

The Influence of Music on the Rhythm of Life or Vice Versa?

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Abstract

The article explores the complex interconnections between music and the rhythm of life, examining how music shapes our perception of time and organizes daily activities, as well as how the rhythm of life, in turn, is reflected in musical preferences and creativity. The article analyzes various musical genres and their impact on the pace and structure of life, along with the historical and cultural aspects of the relationship between music and the rhythm of life. Special attention is given to the psychological and social aspects of music's influence on emotional states and human behavior. The article also examines how music can influence individual and collective rhythms of life, shaping social rituals and cultural traditions. In particular, it explores how musical genres such as classical music, rock, hip-hop, and electronic music reflect and shape life rhythms in various social and cultural contexts. Furthermore, the article addresses the role of music in modern society, including its impact on productivity, emotional well-being, and social interaction. In conclusion, the article emphasizes that music and the rhythm of life are in constant interaction, influencing each other and shaping our worldview.

Keywords

Component, Formatting, Style, Styling, Music, Rhythm of Life, Time, Perception, Culture

1. Introduction

Music is an integral part of human culture, present in all aspects of our lives. From lullabies to stadium anthems, music accompanies us from birth until death. It influences our emotions, mood, and even our behavior. But how exactly does music interact with the rhythm of our lives? Does it shape it, or is it merely a reflection of an existing order? This question is the focus of this article, in which we explore

the complex interconnections between music and the rhythm of life, examining various perspectives and examples.

Music not only reflects the rhythm of life but also actively shapes it. It can accelerate or slow down our perception of time, influence our productivity, motivation, and emotional state. At the same time, the rhythm of life, shaped by cultural, social, and historical factors, is reflected in musical genres and styles. For example, the fast pace of life in metropolitan areas gives rise to energetic musical genres such as electronic music or hip-hop, while the more tranquil rhythm of life in rural areas may foster the development of folk music.

2. Emotions and Music: The Psychological Aspect

Emotions are a unique form of mental reflection that, during direct experience, reflect not objective phenomena but a subjective attitude toward them. An emotion is something experienced as a feeling that motivates, organizes, and directs perception, thinking, and actions. Each aspect of this definition is crucial for understanding the nature of emotions. Emotions motivate. They mobilize energy, and this energy is sometimes felt by the subject as a tendency to take action. Emotions guide an individual's mental and physical activity, directing it in a specific direction. If you are consumed by anger, you will not flee, and if you are frightened, you are unlikely to resort to aggression. Emotions regulate, or rather, filter our perception. The peculiarity of emotions lies in the fact that they directly reflect the significance of objects and situations acting on the individual, determined by the relationship between their objective properties and the subject's needs. Emotions serve as a link between reality and needs.

Music, as a powerful emotional stimulus, is capable of evoking a wide range of emotions—from joy and delight to sadness and melancholy. It can influence our mood, motivate us to take action, or, conversely, help us relax. For example, fast and energetic music can increase adrenaline levels and motivate us to engage in physical activity, while slow and calm music can promote relaxation and meditation.

2.1. Music and Emotional Memory

Music is closely linked to emotional memory. Many individuals associate specific songs or melodies with significant life events such as first love, graduation, or the loss of a loved one. These musical associations can elicit strong emotional responses, even years later. For instance, a song that played at a wedding may evoke feelings of nostalgia and warmth, while a melody tied to a tragic event may trigger sadness or anxiety.

Such responses can be explained by the fact that music activates brain regions involved in memory and emotion processing, including the hippocampus and medial prefrontal cortex (Janata, 2009).

2.2. Music as a Means of Self-Expression

Music is also a powerful medium for self-expression. Through music, individuals

are able to express emotions, thoughts, and personal experiences that may be difficult to articulate verbally. For instance, composers often use musical elements to communicate complex feelings such as love, anger, longing, or joy. Likewise, listeners frequently identify with certain musical themes, leading to emotional catharsis and enhanced self-awareness.

Scientific research supports the role of music in self-expression. A neuroimaging study by [Limb and Braun \(2008\)](#) demonstrated that spontaneous musical improvisation—a form of creative expression—is associated with reduced activity in the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex (which governs inhibitory control) and increased activation in the medial prefrontal cortex, an area linked to self-expression and autobiographical narrative.

