

# Examining the Influence of Taylor Swift's Famous Discography on the Mood States and Emotional Well-being: An Experimental Inquiry among NU Baliwag Students

Mike Lester V. Arceo, Joana Marie B. Babon, Princess Micaella T. Bustamante, Erica Camille P. Magat, John Inigo SR. Miranda, Kristine C. Reyes, Mr. Jayvee C. Cebu

Department of Psychology, National University Baliwag, Philippines

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

The effect that music has on people's mental health and mood states has long piqued psychology's curiosity. Understanding how a given artist's discography affects mood and well-being might provide useful insight into the potential effects of music consumption. Taylor Swift, a well-known performer who has attracted a lot of attention, is well-known for her musically evocative songs that are heartfelt.

Few academics would disagree that listeners frequently perceive music as expressing emotions. One of the most crucial factors for determining the aesthetic worth of music has been considered emotional expression (Juslin, 2013). Music is a powerful emotional stimulus that can change how a person experiences time. When you are listening to calming music, time does seem to fly. The emotional effects of music, particularly its capacity to elicit and influence emotions, have also been the subject of several psychological studies (Sachs et al., 2015). As a result, music is played in waiting areas to shorten perceived wait times and at supermarkets to entice customers to stay longer and make more purchases (Droit-Volet, et al., 2013).

In contrast, young people with low emotional awareness frequently have less access to practical coping mechanisms for dealing with negative affect and interpersonal challenges (Flynn and Rudolph, 2014). When thinking about the effects of music on mood regulation and emotional well-being, college students, who regularly endure academic stress and emotional challenges, are especially pertinent. Young people with depression may choose to listen to music as a result of this ignorance. According to a study by Garrido and Schubert (2015), people with high levels of rumination claimed to have benefited from listening to depressing music. Still, they also reported an increase in depression symptoms. Exploring the specific influence of Taylor Swift's discography on the mood states and emotional well-being of NU Baliwag students holds significance in understanding the potential effects of her music on this particular population.

This study aims to investigate the influence of Taylor Swift's famous discography on the mood states and emotional well-being of NU Baliwag students. By focusing on this specific population, the study provides insight into the potential implications of Taylor Swift's songs in this environment. The study adds to the body of studies on the psychological advantages of music and its function in emotional regulation.

Examining the relationship between Taylor Swift's music and the emotional experiences of NU Baliwag students can contribute to the field of music psychology and provide insights into the mechanisms through which music influences emotions. This study aims to conduct an experimental inquiry to assess the impact of Taylor Swift's famous discography on the mood states and emotional well-being of NU Baliwag students, ultimately contributing to the existing literature on music psychology and emotion research.

Understanding how Taylor Swift's music affects students at NU Baliwag's moods and mental health can have effects on therapeutic treatments, music therapy, and general psychological health. This study aims to advance

knowledge in the field and offer useful information for scholars, practitioners, and music fans by examining the unique effects of Taylor Swift's discography.

### **Description of the Experiment**

The study employed a classic experimental design with an experimental group, referred to as the "Taylor Swift" group, exposed to a 25-minute collection of Taylor Swift songs, and a control group. The purpose of exposing the experimental group to Taylor Swift's songs was to observe and analyze potential changes in their emotional states. Prior to the music exposure, both groups underwent pre-assessment using the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) and the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) to establish baseline measurements of their affect and happiness levels.

The control group also underwent pre-assessment and was exposed to a 25-minute selection of R&B, Pop, and Rock songs instead of Taylor Swift's music. This allowed for a comparison of the effects on mood between the experimental group and the control group. By using a control group and administering pre-assessment tests, the researchers aimed to differentiate the specific influence of Taylor Swift's songs from the general impact of music on mood and well-being.

The findings of this experiment will provide valuable insights into the potential influence of Taylor Swift's discography on the mood and emotional well-being of NU Baliwag students, while also addressing the broader question of the effects of music on emotional states.

