

MUSIC IN THE LIFE OF YOUTH: RESULTS OF SOCIOLOGICAL SURVEY

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Abstract: This paper presents the results of a sociological survey carried out in 2019 on the topic: "The Role of Music in the Life of Youth" on the basis of the laboratory devoted to the problems of modern family at the Minin Nizhny Novgorod State Pedagogical University (N-300). The use of a quantitative sociological method, namely a SPSS Statistics 21 package, allowed to find out: the main factors affecting musical preferences of youth; the musical preferences of youth; the attitudes of young people to the Russian national song traditions; the attitudes of young people to karaoke; the existence of family musical traditions; the role and place of music in the life of youth; the attitudes of young people to the song genre, etc.

Keywords: music, values, youth, inculcation of values, everyday life, mentality, spirituality.

1 Introduction

Globalization in economy, politics, culture and everyday life slowly but surely destroys visible boundaries between countries and continents, representatives of different nations, confessions, etc. Due to the rapid scientific and technological progress, music has gained international prestige among young people.

Boys and girls with headphones have already become the common thing. They mainly listen to music, some listen to audio books, texts of lectures. The latter are clearly in a minority in relation to the former. Overall, as revealed by numerous sociological studies, listening to music in the youth cohort becomes one of the leading forms of leisure. Thus, the study of youth' musical preferences is one of the urgent problems in music sociology, youth sociology, and arts history.

The music in the life of young people became especially important in the 20th century. It became the subject of intense attention of musicians, philosophers, psychologists, and sociologists. Music reflects the emotional spirit of the time, becomes sound representation of thoughts and moods dominating the era. In the 20th century, it served as a youth voice in the age of social upheaval ("sexual revolution" in Europe, "perestroika" in Russia). It is virtually impossible to force young people love certain music, they choose it according to their inner state of mind. Society faces a great challenge: how to develop young people with the help of music, how to understand their moods, thoughts and feelings? The pursuit of answers to these questions strengthens the relevance of this research on the musical preferences of youth through a sociological survey.

2 Literature Review

The fundamental research of T. Adorno "Sociology of Music" (2008) was a valuable input to our study. This writing explores the links between music as the art and the audience, and analyzes the existing types of listeners. The work of Adorno (2008), which appeared in the mid 20th century, has not lost its relevance today, first, because the types of listeners described therein are found in the modern society as well, and second, because Adorno (2008) views music as the art that reflects the spirit of the time.

We have also relied on some psychological studies, such as the paper authored by A. D. Andreeva "The Idea of Childhood through the Eyes of Parents of Modern Schoolchildren" (2019). The study highlights the connection between sociocultural

stereotypes of parents and their influence on the future of the younger generation, including in relation to the inculcated system of values. The author appeals to the category of "the idea of childhood" embedded in the minds of parents, which, in our opinion, is also applicable to the problems we seek to explore. A. D. Andreeva (2019) points out that from the point of view of some parents "...childhood should be exclusively "nutritious" and useful: intensive development and high-quality education will give the child a good start..." (p. 11), but warns against manifestations of parental perfectionism.

A study into the causes of young generation passivity undertaken by M. M. Basimov (2019) and presented in his paper "Psychological Causes Behind Youth Reluctance to Participate in Political Life" proved to be useful for us. The researcher states that: "In educational institutions, the process of socialization of students is regulated by a number of national, departmental, regional, municipal, and school programs for education and socialization of students. These programs... however, are of little use in building the competence of young people in politics". This is the probable reason why young people are so reluctant to explore cultural spaces new to them.

Many studies indicate that young people are the indicator of a process of values transformation, and as a result, their "cultural navigation" becomes more complex. Thus, Yu. A. Zubok and V. I. Chuprov (2018) write that the modern "Sociocultural space ... exhibits contradictory trends..." (p. 137), meaning alternating youth departure from and return to traditional values.

