

# THE ROLES OF MUSIC IN RELEASING STRESS DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWN IN VIETNAM: CASE OF VIETNAMESE YOUTH

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**Abstract:** When COVID-19 causes a lot of problems for people and society. College students experience varying difficulties and degrees of stress, and this period had a significant negative impact on their mental health. One of the best ways for students to reduce stress during confinement is through music. This study aims to examine how students assess their stress levels during COVID-19 and explores how they choose their music genre as well as cope with their stress problems. Online surveys using simple question formats are conducted. Participants are students of Ho Chi Minh City's FPT University and experienced the COVID-19 period in Vietnam. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used to analyse the data. SPSS program were used to count, calculate the data recorded from the survey. The findings show that academic overload stress, isolation stress, and fear of contagion stress were three main stressors. The most of respondents' experiences on the epidemic is very modest level of stress. The result shows that FPT students tend to listen to music when they are facing academic stress and find it really effective to increasing mood and have mentally recovered while they find that music is not quite effective to release other 2 type of stress. Pop and Ballad were the two most popular genres listened by FPT students to reduce stress during the lockdown.

**Keywords :** COVID - 19, psychological , music, stress, university students

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## Introduction

In addition to the worry of contracting the virus, many students living in Vietnam during the current COVID-19 outbreak must also deal with changing lifestyle and the way they receive their education. There has been a significant detrimental impact on mental health as a result of this period's negative effects, including elevated levels of anxiety, sadness, stress, loneliness, and fear of contagion. Due to the convenience and accessibility, many people have resorted to music as a remedy to lessen the harm to their mental health. They listen to their favorite song on electronic devices for entertainment and take their minds off of the situation then. Additionally, listening to slow music slows down the speed of brain waves, creating a calm

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state that can help lower stress. In particular, FPT university students' changes in music listening habits during the COVID-19 lockdown will be examined in this study

## **Materials and Methods**

Since we were interested in gathering information on numerous aspects, dimensions, and components of the phenomenon under research, the study was mostly descriptive in nature. The data were gathered in a FPT University student survey. The research was designed to investigate a series of aspects in relation to the use of music by students in FPT University during the period of confinement. The questionnaire “Survey: Music genres listened by students for stress release during COVID-19” was hosted on a Google Form application, and administered and shared on social media and through researcher group channels. The survey form was open for responses during the 1-week period between October 28 and November 4, 2022.

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Result***

We use SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) program to analyse data recorded from the survey form in order to count the numbers, calculate the percentage and give N (overall scale).

In the question : “How would you rate your Stress level during COVID-19 out of 5”. Most of the students didn’t face the problem of being serious stressed, The majority of answers was around Level 1 to Level 3 and Level 3 was the highest rate at 33.3% which means FPT students experienced average stress levels during COVID, not too slight and not too serious.

<b>Stress level</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	18	20,9	20,9	20,9
	2	18	20,9	20,9	41,9
	3	29	33,7	33,7	75,6
	4	14	16,3	16,3	91,9
	5	7	8,1	8,1	100,0
	Total	86	100,0	100,0	

*Figure 1: Data of answers of rating level of stress during COVID-19*

Specifically, in Figure 1, we can see that stress 1 (no stress) and stress 2 (mild stress) share the same metric which is 20.9%. In addition, stress levels 4 (fairly severe) and stress 5 (severe) were 16.3% and 8.1%, respectively.

	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Academic workload	35	26,1%	40,7%
Isolation	50	37,3%	58,1%
Fear of contagion	39	29,1%	45,3%
Other	10	7,5%	11,6%
Total	134	100,0%	155,8%

Figure 2 : Reason causing stress during COVID-19

Next, participants were asked about the reason causing stress during COVID-19. We fixed 3 main reasons which were “Stress caused by academic workload, stress caused by isolation and stress cause by fear of contagion” in the above study as the choice for the survey, in addition, there is an "other" section for people to give answers other than the fixed reasons.

In Figure 2, “Isolation” was the biggest reason causing stress with a 37.3% chosen rate. This figure of “Academic workload” was 26,1% while “Fear of contagion” took up a little higher rate which was 29.1% and others was 7.5%.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	80	93,0	93,0	93,0
	No	6	7,0	7,0	100,0
Total		86	100,0	100,0	

Figure 3 : Do you listen to music during COVID

After questions about stress, participants were then asked “Did you listen to music during Lockdown of COVID-19?” in Figure 3. There were 80 out of 6 answers who said “Yes” which were 93% and continued the questions about Music as a method of solving stress problems.

Focus on 3 main reason causing mentioned, we did 3 Likert scale questions for each reason respectively “Academic workload”, “Isolation” and “Fear of contagion”.

