if you want to listen to the whole piece. There need to be more facilitating processes to help people make purchase decisions outside of the platform, such as searching it on YouTube, but the final purchases are for those music lovers and collectors who want to own the music eventually.

While online digital music platforms are taking over the traditional media’s role in music broadcasting, TV, radio and newspapers still have limited information about popular music being promoted. However, the volume and diversity of music there are far less comparable with what the internet can provide to listeners. Word-of-mouth is considered the most effective publicity approach by non-profit arts organizations. Regardless of the small amount of music information being transmitted in this process, it is in effect the approach that can nearly always make the receiver of the recommendation accept and love it, since people are highly possible to recommend music to their friends who have similar tastes rather than others.

In comparison with the Chinese students’ music exploration channels in the sample, U.S. students utilized more platforms to find music given the high percentages of usage of each approach (See Figure 85). Among the U.S. respondents’ multiple exploration tools, friends’ recommendations stand out showing that the social network has a great impact on their music choices and tastes. Chinese respondents in my study were prone to the recommendation mechanisms from streaming music service more than any other
channels. Their music exploration depended much more on random encounters given their high preference of using music recognition softwares (28.57% reported usage of Soundhound for new music; as seen in Figure 86).

It is hard to tell how the usage of the different combinations of music exploration channels influences one’s music tastes, but U.S. students might demonstrate a more proactive role in seeking new music through heavy usage of the diverse music channels, and attachment to their music tastes by valuing their networks through friends’ recommendations. In contrast, the Chinese students seem passive in exploring new music, while they seem to care more about individual feelings and attachment to music. That said, we might expect more opinion leaders among U.S. students than the Chinese. This result does not vary much from Tepper and Hargittai’s study (2009) about students’ music exploration habits in the digital age, where U.S. undergraduate students preferred social network resources the most. Apart from this, traditional media has lost its importance as the second top choice for music exploration. The diversified markets and music tastes need more customized recommendation approaches to be addressed; thus, online information technologies carry increasing value among the younger generation.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

Summary and Discussion

The data collected from my “Millennials’ music consumption survey” suggested a divergence of impacts from social, cultural, industrial, and policy environments on undergraduate students’ music tastes in China and the U.S. in the digital revolution and globalization era.

Taste Pattern Highlights

Apart from the appreciation of Pop music and Rock music of Chinese and the U.S. undergraduate students, a significant distinction is that U.S. students rated Alternative music as one of their favorite genres whereas the Chinese students expressed unanimous preference for Easy Listening.

The music history of each country could draw great influence on their overall perceptions of what type of music is authentic—in this case, U.S. Rock music and Chinese folk music laid foundation for their music appreciation, by internalizing the individual chaotic rhythms and smoothing melodies respectively for the U.S. and Chinese students.

Taste Formation Mechanism

Cultural environments where these respondents live establish their unique behavioral and emotional reactions towards consumption of cultural products. Since Chinese students value social bonds and high context communication, social interactions among them are easily interrupted by rather than enhanced by music consumption. Instead, music is a
necessity to U.S. students’ hangouts, contributing to a relaxing atmosphere for communication. As a result, U.S. students might be easily transformed into music lovers. Law and regulation in the industry, as an external force, frames how and what the younger generation access regarding music. Copyright law and music industry regulations in China and the U.S. to a large extent control music information available to consumers through different consumption channels, from traditional CDs to streaming music. Comparatively, U.S. students benefit from the larger library size (Pandora has 900,000 tracks and Spotify has 20 million\(^ {18} \)) than the Chinese students (Xiami has 40,000,000 tracks\(^ {19} \)), given the effective protection of IP laws in the U.S. The amount of music accessible to the younger generation affects their music tastes. Diversified tastes (represented by Alternative music preference) and the homogenous taste for relaxing music (represented by Easy Listening music preference) of the U.S. and Chinese students respectively are affected by the distinct educational, social, technology and industrial attributes in each country.

*Formal Education vs. Informal Education*

The elective music classes in the U.S. educational system and active self-education about music offer more opportunities for U.S. students to develop personal tastes and interests in music.

