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# MUSICAL CULTURE IN THE DIGITAL AGE AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF SPIRITUAL VALUES

**Annotation.** The transformation of the digital age has made music increasingly accessible through various streaming platforms, and it has become an integral part of students' daily lives. This ease of access allows music to function not only as entertainment, but also as a means of self-reflection and strengthening spiritual values. The purpose of this study is to analyze the role of music as a means of meditation in shaping students' spiritual consciousness. The study used a descriptive quantitative approach using a survey method, which involved 104 students who are in the habit of listening to music. The data was collected using a Google Forms-based questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistical methods in the form of percentages and interpretation of the results. The results showed that the majority of respondents consider music as a means to help manage emotions, strengthen inner peace and promote reflection on the meaning of life. Common songs were recognized as being able to convey positive messages that stimulate self-reflection. Thus, music has the potential to become an effective means of meditation in supporting the formation and strengthening of students' spiritual consciousness in the digital age.

**Keywords:** music, meditation, spiritual awareness, students, self-reflection.

## *Introduction*

The transformation of the digital age has changed the patterns of media consumption, including how the younger generation accesses and uses music in their daily lives. The development of digital technology allows people to enjoy music instantly through various streaming platforms such as Spotify and YouTube Music. According to Dingle et al., music has become an integral part of the daily life of the younger generation, as it functions not only as entertainment, but also as a means of emotional regulation [1]. Similarly, Bish explains that easy access to digital technologies has led to the fact that music is increasingly integrated into various types of personal activities [2]. A study by Wang et al. It also shows that young people, including college students, consume music intensively to accompany their studies, relax, and manage their mood. This phenomenon indicates that music has become a part of the student lifestyle and has an impact on emotional experiences and the personal meaning of life. The phenomenon of music use among college students is becoming increasingly interesting in the context of the psychological well-being of the younger generation. Numerous news reports since the pandemic have highlighted the growing psychological stress among students due to academic demands and the uncertainty of the future. In this context, Carlson explains that young people tend to use music as a coping mechanism for emotional stress. Vidas' research [3] has also shown that listening to music is associated with improved

psychological well-being and reduced stress. Meanwhile, Gunawan[4] emphasizes that music can help people achieve peace of mind and promote self-reflection. Thus, music serves not only as a means of entertainment, but also plays a role in helping people manage their psychological state.

These conditions are of great importance for the life of students. Students are at the stage of development leading to adulthood, which is characterized by the process of searching for self-identity, strengthening values and forming life orientations. According to the study, the digital generation is facing problems related to the high degree of exposure to technology, which can affect psychological balance and the quality of personal life. The scientists explain that the high intensity of digital media use can also affect the quality of students' self-reflection. The Liza study [5] shows that students in the digital age are experiencing academic pressure.as well as social issues that can affect their mental and spiritual well-being. In such circumstances, students tend to seek personal, flexible, and easily accessible media as a way to find peace and space for reflection. According to R. Roberts [5], the practice of spiritual reflection is associated with deepening the meaning of life and strengthening personal spirituality. In accordance with this, Hussein and Wahab explain that spiritual reflection contributes to a person's inner well-being. Murtado and Badrudin also emphasize that tafakkur is not just a cognitive activity, but a spiritual process that guides a person to realize their connection with God. The connection between music and meditation can be understood through the ability of music to influence human emotions. According to R. Johnson, musical experiences can cause people to feel transcendence and spiritual connection. K. Gelbirger explains that music can create an emotional space that encourages people to engage in deeper contemplation. The results of the study by Mutmain et al. It is also shown that music can provide a cognitive experience through strong emotional engagement. When music contains moral messages or spiritual values, the listening process ceases to be passive and can become a contemplative means encouraging people to reflect on the meaning of life[6].