P. E. Okuneva and A. N. Medvedev (2018) in their paper investigate the role of vocal singing in reinforcing moral and aesthetic values among young people. The mechanisms for transmitting intergenerational socio-cultural experience within a family are discussed in the paper by O. A. Nemova (Nemova & Semusheva, 2020; Nemova & Svadbina, 2020; Nemova & Kartasheva, 2019), G. M. Tanieva and V. P. Kozyrkov (2015). The questions of encouraging interest in music through everyday interactions between parents and children are explored in a collective monograph: "Private Life in a Family: In Pursuit of Harmony and Meaning" (Svadbina et al., 2017).

3 Research Methodological Framework

The main purpose of this paper was to analyze the musical interests and preferences of the present-day students based on the empirical evidence.

The research objectives were as follows:

1. Identify the role of a family in shaping the musical preferences.
2. Examine the musical tastes and preferences of the present-day students. For this purpose, conduct the comparative analysis of musical tastes of students referred to the group of "professionals" (those who chose music as a future profession) and the group of "non-professionals".
3. Investigate the problems of preserving Russian family musical traditions (playing music instruments at home, visiting musical performances, performing Russian folk songs, and so on).
4. Reveal the attitudes of young people to music and song genre, and their role in human life.

In 2019, on the basis of the research laboratory devoted to the problems of a modern family at the Minin Nizhny Novgorod State Pedagogical University (hereinafter the Minin's University) (laboratory headed by O. A. Nemova) a sociological survey "The Role of Music in the Life of Youth" was organized and carried out: The data was collected through a questionnaire survey (N-300). The research covered students of the Minin's University of the second and third years of study (89.3%) and students of Balakirev's Nizhny Novgorod Music College (10.7%), the sample included 39% of males and 61% of females.

The main focus of Balakirev's Music College is training of professional musicians. Most students surveyed in the Minin's University were from the Department of Social and Technical Services Management, in other words these were students whose professional preferences are not related to music.

The research used a quantitative method of questionnaire survey, with subsequent data processing with the SPSS-21 software.

4 Results and Discussion

In order to understand the role of a family in shaping musical preferences, the respondents were asked a question "Whose impact on your musical preferences was the biggest?". The respondents had to choose one answer out of five options ("parents", "relatives", "classmates, co-workers", "friends", "mass media, radio, TV, newspapers, Internet, etc."). The biggest impact on the musical tastes comes from parents and relatives (38.0% and 4.3%). Quite a significant role in the process of musical socialization is played by the opinion of friends (28.7%) and mass media (25.3%). Therefore, in musical socialization the impact of family and the immediate circle is the highest.

Answers to the question "Which music is listened to in your house?" were as follows: 65.3% listen to pop music at home, 16.3% listen to classical music (predominantly students of Balakirev's college), 6.3% listen to rock music, and 2.7% listen to jazz. 9.3% answered that in their houses music does not sound at all.

The look at the problem from the perspective of "professionals" and "non-professionals" revealed that for music college students the impact of parents is stronger than for students of the Minin's university (93.8% vs 12.7%). Apparently, parents' love for music and the continuation of traditions of listening to music (especially classical music) in the family affected not only musical tastes and preferences of young people, but also, as a result, determined their professional choice.

The popularity of light pop music among young people indicates lowering of the "music bar" in the general musical culture of Russians. Those products that are now called "mass music culture" have nothing in common with Russian national traditions. For the most part it is copying of not the best samples of Western pop culture (Chebotaev & Fedoseev, 2008).