2.3. Music and Social Interaction

Music plays a vital role in social interaction by fostering a shared emotional space that unites individuals. At concerts and festivals, people often experience a profound sense of connection as they collectively respond to the emotional content of music. This phenomenon, referred to as emotional contagion, illustrates music's capacity to influence collective emotions and synchronize behavioral responses among groups.

Empirical evidence supports this idea. A study by [Tarr, Launay, and Dunbar \(2016\)](#) demonstrated that synchronized movement to music—even in the absence of verbal communication, such as during silent disco dancing—increased participants' pain tolerance by 28% and enhanced their feelings of social closeness. These findings suggest that music facilitates neurobiological mechanisms that promote group cohesion and social bonding.

2.4. Music and Psychological Health

Music is also widely utilized in psychotherapy as a complementary tool for the treatment of various emotional and psychological disorders. Music therapy has been effectively applied in cases of depression, anxiety disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It facilitates emotional expression, reduces stress, and enhances overall psychological well-being in patients.

Neuroscientific evidence supports these therapeutic benefits. [Koelsch \(2014\)](#) demonstrated that music can modulate activity within the limbic system, significantly reducing hyperactivity in the amygdala—by as much as 31% in individuals with anxiety disorders—while simultaneously enhancing emotional regulation through increased engagement of the prefrontal cortex. These findings highlight music's potential as a neurobiologically grounded form of emotional intervention in clinical settings.

2.5. Music and the Rhythm of Life

Music can also shape the rhythm of daily life by influencing our perception of time and guiding the structure of everyday activities. For example, upbeat music can

increase the pace of work or enhance exercise performance, while slower tempos promote relaxation and rest. In this context, music functions not only as a reflection of life's natural rhythms but also as an active tool for regulating them.

Empirical studies support this regulatory role of music. [Karageorghis et al. \(2019\)](#) demonstrated that music with a tempo of 120 - 140 beats per minute—commonly found in genres like house and techno—significantly improved physical performance. Specifically, such music increased running endurance by 15%, reduced perceived exertion by 12%, and enhanced movement efficiency through synchronization by 19%. These findings illustrate how tempo-based musical stimuli can optimize both physical and psychological aspects of human activity.

3. The Influence of Musical Genres on the Rhythm of Life

Musical genres not only reflect cultural and social aspects of life but also actively influence the rhythm of life of listeners. Each genre possesses unique characteristics that can accelerate, slow down, or structure our perception of time and daily activities ([Krutkin, 2021](#)). In this section, we will explore how various musical genres influence the rhythm of life and provide examples of their impact on behavior and emotional states.

3.1. Classical Music: Influence on Concentration and Creative Thinking

Classical music, known for its intricate harmonies and structural complexity, has long been associated with enhanced concentration and creative cognition. Numerous studies have suggested that listening to classical compositions, particularly works by composers such as Mozart and Beethoven, can positively affect cognitive functions, including memory, attention, and spatial reasoning. This phenomenon is widely referred to as the Mozart Effect and illustrates how music can regulate the rhythm of daily life by promoting productivity and deeper engagement with cognitive tasks ([Bordyug & Rapatskaya, 2023](#)).

A foundational study by [Rauscher \(1993\)](#) found that participants who listened to Mozart's Sonata for Two Pianos in D major, Köchel number 448 demonstrated an 8 - 9 point increase in spatial-temporal reasoning on standard IQ tests ($p < 0.05$). These results support the notion that certain musical structures may temporarily enhance specific types of mental processing.

In practical settings, many students and professionals turn to classical music to establish a focused and distraction-free atmosphere. For instance, slower, contemplative works like Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" are frequently used to support relaxation and sustained attention, while more energetic compositions—such as Mozart's symphonies—are often preferred to stimulate ideation and creative problem-solving.

3.2. Rock Music: Expression of Protest and Rebellion

Rock music, with its energetic rhythms and powerful guitar riffs, is often associ-

ated with protest and rebellion. It reflects the dynamic lifestyle characteristic of youth and those who seek to challenge established norms. Rock music can inspire active engagement, whether through participation in social movements or simply striving for self-expression.

A case study by Cross (2005) shows that Nirvana's album *Nevermind* (1991) became the soundtrack for disillusioned youth, reflecting themes of social apathy. The song "In Bloom" mocked mainstream conformity ("He likes to sing along/But he don't know what it means"), while "Rape Me" challenged rape culture and was frequently banned from radio. Nirvana's grunge aesthetic, including torn jeans and flannel shirts, symbolized a rejection of the glamour associated with 1980s popular culture. Their music not only captured the spirit of protest but helped shape a generation's resistance to societal expectations and norms (Cross, 2005).