In this study, spiritual awareness is understood as a person's ability to recognize inner states, understand the meaning of life, and guide their behavior based on spiritual values. According to P. Rimbaud, spiritual awareness is related to a person's ability to interpret life experience more deeply.Rupert and R. Derick added that spirituality contributes to the formation of a person's psychological well-being and life orientation. Virani and Kurniawan also explained that strengthening spirituality helps a person build a more meaningful relationship with themselves.Spiritual self-awareness is manifested in introspection activities, the quality of spirituality, and the ability to combine learning activities with spiritual values. Despite the fact that music has become an integral part of college students' lives, there is still relatively little research focused specifically on music as a means of meditation for developing spiritual awareness among students. Most previous research has focused on music in the context of mental health, emotional regulation, or general spirituality. There are still few studies examining the relationship between musical experience, meditation, and spiritual awareness among students. Therefore, this study is important to explain how music can be interpreted not just as a means of entertainment, but also as a means of spiritual reflection for the development of spiritual awareness among students.

*Research methods*

This study used a descriptive quantitative approach using the questionnaire method. The purpose of the study was to describe the students' views on the role of music as a means of meditation in the formation of spiritual awareness. The study involved 104 respondents, all students from al-Farabi Kazakh National University, who are in the habit of listening to music.

The respondents were selected using a targeted sampling method based on the criteria of students and active listeners of music. The study used primary data obtained using a questionnaire based on Google Forms. In order to comply with ethical standards, research on the identity of the respondents and their educational institutions was not disclosed. The study was conducted in three stages: data validation, data tabulation, and data analysis. At the stage of data verification, the completeness of the responses was assessed, their compliance with the characteristics of the respondents, and irrelevant data was eliminated. At the tabulation stage, the data was grouped into question categories and presented in the form of tables, percentages, and diagrams. Then descriptive analysis methods were used to analyze the data, interpreting the percentages and trends of respondents' responses in order to illustrate the role of music as a means of meditation in the development of spiritual awareness among students.

*Results and discussion*

According to the results of the data collection, 104 responses were received from students showing interest in listening to music.




Figure 1. Gender Distribution of Respondents (N = 104)

Technological progress has made significant changes in the way people enjoy music. The advent of increasingly modern digital devices has made accessing and playing your favorite songs easier and more convenient for music lovers. Thanks to the support of modern devices, music can now be enjoyed anytime, anywhere, without restrictions on space or time.

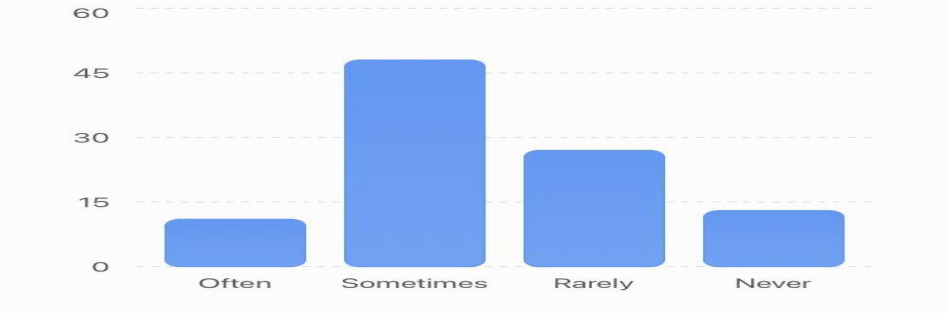



Figure 2. Frequency of Students' Selection of Songs with Spiritual Themes

According to the data, the majority of respondents stated that they sometimes listen to songs with spiritual motives — as many as 50 respondents (48.1%). In addition, 28 respondents (26.9%) stated that they rarely listen to songs with spiritual motives, 14 respondents (13.5%) — never, and only 12 respondents (11.5%) — often choose songs with

spiritual motives. These results show that religious songs are not the main choice in students' daily musical consumption, although they still occupy an important place in their musical experience.

