Understanding young people's preferences for different genres of modern music: Case studies of two schools in Manchester

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Acknowledgements

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Abstract

My dissertation's aim is to understand how British school children coming from varying backgrounds, subject to different social influences, and with different interests and ambitions, develop preferences for different musical genres. My dissertation examines current literature focusing on young people's musical tastes, beginning with the theoretical debate over the concept of subculture between the CCCS researchers and the post-subculturalists. I adopt Hesmondhalgh's (2005) approach: young people's musical tastes are influenced both by social structure and musical form. I also consider the largely separate, questionnaire-based approach of the 'youth music survey researchers'. My subjects were pupils of two secondary schools in Manchester: both Roman Catholic, one boys-only and one girls-only. I adopted a mixed methods approach, utilising focus groups and a survey based on questionnaire comprising closed-answer and open-answer questions. My study findings showed that pupils' preferences for pop songs, folk songs, urban songs and rock songs correlated differently with a range of independent social factors, although pupils' preferences were equally influenced by songs' musical form and fashion. Social factors important for pop and folk songs were being a girl and having friends with similar musical tastes. The findings for pop songs contributed considerably to the theory of bedroom culture. Pupil's preferences for urban and rock songs were less easily explained. However, when I controlled for status of pupils' homes, I found career ambition, home location, taking part in musical activities, ethnicity and sex to play roles to some extent. Although my study has limitations, it suggests that a flexible approach and recognition of the influences of social background factors, such as home social status, sex, and friends' musical taste, as well as those of musical forms and practices, can

develop existing theory and add new theoretical insights and knowledge about how young people develop their preferences for groups of songs.

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1 My dissertation aim

The study of young people's musical preferences is an important area for investigation. As Colley states (2008: 2039) '[m]usic particularly popular music plays a central role in the lives of young people'. Tanner et al. (2008) point out that young people are prime consumers of popular music and are those most attuned to nuanced stylistic differences between musical genres and within musical genres (subgenres).

I came to be interested in young people's musical tastes through my experiences as a peripatetic drum tutor, teaching in secondary schools (giving individual drum lessons). For over six years I have observed the wide variety of my pupils' musical tastes. I became aware that musical likes and dislikes were not matters simply of personal taste but needed to be understood as part of social and cultural patterns (Tanner et al., 2008). I became interested in understanding what social and cultural factors affected young people's musical tastes.

In my dissertation I sought to understand how British school children in a boys-only and a girls-only schools (both located in Manchester), who came from varying backgrounds, were subject to different influences, and had different interests and ambitions, develop preferences for different musical genres. I focussed on children in secondary education, as I was particularly interested in how those critical years of adolescence shaped young people's music tastes and how their experiences at home and school contributed to that evolution. Hargreaves et al. (1995) argues that adolescence is the age when children's younger 'open-earedness' declines and when their tastes become markedly orientated towards 'popular'

styles, largely rock and pop music; then with further progress into early adulthood, young people's range of tolerance for different styles widens once again.

I focused on younger children as they have been relatively neglected in the study of young people's music preferences. Thus, I chose to study children in the English education school years of 8, 9 and 10; aged 12-13 (with a few children still 11 years old as it was the start of the school year), 13-14 and 14-15. I omitted year 7 pupils (aged 11-12 years) as they would not have been in secondary education long enough for the school environment to have influenced their music preferences. I omitted year 11 pupils (aged 15-16 years) as I considered pupils of that age to be nearer to adulthood.

1.2 The research gap

There have been two distinct bodies of literature that discuss young people's musical tastes or preferences. What I have found puzzling is the lack of cross-referencing between authors in these two bodies of literature, although they are both concerned with the development of young people's musical preferences. The *first* body of literature focuses on the debate over the relevance of the concept of subculture in understanding young people's musical tastes. Researchers belonging to the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) emphasised the explanatory role of subculture (for example, Hall and Jefferson (1975) and Willis (1978)) and the post-subculturalists (for example, Redhead (1990) and Bennett (1999, 2005, 2011)) argued that the changes in youth subculture in the 1980s means that musical preference was no longer a function of class, gender or ethnicity but was, instead, a matter of personal choice. Both CCCS and post-subcultural researchers have been criticized for their

methodology (for example, see Bennett's 2012 methodological critique): the CCCS researchers have been criticised for lacking a rigorous approach to methodology and for drawing explanations from wider economic and social trends and the post-subculturalists for their use of 'insider' participant observation studies.