\(^{18}\) For detailed music services comparison between Pandora and Spotify, see http://mashable.com/2013/02/13/music-services-compared-2/.

\(^{19}\) For detailed music service comparison between Xiami and other Chinese music platforms, see http://www.zhihu.com/question/20028810.
In contrast, Chinese students in my study rely on out-of-classroom music education to develop interests in music. Most of their tastes are highly possible to be framed by the formal required education in the classroom.

The content of formal education sets the foundation for the taste development of students in the future. Chinese formal music education focuses on western Classical music and Chinese folk music, whereas formal music education in the U.S. is diversified at an early stage by encouraging students to get involved in music playing and creation processes (See National Standards for Music Education\(^\text{20}\)). Though the contents are similarly focused on western Classical music, U.S. students seem to have develop interests in music beyond just knowledge in my study.

Moreover, the mastery of musical instruments not only reflected U.S. students’ interests in music and ability to appreciate various types of music, but might underlie their proactive role in creating personal tastes instead of following a certain trend. Interestingly, family inheritance as an informal education source in western stratified society seems to diminish its influence on U.S. students’ music tastes and consumption in the sample. In contrast, the Chinese students benefit more from their family background in terms of developing interests and knowledge in music in my study.

\textit{Social Networks}

Sharing music has always been popular among younger generations within their “circles”, which also enhances social network relationships. Students from both

\(^{20}\) See \url{http://musiced.nafme.org/resources/national-standards-for-music-education/} for detailed curriculum for music education in the U.S.
countries in the sample are moderate social network users from both countries; however, they projected different sharing activities when it comes to sharing music. U.S. students seem more likely to be music opinion leaders among their peers given their high frequency of sharing music compared with the Chinese students. Furthermore, the data suggest that U.S. students’ social networks are tightly connected to people with similar music tastes in the sample, whereas the Chinese students’ circles seem to be based on other similarities with their friends. Music is probably not a popular topic for Chinese undergraduates, and their music tastes might be isolated from peer influence. In the process of music exploration, U.S. students value their friends’ recommendations more than Chinese students in my study, which suggests the importance of social networks in their music taste formation.

Technology Accessibility and Choices

Thanks to globalization, technology presents a compatible level of development in music industries in China and the U.S. The co-existence of traditional CDs, online music purchase platforms, streaming music service platforms, audio-visual platforms and music recognition platforms enhance students’ music experience. In the sample, U.S. students take advantage of streaming music services in their daily music consumption experience to expose themselves to a variety of music types, whereas the Chinese students seem to have a delayed reaction to streaming music services.
Nevertheless, the Chinese students seem to be more attuned to new sound recognition programs in search of new music. Their independence in music taste and consumption might be subject to more external influence from the media industry.

Music Industry Structures

Against the rumor that the music CD market is dying, the comparatively large CD consumption of U.S. students in the sample suggests the potential market for this format of music consumption. Moreover, real life music experiences might be valued more by U.S. students with regard to their frequent visits to large department stores for CD purchase and to music concerts.

U.S. students’ attendances to diverse music concerts reflect their omnivorous music tastes and music enthusiast nature, which is suggested as well by their love of one musician’s CD as feverish fans.

Intrinsic Attachments to Music

It is hard to imagine how one with little interest in music could have incentive to develop or expand his or her music taste. Accessing the different music consumption habits of the U.S. and Chinese students provides an overall reflection of the levels of interests in music of undergraduate students in each university.

In comparison with the Chinese students, U.S. students in the sample spend more time every day on listening to music through all kinds of music platforms. Using music as
background for almost every daily activity might make U.S. students excited about
different music types like taking adventures.

Review of Analytic Framework

The analytic framework of my study focuses on how consumption and production exert
intertwined power in music taste formation of Millennials. Trying to map out the
distributed influence from social, cultural, industrial and policy settings, I put the
identified six factors in the cultural diamond model. The data collected in my study shed
light on the movement of the impact dynamics among different elements, addressing the
uniqueness of Millennials’ music tastes and consumption.