### **Rationale and Purpose of the Study**

People feel pleasure, rage, dismay, and other feelings. Tons of emotions influence how people act and speak, and they are triggered by various factors, including music (Ahmad & Rana, 2015). Music is the art of creating aesthetically pleasing or evocative tonal arrangements, usually with harmony, rhythm, and melody. Listening to music is one of the most arcane of human behaviors (Schäfer, et al., 2013). Understanding those behaviors entails the comprehension of how people are affected by the resounding magnificence of the music. It is why it is much more than words that cohesively flow. Music is an omnipresent companion to people's everyday lives. It plays an important role in correlating mood and arousal. It is a source of satisfaction and contentment that affects human behaviors, thoughts, and feelings (Nguyen & Grahn, 2017).

In addition to the aforementioned, a study suggests that making and listening to music can improve one's mood and level of happiness (Lynar et al., 2017; Cheung et al., 2019; Koelsch et al., 2015) and alleviate anxiety and stress, (Fallon et al., 2019; De Witte, Spruit, Van Hooren, Moonen, & Stams, 2019), and the psychological well-being (Koehler & Neubauer, 2019). Mansfield & Seligman (2021) states that there is a clear correlation between music and positive emotions. Moreover, according to Geipel et al. (2022), music appears to be crucial for regulating emotions, improving depressive symptoms, and improving health-related quality of life.

Taylor Swift is a famous pop and country singer-songwriter known for her multi-genre career, songwriting, and creative reinventions. She is the first and only female solo artist to have won the Grammy for Album of the Year three times for her solo recordings. She has won 11 Grammy Awards. Taylor Swift is a talented composer known for penning songs that are largely based on her feelings and experiences, which is why young people and even adults adore her music. By focusing on Taylor Swift's record, this study emphasizes how music can potentially alter mood regulation and emotional well-being. It can aid in the development of music-based interventions and therapies to improve mental health outcomes. Such findings may be significant for fans of Taylor Swift's music or those who have a strong emotional connection to songs in the music industry. The distinctive impact of Taylor Swift's discography on mood and emotional well-being is investigated in this study.

By studying the relationship between music and emotions, we learn more about how different genres, singers, and songs might influence people's emotional experiences. This contributes to the growing field of music psychology, which investigates the psychological and emotional effects of music, and identifies any potential basic or fundamental features that may be inferred from many different ways the music serves society.

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## Statement of the Problem

This study aims to explore the music discography of Taylor Swift—a well-known singer, songwriter, and producer, to unravel its influence on the NU Baliwag Students' mood and emotional well-being.

The purpose of the study is to answer the following questions:

1. How does Taylor Swift's discography impact the NU Baliwag students' mood and emotional well-being?
2. What influences were found based on their emotional state upon listening to Taylor Swift's discography?
3. What are the significant differences in mood states and emotional well-being between the experimental group exposed to Taylor Swift's music and the control group?

## Limitations of the Study

The research has found potential limitations of the study. (1) The nature of the study is experimental which conveys that the researchers may provide short-term results and vary in the future. (2) The sample of the study—NU Baliwag students; does not represent the majority of Taylor Swift's listeners and cannot further expand the target population since the study is limited to the students of NU Baliwag as the researchers also consider the accessibility and possible time constraints to meet the target date. It is recommended that changes in the nature of the study may provide alternative results that may be produced in future studies and continue to further investigate the related study in a more significant population.

## OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE STUDY

### Review of Related Literature and Studies

Taylor Swift is indeed a musical chameleon shaping the soundtrack of a generation. The purpose of this study is to look into the potential impact of Taylor Swift's popular discography on the mood states and emotional well-being of NU Baliwag students. It aims to investigate the influence of Taylor Swift's music on people's emotional experiences, such as mood enhancement, emotional control, and overall well-being. The study adopts an experimental design, with a sample of NU Baliwag students exposed to Taylor Swift songs under controlled conditions. Various measurements and psychological tests (PANAS and SHS) will be used to examine participants' mood states, emotional responses, and well-being before and after music exposure. The findings of this study may help to a better understanding of how music affects emotional states and provide insight into the potential therapeutic effects of music listening.