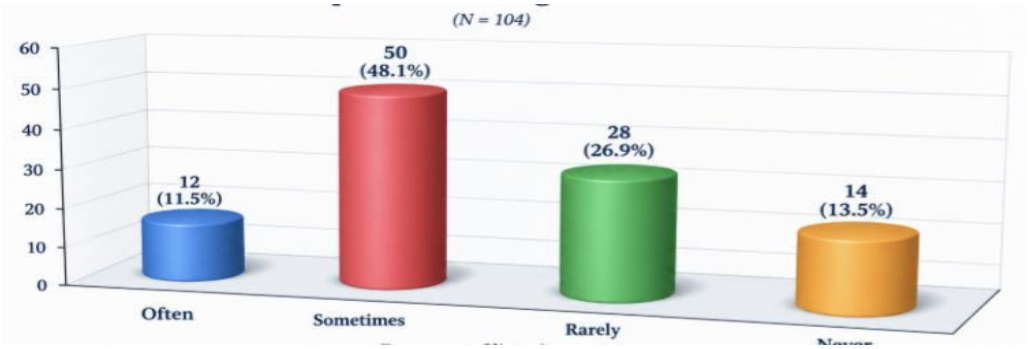



Figure 3. Frequency of Students' Selection of Songs with Spiritual Themes

These results show that university students tend to have diverse patterns of music consumption and are not limited to any particular genre. Previous studies have also shown that the majority of respondents prefer a combination of different musical genres to one genre. This suggests that college students' musical preferences depend more on emotional situations, moods, and psychological needs than just on belonging to a particular genre.

These findings are consistent with a study by Wang et al., which explains that students in the digital age tend to use music flexibly, according to their emotional needs and psychological state. Carlson et al. We also found that people use music not only based on its category, but also based on its ability to create emotional comfort. In addition, Rinvanda and Soleh (2025) explain that the function of music for students is often related to stress management and the search for calm, rather than a preference for a particular genre.In the context of this study, the results indicate that the process of contemplation does not always occur due to songs with explicit religious overtones. Students can gain the experience of reflection through various types of music if the music contains a meaningful message or is able to create a space for contemplation. This suggests that the function of music as a means of contemplation depends more on the individual interpretation of music.

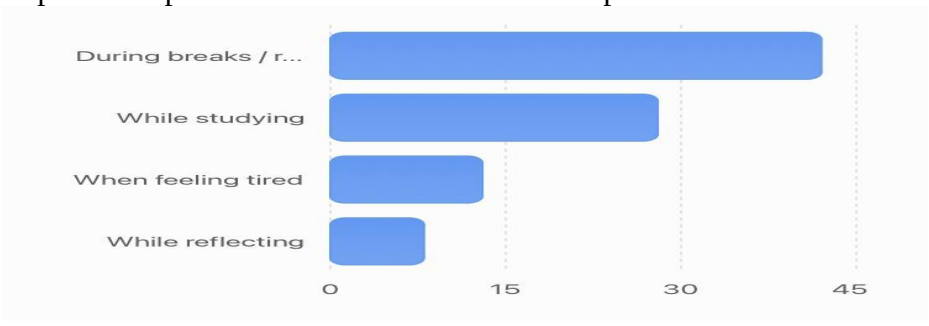



Figure 4. Situations in Which Students Most Frequently Listen to Music

The respondents most often listened to music during breaks or rest periods — 42 people (40.4%). In addition, 28 respondents (26.9%) chose to listen to music while studying, 13 respondents (12.5%) — when they felt tired, and 8 respondents (7.7%) — when they were thinking. These results show that listening to music most often occurs in situations related to emotional needs or certain psychological conditions.The predominance of listening to music

during breaks and rest indicates that students use music as a means to calm down and relieve boredom after completing assignments.Academic field. Music in this context serves not only as entertainment, but also to create a more comfortable psychological atmosphere. Meanwhile, the fact that the respondents listened to music when they felt tired and were prone to reflection suggests that music is also used in situations involving emotional and reflexive needs. These results are consistent with a study by Carlson et al., which explains that music is widely used in everyday life as a means of controlling mood and psychological well-being. Vidas et al. They also found that university students use music as a coping strategy to help reduce emotional stress and achieve peace of mind. In addition, Dingle et al. They explain that musical activity promotes emotional regulation and personal well-being.From the point of view of meditation, states of rest, fatigue, and moments of contemplation are situations where people have space for self—reflection. Although the percentage of students who listen to music while contemplating is relatively small, these results show that music can be a means to support the process of contemplation and inner awareness. Thus, music can be understood not only as an entertaining activity, but also as a means to help people create a space for reflection in their daily lives.