Contemporary globalized society has been lowering the threshold for large amounts of
information to reach the younger generation, while cultural globalization cultivates
similar consumption behaviors for them through possible cultural consumption
assimilation. The global industry should have increasing impact on consumption choices
of this generation, given their extensive global marketing efforts through multi-layered
channels. However, as suggested by our data, the influence of formal education on
Millennials’ music tastes is still strong, whereas informal education, in the forms of self-
teaching in the U.S. and in the forms of family inheritance in China, is rising as an
important supplement of extra knowledge in music consumption.

Social network and music industries are competing in forming Millennials’ music tastes.
Obviously the industry effects outweigh social networks in China, which make the
Chinese students in my study vulnerable to popular music and traditional Easy Listening
preference. In the U.S., however, students might be absorbing both music recommendations from streaming music and their friends, and then cultivate their own specific tastes based on multiple streams of choices rationally. Though technology has changed Millennials’ music consumption experience dramatically, it is still a tool for cultural consumption. It is the meanings and intrinsic aesthetics that consumers value the most out of music. Under this circumstance, law and regulation cast more external influences on the information accessibility of the younger generation instead of the music industry structure. The industrial structure, on the other hand, might have more influence on Chinese students’ information access, given the ineffective regulation of copyright in music sectors. In the U.S., music industry structure has more influence on the ownership of music rather than taste and consumption of music among Millennials.

In conclusion, Bourdieu’s cultural habitus in the Globalization Age still has significant impact on taste formation, even though class boundaries have been blurred. More resources of cultural capital accessible to the Millennial Generation from the industry side have gradually changed the rigidity of cultural habitus to a fluid and ever-changing network. Thus, undergraduate students’ music tastes in the U.S. and China are subject to influences from industry and social networks to different extents. There is less tendency for industry to exert complete control over consumers’ tastes, rather, the social conditions frame the taste patterns through internalizing distinct levels of interests in music and potential to develop music tastes in the future for Millennials in different countries.
Reflections on Globalization

Drawing on the music taste patterns of Chinese and U.S. students in my study, cultural globalization takes form as “glocalization” in China given students preference of Pop and Rock music. Moreover, there is less resistance in consuming English songs among Chinese Millennials in my sample, but their U.S. counterparts have more difficulty appreciating Chinese music. The examples of music for different music genres given by Chinese students reflect the gap existing in the perception of music genres across nations. Nevertheless, the examples of Chinese Rock music suggest students’ acceptance of
internalized western Rock rhythms. Chinese Rock is thus an adaptation of western 
cultural format into Chinese social and cultural context, in terms of content, instruments 
and melodies. The application of cultural globalization to the Millennial Generation 
implies a strong reaction of local cultures towards global culture. In this case, industry, 
local policy and consumers are actively absorbing and internalizing western culture into 
local cultural paradigms to produce the co-existence of local, global and mixed cultures. 
On the contrary, living in the dominant culture of cultural globalization and the 
headquarter of most globalized companies, U.S. students demonstrate no clear 
globalization attributes in their music taste. Instead, their music consumption channels 
spread on a broad media spectrum—from CD to music recognition platforms, suggesting 
the harmonious co-existence of these distribution channels in the U.S. music industry. 
Compared with the disappearing CD market in China, the U.S music industry presents a 
delay in replacing CDs with other digital music services online. The data only suggest a 
convergence of music consumption behaviors among Chinese and U.S. students, in terms 
of similar platform usage and recognition of music sharing activities. Otherwise, it is 
difficult to determine which type of cultural globalization the U.S. has, except for a 
potential multiculturalism, given their high recognition and consumption of World Music. 
Cultural proximity has a tremendous impact on the disconnections of the music genre 
perceptions in the two countries, which indirectly interferes with the music taste 
globalization process.
Marketing Implications