**Academic stress**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	1,3	1,3	1,3
	2	4	5,0	5,0	6,3
	3	8	10,0	10,0	16,3
	4	27	33,8	33,8	50,0
	5	40	50,0	50,0	100,0
	Total	80	100,0	100,0	

Figure 4 : Effectiveness of the use of music to reduce academic stress

In Figure 4, participants were asked to do the Likert scale of the question “Evaluate the effectiveness of using music to reduce academic workload stress?”. We received 50% of FPT students who rate scale 5 which is the most effective way to reduce this kind of stress. Moreover, 33.8% was the figure of scale 4 and 10% of scale 3. Poorly, scale 1 contained 1.3% and scale 2 was 5%.

**Isolation**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	30	34,9	34,9	34,9
	2	18	20,9	20,9	55,8
	3	14	16,3	16,3	72,1
	4	11	12,8	12,8	84,9
	5	13	15,1	15,1	100,0
	Total	86	100,0	100,0	

Figure 5 : Effectiveness of the use of music to reduce isolation stress

In Figure 5, again, participants were asked to do the Likert scale exactly the same as Figure 4 with the question “Evaluate the effectiveness of using music to reducing isolation stress”

Unlike academic stress, the highest percent in the chart was scale 1 (not effective) which took up 34.9%, second highest was scale 2 which was 20.9% and scale 3,4,5 were almost equal which took up respectively 16.3%, 12.8% and 15.1%

**Fear of contagion**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	23	26,7	26,7	26,7
	2	20	23,3	23,3	50,0
	3	17	19,8	19,8	69,8
	4	17	19,8	19,8	89,5
	5	9	10,5	10,5	100,0
Total		86	100,0	100,0	

Figure 6 :Effectiveness of the use of music to reduce fear of contagion stress

In Figure 6, same type of Likert scale was used with the question “Evaluate the effectiveness of using music to reducing fear of contagion stress”

This figure shows that all scales share pretty similar data. Specifically, scale 1 was the highest which took up 26.7%, scale 2 was 23.3%. Scale 3 and 4 share the same percentage which was 19.8% while scale 5 was the smallest, just 10.5%.

Next part, similar to “efficiency” section, we approach the "most listened to music genres" section based on the 3 reasons for stress during the COVID season above to provide the most practical analysis.

**Music genre to reduce academic work stress**

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
<b>Genres</b>	Pop	50	26,9%	62,5%
	Ballad	50	26,9%	62,5%
	Classical	27	14,5%	33,8%
	Rap	32	17,2%	40,0%
	EDM	27	14,5%	33,8%
Total		186	100,0%	232,5%

Figure 7 :Music genres were listened to reduce academic stress

Based on the Figure 7 , The majority of FPT students chose Pop and Ballad as 2 most listened genres which was (26,9%, N=50) for both genres. Rap genre was second most popular to students during COVID which contained (17.2%, N=32) while Classical and EDM shared the same figure which were (14.5%, N=27).

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
<b>Genres</b>	Pop	44	25,6%	55,0%
	Ballad	47	27,3%	58,8%
	Classical	23	13,4%	28,7%
	Rap	27	15,7%	33,8%
	EDM	31	18,0%	38,8%
<b>Total</b>		172	100,0%	215,0%

Figure 8 :Music genres were listened to reduce isolation stress

Based on Figure 8, the most popular genre listened to cope with isolation stress was Ballad which had the percentage of (27.3%, N=47), next was (25.6%, N=44) of Pop genre. Moreover, Classical, Rap and EDM were respectively (13.4%, N=23), (15.7%, N=27) and (18%, N=31).

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
<b>Genres</b>	Pop	52	32,9%	65,0%
	Ballad	41	25,9%	51,2%
	Classical	21	13,3%	26,3%
	Rap	21	13,3%	26,3%
	EDM	23	14,6%	28,7%
<b>Total</b>		158	100,0%	197,5%

Figure 9 :Music genres were listened to reduce contagion stress

Figure 9 shows Pop and Ballad were popular genres to FPT students to reduce fear of contagion stress which were (32,9%, N=52) and (25,9%, N=41). Classical, Rap were both (13,3%, N=21) while this figure in EDM genre was (14,6%, N=23).