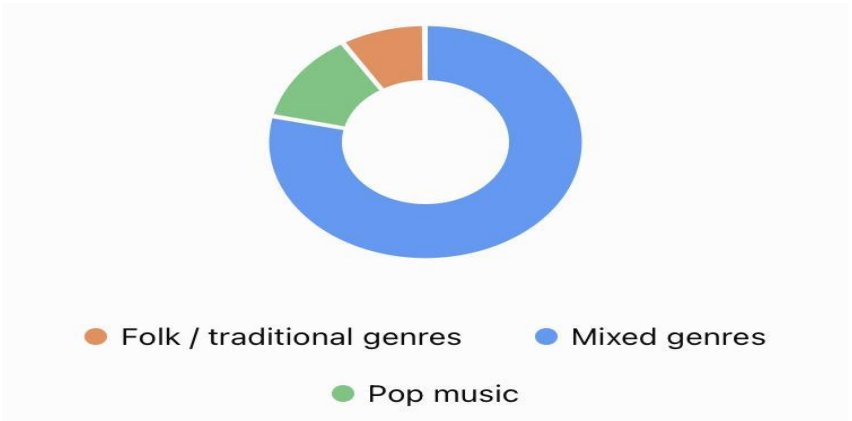



Figure 5. Statistical interpretation

The majority of respondents chose a mix of genres as the most frequently listened music genre — 82 people (78.8%). In addition, 13 respondents (12.5%) chose pop music, while folklore genres occupied a smaller share. These results show that students tend to have diverse musical preferences and do not focus on any one particular genre.This variety of preferences indicates that students choose music based on situational needs, mood, and desired emotional experience. The choice of genre combinations demonstrates that the role of music in students' lives is determined not only by the category of music, but also by the context of its use, as well as the meaning they extract from listening. Thus, students tend to be flexible in choosing music appropriate to their current psychological state.This conclusion is consistent with the opinion of Shilikin and Baharuddin, who argued that music can be understood as a means of reflection and spirituality when people use it not only for entertainment, but also as a means to understand inner experiences, reflect on life and approach spiritual values. In this context, music can help a person calm their mind, manage their emotions, and find meaning in life through a deeper process of contemplation. With the help of melody, rhythm and text, a person can express and interpret various emotions that arise in everyday life.In the context of this study, the results show that the potential of music as a means of contemplation is not limited to genres alone. Although spiritual music often

carries more explicit spiritual messages, other types of music can also promote reflection if interpreted deeply by the listener. This confirms the view that the process of contemplation depends more on individual interpretation and inner experience than on the type of music being listened to.As many as 45 respondents (43.3%) said they agreed, while 14 respondents (13.5%) fully agreed that music could be used as a means of emotional expression, stress reduction, and psychological well-being.