The huge differences between Chinese and U.S. students’ music tastes in my study question the “golden principle” of music categorization applied by western and non-western music industries. That is probably a reason why the globalized music services such as Spotify delayed their launch in China, aside from the copy right concerns. It is a good opportunity for the Chinese music sector to evaluate their strategies of producing globalized Chinese music and promoting music from outside of China. Is it really feasible to market music genres that consumers have never encountered in formal education and daily life? The mismatch of existing knowledge structure of consumers and supply from music industry creates a gap for efficient and conscious music taste cultivation among the younger generation in China. A possible solution for better cross-national cultural understanding through cultivating diverse music tastes resides in the recognition of the categorization problem of the whole Chinese music industry. The record companies, distribution channels, copy right controllers, musicians and public music resources should work on a more Chinese style categorization standard combining western and Chinese music types. Furthermore, together with Chinese government, a healthy music education system should be introduced inviting active music participation both online and offline, in order to guide self-recognition of music tastes.

The U.S. music sector, on the other hand, could adjust their music genres to be more inclusive of other non-western cultures’ music. Moreover, the introduction of both music performance and digital music to the industry is a good way to inform consumers of Chinese music culture. The existing active and omniore’s music consumption scene by
Millennials in the U.S. could facilitate cross-cultural understanding and diversify the multi-cultural society.

Policy Implications

As a sector of the cultural industries, the music industry has seldom been conceived of as belonging to the non-profit realm. Rather, its private nature puts this industry in an uneasy position in the public policy framework. However, taking into consideration “the ways in which the cultural industries are governed through organizational forms, regulations and markets” (Pratt, 2005, p4), one can easily tell some of them fall into the public sector, such as intellectual property and market regulation. On the other side, the organizational management and business operation are influenced by organizational policy outside of state level control.

Though public cultural policy merely addresses the profit-making dimension of the cultural industry, its regulation over IP laws determines the profit model used by the industry, and thus, the profitability of cultural products. Moreover, since copy right of music largely affects the living condition and incentive for creativity of musicians, it is critical to make cultural policy effective enough to protect musicians’ rights. In the year 2013, revenues from music subscription services grew by 51.3 percent (according to IFPI digital music report 201321), breaking even for the first time. This could be seen as a success of copyright regulation on the music industry. The continuous implementation of IP law is promising for musicians around the world.

Although the U.S. has a more well-developed copyright system and royalty collection mechanism in the music industry, it is still subject to the underground file-sharing websites, according to my data. Policy emphasis in the U.S. should be on encouraging people to use other copyright ensured music services through more user-friendly service and larger music library. More convenient purchase channels and lower prices could also draw people from the P2P websites to major distribution channels controlled by music companies. Adding transaction fees to P2P sharing systems would be another way to tackle this issue.

China has always been criticized as having a poor copyright regulation orientation. Indeed, although it claims to have implemented a stricter IP law on digital music platforms, only major music platforms such as Xiami and Douban integrate payment systems for music under the regulation. Downloading music is still free for the general public, if you do not care about the size of the music library. Thus, Chinese cultural policy should prioritize paid music consumption and encourage consumers’ participation through multi-level account choices in the music subscription model.

Furthermore, from the aspect of increasing cross-national cultural understanding, national governments should not only be aware of the market structure and IP law gap between the U.S. and China, but also the music education for the public. The lack of knowledge of each other’s music traditions increases the misperceptions of consumers in both countries about music styles. There should be more selective music courses on non-western music for U.S. students as well as media publicity of non-western cultures. Chinese music curriculum should be updated from Classical western music traditions, to a more
contemporary western music focus. Public educational resources from broadcasting channels and online platforms are also good policy foci improving cross-national cultural understanding between China and the U.S.

Suggestions for Future Study

Due to the choice of convenient samples, my study focuses on small and uneven samples from one Chinese and one U.S. university. Since the state and local regulations, music industries, and social and cultural traditions usually project distinct scenes, there must be selective bias in my comparison groups. Further study could conduct the survey in universities in similar municipal level cities in each country, where the social demographic characteristics are similar, in order to reduce bias. The sample size should be enlarged and participants randomly selected to increase external validity, so that the results are more close to the music consumption attributes of the whole population of Millennials.