According to the study by Volpe, M. (2021), the use of music therapy is a means of promoting well-being and flourishing in individuals, particularly in the context of illness and wellness. The authors argue that current medical models do not fully account for the impact of music on emotional well-being and self-concept. The study revisits a previous discussion between a music studies scholar and music therapists to explore the embodied experience of music-making, specifically playing Taylor Swift covers. The authors suggest that playing music can contribute to a sense of “feeling oneself” and promote flourishing in daily life. The study also highlights the importance of embodiment in reimagining systems of care and promoting well-being through the arts.

In the study of Junes, E. K. (2023) the impact of celebrity culture on individuals' identities and life ambitions and how social structures and inequalities are reproduced through celebrity culture. Specifically, the study analyzes the evolution of Taylor Swift's public persona throughout her career, with a focus on her gender, age, and music. Using qualitative research methodology, this study identifies ten significant narrative themes in Swift's interviews between 2009-2022, including personality, emotions, music career, personal life, relationships, and social and cultural issues. The findings reinforce themes found in the literature and provide new insights into celebrity culture, gender and sexism, artist autonomy, commodification, and public persona. The study highlights the importance of examining celebrity culture as a lens for understanding broader social structure and equality.

According to the study of Harrison, C., & Ringrow, H. (2022), song lyrics, similar dramatic performances, and plays, establish a discourse structure that invites listeners to eavesdrop on narratives while conceptualizing and enacting particular roles and scenarios. The study focuses on Taylor Swift's songwriting, specifically in her two sister albums, *folklore*, and *Evermore*, which were written and produced during the Covid-19 pandemic. The study uses a stylistic analysis of the narrative structure to identify how dis-narration strategies are used to build the album stories. The study examines how dis-narration characterizes the album's narrators, establishes narrator-narrate relationships, and invites listeners to participate in the meaning-making process. Through a closed analysis of four songs, the study argues that dis-narration strategies foreground themes such as nostalgia, wistfulness, and regret, contributing to the fictionalization and self-aware storytelling characteristics of the story worlds in these albums. The study builds on existing research on the stylistics of songwriting and highlights the importance of dis-narration as a narrative strategy in constructing meaning in song lyrics.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The researchers will utilize a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT), with eligible participants from NU Baliwag, they will be assigned and randomly allocated into two groups. The "Taylor Swift" group will receive exposure to Taylor Swift's famous music. On the other hand, the control group will be exposed to the kind of music that does not typically elicit the same level of emotional themes as Taylor Swift's. This kind of design allows for comparisons between both groups and helps establish cause-and-effect relationships. (Pocock & Simon, 2013).

### Selection and Assignment of Participants

A diverse group of students from NU Baliwag, who have shown a strong passion and interest in Taylor Swift's music, will be invited to participate in the experimental study. The researcher intends to include individuals with varying levels of familiarity and appreciation for her music, ensuring a wide range of perspectives and experiences are represented in the research.

Participants in the Taylor Swift experimental group will be selected based on specific criteria indicating a strong interest in Taylor Swift's music. This interest will be assessed using various self-report measures, such as active participation in Taylor Swift fan communities, attendance at her live stream events, and providing information about their previous exposure to her music. Conversely, for the control group, participants will be chosen among NU Baliwag students who are interested in different music genres or artists, excluding Taylor Swift specifically. This approach ensures that the control group represents a diverse range of music preferences, allowing for standardized differentiation to be made with the effects observed in the Taylor Swift group.

The selected participants will be randomly assigned to either the "Taylor Swift" or "Control" conditions to minimize bias. This random assignment ensures that mood and emotional well-being differences can be attributed to the specific music condition rather than pre-existing participant characteristics. By randomly assigning participants to the experimental group—exposure to Taylor Swift's music or the control group, researchers can confidently accredit observed differences between the control group and the experimental's effect. This approach controls for confounding variables and enhances the study's internal validity, providing a more accurate understanding of the impact of Taylor Swift's music on mood and emotional well-being.

### Ethical Considerations

The selected participants are gathered based on two different criteria that validate as avid listeners of Taylor Swift; who can be a part of any fandom, and supporters of Taylor Swift. Before experimenting, the participants will be oriented about their rights. They shall receive informed consent (including their anonymity, confidentiality, and data privacy) as the formality of voluntary approval to partake in the experimental procedures. Suppose the participant is exposed to any deception or harm. In that case, the researchers will be accountable for conducting a debriefing providing them an explanation as to why it is necessary to experience them.