The *second* of these two distinct bodies of literature, so far limited in the number of studies undertaken, has concerned itself with the influence of a range of social factors − demographic characteristics together with family and school experiences − on young people's preferences for different musical genres. These researchers have adopted a rigorous survey- and statistical-analysis-based approach. The leading study perhaps is that by Tanner et al. (2008) undertaken in Canada. These authors do not, in general, refer to the CCCS researchers versus post-subculturalist debate. As I explain in Chapter 3, I label this school the *youth music survey researchers.*

Recently, Hesmondhalgh (2005) has suggested that it is important to consider *both* social structure and musical forms. However, to my knowledge, no researcher has yet adopted Hesmondhalgh's approach when undertaking a study of young people's music preferences. Boyle et al. (1981) and Urquía (2005) have made tentative steps in this direction but much more needs to be done.

In my dissertation I seek to remedy this research gap. I aim to undertake an empirical study that explores the affect on young people's musical preferences of both social structure and musical forms, thereby, bringing these two bodies of literature together. I found Hesmondhalgh's (2005) approach to be a useful way of doing this, given its flexibility and recognition of the influence of social background factors, such as social class, gender and

race, as well as the fact that musical forms and practices were important in his study of young people's musical preferences. Attempting to bring these two schools together, I also adopted a methodology that included both qualitative and quantitative instruments so that I could provide a statistical analysis of the relationships between social factors and musical preferences and capture the influence of musical form and practices on young people. The word *identity* is commonly used in the theoretical debate over subculture, whereas the youth music survey researchers use the term musical *preferences* or *tastes*. In my dissertation I have chosen to use the simpler concept of young people's musical preferences or tastes so that I can refer uniformly to young people's choice of music for the different bodies of literature. Tanner et al. (2008) use *preferences* and *tastes* interchangeably.

In my dissertation I also remedy other aspects that have been neglected by researchers on young people's musical tastes.

(1) Most previous researchers have imposed classifications of musical genres on young people. The classifications they have imposed often refer to music retailers' taxonomies (for example, that of Virgin Megastores). These taxonomies are usually made up of four levels: a main level with global musical categories (Classical, Jazz, Rock, etc.); a second level made of specific subcategories (e.g. "Hard Rock" within "Rock"). The third level is usually an alphabetical ordering of artists and the fourth level is artist albums. Tanner et al.'s (2008: 127) study is an example where researchers presented their respondents with predefined choices: they presented their respondents with 11 of what they describe as 'contemporary musical genres'. However, these authors did not group their 'genres' into broader groupings. I adopted the approach that research on the influences on young people's musical tastes should be based on how young people *themselves* classify music into genres and subgenres.

(2) There have been few studies that have included the age range that I was concerned with. The study by Hargreaves et al. (1995) is the nearest in age range to my own and that was conducted nearly 20 years ago. I considered that my pupils' younger age had implications for my choice of independent factors and measures.

(3) A number of studies have focussed on the musical tastes of young men while those of young women have been neglected, as suggested by Colley (2008). I included girls in my study and perceived sex to be an important social factor.

(4) No previous researcher to my knowledge has included the influence of friends' musical tastes in a survey-based study of young people's musical preferences. I considered that it was important to include this factor as it had social background connotations as well as capturing elements of musical fad and fashion.

(5) Only Boyle (1981) refers to the influence of the means by which young people listen to music and, in his early study, he refers only to listening to the radio. In 2014, there are many different ways for young people to listen to music and I consider that this influence was an important one to explore in my study.

1.3 My research questions

I posed research questions to guide my dissertation rather than research hypotheses − where the direction of the relationship between the various social factors and identification with particular musical genres is predicted − for the following reasons:

(i) There has not been any empirical research that considers both the influence of social factors *and* of musical form and practices on the development of young people's musical preferences.

