

## The Effects of Social Media WOM and Fan Pages on Young Americans' Intention to Purchase Foreign Pop

Hyun Sang An, Christina Chung\*, Alexander Muk

*This study examines how social media influences young American consumers' intentions to consume foreign pop music. For the theoretical foundation, the Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) and the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) are applied, and a model is created using 7 constructs: entertainment need, escape need, familiarity, attitude toward foreign pop music, intention to share foreign pop music information on social media, intention to join the fan page, and intention to purchase foreign pop music. Data was collected from 293 young American consumers. The results explain that young Americans form positive attitudes toward foreign pop based on their entertainment needs and familiarity with general pop music. The attitudes affect social media Word of Mouth (WOM) and intention to join an artist's fan page. Further, WOM and fan page influence to purchase intention foreign pop music. This study's findings imply that young consumers' engagement with an artist via that artist's fan page is more critical than social media WOM. As managerial suggestions, entertainment related messages should be delivered continuously in social media to facilitate favorable attitude formation, as well as the same for artist-fan engagement.*

**Keywords:** foreign pop music, social media WOM, fan page, entertainment need, familiarity, attitude

### Introduction

The U.S. is the most exciting market in the world and worth the challenge for foreign pop artists since the U.S. is the world's largest and the most advanced modern music market (IFPI Global Music Report 2019), especially for the contemporary genre. For foreign pop artists in the era of digital consumption, the U.S. market is another opportunity for growth, since the music distribution channel via social media (e.g., Facebook or Twitter) or streaming services (e.g., Spotify, Apple Music or Amazon Music) is simpler than that of traditional recorded music and the diffusion speed of the digital format is faster than that of the traditional one (Bakshy, et al., 2012; Dewan and Ramaprasad, 2014; Leonard, 2013). According to the IFPI Global Music Report (2019), the revenue generated by digital streaming services alone has already exceeded \$11.4 billion in the U.S. in 2019, and it is projected to increase year after year. Digital music services (e.g., online streaming, digital downloading, or video-based music content) such as Spotify, Apple Music, or YouTube tend to increase American Millennials' and Gen Zers' foreign music consumption due to their technology acceptance and ubiquity of music content without any borderlines in the digital world. Looking at consumer demographics in the market, Millennials who were born in between 1981 and 1996 (ages between 23 and 38 in 2019) (Dimock, 2018) and Gen Zers, born in between 1997 and 2012 (Dimock, 2019), consume (i.e., listen to or watch) 75% more music content than the baby boomer generation on a daily basis (Resnikoff, 2016). It is known that about 90% of Millennials and Gen Zers are using as least one music

streaming application (Lister, 2017) and 57% of Millennials use more than two music applications to online stream music, while only 39% of older groups use music streaming applications (Boron, 2017). The Millennial group makes up 72% of all users in Spotify, which is one of the most popular music streaming services (Cummings, 2016). Adoption of a music streaming service helps Millennials and Gen Zers easily access foreign contemporary music content, so it makes foreign pop become one of the more popular genres in the U.S. contemporary music scene. Being supported by Millennials' and Gen Zers' adoption of music streaming services, foreign pop such as Korean pop (K-pop) has become a firm genre in the U.S. music industry. For example, Billboard, one of the major music charts, added a K-pop chart to its existing charts (Herman, 2019). These events together inspire entertainment agencies to promote more than twenty K-pop concerts a year in major U.S. cities (Liu, 2017) and the sales of foreign pop keeps growing among the whole music industry (Starkey, 2017). Music streaming services, as well as social media services backed by advanced web technology, has accelerated these phenomena. Free social media services are heavily used by Millennials and Gen Zers for entertainment purposes (Mulligan, 2017), as well as by music artists as a marketing channel (Vega, 2013) to attract more music fans and consumers due to social media services' simple functions of engagement (e.g., liking, making comments, sharing content from one media platform to another) (Golden, 2019). Agencies and artists motivate young American consumers to share music with their peers on their own social media pages (e.g., via an embedded music video link to YouTube or playlist), in addition to information about the music itself or the artist(s). By doing so, users of social media partake to re-/co-/create content (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010) and to generate electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). For example, the mega hit of Psy's Gangnam Style in 2012 was begun by a young fan's parody video uploaded to YouTube as a pastime during a boring summer vacation. Once the parody video earned attention,

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the original music video started gaining attention all around the world like a viral effect (Billboard, 2012).

Therefore, U.S. Millennials' and Gen Zers' foreign pop music consumption behavior is a critical topic in both academic literature and business practices. However, little research has studied young American generation's foreign pop music consumption behavior in a social media context, despite the fact that social media and the digital music streaming market has been growing drastically. The purpose of this study is to examine motives of U.S. Millennials and Gen Zers to consume foreign pop music content and their attitude toward foreign pop music, intention to share foreign pop music on social media, intention to join foreign pop artists' official page(s) in social media (i.e., a fan page), and intention to pay for the subscription-based streaming service. For theoretical foundation, the Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) and the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) are applied.