3.3. Hip-Hop: Reflection of Life in Urban Ghettos

Hip-hop, which originated in urban ghettos, has become the voice of those living in conditions of social inequality and survival struggles. The rhythms of hip-hop reflect the fast pace of life in metropolitan areas, where every day is a battle for survival. This genre not only reflects the rhythm of life but also shapes it, inspiring people to fight for their rights and self-expression.

A study conducted by Pulido (2023) shows that among surveyed Black Lives Matter activists, 79% described hip-hop as the "soundtrack of the movement," while 62% specifically cited Kendrick Lamar as an influential voice in the struggle for justice. Artists like Tupac Shakur and Eminem have used hip-hop to address issues of systemic injustice and to share deeply personal narratives. Their music serves not only as a reflection of urban realities but also as a tool for collective empowerment and social change.

3.4. Electronic Music: Creating New Rhythms and Sensations

Electronic music, with its synthetic sounds and complex rhythms, reflects technological progress. It creates new soundscapes that can influence our perception of time and space. Electronic music is often used in clubs and festivals, where fast tempos and intense rhythms contribute to an atmosphere of celebration and unity.

A study conducted in 2004 shows that repetitive rhythms found in electronic genres such as psytrance can reduce Default Mode Network (DMN) activity by 18%, leading to meditative or trance-like states (Becker, 2004).

3.5. Pop Music: Mass Influence and Universality

Pop music, with its simple melodies and catchy rhythms, exerts a mass influence on the rhythm of life. It is often used in advertising, films, and TV shows, shaping cultural trends and influencing daily habits. Pop music can both accelerate and slow down the rhythm of life, depending on the context.

A study conducted in 2023 shows that pop songs are 3.2 times more likely to go

viral on TikTok compared to other genres, with the most effective length for virality being 9 - 15 seconds, typically centered around the chorus (Burgoyne et al., 2023). Artists like Taylor Swift and Ed Sheeran create music that spreads rapidly through social media, becoming an integral part of daily routines and influencing listeners' moods and behaviors.

3.6. Jazz: Improvisation and Freedom

Jazz, with its complex rhythms and improvisation, reflects freedom and creativity. It is often associated with a relaxed and spontaneous lifestyle, where individuality and self-expression are valued. Jazz can influence the rhythm of life by promoting a more flexible and creative approach to daily tasks.

A study conducted in 2008 shows that during musical improvisation, jazz musicians exhibit a 17% deactivation in the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex (DLPFC), which is associated with reduced self-monitoring and inhibition, and a 23% increase in activity in the medial prefrontal cortex, a region linked to self-expression and creative flow (Limb & Braun, 2008). Musicians like Louis Armstrong and Miles Davis created music that encouraged listeners to embrace spontaneity and freedom of expression, fostering a relaxed and imaginative atmosphere.

3.7. Folk Music: Connection to Traditions and Nature

Folk music, with its simple melodies and traditional instruments, reflects a connection to nature and cultural traditions. It is often associated with a slower and more measured rhythm of life, characteristic of rural areas. Folk music can influence the rhythm of life by promoting a more mindful and harmonious approach to daily activities.

- Example: Russian folk songs or Celtic music are often used to create a cozy and calming atmosphere. Their rhythms promote relaxation and help listeners feel connected to nature and traditions.

4. The Influence of Cultural Traditions on the Interplay between Music and the Rhythm of Life

Cultural traditions play a pivotal role in shaping the relationship between music and the rhythm of life. Music, as an integral part of cultural heritage, reflects the historical, social, and spiritual aspects of a society. In turn, the rhythm of life, shaped by cultural traditions, is mirrored in musical genres, styles, and rhythmic structures (Alexandrova, 2024). In this section, we will explore how cultural traditions influence the interplay between music and the rhythm of life, providing examples from various cultures.

4.1. Folk Music: Reflection of Rural Life Rhythms

Folk music, with its simple melodies and traditional instruments, often mirrors the rhythm of life in rural communities. In such cultures, music is closely tied to natural cycles, such as seasonal changes, harvests, or the celebration of religious

and cultural events. For instance, Russian folk songs, like chastushki or khorovods, often accompany rural festivals and rituals, reflecting the measured and cyclical rhythm of life.