(ii) There has been little empirical research on the musical preferences of the younger children I chose to study.

(iii) I undertook qualitative research (focus groups) as the first step in my empirical research before I undertook quantitative research (a questionnaire survey). This research sequence is more appropriate for research questions than for research hypotheses.

I set out my research questions below:

(i) How do young people perceive modern music?

(ii) How can we understand the development of young people's musical preferences?

(iii) What social factors, and musical forms and practices, correlate with young people's musical preferences?

1.4 The ethics of conducting research on children and young people

There is considerable literature specifically on the ethics of conducting research on children and young people: for recent examples, Alderson (2007), Cocks, (2006), Morrow (2008), Goodenough et al. (2008) and Punch (2002). The ethics of research with children and young people requires a delicate balance between, on the one hand, preventing harm to them and, on the other, preventing exclusion of children's voices from research about their views and experiences (ESRC/RDI/IOC, 2015).

I was concerned to take a rigorous ethical approach as I was conducting research on young people aged 11 to 15 years. In describing my ethical approach, I show how my conduct conformed to the four areas for consideration set out by Diener and Crandall (1978) in their classic exposition on ethics.

(i) In terms of *informed consent*, I decided to seek this from the Heads of the two schools in which I conducted my study and the pupils who took part in the focus group discussions and who completed the questionnaire. In these choices, I followed the British Psychological Society's Code of Ethics (2009: 17) which states:

> In relation to the gaining of consent from children and young people in school or other institutional
> settings, where the research procedures are judged by a senior member of staff to fall within the range of
> usual curriculum or other institutional activities, and where a risk assessment has identified no significant

risks, consent from the participants and the granting of an approval and access from a senior member of a school legally responsible for such approval can be considered sufficient.

Following the British Psychological Society's Code of Ethics (2009) for my school-based research I did not ask the parents of each young person involved for their informed consent. I did not consider that it would have made any difference to the conduct and findings of my research had I asked for this informed consent, give that the young people in my study had considerable knowledge of modern music and strong opinions about it. In practice, it would have been a very difficult exercise to secure parental consent for the pupils involved. In both schools, experience of ensuring that pupils remember to deliver consent forms to their parents and then, once the parents had signed it, remembering to bring them back to school has been frustrating and protracted.

Following the ethics of the British Psychological Society meant that I was required to secure the informed consent of the Heads of the boys' and girls' schools. I explained the aims and methods of my research project to both Heads and gained their informed consent; the Heads and I considered that my research focus on the school pupils' music preferences fell within the range of the usual curriculum and activities of the schools. I did not in the questionnaire include any questions on the pupils' truancy, delinquent activities, drug-taking, drinking alcohol or sexual activities.

Following the ethics of the British Psychological Society meant that I was also required to secure the informed consent of the pupils selected to be participants in the focus group discussions and those to be questionnaire respondents. As we shall see in Chapter 4, I began each focus group by explaining to the pupils what was my research project was about and that

taking part in the discussions was voluntary − anyone who did not wish to participate was, of course, free not to do so. In retrospect, I realise that, if a pupil had wished to leave, this might have been difficult for them as he/she would have to leave in front of the other group members. It would have been better if I had organised it so that a pupil wishing not to participate could have expressed this wish to me in private. In the event, taking part in the focus groups was extremely popular in both schools and no pupil expressed a wish not to take part. Indeed, I experienced difficulty with pupils who were not asked to take part in a focus group and very much wanted to. As we shall see in Chapter 4, for the questionnaire survey, I arranged for those selected to complete this to receive a letter from me that explained why I was undertaking the survey, stressing that his/her participation in the questionnaire survey was voluntary and assuring them that his/her replies were confidential.