The tradition of home music performances was spread not only in the pre-revolutionary epoch, but also in Soviet times, namely: singing romances and bard songs to the guitar, singing songs at a feast table, playing harmonica in Russian villages, student, army, camping songs, youth song contests, and so on. The results of the survey revealed that many of the respondents enjoy singing in karaoke, many have musical instruments at home, but the tradition of joint music performances, which once was popular in Russian society, seems to be fading away. What does this suggest? Probably, that everything that is "offline", genuine and real-life in the age of high technology is, unfortunately, relegated to the background. Thus, for example, live interactions between people (which has already been many times raised by sociologists, psychologists, teachers, etc.) are overtaken by chats, social media, Skype, Viber, etc. Certainly, the technological advances and new devices have brought comfort into our lives and reduced the time and distances for quick communication. However, at the same time they have deprived us of something else, deeply rooted in our culture and life, representing traditions, indispensable for a man, and have caused transformations in our human, cultural and aesthetic concepts. Thus, once a popular genre for intimate home performances was a romance, or a Russian romantic song. As evidenced by the history of Russian music, domestic singing of romantic songs (romances) was an integral part of everyday life of Russian society (not only nobility, but also petite bourgeois and people belonging to different social classes) in the 19th century.

Meanwhile, even prominent Russian musicians, teachers, and performers admit that the tradition of singing romances recedes into the past.

Vladimir Fedoseev (Chebotaev & Fedoseev, 2008), when answering a question about the key distinction of music perception by Russians, emphasized that: "Russia is a lyrical figure. This is manifested in the traits of our national character - a desire to be close to each other, kind heartedness, mutual help, readiness to share the sorrows of our nearest. The ability to enjoy and admire nature, works of art, music, group - both feast-table and choral - singing, the ability to understand and accept the soul of another nation ... These are all lyrical phenomena" (Chebotaev & Fedoseev, 2008).

Reading the memoirs, including letters and recollections of Russian emigrants, describing the Russian life at the turn of 19th and 20th centuries, one becomes convinced: representatives of the Russian urban intelligentsia once had good skills in playing musical instruments, held chamber evenings at homes and played in ensembles. There are a lot of examples, including the classic ones. Below is just one fragment from a work which heroes are non-professional musicians who nevertheless spend all their time playing the piano, and become participants of string quartets, sing, and perform at home concerts: "Dima started performing Chopin's scherzo, (...). The impression of his playing was inexpressible, he was a genuine accomplished musician. It was hard to describe with words. Music has always had a strong effect on me, I could enjoy it tirelessly. It evoked the memories of my father, my childhood years, when I got with my feet into the corner of the sofa and literally held my breath to listen to it. Sounds carried me away into the mysterious, unknown world... And now, having closed my eyes, I could not listen without excitement, my father played this scherzo, I played, but when Dima performed it, though familiar, it sounded somewhat differently: the new conveyance of some phrases was captivating and touched new strings of perception. I was captured by this novelty, elegance of performance..." (Ishmenetskaya, 2015).

Musical national traditions have deep historical roots. The everyday and festive culture of the Russian people is unthinkable without dancing, music and singing (Okuneva & Medvedev, 2018). The song accompanied the working life and holidays in all segments of Russian society. Meanwhile, the study revealed that the tradition of joint music playing and songs singing in the family circle, is gradually fading away. To the question: "Do you have so-called 'feast-table songs' performed in your family on holidays?" only 24.7% of respondents gave a positive answer, while 75.3% replied negatively. Predictably, the group of "professionals" maintain the traditions of festive singing more often than the "non-professionals" (50% versus 21.6%).

We view the gradual erosion of the best family musical traditions common to everyday and festive life of Russians as a negative social phenomenon, since music is not only the guardian of the Russian mental code and character, but, at the same time, a mechanism for intergenerational cohesion and transmission of intergenerational values.

In the age of technological progress, karaoke singing becomes increasingly popular. One of the hypotheses behind the study was an assumption that young people continued the tradition of joint family music performances through the use of new technologies, i.e. the karaoke. However, this hypothesis was not validated. Only 21.7% of respondents sing karaoke at home, 78.3%, respectively, are not doing this, showing indifference to the music as such, despite technological innovations. A group of "professionals" are still more likely to sing karaoke songs as compared to "non-professionals" (50.0% versus 21.6%).