## Literature Review

### *Gratification Theory (UGT)*

Conventionally, the uses and gratification theory (UGT) has been adopted to investigate reasons behind individuals' media choice and the distinctive purpose to use the media to gratify their social and psychological needs (Muk and Chung, 2014; Rubin, 2009; Severin and Tankard, 2001). Primarily, UGT focuses on illuminating media users' psychological needs that influence psychological processes (e.g., attitude formation) while being exposed to media, and what motivates them to get involved in specific media consumption behaviors (e.g., extended duration of media usage) to fulfill those needs (Ko, Cho, and Roberts, 2005; Lin, 1999; Rubin, 1994; Swanson, 1987). Since there are various kinds of media, from traditional types (e.g., newspaper or radio) to new media (e.g., Internet or social media), UGT has been examining media audiences' motivations and decisions to adopt a certain media every time a new type of media emerges (Elliott and Rosenberg, 1987; Ko, Cho, and Roberts, 2005). Also, though it was developed in communication studies in the early stage (Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch, 1973), UGT actively expounds consumers' social media usage in marketing studies (Whiting and Williams, 2013). For example, Berelson (1959) argues that people choose newspapers to fulfill their information needs, social contact needs, and social prestige needs. Mendelsohn (1964) suggests people listen to the radio to form companionship and to offset boredom, as well as to acquire information. Rubin (1981; 1984) argues that people watch television to gratify relaxation needs, entertainment needs, information needs, and escape needs. Focusing more on online media, Korgaonkar and Wolin (1999) suggest that audiences use online media to seek entertainment and escape. Papacharissi and Rubin (2000) posit that needs for interpersonal utility and pastime besides information seeking motivate online services usage. In addition, Luo (2002) investigates the impacts of online media informativeness, amusement and annoyance on users' attitudes toward the media and their intention to adopt it. More recently, Whiting and Williams (2013) propose that the purposes of social interaction, relaxation, expression of opinion, and information sharing drive media users to adopt

social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Muk and Chung (2014) find that the need for belongingness or affiliation stimulate individuals to join social media. Florenthal (2019) argues that young consumers such as Millennials and Gen Zers partake of social media to actively get engaged with the brand they prefer by supporting the brand's good causes and by sharing brand-related information in social media (e.g., electronic word-of-mouth).

### *Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)*

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is a framework designed to predict individuals' external behavior to achieve an object by measuring his/her attitude(s) toward an object and intention(s) to approach the object (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Thus, TRA is helpful in explaining the cognitive dimensions (e.g., attitude toward a product) of one's decision making process (e.g., purchase intention) (Han and Kim, 2010; Rodrigo, Khan and Ekinci, 2019). TRA assumes that individuals are rational and purpose-driven in their decision-making process, hence, they tend to make a reason-supported decision among alternative options (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Han and Kim, 2010). According to Kumar and Kumar (2013), one's behavior is an external outcome of the inner intention shaped by that person's attitude toward taking a particular action, and the attitude toward doing the action is considered his/her self-assessment of future consequence(s) after the behavior is made. For example, it is more likely that s/he takes action once s/he foresees a positive outcome as a result, and vice versa (Sheppard, Hartwick, and Warshaw, 1988). Therefore, Gironda and Korgaonkar (2014) emphasize that intention is a reliable indicator to measure one's efforts to perform a particular behavior. Rodrigo, Khan and Ekinci (2019) argue that individuals' behavioral intentions affected by their attitudes can be deemed one of the most critical predictors in anticipating an actual behavior. Sheppard, Hartwick, and Warshaw (1988) examine the effectiveness of TRA and find that the theory precisely forecasts subjects' decision behaviors. Hence, TRA has been extensively adopted by marketing studies on consumers' psychological decision-making (e.g., product purchase decision) process (Barkhi, Belanger, and Hicks, 2008; Fu, et al., 2010).

Incorporating the frameworks of UGT and TRA, a research model was developed using seven constructs: Entertainment Need, Escape Need, Familiarity, Attitude toward Foreign Pop Music, Intention to Join the Artist's Fan Page on Social Media, Intention to Share Information on Social Media, and Intention to Purchase Foreign Pop Music.

### *Entertainment need and Attitude*

Since Wright (1960) first added the entertainment need to the factors motivating media usage, various research has studied its sequential impacts on consumer behaviors. Especially, it was found that people adopt online media such as the Internet for their entertainment needs (Eighmey and McCord, 1998; Kaye and Johnson, 2004; Korgaonkar and Wolin, 1999; Ko, Cho, and Roberts, 2005; Lim and Ting, 2012; Papacharissi and Rubin, 2000). McQuail (2010) discusses the entertainment aspect of media that is capable to meet the users' needs of hedonic enjoyment, aesthetic pleasure, and affective relief. According to Kim and

Forsythe (2007) and Luo (2002), e-commerce consumers are so craving entertainment while shopping online that they tend to stick to websites or applications which entertain them more. In addition, entertainment attributes of media form a favorable attitude toward the media content in users' minds when the attribute matches their needs (Ducoffe, 1996). In the online shopping context, Lim and Ting (2012) argue whether customers' entertainment needs are gratified by the website positively influencing consumers' attitudes toward the product purchased via Internet shopping. In the social media context, Sheth and Kim (2017) and Sihombing (2017) claim that the entertainment factor of social media gratifying users' entertainment needs has a positive impact on their attitudes toward the content on social media. Based on previous studies, this study posits that entertainment need may form favorable attitude toward foreign pop music,

concluding that the entertainment feature of media content gratifies users' entertainment needs.

**H1a:** Entertainment needs gratified by foreign pop music content on social media positively affects attitudes toward foreign pop music.