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## Pre- and Post-session Assessments

This study will utilize validated assessments such as the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) and the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) will be administered. Before the experiment, participants will administer the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) and the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) questionnaires.

Following the experiment, involving exposure to either the “Taylor Swift” condition or the control condition, the same assessments are administered again as part of the post-assessment. The PANAS questionnaire is re-administered to capture any changes in participants’ mood states after the experiment, while the SHS assessment is conducted again to evaluate the changes in subjective well-being and happiness levels.

The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) is a reliable and mostly used self-report questionnaire that effectively assesses two key dimensions of affect: positive and negative. Positive and negative affect are two distinct dimensions that represent an individual's inherent tendency toward experiencing positive or negative emotional states. These dimensions influence how individuals perceive and respond to various life events, shaping their subjective experiences of joy or distress (Pereira et al., 2013).

On the other hand, the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) directly measures subjective happiness. The Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) assesses participants' evaluations of their happiness levels. It utilizes a scale comprising statements that individuals use to rate themselves or make comparisons with others. Despite being a concise measure, the SHS meets the necessary psychometric criteria for accuracy, as supported by data collected from various samples conducted in the United States (Dogan & Totan, T. 2013).

## Statistical Analysis

The data obtained from the study will be subjected to statistical analysis, specifically utilizing the independent sample t-test. This statistical test will enable the comparison of mood and emotional well-being scores between the "Taylor Swift" and "Control" conditions, thereby offering valuable insights into the distinct impact of Taylor Swift's music on the participants' psychological states.

## Data Implementation Plan

The collected data will be examined using an independent sample t-test, specifically a t-test for two independent groups, to compare the mood and emotional well-being scores between the “Taylor Swift” group and the control group. This statistical analysis is utilized for analyzing the means of a certain continuous variable, such as the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS) and Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS), across two independent groups.

First, the mean scores of PANAS and SHS will be calculated separately for each group. Providing the average scores of moods and emotional well-being. There, the t-test will be administered, generating a p-value that indicates the probability of obtaining the observed difference in means if there were no true differences between the groups. If the p-value is less than the chosen significance level which is typically 0.05, it will suggest a statistically significant difference between both groups.

The interpretation of the results will involve comparing the mean scores of the “Taylor Swift” group and the control group. If the experimental or the “Taylor Swift” group manifested significantly higher Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS) and Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) scores, it will simply indicate that exposure to Taylor Swift’s famous music has a positive correlational impact on mood and emotional well-being.

## Process of Experimentation

Under the "Taylor Swift" condition, participants will be exposed to a carefully curated playlist from survey results consisting of popular songs made by Taylor Swift. In contrast, the "Control" condition will involve participants listening to a playlist of songs from a different genre or artist that does not carry the same emotional

charge. The criteria for selecting a playlist for control are the main pop songs. This contrast allows for a direct comparison of the effects of Taylor Swift's music on mood and emotional well-being.

In this experiment, both the Taylor Swift group and the control group will be exposed to a total of 30-minute sessions. The 30-minute session is divided into two parts: the first 5 minutes will be allotted for briefing and the remaining 25 minutes will be assigned for the music session. According to the study by Thoma et. al. (2013), titled “The Effect of Music on the Human Stress Response”, it has been found that listening to music for 25 minutes significantly reduced cortisol levels—a stress hormone, and subjective emotional-being ratings. This suggests that a 25-minute duration of music listening has a positive impact on the mood by receding stress levels.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS OF EXPERIMENTATION

### Results

Table 1. Impact and Influence of Taylor Swift's Discography on Students' Mood and Emotional Well-being

Experimental Group Exposed to Taylor Swift Discography			
Impact		Pre-Assessment Mean Score	Post-Assessment Mean Score
Subjective Happiness Scale		3.53	4.39
Positive (PANAS)	Affect Score	29.4	37.9
Negative (PANAS)	Affect Score	30.3	19.8
Control Group Not Exposed to Taylor Swift Discography			
Subjective Happiness Scale		4.76	5.3
Positive (PANAS)	Affect Score	33.1	39
Negative (PANAS)	Affect Score	26	17

Table 1 presents the mean scores of the respondents across two different tests (Subjective Happiness Scale & PANAS) of both the experimental and control groups in both pre-assessment and post-assessment. To answer the first research question, the impact of Taylor Swift’s discography on the mood and emotional well-being of the students can be determined by comparing the pre-assessment and post-assessment mean scores of the respondents in the two tests.