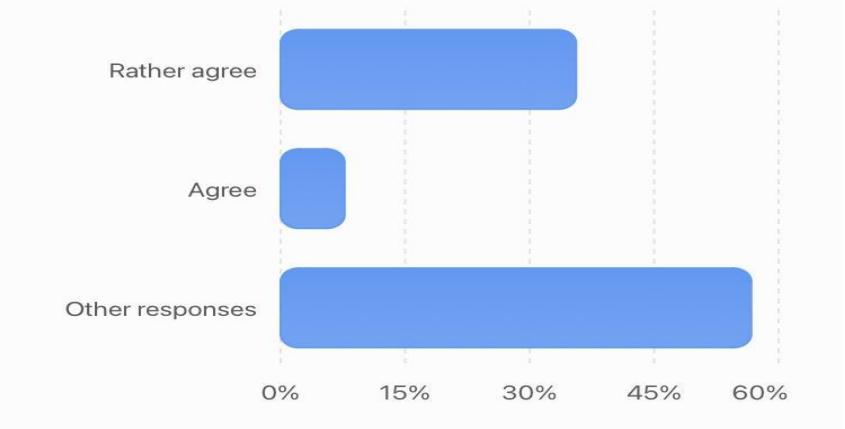



Figure 6. Students' Perception of Music as a Tool for Self-Reflection

Meanwhile, 37 respondents (35.6%) classified themselves as "rather agree", and only a small number of respondents, namely 8 respondents (7.7%), said they agreed. This conclusion indicates that the majority of students consider music not only as a means of entertainment, but also as a tool that promotes the process of self-reflection.The high level of agreement among respondents indicates that listening to music can create a psychological space that allows people to reflect on their life experiences. Music, thanks to its lyrics, atmosphere, and emotional experiences, can help people understand their inner state, recall specific events, and interpret various moments in their lives. This demonstrates that the process of listening to music is not always passive, but can develop into a reflexive activity involving emotional and spiritual aspects.These findings are consistent with the study by Bista et al. which explains that music can enrich a person's spiritual experience through deep emotional engagement. In their study on Jalaluddin Rumi's view, Hanif and Fathi also explain that music can awaken a person's inner world and provide deeper spiritual experiences. In addition, R.Davidov et al. They explain that meditation and spiritual reflection contribute to the formation of self-awareness and strengthen the meaning of human life.From the point of view of meditation, contemplation is not just a process of thinking about an event, but also an inner activity that helps people understand the meaning of life. Thus, these results show that music can be a means for contemplation, as it is able to create an atmosphere conducive to reflection, which encourages students to contemplate and develop spiritual awareness.

According to the author's analysis, the use of music as reinforcement in solving personal problems indicates that students use music as a means of emotional regulation in various psychological states. Although the research tool did not specifically identify the types of emotions felt by the respondents, these results indicate that music is likely used when people experience sadness, frustration, loss of enthusiasm, or other emotional turmoil. On the other hand, music can also be used to maintain positive feelings such as calmness and happiness. In this context, music not only helps to distract from negative emotions, but also

serves as a means for a more meaningful understanding and management of their emotional experiences.Based on the research results obtained during a survey of 104 students, it was found that music plays a significant role in helping people manage their emotional states and develop self-reflection. The results of the study show that the majority of respondents consider music not only as a means of entertainment, but also as a means of calming, facilitating the process of reflection and providing emotional support in everyday life. These findings are consistent with the results of previous studies, which indicate that music contributes to the development of emotional intelligence in Muslim students, especially in aspects such as recognizing their own emotions, managing them, increasing motivation, developing empathy and social relationships[12]. These abilities serve as an important basis for the meditation process, as it will be easier for people who are able to understand and control their emotions to engage in self-reflection and extract deeper meaning from life experiences.In the lives of students facing various academic and social demands, music is often used as a means of calming the mind and reducing psychological stress. The majority of respondents stated that they use music as a support when solving personal problems. This indicates that music functions as a means of emotional regulation, helping people to stabilize their psychological state and providing motivation when faced with various difficulties.These results are consistent with previous studies showing that music can have a positive effect on a person's mental state. Music is known to help people calm down, reduce stress levels, and enhance feelings of comfort and relaxation. In addition, music can also enhance emotional intelligence by helping people recognize, understand, and express their emotions. People who listen to music regularly tend to have a more stable emotional state and cope better with their feelings [13]. From a spiritual point of view, music can also be a means to encourage people to introspect or meditate. When a person listens to music that has a deep meaning, it can encourage them to reflect on life experiences, understand the significance of events, and develop a stronger inner awareness. This process of reflection allows people to better understand themselves and direct their lives towards higher spiritual values.This point of view is consistent with the ideas of R. Thomsen, who considered music as a means capable of bringing the human soul closer to a deeper spiritual experience.

For Rumi, music has the power to purify the heart, awaken the desire for spiritual peace and help people find inner peace. In this context, music is understood not only as an aesthetic expression, but also as a means of connecting a person with the spiritual dimension of his life.Thus, the results of this study show that music plays a significant role in students' lives, both as a means of emotional regulation and as a means of spiritual reflection. Through music, students can calm their minds, reflect on their life experiences, and develop deeper spiritual awareness. This suggests that music can be an effective means to support the meditation process and strengthen students' spirituality in the context of the dynamics of modern life.