### *Escape need and Attitude*

Berelson (1949) initiates the investigation on why people adopt media such as newspapers and finds they want to escape and feel relieved from their personal matters by reading newspapers. Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1973) claim that media help users escape their daily routine and circumstances that give tension and anxiety. More specifically, Henning and Vorderer (2001) define an escape need as a way of cognition and emotion utilized as users' desire to get away from the moment they live in. The escape need is also described as a behavior diverting him/her from current problematic issues (Kircaburun and Griffiths, 2019; Young, et al., 2017). Lee (2017) argues that individuals may experience depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem, for instance, so they may want to escape from those situations. Previous research claims that a behavior to partake of online activities such as social media content engagement is to escape from the reality (Gao, Liu, and Li, 2017; Masur, et al., 2014; Yee, 2006). Zolkepli, Kamarulzaman, and Kitchen (2018) find that a need to escape from reality as one of tension-release needs plays a critical role in social media utilization. This is supported by the Zhang, Shabbir, and Mujeeb-ur-Rehman (2015)'s study asserting that social media users' tension release motives positively affects their attitude toward social media content as new information to refresh themselves. According to Zhang, Shabbir, and Mujeeb-ur-Rehman (2015), social media content gratifies media users' tension release needs by protecting them from the pressure of daily routines via new content engagement, and eventually, tension release (i.e., escape) gratification motivates media users to form positive attitudes toward social media content.

**H2:** Escape needs gratified by foreign pop music content on social media positively affects attitudes toward foreign pop music.

### *Familiarity and Attitude*

Familiarity with a product or service mirrors the experiences with the product or service (Alba and

Hutchinson, 1987) due to the fact that product or service adoption is greatly influenced by familiarity (Axelrod, 1968; Baker, et al., 1986; Haley and Case, 1979). Berlyne (1970) argues that familiarity with an object helps to form a positive attitude toward it. Obermiller (1985) claims that the familiar even increases a positive affect for the object. Cho (2007) suggests that brand familiarity impacts consumers' positive attitudes toward the product in an online shopping context and it leads consumers to purchase a product with a familiar brand. According to Hoyer and Brown (1990), the familiarity may eventually affect information processing in consumers' minds and their brand choice decisions, and it is supported by Zajonc (1980)'s study asserting that familiarity motivates favorable attitudes (e.g., preference) and choice behaviors made by a positive effect. Brand familiarity also has positive effects on consumers' word-of-mouth communication and brand evaluation (Sundaram and Webster, 1999). These previous studies suggest that familiarity with a product or service makes consumers respond more favorably toward the product. Therefore, the relationship between consumers' familiarity with the product, service, or brand name and their attitudes toward it can be applied to the young American consumers' foreign pop music consumption context. For instance, consumers familiar with foreign pop music may form positive attitudes toward social media content related to foreign pop music and they are led to choose social media to consume more content concerning foreign pop music. Hence, this study postulates that consumers' level of familiarity toward foreign pop influences their attitudes toward foreign pop music.

**H3:** Familiarity with foreign pop music positively affects attitudes toward foreign pop music.

### *Attitude and Intention to Share Information*

The relationship between individuals' attitudes and their behavioral intentions has long been discussed. Festinger (1957) argues that individuals tend to behave as their attitudes direct. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) assert that people's attitudes positively impact their behavioral intentions. Pookulangara, Hawley, and Xiao (2011) postulate that consumers' attitude is a reliable factor to predict their behavioral intention such as word-of-mouth (WOM) in either an online or offline context. Especially, WOM via Internet (i.e., electronic WOM or eWOM) is a communication where consumers promptly share either positive or negative information about products, services or brands with peers (Hennig-Thurau, et al., 2004; Litvin, Goldsmith, and Pan, 2008; Tercia and Teichert, 2016). They do this through various online-based media such as social media (e.g., Facebook or Twitter), consumer review services (e.g., Yelp), e-commerce sites (e.g., Amazon or eBay), or personal blogs (Alalwan, et al., 2017; Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Wang, et al., 2016). According to Sohaib, et al. (2018), social media is more critical than any other online-based media in terms of its ability to allow users to generate content in their own words, and quickly share the content with peers. Therefore, WOM in social media affected by consumers' attitudes is an important factor worth investigating. Akar and Topçu (2011) argue that consumers are willing to spread either positive or negative information about the product or service they experience in social media

and the tone of information (e.g., positive or negative) depends on their attitude formed by the level of satisfaction. Therefore, positive attitude toward the content may drive positive WOM in social media. Shin (2013) proposes that positive attitude toward the content in an online platform is highly connected with consumers' social media WOM intentions that may induce more platform users' engagement in an online social commerce context. Yang (2013a; 2013b) asserts that a favorable attitude toward marketing content positively affects young social media users' information sharing (e.g., product or service recommendation to peers) behavior. Also, one of the most powerful functions in social media is sharing pre-existing content (e.g., a news article on Billboard.com, video content on YouTube, or someone else's content) from one platform to another (e.g., from YouTube to Facebook) besides the user's own post. Hence, applying the research findings of previous studies on young Americans' online music consumption context, this study postulates that their attitude toward foreign pop music may influence their willingness to share foreign pop music and related information with peers in social media.

**H4:** Attitude toward foreign pop music positively affects intention to share foreign pop music information on social media sites.

#### *Attitude and Intention to Join Fan Page*

Social media is one of the most important marketing communication channels for both service providers and consumers in terms of the fact that it helps to retain an impactful brand image and it keeps users updated with information about a product, service or brand online (Levy, 2010). As Lee, Xiong and Hu (2012) point out, industry practitioners have successfully established marketing foundations by adopting official Facebook fan/event pages, official Twitter accounts or official YouTube channels to directly reach customers and listen to personal opinions and feedback. For example, Samsung has over 150 million followers on Facebook and this is, in the field of technology, one of the most visited fan pages on social media (Robinson, 2020). It is a great chance for the company to monitor consumers' responses to the brand and to promote the brand or directly interact with consumers (Zhang and Benyoucef, 2016; Zhang, Benyoucef and Zhao, 2015). Based on the nature of social media, Lee, Xiong and Hu (2012) propose that attitude toward the content on an official fan page or event page of social media has a positive impact on media users' intention to follow the page to keep themselves informed. A study by Muk and Chung (2014) on the relationship between consumers' attitudes toward brand pages on social media and their intention to join the page find that consumers' attitudes toward the brand page content is an important driver in predicting their intention to join the brand page on social media. According to Zhang, Benyoucef and Zhao (2015), what consumers think and feel about the brand (e.g., evaluation or attitude) affects their intention to partake in brand engagement (e.g., joining a brand page) during the brand attachment process in which consumers fortify their intimate relationships with the brand. Applying this to an online music consumption context, social media provides an official channel or fan page through which an artist can directly communicate with fans (e.g., music