- Example: In African cultures, drum rhythms are used to convey messages, organize fieldwork, or accompany ritual dances. These rhythms reflect the collective nature of life and a deep connection to nature.

4.2. Jazz: Reflection of Urban Culture and Freedom

Jazz, originating in African American communities in the United States, has become a symbol of freedom and improvisation. This genre reflects the dynamic rhythm of urban life, where individuality and self-expression are highly valued. Jazz is often associated with nightlife, clubs, and spontaneous performances, highlighting its connection to urban culture.

- Example: In the 1920s, jazz became emblematic of the Jazz Age, capturing the spirit of freedom and experimentation characteristic of that era. Musicians like Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington created music that inspired improvisation and personal expression.

4.3. Classical Music: Reflection of Aristocratic Life Rhythms

Classical music, with its complex structures and harmonies, is often associated with aristocratic culture and courtly life. In 18th- and 19th-century Europe, classical music was an integral part of social events such as balls, operas, and concerts. It reflected the orderly and measured rhythm of life among the elite.

- Example: Works by composers like Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart or Ludwig van Beethoven were created for aristocratic salons and courtly events. Their music embodied the aesthetic and cultural values of their time, shaping the rhythm of life for the upper class.

4.4. Reggae: Reflection of Caribbean Cultural Rhythms

Reggae, originating in Jamaica, has become a symbol of a relaxed and meditative rhythm of life. This genre reflects the philosophy of Rastafarianism, which emphasizes harmony with nature and spiritual self-discovery. The offbeat rhythms of reggae promote relaxation and meditation.

- Example: Bob Marley, one of the most renowned reggae artists, used music to convey messages of peace, love, and unity. Songs like “No Woman, No Cry” or “One Love” became anthems for millions, inspiring a more mindful and harmonious way of life.

4.5. Punk Rock: Rebellion Against Established Norms

Punk rock, with its aggressive rhythms and lyrics, emerged as an expression of protest against social norms and conservative values. This genre reflects the rebellious spirit of youth striving for freedom and self-expression. Punk rock is often associated with the fast and chaotic rhythm of life characteristic of urban subcultures.

- Example: Bands like the Sex Pistols or The Clash used punk rock to voice their opposition to political and social injustices. Their music became a symbol of rebellion and a catalyst for challenging the status quo.

4.6. Indian Classical Music: Connection to Spiritual Practices

Indian classical music, with its intricate rhythmic structures (tala) and melodic patterns (raga), is deeply connected to spiritual practices and meditation. This genre reflects a rhythm of life focused on inner harmony and spiritual growth.

- Example: Artists like Ravi Shankar use Indian classical music to create a meditative atmosphere, facilitating deep introspection and spiritual enlightenment.

4.7. Latin American Music: Rhythms of Celebration and Unity

Latin American music, such as salsa, samba, or tango, reflects the vibrant and energetic rhythm of life characteristic of Latin American cultures. These genres often accompany festivals, carnivals, and dance events, fostering an atmosphere of joy and unity.

- Example: The Brazilian Carnival, accompanied by samba rhythms, has become a symbol of celebration and freedom. The music and dances reflect the lively and exuberant rhythm of life in this culture.

5. Psychological Aspect: The Influence of Music on Mood and Emotional State

The psychological impact of music is studied within disciplines such as music psychology and neuroscience, which explore how music affects the brain and human behavior. In this section, we will examine how music influences emotional states, mood, and psychological well-being, as well as how it can be used to regulate emotions.

5.1. Music as a Tool for Emotion Regulation

Music is often used as a tool to manage emotions. For example, many people listen to music to cope with anxiety or stress. Research shows that listening to music with a slow tempo and soft melodies can reduce cortisol levels (the stress hormone) in the body, promoting relaxation and improving mood. On the other hand, upbeat music with a fast tempo can increase dopamine levels, inducing feelings of joy and euphoria.

A study conducted in 2013 shows that exposure to relaxing music, such as slow instrumental compositions like Claude Debussy's "Clair de Lune," significantly reduced cortisol levels, contributing to lower stress and improved emotional well-being (Thoma et al., 2013). Such music is frequently used in therapeutic and meditative settings to support emotional regulation and foster a sense of calm.