First, as seen in the table above, the Subjective Happiness Test shows that those in the experimental group gained an increase of 0.86 from a pre-assessment score of 3.53 to a post-assessment score of 4.39. Meanwhile, those in the control group who listened to music that did not involve Taylor Swift’s discography gained an increase of 0.54 from a pre-assessment score of 4.76 to a post-assessment score of 5.3. These results suggest that both groups had higher subjective happiness after listening to music regardless of the artists that were involved. However, those who listened to Taylor Swift's discography recorded a lesser increase in Subjective Happiness.

Second, in terms of the Positive Affect scores, results showed that those in the experimental group that listened to Taylor Swift’s discography gained an increase in the positive affect of 8.5 from a pre-assessment score of 29.4 to a post-assessment score of 37.9. Meanwhile, those in the control group who listened to music without the presence of Taylor Swift's discography gained an increased positive effect of 5.9 from a pre-assessment score

of 33.1 to a post-assessment score of 39. These results suggest that both groups had experienced higher positive affect after listening to music regardless of the artists involved. However, it is noteworthy that students who listened to Taylor Swift had a higher increase in positive affect as compared to those who did not listen to Taylor Swift.

Third, the Negative Affect Scores show that the experimental group that listened to Taylor Swift’s discography decreased in Negative Affect by 10.5 from a pre-assessment score of 30.3 to a post-assessment score of 19.8. Meanwhile, students in the control group who did not listen to Taylor Swift had a decrease in Negative Affect of 9 from a pre-assessment score of 26 to a post-assessment score of 17. These results suggest that students from both the experimental and control groups recorded lower Negative Affect scores after listening to music regardless of the artists that were involved. It is worth highlighting that students who listened to Taylor Swift’s discography had a more decreased Negative affect score as compared to the students who did not listen to Taylor Swift.

Table 2. T-test for Two Independent Samples (Experimental and Control Group) using the Subjective Happiness Scale

<i>Groups</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>T crit</i>	<i>Decision</i>
Post-Assessment Subjective Happiness Scale					
With Taylor Swift	9	-1.9091	0.07232	±2.2622	Accept H0
Without Taylor Swift	9				

H0: There is no significant difference in mood states and emotional well-being between the experimental group exposed to Taylor Swift's music and the control group.

Table 2 shows the t-test across two different samples (experimental and control groups). A significant p-value of  $\leq 0.05$  would indicate a significant difference between the mood states and emotional well-being of the students between the experimental and control groups. As seen in the table above, the p-value is 0.07232 in the post-assessment of the Subjective Happiness scale which leads the researchers to accept the null hypothesis: there is no significant difference in the mood states and emotional well-being of the experimental group which were exposed to Taylor Swift's discography and the control group who did not listen to the said artist.

## DISCUSSION

To answer the first research question, the positive impact is suggested by the increase in positive affect scores of the respondents who listened to Taylor Swift. As evidenced by the increase in positive effect from the pre-assessment to post-assessment scores, the results indicate that as a measure of well-being, students exposed to Taylor Swift had a higher positive affect after listening to the said artist. However, it is also important to note that students who did not listen to Taylor Swift and listened to different artists also had an increase in Positive Affect. These results suggest that regardless of the artist involved, listening to music increases the positive affect on students as evidenced by their scores in the post-assessment. In addition, the decrease in the Negative affect scores of respondents after listening to Taylor Swift emphasizes the effect of the artist on lessening the negative affect on the students. Similarly, students who listened to other artists without Taylor Swift’s music also reported a decrease in negative affect, highlighting that listening to music, in general, improves the emotional well-being of the students.