consumers). Crupnick (2018) posits that music-related or artist-related content is one of main factors involving users with a particular social media. For example, fan pages in the music category has more followers on social media than any of the other categories such as comedy, food, gaming, and fitness. in social media. Shakira, a female Latino pop artist from Colombia, has about 98 million followers on Facebook and has received 100 million likes while actively communicating with them (Robinson, 2020). Also, almost 90% of users participate in music-related activities in social media such as liking, sharing, and/or tagging artist-related posts (e.g., event/concert updates, photos, or music videos) (Crupnick, 2018). Their activities may increase social media WOM and a general public awareness toward the artist and music content in a viral effect. Due to this nature, having music consumers join a fan page with their positive attitude should be critically considered, especially for foreign pop artists. Thus, this study hypothesizes that young American consumers' attitudes toward foreign pop music may motivate their intentions to join a fan page in social media.

**H5:** Attitude toward foreign pop music positively affects intention to join foreign pop music artist pages on social media sites.

#### *Intention to Share Information and Purchase Intention*

One of critical factors affecting consumers' purchase decision making is social media WOM in this digital era (Chu and Kim, 2011). Conventionally, it has been a tendency that consumers seeking product/brand information rely upon other people's opinions for their purchase decision making (Flynn, Goldsmith, and Eastman, 1996) and consumers giving opinions to others are likely to influence others' purchase decision making (Feick and Price, 1987). However, according to Chu and Kim (2011), social media WOM is very interactive and dynamic due to the fact that one media user plays various roles as an information seeker, a content creator, and a news sharer simultaneously. In addition, the borderline between the roles is becoming faded. Those social media WOM activities taken together become e-commerce consumers' brand/product engagement that is a strong foundation for influencing product purchase decision (Chu and Kim, 2011). Swani, Milne, and Brian (2013) argue that consumers distributing positive social media WOM about a product/brand can be considered highly engaged with and attached to the brand/product. Also, Royo-Vela and Casamassima (2011) claim that consumers' WOM in social media activity reflects their satisfaction toward, and positive commitment to, brand/product. These previous research findings are supported by the Kudeshia and Kumar (2017) study on the relationship between consumers' brand attitudes in between social media and their product purchase intention. According to the study, brand attitude formed during social media activities includes behavioral tendency (Kotler and Keller, 2008), such as WOM, which has a significantly positive impact on consumers' product purchase intention (Wu and Wang, 2011). Especially, Kotler and Keller (2008) suggest that favorable brand attitude tends to enhance the brand/product adoption rate.

Hence, based on previous studies, this study proposes that young music consumers' intentions to share information about foreign pop music and artists online is more likely to increase consumers' music purchase intentions (e.g., signing-up for a paid streaming or download service).

**H6:** Intention to share foreign pop music information on social media sites positively influences intention to purchase foreign pop music.

#### ***Intention to Join Fan Page and Purchase Intention***

Partaking of a fan page in social media is one of several brand engagement activities to create messages, distribute information, and emotionally support the brand and other media users in the page (Borle, et al., 2012; Song, et al., 2018). Jamali and Khan (2018) assert that joining a fan page in social media is a brand commitment that builds a long-term relationship between consumers and the brand, and this significantly affects consumers' product purchase intentions. According to Beatty and Kahle (1988), devotion to the brand (e.g., brand engagement via a social media fan page) reveals a positive and firm relationship with the brand. Active involvement in a fan page social media enhances consumers' personal relationships with the brand and this has sequential impacts (Flavián and Guinalú, 2006; Kassim and Abdullah, 2010). For example, consumers participating in the online brand community reveal a strong likelihood of purchasing the brand's product (Borle, et al., 2012; Kassim and Abdullah, 2010), a substantial degree of continuous usage (Lee, Ahn, and Kim, 2008) and a significantly high level of loyalty and trust (Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman, 1996). Incorporating these, Song, et al. (2018) claim that brand page participation in social media is a critical factor to predict consumers' purchase intentions.

Besides the commitment dimension of fan page participation, information and knowledge about the product earned by joining a fan page in social media also plays an important role in driving social media users to purchase the product (Anderson, et al., 2014). Brand/product fan page is

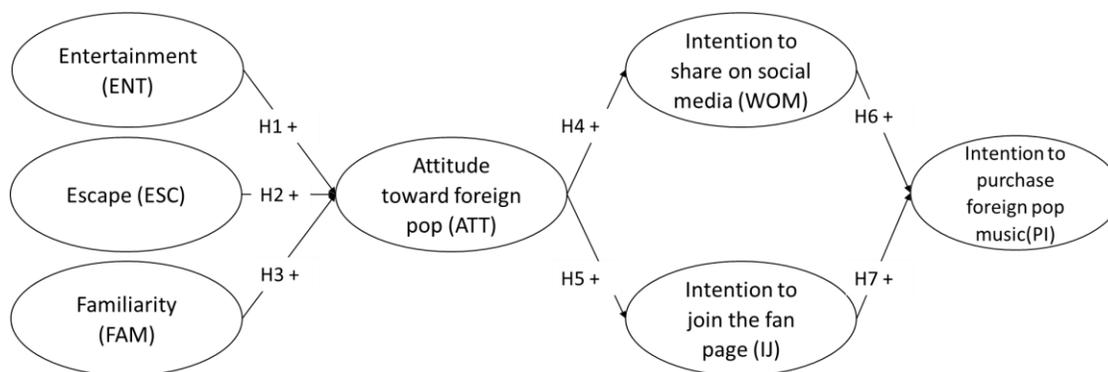
a good source of information including product price and quality (Kwon and Jain, 2009) and promotions (To, Liao, and Lin, 2007). Anderson, et al. (2014) postulate that access to the Facebook brand page to seek brand or product information is positively related to consumers' product purchase intentions. Supporting this, Mikalef, Giannakos, and Pateli (2013) argue that consumers' frequent interactions with the brand in social media (e.g., browsing products over social media and learning information from the brand page) has a positive impact on their product purchase intention.