Moreover, future studies should refine music genres used to find music taste patterns in China and the U.S. based on consumer perceptions of western music genres. However, it should be stated that there might be no consensus on music genres in different cultures. Thus, to explore the difference in perceptions of music must be an interesting topic for future study.

It is necessary for a more in-depth investigation of Millennials’ music tastes in each country to do further comparisons for accurate marketing and policy implications, so that a feasible leverage for music taste patterns is required for future research. Music genre is
just one aspect of looking at music taste, and after all music is a combination of intrinsic and social experience. Ethnomusicologists and cultural sociologists could work together to identify the most feasible variables in mapping music taste patterns for cross-national comparison.
References


Doi: 10.1109/HICSS.2005.608


Appendix A Millennials’ Music Consumption Preference Survey

Millennials’ Music Consumption Preference Survey

Nick name:

Age:

Gender:

Major:

Hometown:

1. *Using the following scale, please indicate your preference of the music genres according to your daily music listening experience.
2. Please rank the language of songs that you are most likely to listen to from 1-4: (1 being the least likely and 4 being the most likely)
   - English
   - Spanish
   - French
   - Japanese
   - Korean
   - Chinese

   Please list one or two songs that are representatives of the music genre, if you rate it as 4 and 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music Genre</th>
<th>Strongly dislike</th>
<th>Dislike</th>
<th>Neither like nor dislike</th>
<th>Like</th>
<th>Strongly like</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classical music</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country music</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazz</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk music</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative (experimental)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance, techno, or electronica</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rap or Hip Hop</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reggae</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blues, rhythm &amp; blues, or soul music</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy Listening</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New age (the Piano Guys, Bandari)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songwriter</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious music (Gospel)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. How much time do you spend on social networking websites on a daily basis? *Check the answer that applies to you
   - Less than one hour
   - One to Three hours
   - I am always online

4. How often do you use the internet to watch, listen to or download music? *Check the answer that applies to you
   - Several times a day (More than once a day)
   - Almost every day (once every day or every other days)
   - 3-5 times every week
   - 1-2 times every week
   - Never

5. What are your most often used online channels to listen to music? *Check the answer that applies to you
   - visual audios platforms like YouTube
   - digital music listening and selling platform like ITunes
   - streaming music service platform like Spotify or Pandora
   - Others channels: (please list)

6. What is your preferred online channel to listen to music? *Check the answer that applies to you
   - visual audios platforms like YouTube
   - digital music listening and selling platform like ITunes
   - streaming music service platform like Spotify or Pandora
   - Others channels: please list

7. Do you have any handheld or mobile devices such as a smart phone, a laptop, notebook or tablet computer? (Circle one) Yes  No

8. If yes, how often do you use them to listen to music? *Check the answer that applies to you
   - Several times a day (More than once a day)
   - Almost every day (once every day or every other days)
   - 3-5 times every week
   - 1-2 times every week
   - Never

9. Do you have any streaming music apps on your mobile devices? (Circle one) Yes  No

10. If yes, what are they?
11. How often do you use the streaming music apps to listen to music? 
   *Check the answer that applies to you
   
   ● Several times a day (More than once a day)
   ● Almost every day (once every day or every other days)
   ● 3-5 times every week
   ● 1-2 times every week
   ● Never
   
   [Music/arts education background]

12. Can you play music instruments? (Circle one) Yes   No
13. If yes, what are they?
14. Can you sing (You can catch a tune of a song)? (Circle one) Yes   No
15. Have you ever taken lessons or classes in music--either voice-training or playing an instrument? (Circle one) Yes   No
16. If yes, when did you take these classes?
17. Which type of classes are they?
   *Check the answer that applies to you
   
   ● Required in-school courses
   ● Elective in-school courses
   ● Outside-of-school courses (extra-curriculum)
   ● Or both in school and outside of school
18. Have you ever taken lessons or classes in music history, music appreciation, or music theory? (Circle one) Yes   No
19. If yes, when did you take these classes?
20. Which type of class did you take?
   *Check the answer that applies to you
   
   ● Required in-school courses
   ● Elective in school courses
   ● outside of school courses (extra-curriculum)
   ● Or both in school and outside of school
   