(ii) In terms of *avoiding harm to participants*, I took care to ensure that no harm came to the pupils participating in my study. I took care to maintain the confidentiality of the pupils' responses in my pilot interviews, my focus group discussions and in my questionnaire survey. I have not named in my dissertation the two schools I selected for my study. I assured all the subjects in my study that their contributions would be anonymous. A special concern in my study was to assure the pupils that none of the teachers in the two schools had access to the pupils' responses. I did not put any code numbers on the copies of the questionnaires which I distributed. I do not refer to any pupils' names when I include quotations in my Dissertation. I was not required by the Salford University's Ethics Committee to undertake any risk assessment as my study was conducted within school buildings that had been already been risk assessed.

(iii) In terms of *privacy*, I ensured that all the questions asked and topics discussed in my study were sensitive and did not intrude upon the children's privacy. As a researcher does not always know in advance what study subjects may consider sensitive/personal, the study subjects had the freedom in the questionnaire survey and focus groups sessions to refuse to answer any questions/discuss any topic they considered to be sensitive.

(iv) In terms of *deception*, I point out that my position, as a drum teacher was well known in the boys-only school. However, I explained my position carefully to the subjects in the girls-only school. I explained carefully to the pupils selected for the pilot, focus group discussions and the questionnaire survey the purpose for which I was collecting information. I explained to the boys and girls in my study that I was undertaking research on the development of young people's musical preferences for my Master's degree. I explained that I might later publish my collective results in an academic journal but that in such an article I would respect their anonymity.

1.5 Plan of my dissertation

This chapter has introduced my interest in young people's musical preferences, referred to the considerable gap in the literature on the impact of social factors and musical forms and structures on the development of young people's musical identity, set out the research questions that guided my study and explained how I ensured that my research was ethical.

In Chapter 2 I consider the theoretical debate over the use of the concept of subculture in the study of young people's musical tastes. Most importantly I review the work of the CCCS and

the later criticism of their scholarship by the post-subculturalists. I then discuss how Hesmondhalgh (2005) has suggested that researchers into youth's music tastes should flexibly combine the influences of social structure together with musical forms and practices. At the end of this chapter, I set out the theoretical position I adopted for my study of musical preference in two schools.

In Chapter 3 I discuss the work of a number of researchers who undertook survey-based studies in their attempts to analyse the influence of social factors upon young people's musical preferences − largely the influence of demographic characteristics together with family and school experiences. I then go on to identify, in more detail than in this chapter, the research gap in the literature.

In Chapter 4 I define quantitative and qualitative research and then discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each. I then explain the benefits of adopting a multi-method approach. I then explain my choice in my mixed methods approach of a qualitative pilot study, a qualitative focus group exercise, and a questionnaire-based survey that collected data from both closed-questions (quantitative) and open-ended questions (qualitative). I explain the role each method I used plays in my data collection. I then discuss the research sites I selected for my study. Finally, I describe my fieldwork.

In Chapter 5 I analyse the response of the focus group participants towards taking part in the discussions and I reflect on my role as researcher in the discussions. I discuss how I classified the pupils' perception of how modern music is divided and the pupils' opinions on the factors affecting preferences for different musical genres. I consider how my findings relate to those set out by the different schools of thought on young people's music preferences.

In Chapter 6, I analyse the quantitative (closed-answer questions) data from my questionnaire survey and the qualitative (open-answer questions) data. I set out my findings for my statistical analysis of my quantitative data and my interpretative analysis of my qualitative data. I compare my findings with those of researchers from the different schools of thought on young people's musical preferences.

In Chapter 7, I compare my study findings by method of data collection − focus group discussions and the closed-answer and open-answer questions in the questionnaire − for the factors influencing the music preferences of my study participants. I justify my use of a mixed methods approach in my study of the factors influencing the music preferences of the study participants. I demonstrate how my study findings contribute to the development of a *new* understanding of young people's perception of modern music and how young people come to develop particular music preferences. I identify the limitations of my study, acknowledging any issues that have arisen as a consequence and discussing how they could have been avoided. I include suggestions for further research based on the findings of my study.

I have attached 5 appendices that relate to the methodology that I used.