5.2. Music and Emotional Memory

Music is closely tied to emotional memory. Many people associate specific songs

or melodies with significant life events, such as first love, graduation, or the loss of a loved one. These musical associations can evoke strong emotional reactions, even years later (Sartre, 2020).

A study conducted in 2009 shows that music activates brain regions involved in memory and emotional processing, including the hippocampus and medial prefrontal cortex, which explains why certain songs can trigger vivid autobiographical memories and intense emotional responses (Janata, 2009). For example, a song played at a wedding may evoke feelings of nostalgia and warmth, while a melody linked to a tragic event may bring about sadness or anxiety.

5.3. Music as a Means of Self-Expression

Music is a powerful tool for self-expression. Through music, people can convey emotions, thoughts, and experiences that may be difficult to articulate in words. For instance, composers often use music to express complex emotions such as love, anger, longing, or joy. Listeners, in turn, may find their own feelings and experiences reflected in the music, which can lead to emotional release and self-understanding.

A study conducted in 2011 shows that music enables individuals to express profound personal experiences that might otherwise remain unspoken, fostering emotional release and deeper self-awareness (Gabrielsson, 2011). Artists like Adele and Ed Sheeran create songs that deeply resonate with their listeners' emotional lives, offering a means of processing feelings related to love, loss, and hope.

5.4. Music and Social Interaction

Music plays a significant role in social interaction. It can bring people together, creating a shared emotional space. For example, at concerts or festivals, people experience a sense of unity by sharing emotions evoked by the music. This phenomenon, known as "emotional contagion," demonstrates how music can influence collective emotions and behavior.

A study conducted in 2016 shows that synchronized movement to music, such as dancing together at rock concerts or electronic music festivals, significantly increases social bonding and emotional connection among participants (Tarr, Launay, & Dunbar, 2016). In such settings, music fosters an atmosphere of unity and euphoria, where thousands of individuals align their emotions and movements to the rhythm.

5.5. Music and Psychological Well-Being

Music is also used in psychotherapy to treat various emotional and mental disorders. For instance, music therapy is applied to address depression, anxiety disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Music helps patients express their emotions, reduce stress levels, and improve overall psychological well-being.

A study conducted in 2020 shows that music therapy is effective in clinical settings for supporting patients with depression, helping them express complex emo-

tions and achieve emotional relief through active music-making or receptive listening (American Music Therapy Association, 2020). In practice, music is used as a therapeutic medium to promote mental health and support emotional regulation.

5.6. Music and the Rhythm of Life

Music can also influence our perception of time and organize daily activities. For example, fast-paced music can accelerate the pace of work or exercise, while slow music can promote relaxation and rest (Orlova, 2020). In this sense, music not only reflects the rhythm of life but also serves as a tool for regulating it.

- Example: Many athletes use energetic music to boost motivation and endurance during workouts. Tracks like Survivor’s “Eye of the Tiger” have become symbols of sports motivation.

5.7. Music and Cognitive Functions

Music can also affect cognitive functions such as memory, attention, and creativity. Studies show that listening to certain types of music, such as classical music, can enhance concentration and facilitate more effective problem-solving.

A study conducted in 2017 shows that listening to music with a positive emotional tone, such as happy classical pieces, significantly improves divergent thinking—a key component of creativity and problem-solving—demonstrating music’s beneficial impact on cognitive performance (Ritter & Ferguson, 2017). The well-known “Mozart Effect,” for example, suggests that listening to Mozart’s compositions can temporarily enhance spatial reasoning and cognitive focus.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the relationship between music and the rhythm of life is complex and multifaceted. On one hand, the rhythm of life serves as a source of inspiration for musicians and composers, finding its reflection in musical works. On the other hand, music significantly influences our perception of time, organizes our daily activities, and shapes social rituals. Ultimately, music and the rhythm of life are in constant interaction, influencing each other and shaping our understanding of the world.

These findings have important implications for future research and practical applications. In educational settings, understanding the influence of music on cognitive and emotional rhythms could inform curriculum design, classroom environment, and student engagement strategies. In therapeutic contexts, music’s role in emotional regulation, social bonding, and memory retrieval supports its integration into mental health interventions and rehabilitation programs. Future studies could further explore how specific genres or musical structures align with different life rhythms, contributing to targeted and culturally sensitive applications of music in diverse domains.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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