   [Social and cultural capital influence]

21. *Have you ever learned any music (including music history, instruments, appreciation and voice training) through any other means such as being taught by family or friends, as part of a family tradition, by teaching yourself? (Circle one) Yes   No

22. If yes, how?
   ● being taught by family or friends, as part of a family tradition
   ● teaching yourself

23. *Have you ever learned any arts appreciation or arts history through any other means
such as being taught by family or friends, as part of a family tradition, by teaching yourself?
(Circle one) Yes   No

24. If yes, how?
  ● being taught by family or friends, as part of a family tradition
  ● teaching yourself

[Music consumption and Exploration]

25. Under what circumstances do you usually listen to music? (Choose more than one)
  ● When I want to release feelings (ex. listen to sad songs when I am sad)
  ● When I want to adjust emotions (ex. listen to happy songs when I am sad)
  ● When I am bored
  ● When I hang out with others
  ● When I study
  ● When I try to sleep
  ● When I workout
  ● When I am doing house work (cleaning, cooking or bathing)
  ● Other reasons: list here

26. Why do you listen to music?
   *Check the answer that applies to you

  ● Mostly for intrinsic satisfaction (I simply like music be my company)
  ● Mostly because the external atmosphere needs, music accompanies special environment (like party, workout, study, etc.)

27. How much time do you spend leisurely listening to music per day?
   *Check the answer that applies to you

  ● Less than One hour
  ● One to three hours
  ● Over three hours

28. Do you have a favorite musician/band, which you claim to be a big fan of? If so, list it below:

29. Have you attended the concerts or joined a fan community of any particular musician or musical group? If so, please list:

30. How do you typically find new music? (choose more than one)
  ● Sound hound, music recognizing apps
  ● YouTube, visual audios platforms with recommendation system
  ● Spotify/Pandora, streaming music service with recommendation system
  ● iTunes, digital music listening and selling platform
  ● Traditional media such as radio and TV
  ● Friends recommendations

31. How do you listen to music? (Choose more than one)
*Check the answer that applies to you

- Most of the time I put my favorite music in the playlist for streaming
- I download most of the music I listened
- I buy CDs of my favorite musicians after listening to the online music

32. If you have ever downloaded music online, how many did you download every month, on average?
*Check the answer that applies to you

- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 15-20
- more than 20

33. In your opinion, how does listening to streaming music influence your music downloading?
*Check the answer that applies to you

- I will select my favorite music to download according to my streaming music experience.
- I tend to add more music to my playlist for streaming rather than downloading.
- No influence

(Offline consumption)

34. How many CDs do you have?
*If your answer is zero, please jump to Q 38

35. Why do you like to buy CDs: (Choose more than one)

- I can reserve the physical format of music of my favorite musicians/bands
- I like the sound quality of CDs
- Many of my friends often purchase CDs which affect my ways of listening to music

36. When will you consider purchasing CDs?
*Check the answer that applies to you

- I buy CD albums when I am sure that every song in the CD is my favorite
- I buy CD albums even though only some songs in the CD are my favorite
- I buy CD albums of my favorite musicians even though I only like one song in it

37. Where do you usually purchase CDs?
*Check the answer that applies to you

- Online Retail stores (Amazon, etc.)
Online fan sites (used records)
- Online independent sellers (ex: eBay)
- Offline Thrift Stores/garage sales
- Record/Book Stores
- Large Department Stores (Wal-Mart, Target, etc.)