Integrating these previous studies, this study applies the relationship between consumers' intention to join a brand page and their intention to purchase a product to the online foreign pop music market. Hence, this study hypothesizes that young American music consumers' intentions to join a foreign artist's fan page in social media and their intention to purchase foreign pop music content has a positive correlation.

**H7:** Intention to join foreign pop music artists' fan pages on social media sites positively influences the purchase of foreign pop music.

Based on this review, the UGT and TRA models in this study are applied to determine U.S. Millennial and Gen Z consumers' gratification needs on foreign pop, attitudes toward foreign pop music, and how it affects their intentions to be engaged with foreign pop artists in the online space using social media, to generate electronic word-of-mouth, and to purchase online streaming services in order to enjoy more foreign contemporary pop music. Measured attitudes toward foreign pop music and intentions to purchase foreign pop music online may enable consumer researchers and marketing practitioners to predict young consumers' future purchasing behaviors in the U.S. entertainment market. Based on the literature review, a research model is created (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1.**



## Methods

This study administered a web-survey to measure young American consumers' intentions to consume foreign pop music. Data were collected using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) over a week-long period. This platform has been shown to provide a diverse, reliable, and heterogeneous sample (Casler, Bickel, and Hackett, 2013). Thus, the sample used in this study is considered reliable. At the beginning of the survey, there were three screening questions (1) Are you a U.S. citizen and live in U.S? (2) Is your age between 18-37 years old? (3) Do you use social media? These questions were used to ensure that only target consumers would be included. If they responded "No" for any one of the three questions, the survey was automatically terminated. The sample frame only of Gen Zers and Millennials were appropriate because they enjoy pop music, are heavy users of social media, and they embrace social media platforms as their chosen communication channel with friends and peers (Pempek, et al., 2009). By utilizing this screening process, the final useable sample size consisted of two hundred and ninety-three respondents (59.7% females and 40.3% males).

Questionnaire items measuring Entertainment (ENT) need scales were adapted from the Chen and Wells (1999) study regarding Internet users' attitudes toward the website and were modified for this research. The Escape (ESC) needs scale was adapted and modified from the Haridakis and Hanson (2009) study on motives of YouTube watching. The Familiarity (FAM) scale was adapted from the Oliver and Bearden (1985) study on new product trial behavior and the Hirschman (1986) study on advertising stimuli. Also, items measuring attitudes toward foreign pop music (ATT) were adapted from Ducoffe's (1996) Internet advertising research and were modified for this study. The intentions to join fan page (IJ) scales were adapted from Muk and Chung's (2014) research on consumers becoming fans of brand community and modified for this study. The intentions to share information by spreading social media word-of-mouth were adapted from the Chen, et al. (2013) study on word-of-mouth on Facebook, and the study by Chu and Choi (2011) on social networking services' electronic WOM, and Ha and Im (2012)'s research on WOM affected by website design and customer satisfaction. The intention to purchase foreign pop music (PI) was adapted and modified from the Kim and Johnson (2016) study on social media users' product purchase intention influenced by product-related content on social media and the An (2018) study on foreign entertainment content distribution via social media. All items utilized to measure constructs were measured by a 7-point Likert scale where 1 = Strongly disagree and 7 = Strongly agree, while attitudes toward foreign pop music (ATT) were measured by a 7-point bipolar scale (e.g., 1 = boring and 7 = interesting) (see Appendix).

## Analysis and Results

First, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted by using a maximum likelihood estimation with varimax rotation to refine measurements used in this study. A seven-factor dimensionality with eigenvalue over 1.0 was spotted, and 37 items having factor loading of at least .50 were kept in order to maintain only the reliable items. In order to

identify reliability, Cronbach's alpha was adopted and the lowest Cronbach's alpha of .84 and the highest Cronbach's alpha of .979 were detected. Thus, the reliability of the items' structure was established (see Table 1).

Based on EFA, a Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was run to examine the overall validity of the measurement model. Adopting Hair, et al. (2006) and Kline (2005), this study used the following indices:  $\chi^2$ , Tucker Lewis index (TLI), comparative fit index (CFI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). The CFA results indicate an acceptable fit with  $\chi^2 = 905.15$ ,  $df = 590$ ,  $p$ -value = .000, TLI = .97, CFI = .97, and RMSEA = .043 (90% of confident interval: .037 – .048). Further, construct validity was evaluated based on the standardized factor loading estimates ( $\lambda$ ), construct reliabilities, average variance extracted (AVE) percentages and inter-construct correlations. All loading estimates were significant ( $p < .000$ ) with the lowest being .61 and the highest being .94. The average variance extracted estimates (AVE) were .76, .71, .65, .74, .87, .67, and .79 for entertainment need, escape need, familiarity, attitudes toward foreign pop music, intention to join artist's fan page, intention to share foreign pop music information, and intention to purchase foreign pop music, respectively. In addition, the construct reliability estimates were all adequate, ranging from .85 to .98 (see Table 2). Following the Fornell and Larcker (1981) method, discriminant validity is measured by comparing the square root of variance-extracted ( $\sqrt{AVE}$ ) percentage for any two constructs with the correlation estimate between these two constructs. The results indicate that the convergent validity of the model is supported, and good reliability is also established (see Table 2 and Table 3).