*Conclusion*

Based on the results of a study conducted among 104 students, it can be concluded that music as a means of contemplation in shaping the spiritual consciousness of Muslim students plays a real role in everyday life.Today, music is perceived not just as entertainment, but also as a space for reflection, helping students understand themselves, calm their minds, and manage their emotions in the face of academic demands and the dynamics of the digital age. Both spiritual and commonly used songs are considered capable of conveying meaningful messages and contributing to a deeper understanding of life. Through conscious and

purposeful listening, music can become a means of strengthening faith and spiritual maturity. Thus, music can act as an actual and contextual means of reflection for modern students.

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## ЦИФРЛЫҚ ДӘУІРДЕГІ МУЗЫКАЛЫҚ МӘДЕНИЕТ ЖӘНЕ РУХАНИ ҚҰНДЫЛЫҚТАРДЫҢ ТРАНСФОРМАЦИЯСЫ

**Аңдатпа.** Цифрлық дәуірдің өзгеруі музыканы әртүрлі ағындық платформалар арқылы қолжетімді етті. Соның нәтижесінде ол студенттердің күнделікті өмірінің ажырамас бөлігіне айналды. Бұл қол жетімділіктің қарапайымдылығы музыканың ойын-сауық ретінде ғана емес, сонымен қатар өзін-өзі тану және рухани құндылықтарды бойына дарыту құралы ретінде де қабылдауына мүмкіндік береді. Бұл зерттеудің мақсаты-студенттердің рухани санасын қалыптастырудағы медитация

құралы ретіндегі музыканың рөлін талдау. Зерттеу барысында сауалнама әдісін қолдана отырып, сипаттамалық сандық тәсіл қолданылды, оған музыка тыңдауды әдетке айналдырған 104 студент қатысты. Деректер Google Forms негізіндегі сауалнама арқылы жиналды және нәтижелерді пайызбен және интерпретациялау түрінде сипаттамалық статистикалық әдістерді қолдану арқылы талданды. Нәтижелер респонденттердің көпшілігі музыканы эмоцияларды басқаруға, ішкі тыныштықты нығайтуға және өмірдің мәні туралы ойлауға көмектесетін құрал ретінде қарастыратынын көрсетті. Жалпы музыка өзін-өзі тануға ынталандыратын жағымды хабарларды жеткізе білу қабілеті ретінде танылды. Осылайша, музыка цифрлық дәуірде студенттердің рухани санасының қалыптасуы мен нығаюын қолдауда медитацияның тиімді құралына айналу мүмкіндігіне ие.

**Кілт сөздер:** музыка, медитация, рухани сана, студенттер, өзін-өзі көрсету.

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## МУЗЫКАЛЬНАЯ КУЛЬТУРА В ЦИФРОВУЮ ЭПОХУ И ТРАНСФОРМАЦИЯ ДУХОВНЫХ ЦЕННОСТЕЙ

**Аннотация.** Трансформация цифровой эпохи сделала музыку все более доступной благодаря различным стриминговым платформам, и она стала неотъемлемой частью повседневной жизни студентов. Эта легкость доступа позволяет музыке функционировать не только как развлечение, но и как средство саморефлексии и укрепления духовных ценностей. Цель данного исследования — проанализировать роль музыки как средства медитации в формировании духовного сознания студентов. В исследовании использовался описательный количественный подход с методом опроса, в котором приняли участие 104 студента, имеющих привычку слушать музыку. Данные были собраны с помощью анкеты на основе Google Forms и проанализированы с использованием описательных статистических методов в виде процентных показателей и интерпретации результатов. Результаты показали, что большинство респондентов рассматривают музыку как средство, помогающее управлять эмоциями, укрепляющее внутреннее спокойствие и способствующее размышлению о смысле жизни. Общеупотребительные песни были признаны способными передавать позитивные послания, стимулирующие саморефлексию. Таким образом, музыка имеет потенциал стать эффективным средством медитации в поддержке формирования и укрепления духовного сознания студентов в цифровую эпоху.

**Ключевые слова:** музыка, медитация, духовное осознание, студенты, саморефлексия.