(Online music consumption)

38. Do you have multiple playlists for different functions (like for workout or studying)/styles (like Rock or Classical music)? (Circle one) YES NO

39. If yes, what are they? (please list the specific functions or styles)
   [Social network mechanism]

40. Have you ever recommended songs by word of mouth to your friends?
   (Circle one) YES NO

41. If yes, how many times did you recommend music last month?
   - Less than 5 times
   - Over 5 times

42. Have you ever used a computer, a handheld or mobile device, or the internet to email, post, or share music? (Circle one) YES NO

43. If yes, how many times did you share music last month?
   - Less than 5 times
   - Over 5 times

44. Have your friends ever recommended songs to you? (Circle one) YES NO

45. If yes, how many times did they recommend music to you last month?
   - Less than 5 times
   - Over 5 times

46. Do you usually like the song they recommended?
   - Yes
   - No, I have my unique music taste

47. As far as you know, how many of your friends who like the similar music/same musicians as you?
   - 1-3
   - 4-6
   - 7 or more

48. List all of your favorite bands or musicians:
Appendix B Cultural Practices in France in the 1960’s

Table 6. Some Indicators of Cultural Practice in Different Fractions of the Dominant class, 1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Teachers (higher and secondary)</th>
<th>Public sector execs.</th>
<th>Professions</th>
<th>Engineers</th>
<th>Private-sector execs.</th>
<th>Industrial employers</th>
<th>Commercial employers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading books other than for job</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre-going</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to classical music</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum visits</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art gallery visits</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own FM radio</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No TV</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading <em>Le Monde</em> d</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading <em>Le Figaro</em></td>
<td>168</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: this graph is from Bourdieu (1984, p118)
Appendix C Data Presentations of Chinese and U.S. Students’ Music Consumptions in this Study

![Diagram](image)

Figure 23. Circumstances under Which Chinese Students Listen to Music
Figure 24. Circumstances under Which Chinese Students Listen to Music
Figure 25. U.S. Students' Preferences of Music Genres

Figure 26. U.S. Students' Preference Distribution of Each Music Genre
Figure 27. Chinese Students' Preferences of Music Genres

Figure 28. Chinese Students' Preference Distribution of Each Music Genre
Figure 29. Mastery of Music Instrumentation of U.S. students

Figure 30. Mastery of Music Instrumentation of Chinese Students
Figure 31. Voice-Training or Music Instrument Education of U.S. students

Figure 32. Voice-Training or Music Instrument Education of Chinese Students

150
Figure 33. Types of Classes in Voice-Training or Music Instrument U.S. Students Took

Figure 34. Types of Classes in Voice-Training or Music Instrument Chinese Students Took
Figure 35. Music History, Appreciation, or Theory Education of U.S. Students

Figure 36. Music History, Appreciation, or Theory Education of Chinese Students
Figure 37. Types of Classes in Music History, Appreciation, or Theory U.S. Students Took

Figure 38. Types of Classes in Music History, Appreciation, or Theory Chinese Students Took
Figure 39. U.S. Students’ Music Learning Experience through Family Tradition or Self-teaching

Figure 40. Chinese Students’ Music Learning Experience through Family Tradition or Self-teaching
Figure 41. Types of Informal Means U.S. Students Choose to Learn Music

Figure 42. Types of Informal Means Chinese Students Choose to Learn Music
Figure 43. U.S. Students’ Word of Mouth Music Recommendation Choices

Figure 44. Chinese Students’ Word of Mouth Music Recommendation Choices
Figure 45. U.S. Students’ Word of Mouth Music Recommendation Frequency Last Month

Figure 46. Chinese Students’ Word of Mouth Music Recommendation Frequency Last Month
Figure 47. U.S. Students’ Music Sharing Activities through Electronic Devices or Internet

Figure 48. Chinese Students’ Music Sharing Activities through Electronic Devices or Internet
Figure 49. U.S. Students’ Music Sharing Frequency Last Month through Electronic Devices or Internet

Figure 50. Chinese Students’ Music Sharing Frequency Last Month through Electronic Devices or Internet
Figure 51. U.S. Students’ Friends’ Music Recommendation Activities

Figure 52. Chinese Students’ Friends’ Music Recommendation Activities
Figure 53. U.S. Students’ Friends’ Music Recommendation Frequency Last Month

Figure 54. Chinese Students’ Friends’ Music Recommendation Frequency Last Month
Figure 55. U.S. Students’ Number of Friends like Similar Music

Figure 56. Chinese Students’ Number of Friends like Similar Music
Figure 57. U.S. Students’ Daily Social Networking Sites Usage