The last step to examine the overall theoretical model specification and the hypotheses was the structural equation modeling (SEM). The SEM results indicate a satisfactory fit of data with  $\chi^2 = 1051.02$ ,  $df = 601$ ,  $p$ -value = .000, TLI = .96, CFI = .96, and RMSEA = .051 (90% of confidence interval: .046 – .056). Regarding the hypotheses tests, the SEM structural path results reveal that not all the relationships among the constructs are significant. Entertainment need (ENT) ( $\beta = .232$ ,  $p = .001$ ) and familiarity toward foreign pop music (FAM) ( $\beta = .502$ ,  $p = .000$ ) positively influence the attitude toward foreign pop music (ATT). Thus, H1 and H3 are supported. No relationship is detected between escape need (ESC) and attitude toward foreign pop music (ATT). Therefore, H2 is not supported. The path of H4 also indicates a significant result. Attitude toward foreign pop music (ATT) is a predictor of the intentions to share information about foreign pop music on social media (WOM) ( $\beta = .73$ ,  $p = .000$ ). Also, there is a significant relationship between attitude toward foreign pop music (ATT) and the intentions to join the artist's fan page (IJ) ( $\beta = .517$ ,  $p = .000$ ). Therefore, H5 are supported. Hypothesis 6 is supported as the path indicates that the intention to join the artist's fan page on social media positively (IJ) influence the intention to purchase foreign pop music (PI) ( $\beta = .531$ ,  $p = .000$ ). Thus, H6 is supported. Finally, the intentions to share information about foreign pop music on social media (WOM) has a significantly positive

**Table 1.** Exploratory Factor Analysis: Measured Items in the Model

<i>N</i> =293	Factor Loading							Cronbach's Alpha
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
ENT1	0.851							0.942
ENT2	0.820							
ENT3	0.801							
ENT4	0.743							
ENT5	0.868							
ESC1		0.744						0.927
ESC2		0.819						
ESC3		0.838						
ESC4		0.777						
ESC5		0.805						
FAM1			0.721					0.84
FAM2			0.585					
FAM3			0.741					
ATT1				0.763				0.967
ATT2				0.805				
ATT3				0.837				
ATT4				0.755				
ATT5				0.779				
ATT6				0.799				
ATT7				0.734				
ATT8				0.887				
ATT9				0.869				
ATT10				0.883				
WOM1					0.842			0.900
WOM2					0.773			
WOM3					0.536			
WOM4					0.623			
IJ1						0.871		0.979
IJ2						0.899		
IJ3						0.889		
IJ4						0.876		
IJ5						0.876		
IJ6						0.855		
PI1							0.706	0.944
PI2							0.769	
PI3							0.602	
PI4							0.612	

**TABLE 2.** Construct Validity & Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Construct	Items	$\lambda$	CR	AVE
Entertainment need (ENT)	ENT1	0.909	0.941	0.763
	ENT2	0.889		
	ENT3	0.834		
	ENT4	0.838		
	ENT5	0.894		
Escape need (ESC)	ESC1	0.789	0.924	0.710
	ESC2	0.824		
	ESC3	0.902		
	ESC4	0.854		
	ESC5	0.839		
Familiarity (FAM)	FAM1	0.842	0.848	0.652
	FAM2	0.698		
	FAM3	0.872		
Attitudes toward foreign pop music (ATT)	ATT1	0.850	0.966	0.743
	ATT2	0.831		
	ATT3	0.899		
	ATT4	0.846		
	ATT5	0.862		
	ATT6	0.888		
	ATT7	0.788		
	ATT8	0.892		
	ATT9	0.875		
	ATT10	0.881		
Intention to share on social media (WOM)	WOM1	0.868	0.890	0.674
	WOM2	0.870		
	WOM3	0.605		
	WOM4	0.905		
Intention to join fan page (IJ)	IJ1	0.926	0.977	0.874
	IJ2	0.944		
	IJ3	0.933		
	IJ4	0.937		
	IJ5	0.937		
	IJ6	0.933		
Intention to purchase foreign pop music (PI)	PI1	0.873	0.939	0.793
	PI2	0.877		
	PI3	0.915		
	PI4	0.897		

**Note.** CR: Composite Reliability; AVE: Average Variance Extracted; All coefficients of factor loading ( $\lambda$ ) are significant at  $p < .05$ .

**Table 3.** Correlations

	Mean	SD	ENT	ESC	FAM	ATT	WOM	IJ	PI
ENT	5.427	1.263	<b>0.873</b>						
ESC	3.973	1.503	.561**	<b>0.842</b>					
FAM	4.530	1.697	0.108	0.024	<b>0.808</b>				
ATT	4.818	1.372	.314**	.200**	.561**	<b>0.862</b>			
WOM	3.352	1.558	.149*	.161**	.421**	.520**	<b>0.935</b>		
IJ	2.497	1.544	.119*	.246**	.362**	.437**	.599**	<b>0.821</b>	
PI	2.952	1.637	0.062	.202**	.487**	.541**	.595**	.678**	<b>0.891</b>