The tradition of family attendance of musical evenings (subscription or other concert events) is becoming a thing of the past. So, to the question "Does your family have a tradition of joint family attendance of musical evenings (subscription events or other kinds of concerts)?" was answered in the affirmative only by 17.0% of the total pool of respondents. "Professionals",

as compared to their less engaged peers, attend city music events twice as often (31.3% versus 15.3%).

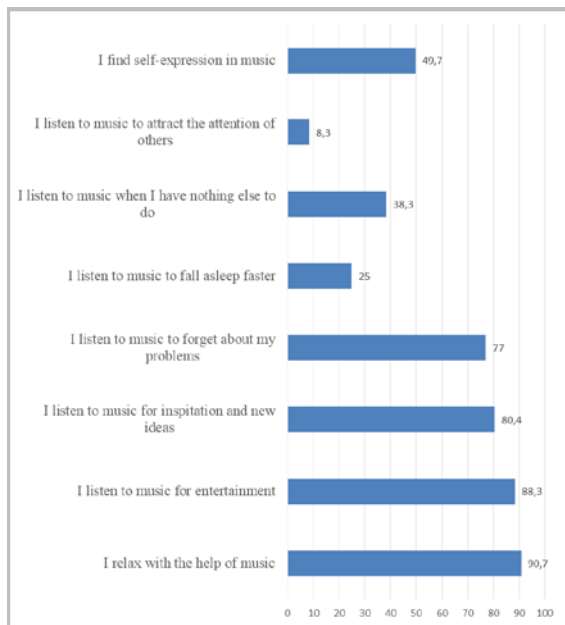
The tradition of family attendance of musical evenings (subscription or other concert events) is also departing into oblivion. So, to the question "Does your family have a tradition of joint family attendance of musical evenings (subscription events or other kinds of concerts)?" was answered in the affirmative only by 17.0% of the total pool of respondents.

What kind of events most attract young people as family leisure activities? Those who answered the previous question positively were offered another question "Which concerts or music performances do you prefer attending with the members of your family?". 21.0% of respondents attend popular music concerts, 18.7% attend opera and ballet performances, 17.0% attend classical music concerts, and 7.0% attend performances at the operetta theater.

What is the situation with preserving and disseminating the tradition of family music performances in the "post-perestroika" time, the era of liberal-market relations? The research results are not optimistic: to the question "Does your family have a tradition of family music performances?" only 5.7% of respondents answered "Yes, very often", 5.3% - "quite often", 34.0% - "sometimes", and 55% - "never".

The study found that the majority of respondents (90.7%) use music to relieve emotional tension, to relax, to get aesthetic pleasure, to have fun (88.3%), to get inspired (80.4%), to forget about everyday problems (77.0%). 49.7% of the respondents admitted that music is a means of self-expression for them. 38.3% of students fill their spare time with music, and listen to music when they have "nothing else to do". A quarter (25%) of respondents noted that music helps them to cope with insomnia, which in itself is surprising. While only 8.3% of the survey respondents use music to show off, in order to attract other people's attention (Fig. 1).