Previous studies have already highlighted the similar effect of listening to music on the emotional well-being of people. Papinczak et al. (2015) state that relationship building, mood modification, cognitive modification, and emotional immersion were found to be the four ways that music listening is associated with well-being. According to the said researchers, although there are undoubtedly other elements that play a role in determining

young people's well-being, the results are consistent with past studies on the importance of music in emotion regulation and social interaction. The results of this cited study are in line with the present study as it emphasizes that music plays a role in the well-being of people. As seen in the scores of the respondents, Taylor Swift and music from other artists impacted the students through an increase in positive affect and a decrease in negative affect.

To answer the second research question, Taylor Swift's discography has a positive influence on the mood states and emotional well-being of the students. Observing the results in both the PANAS and Subjective Happiness Scale, students in the experimental group who listened to Taylor Swift had higher happiness and positive affect scores, accompanied by a decrease in negative affect. In this light, one can be certain that listening to Taylor Swift indeed has a positive influence on students' mood states and emotional well-being. With higher subjective happiness scores, one can infer that Swift's discography indeed positively influences the mood state of the students. With higher positive affect and lesser negative affect scores, a positive influence on the emotional well-being of the students is emphasized. In general, listening to Taylor Swift and her music positively influences students in terms of mood and emotional well-being.

Go (2020) perceives the same positive influence of Taylor Swift on her listeners. According to Go (2020), because she has always been an advocate for love and all of its facets—the good, the bad, the ugly, the angst, and everything in between—Taylor Swift manages to keep me calm. The positive effect of Taylor Swift on the author seemed to reflect the same positive influence evidenced by the results of this study. It is safe to infer that Swift's discography indeed positively influences the mood states and emotional well-being of her listeners.

Lastly, to answer the third research question, the t-test across the two samples evidenced that there is no significant difference in the mood states and emotional well-being of the students in the control group and those in the experimental group who listened to Taylor Swift. The acceptance of the null hypothesis cements the results that music, in general, regardless of the artists, positively impacts and influences the mood states and emotional well-being of the students. One can infer from these results that music plays a huge role in uplifting the mood and well-being of the students.

According to Collins (2021), throughout human history, music has been extensively researched and appreciated for its capacity to amuse and heal. Numerous professionals have looked at the therapeutic potential of music for a variety of physical and mental health issues, as well as for general stress management. In the context of the study, the t-test results show no significant difference in students' moods and well-being and further suggest that just listening to the music itself, regardless of the artist, increases the mood states and emotional well-being of individuals.

The results of this study could be a significant basis for the use of music to uplift the moods and well-being of students who are bombarded with academic life. Practical implications could greatly involve the school administration and other concerned organizations that are advocates for the welfare of students. The results of this study will be of great use to organizations that strive to uplift the welfare of students by suggesting the great role of music in the emotional aspects of students.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

### Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the influence of Taylor Swift's famous discography on the mood states and emotional well-being of NU Baliwag students:

1. In the test analysis of the Subjective Happiness Scale, the experimental group is shown to have higher levels of happiness compared to the control group where the experimental has increased 0.86 from pre- to post-assessment and the control group accumulated 0.54 increase.
2. The findings in the Positive Affect and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS) result show that music in general, regardless of the artist, does have a positive influence on mood and emotional well-being wherein both



experimental and control groups show an increase in the Positive Affect (slightly higher for the experimental group) and decrement in Negative Affect.

3. It is found that there is no significant difference in mood and emotional well-being between the experimental and control group; its effect does not differ from listening to other genres aside from the discography of Taylor Swift.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are provided:

1. Music can be used as another method of intervention in mental health programs in school and in-school organizations of NU Baliwag to enhance their mood regulation and emotional well-being.
2. Aside from the discography of Taylor Swift, there are other existing genres and artists to be recognized to be able to cater to a larger population to give the participants different opinions with musical tastes and provide alternative results of the positive and negative effects.
3. Conducting further study can reveal other existing effects on mood and emotional well-being that this research may not have found. Further investigating the long-term impact of music on mood and emotional well-being can interpret the changes and explore the patterns of mood and well-being in listening to different genres or artists.

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