**Note.** The square root of Average Variance Extracted ( $\sqrt{AVE}$ ) is indicated bold.

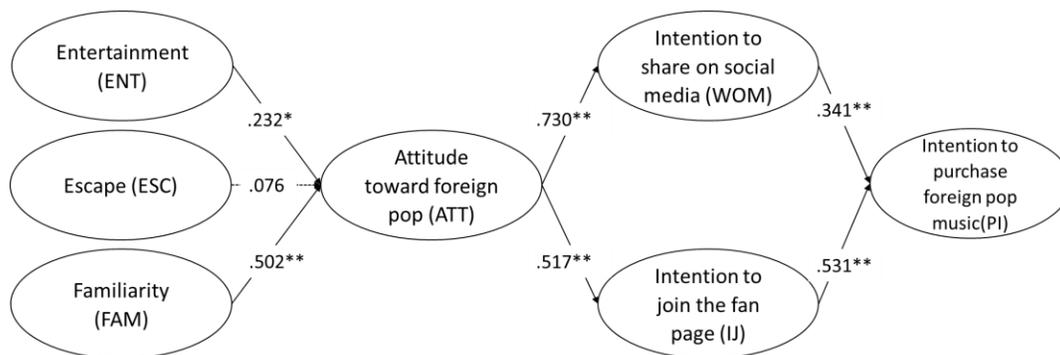
impact on the intention to purchase foreign pop music (PI) ( $\beta = .341, p = .000$ ). Thus, H7 is supported. The results of the hypothesis tests among seven paths are described in Table 4 and Figure 2.

**Table 4.** Results of the Integrative Hypothetical Structural Equation Model

Paths	$\beta$	S.E.	CR	$p$	Hypothesis Test
ENT → ATT	.232	.072	3.220	.001	H1: Supported
ESC → ATT	.076	.060	1.261	.207	H2: Not supported
FAM → ATT	.502	.050	9.991	< .001	H3: Supported
ATT → WOM	.730	.070	10.390	< .001	H4: Supported
ATT → IJ	.517	.062	8.403	< .001	H5: Supported
WOM → PI	.341	.046	7.428	< .001	H6: Supported
IJ → PI	.531	.051	10.388	< .001	H7: Supported

**Note.**  $N = 293$ . The coefficients ( $\beta$ ) in parentheses are standardized value. S.E. = standard error; and CR = critical ratio.

**Figure 2.**



### Discussions and Implications

In spite of the fact that foreign pop (e.g., K-pop) is becoming an important genre in the U.S. contemporary music scene (Zellner, 2020), relatively few marketing studies have focused on how social media affects young music consumers' perceptions toward foreign pop music.

Applying the Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) and the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), this study creates a model which includes 7 constructs to examine young Americans' foreign pop music consumption perceptions and social media effects. First, the relationships between foreign pop music gratifications (entertainment need and escape need) and foreign pop music familiarity and attitude toward foreign pop music were examined. Second, how the attitudes toward foreign pop music are related to intention to share foreign pop music information and intention to join the artist's fan page were examined. Third, the relationships among intentions to share foreign pop music information on social media and intentions to join the artist's fan page and intentions to purchase foreign pop music were examined.

The results explained that entertainment needs and familiarity with foreign pop music are significant predictors of the attitude toward foreign pop music, while escape need is not. Attitude toward foreign pop music influences intention to share foreign pop music information on social

media, as well as intention to join the fan page. Further, intention to share foreign pop music information and join the artist's fan page have significant impact on intention to purchase foreign pop music.

First, the findings imply that young American music consumers are motivated by their entertainment need to consume foreign pop music. Second, it is found that familiarity with foreign pop music strongly enhances a favorable attitude toward foreign pop music. As previous research on consumers' familiarity with a product and their positive attitude (Berlyne, 1970; Obermiller, 1985; Wood and Lynch, 2002) argues, the familiarity consistently plays a significant role to predict consumers' positive attitude formation. Interestingly, familiarity is a stronger variable than entertainment need to increase consumers' attitudes toward foreign pop music. It suggests that the foreign pop music marketer needs to apply various promotion strategies using various social media in order to increase familiarity. For example, artists can provide their songs to advertisers who create commercial videos and ad-supported video on demand. It also emphasizes that young consumers can be attracted to foreign pop music via familiar content, such as contemporary music by local U.S. artists or by relatively well-known artists. Therefore, music agencies or foreign

artists who wish to enter the U.S. contemporary music market should consider working collaboratively with U.S. artists or remaking old hits with modern trends as the first, or the safer step, to maximize the familiarity effects on young consumers' new product adoption. For example, J-Hope, one of K-pop idol artists, and Becky G, the California native artist, teamed up to release the single called "Chicken Noodle Soup" in 2019, which was the remake of an original by Webstar and Young B released in 2006 (Kia, 2019). They adopted Korean, English, and Spanish in the lyrics to approach U.S. fans with familiarity-appeal, and the familiarity-appeal strategy was successful (McIntyre, 2019).

Second, the attitude affects intention to share music information and join artists' fan pages. Even though the consumers' attitude toward foreign pop music simultaneously has a positive impact on both constructs, it has a stronger positive effect on the intention to share foreign pop music information than intention to join artists' fan pages. From the findings, a positive attitude toward the foreign pop music can be considered a crucial factor to increase young American music consumers' social media WOM activities. In a practical perspective, social media WOM activities on social media are critical since it is one of the most powerful communication tools based on trustworthiness and effectiveness (Nielsen, 2015). Previous research supports the prominence of social media WOM showing that a single social media WOM activity, such as posting or sharing content related to commercial product, accelerates multiple postings of the same content, increases product engagement, and drives both immediate purchase and future purchase intentions on the product (Kim and Johnson, 2016). Therefore, music marketers should develop

music, and how important information-sharing is on social media, which social media WOM affects. In addition, the finding suggests that increasing music consumers' engagement with the artist is more critical in order to amplify the chance of music content sales, especially for younger generation consumers, even though the importance of social media WOM should not be underestimated.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