## Discussion

### Overall

Most of the available research and evidence are correct when applied to FPT students, the survey questions posed have reinforced the above assertion. However, most FPT students do not seem to experience too much stress in the time of COVID lockdown, as evidenced by the main assessment scale on the question of stress level in COVID only revolves around scale 1, 2 and 3. Explain for this, It should be noted that before the lockdown, universities in Vietnam

in general and FPT University in particular had online education methods for unique circumstances. The majority of the curriculum is also completed on presentations and software, so students have experience with this. For instance, students or lecturers who are unable to attend classes in person can take online classes. so that pupils can rapidly adjust to online instruction. Another justification is that Vietnam manages the lockdown properly, so students only need to cooperate and remain at home to allay their fears of spreading the illness. Students will face some stress, but they also have access to distractions like social media and music, so their mental health won't differ much from normal day. In addition, besides the three fixed stress factors, in the "other" category, most of the answers received were "don't feel stressed", so we can conclude that within FPT students, There is not a seriousness of stress during COVID-19.

### ***Efficiency of music as a way to reducing 3 reason causing stress among FPT students***

Interestingly, 3 figures representing 3 causes of stress produce 3 completely different types of results. Specifically, Figure 4 representing academic stress shows the absolute efficiency with the highest scale 5 ratio, up to 50%, and scale 3, 4 also took up a high percentage which proves that FPT students tend to listen to music when they can't keep up with their knowledge. learning, and issues related to online classes and find it really effective. On the other hand, for the reason of isolation, listening to music doesn't seem like a good way to relieve stress for FPT students with the ratio of choosing scale 1, 2, 3 overwhelming compared to scale 4, 5. Maybe music sometimes makes them think more and also does not help them connect with society, friends. Finally, the reason for fear of contagion has a fairly similar scale (about 20%) showing average effectiveness, some people find it effective and some people don't.

### ***Most listened music genres by FPT students to reducing stress in 3 different reason***

According to a survey conducted by Amasya University, Pop music was the most popular musical genre before and during the pandemic, jazz and religious music were the least popular musical genres before and during the pandemic, and the frequency of listening to arabesque music increased during the pandemic process

In the case of students in Vietnam, Pop and Ballad are the 2 most commonly heard genres for FPT students during the lockdown, which is true for all 3 reasons of stress. There doesn't seem to be a change in the type of music heard before and after the lockdown, especially light music that theoretically helps reduce stress. To explain this, the group of subjects surveyed are students, so Pop and Ballad music is listened to the most, which is understandable. During the lockdown period, they use listening to music as an effective way to relieve stress but they tend

to listen to familiar songs every day, the stress level is not so high for them to think about changing music genres to relieve stress.

### **Conclusion**

A survey of 402 first-year Australian University students (73.9% female, Mage = 19.6; 75% domestic and 25% international) looked at whether listening to music for stress relief was linked to wellbeing, how well it worked compared to other stress management techniques, and whether domestic and international students differed from one another. A song that the participants said helped them deal with the stress of the COVID-19 was also nominated, and its characteristics were examined. In order to reduce stress, switching places, exercising, and getting some sleep were all equally effective. Not COVID-19-related stress levels, but rather better wellbeing, was linked to the efficiency of music listening as a coping method. Foreign students experienced higher COVID-19 stress levels than domestic students

In Vietnam, people's mental health has been significantly impacted by the lockdown period, particularly the generation of college students. They are under stress due to the amount of studying they must do, loneliness, and infection worry. As a result, listening to music while under lockdown can help with mental health. These findings from a study of students at FPT University support the idea that listening to music is mostly done for its calming and stress-relieving effects. According to research findings, students are experiencing mild stress.

### **Limitations**

Although this study has shown consistent results, we should also be aware of its limitations: First, memory-related issues may arise because the material was gathered retroactively after the COVID pandemic scenario in Vietnam had ceased. When compared to before the pandemic, these potential misunderstandings regarding listening preferences and musical genres are notable. We are more interested in estimates than actual facts since they take the influence of subjective perception on health into consideration. However, in addition to asking participants to reflect on their musical choices during the lockdown after it was ended, the question also asked them to contrast this behavior with their routines prior to the epidemic. The results of this study should be interpreted cautiously even if this method was also used in other studies on changing music genres for stress alleviation during COVID-19.

Second, the study's sample size was somewhat modest. This is the restriction on the parship results, and only the results can be utilized to determine importance. The data did, however, yield some fascinating graphs regarding the ways in which FPT students utilized music to

reduce stress, the efficiency of various musical genres, and the evolution of musical listening preferences before and after COVID.

### **Suggestion**

These results will serve as a practical source of information to evaluate theories related to stress issues, changes in music genre selection among students in general. The article itself will become a pioneer in research topics on Stress, COVID-19 and students due to the lack of these topics in Vietnam. In addition, the survey form will continue to be extended to many different universities in Vietnam beside FPT University to increase the data, thereby increasing the accuracy of the data to give the best assessment and analysis on the relevant issue.

### **Declaration of Interest Statement**

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

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