Figure 58. Chinese Students’ Daily Social Networking Sites Usage
Figure 59. U.S. Students’ Daily Music Listening Time

Figure 60. Chinese Students’ Daily Music Listening Time
Figure 61. U.S. Students’ Music Consumption Frequency through Internet

Figure 62. Chinese Students’ Music Consumption Frequency through Internet
Figure 63. U.S. Students’ Music Consumption Frequency through Mobile Devices

Figure 64. Chinese Students’ Music Consumption Frequency through Mobile Devices
Figure 65. U.S. Students’ Ownership of Streaming Music Apps

Figure 66. Chinese Students’ Ownership of Streaming Music Apps
Figure 67. U.S. Students’ Music Consumption Frequency through Streaming Music Apps

Figure 68. Chinese Students’ Music Consumption Frequency through Streaming Music Apps
Figure 69. U.S. Students’ Music Playlists Habits

Figure 70. Chinese Students’ Music Playlists Habits
Figure 71. U.S. Students’ Criteria for CD Purchase

Figure 72. Chinese Students’ Criteria for CD Purchase
Figure 73. U.S. Students’ Music Consumption Preferences

Figure 74. Chinese Students’ Music Consumption Preferences
Figure 75. U.S. Students Monthly Number of Music Downloaded

Figure 76. Chinese Students Monthly Number of Music Downloaded
Figure 77. U.S. Students Frequently Used Online Channel for Music Consumption

Figure 78. Chinese Students Frequently Used Online Channel for Music Consumption
Q7 What is your preferred online channel to listen to music?*Check the answer that applies to you

Answered: 43  Skipped: 1

- Visual audios platforms like Youtube: 18.60% (8)
- Digital music listening and selling platform like iTunes: 20.93% (9)
- Streaming music service platform like Spotify or Pandora: 60.47% (26)

Figure 79. U.S. Students Preferred Online Channel for Music Consumption

Q7 What is your preferred online channel to listen to music?*Check the answer that applies to you

Answered: 16  Skipped: 5

- Visual audios Platform like Youku: 18.75% (3)
- Streaming music service platform like Douban fm and Xiami: 68.75% (11)
- Digital music listening and selling platform like iTunes: 12.50% (2)
Figure 80. Chinese Students Preferred Online Channel for Music Consumption

Figure 81. The Number of CDs Owned By U.S. Students

Figure 82. The Number of CDs Owned By Chinese Students
Figure 83. Preferred Approaches for U.S. Students to Purchase CDs
Figure 84. Preferred Approaches for Chinese Students to Purchase CDs
Q31 How do you typically find new music? (choose more than one)

Answered: 43  Skipped: 1

- Sound hound, music... 13.95%
- YouTube, visual audio... 51.16%
- Spotify/Pandora, streaming... 74.42%
- iTunes, digital music... 44.19%
- Traditional media such as... 44.19%
- Friends recommendations... 83.72%

Figure 85. U.S. Students’ Music Exploration Channels
Figure 86. Chinese Students’ Music Exploration Channels
Appendix D Participants’ Demographic Characteristics

Table 7. Demographic Characteristics of U.S. Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Engineering - Undeclared</td>
<td>Powell, OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Evolution and Ecology</td>
<td>Brecksville, OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Biology + Finance</td>
<td>Loveland, OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>CIS</td>
<td>Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Biology(Pre-med)</td>
<td>Cleveland, OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Pharmaceutical sciences</td>
<td>Centerville OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Minneapolis, Minnesota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Russia, OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Mathematics Education</td>
<td>Dublin, OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Westfield, NJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Agricultural Communications</td>
<td>Sterling, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Earth Sciences</td>
<td>Cleveland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Grand Rapids, MI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Neuroscience</td>
<td>Williamston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Neuroscience</td>
<td>Columbus, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Civil Engineering</td>
<td>Westerville, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>biochemistry (pre-med)</td>
<td>Columbus, Ohio</td>
</tr>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Springboro, OH</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Oakwood, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Androgynous</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Columbus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Johnstown, OH</td>
</tr>
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Table 8. Demographic Characteristics of Chinese Students

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