This study provides social media effectiveness for foreign pop music in understanding young Americans' attitudes toward foreign pop music and their decision-making patterns for foreign pop music entertainment content. The young American Millennial and Gen Z sample frame is appropriate since they are the target consumers for foreign pop music and heavy users of social media (IFPI Global Music Report, 2019; Oh and Rhee, 2016). However, finding music consumers' behavioral patterns in different generational groups will be needed to generalize how consumers form their attitudes and why they are motivated to share information, join the artist's fan page and to purchase the music. Therefore, music consumption behavior from different age groups such as Generation X or Baby boomers, who mostly enjoy a traditional music consumption pattern (i.e., analogue), and has more buying power than younger generations currently focused in the present study, should be investigated to further understand the homogeneity and heterogeneity in generational groups in music consumption behaviors. Moreover, music consumers'

various social media marketing strategies to enhance young music consumers' positive attitude formation that sequentially boosts eWOM activities and fan-artist engagement. For example, they can utilize user-generated advertising via contests on social media.

Third, both the intention to share foreign pop music information and intention to join the artist's fan page on social media together have a positive impact on young American music consumers' intentions to purchase foreign pop music. More surprisingly, the intention to join the artist's fan page on social media stronger variable than WOM to the foreign pop music purchase intention. Therefore, attracting young music consumers to the artist's fan page to intimately interact should be fully supported by marketing campaigns. For example, activities such as live chat inside the fan page on social media should be developed so that the proximity between the artist and fans can be considerably minimized. The artist's more instant reactions to fans' social media postings could be another suggestion to increase fan page joining intentions. Also, a reward program, including discounts and free sample songs, can be effective when consumers join the fan pages. Additionally, the foreign artists and agencies should deliver messages that can evoke exclusiveness via engagement with fans inside the artist's fan page to make young fans more loyal to the artist (Say, 2016). As a result, artist agencies and entertainment promoters can expect consumers' intention to purchase foreign pop music content to be positive.

In sum, present study's findings provide practical implications for social media marketers by explaining how Millennial and Gen Z music consumers' motives toward foreign pop music develops attitude toward foreign pop behavioral patterns in different contemporary music genres such as Rock, Country, and R&B/Jazz should also be scrutinized as well, since this study only focuses on foreign contemporary music represented by K-pop, and it is possible that each contemporary genre has a different fan base that might induce distinctive consumption behaviors. Furthermore, this study has a limitation in that it was conducted using a U.S. sample only, even though the popularity of foreign pop (e.g., K-pop) is a global phenomenon (Romano, 2018; Wang, 2018; Zellner, 2020).

Therefore, future research needs to examine more constructs which affect attitude toward the music, social media WOM effects on social media, music consumers' engagement with the artist(s), and their music purchase intentions by adding diversity in musical genres, consumers' generations and geographic locations.

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#### APPENDIX: Measured Items

##### Entertainment Need (ENT)

- ENT1. I listen to foreign pop music because it is entertaining.
- ENT2. I listen to foreign pop music because it is fun.
- ENT3. I listen to foreign pop music because I just like to hear it.
- ENT4. I listen to foreign pop music because it is exciting.
- ENT5. I listen to foreign pop music because it is enjoyable.

##### Escape Need (ESC)

- ESC1. When I listen to foreign pop music, I feel like I can escape from reality.
- ESC2. When I listen to foreign pop music, I forget everything else.
- ESC3. When I listen to foreign pop music, it takes me into another world.
- ESC4. When I listen to foreign pop music, I am absorbed intensely in the activity.
- ESC5. I strongly feel that I am inside the virtual world when I listen to foreign pop music.

##### Familiarity (FAM)

- FAM1. I've known about pop music by foreign artist(s).
- FAM2. I've heard about the term such as K-pop, J-pop or Latin pop.
- FAM3. I'm aware of pop songs by foreign artists.

##### ATTITUDE (ATT)

- "I think foreign pop music is..."
- ATT1. Bad - Good
- ATT2. Boring - Interesting
- ATT3. Unappealing - Appealing
- ATT4. Unattractive - Attractive
- ATT5. Unpleasant - Pleasant
- ATT6. Unlikable - Likable

ATT7. Dull - Dynamic

ATT8. Not enjoyable - Enjoyable

ATT9. Not worth listening to - Worth listening to

ATT10. Not entertaining - Entertaining

**Intention to share on social media (WOM)**

WOM1. I will pass along foreign pop music information to my social media friends when I find it useful.

WOM2. I will pass along positive foreign pop music information to my social media friends.

WOM3. I will pass along negative foreign pop music information to my social media friends.

WOM4. I will recommend foreign pop music that I like to my social media friends.

**Intentions to join fan page/artist's official page (IJ)**

IJ1. My intention to join a foreign pop music fan page or artist's official page on social media is high.

IJ2. I think about joining a foreign pop music fan page or artist's official page on social media.

IJ3. I will join a foreign pop music fan page or artist's official page on social media in the future.

IJ4. I will probably join a foreign pop music fan page or artist's official page on social media.

IJ5. I will definitely join a foreign pop fan page or artist's official page on social media.

IJ6. I want to take advantage of being a member of a foreign pop music fan page or artist's official page on social media.

**Intention to purchase foreign pop music (PI)**

PI1. I would purchase a foreign pop music album.

PI2. I would pay and download foreign pop music.

PI3. It is likely that I will purchase foreign pop music album so I can enjoy foreign pop music.

PI4. It is likely that I will pay and download foreign pop music so I can enjoy foreign pop music.