Figure 1 Functional Purposes of Music Among the Youth, %

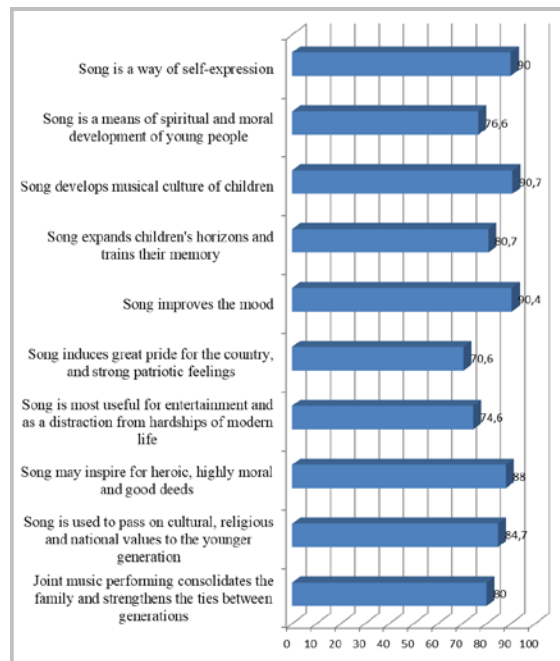


Source: author's own processing

Revealing the attitude of youth to the song genre and the joint family music performances was one of the core objectives of this research. The respondents were also offered some statements with agree-disagree answer options (on a scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"). Respondents' answers were as follows: song develops the musical culture of children (90.7%), song improves the mood (90.4%), song is a way of self-expression (90%), song may inspire to great, highly moral and

good deeds (88%), song is a means of passing cultural, religious and national values on to the younger generation (84.7%), etc. Significantly fewer respondents (74.6%), compared to the previous statements, see the song only as a form of entertainment and a way to get distracted from everyday routine. Highly illustrative is the youth attitude to the song as inducing the feeling of pride for homeland, and strengthening the patriotic feelings. 70.6% of respondents agree with this statement. The authors believe that the topic of patriotism as such is unfortunately disappearing from the modern song genre (See Fig. 2).

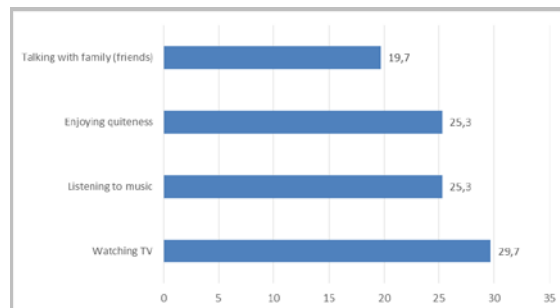
Figure 2 The Role of a Song Among the Youth (Total of answers "Somewhat Agree" and "Strongly Agree"), %



Source: author's own processing

One of the hypothesis behind the research was an assumption that during the mealtime all youngsters prefer watching TV. This hypothesis was validated only partially (See Fig. 2). As an activity during the mealtime watching TV was chosen by 29.7% of respondents, listening to music by 25.3%, enjoying quietness by 15% and talks with family and friends by 19.7% of respondents (See Fig. 3).

Figure 3 Respondents' Activities During the Mealtime (breakfast, lunch and dinner), %



Source: author's own processing

In reality, only a third of the surveyed students watch TV when eating. This indicates the general trend of decline in TV viewing among the youngsters. In the experts' opinion, the reason of aging of TV viewers is the intergenerational "digital gap" which resulted in overtaking of television by other home leisure activities. The youth pivoting towards the Internet has become the objective reality. The same TV programs may be viewed on

the Internet at the convenient time, and the modern youth eagerly benefits from this possibility.

5 Conclusion

Summing up the results of these research, we have drawn a conclusion that though music is every day present in the life of every person, the traditions of joint family music performances, attendance of music performers' concerts and collective singing around the feast table during big celebrations are sinking into oblivion beyond retrieve. This social fact testifies to the erosion of bonds between generations which began in the 1990s (Nemova & Kartasheva. 2019). Today we are witnessing the thinning out of a delicate fabric of cultural intergenerational bonds, which may further lead to a loss of the national mental code.

The lack of general music education and development of music taste has aggravated into the national disaster. Practicing musicians are sounding the alarm bells regarding the reduced number of hours of singing in childcare centers and schools, and less often do the music teachers play music instruments themselves. Audio recordings and other types of electronic musical accompaniment have become widespread. In the USSR almost every institution had its own choir, but today in the age of commerce and market relations, it is becoming an extreme rarity and unaffordable luxury.

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