Appendix 1 – Focus group prompt

Appendix 2 − Pupil survey consent letter

Appendix 3 – Questionnaire survey

Appendix 4 – Sampling methods

Appendix 5 – Statistical techniques

Chapter 2: Literature: The theoretical debate over the influence of subculture on young people's musical preferences

Introduction

This chapter considers the theoretical debate over the use of the concept of subculture in the study of young people's culture and musical tastes. I begin by discussing the concept of subculture. I then turn to the Chicago School and the early British theorists who relied on psychological and psychoanalytical techniques. I then turn to consider the work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS): the work of both the mainstream researchers and those who focused on girls and young women; I complete this section by examining the post-subculturalists' criticisms of CCCS scholarship. I then consider the concepts introduced by the post-subculturalists for their own study of youth culture; I include the work of both mainstream researchers and those who focused on girls and young women. I then turn to consider those theorists who advocate that researchers into youth culture and its music should combine musical forms and practices with social structure; I complete this section by examining the criticisms that have been made of post-subcultural theorists. At the end of this chapter, I set out the theoretical position I adopted for my study of young people's musical preferences in two schools and what factors appear important to include in my study in order to examine the validity of the theories discussed in this chapter. In Chapter 3, I discuss the empirical studies researchers have conducted in their attempts to understand young people's musical taste.

2.1 The concept of subculture

Speaking of subcultures in general terms, Brake (1985: 6-7), sets out how for youth subcultures many members take over styles that are either 'situated' in the family or neighbourhood or 'mediated' from the synthetic culture of the teenage entertainment industry. As such subcultures are expression and extensions of the dominant system in society rather than deviant from or in opposition to society. Thus, most subcultures, despite their being rebellious and dramatising specific styles or values, do not amount to an articulated opposition to society.

Downes (1996) suggested that subcultures can be divided into those which emerge in positive response to the demands of social and cultural structures (for example, occupational cultures) and those that emerge in response to these structures as in the delinquent subculture. He also suggests that subcultures originating within a society can be distinguished from those that originate outside a society such as for immigrant groups.

Blackman (2005: 2) provides a clear definition of the concept of subculture:

> The concept of subculture at its base is concerned with agency and action belonging to a subset or social group that is distinct from <u>but related to</u> [my emphasis] the dominant culture. The word distinct or different from is key to understanding the currency of the term subculture because it suggests something separate and unlike the majority of the population. For this reason the concept has been attractive as a model for explanation in sociology by a diversity of theoretical positions because it focuses on the existence of groups with different patterns of behaviour and alternative values from the mainstream who pursue and act out their own cultural solutions.

As we shall see below, there are different schools of thought on the role of subcultures in the development of young people's musical preferences.

2.2 The Chicago School and early British theories of subculture

In the early development of subcultural theory it is useful to make the distinction between American and British theories of subculture.

The Chicago School, USA

The formal academic study of youth began in America at the University of Chicago (Blackman 2005; Brake, 1985). From 1913, under the direction of Park and later Burgess, the Chicago School began to construct ethnographic maps of the diverse populations inhabiting the city's social and cultural territories; they explored the formation of urban social groups in Chicago focusing on 'youth's own story'. The Chicago School sought to understand young people within an ethnographic context derived from the normal conditions of urban social life. Their adherents identified social space, morality and the social bonds that groups perform through hard times. They aimed to explain the social and cultural context of deviance without reducing young people's actions to symptoms of psychological inadequacy. The Chicago School were influenced by Merton's (1938) theory of deviancy, although he did not himself use the term subculture where he argued that deviance results from the interplay of culture and structure in society. However, the concept of subculture was known to the Chicago school and Cohen's (1956) study of delinquent boys popularized this concept. As

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well as Cohen's study of delinquent gangs among working class boys in slum areas, other notable studies are that by Becker (1963) of a 'deviant' group of white jazz musicians in the 1940s and by Polsky of beatniks in Greenwich village.

Early British theories of subculture

British subcultural theory consistently relied on psychology and psychoanalysis to explain social behaviour (Blackman 2005). In the earlier stage a leading psychologist was Burt (1925), who argued on the basis of Lombroso's evolutionary theory of deviancy that young people who enter deviant groups possess defective morals that showed pathological traits. Bowlby (1946), writing later in the 1950s, offered a more therapeutic psychoanalytical theory of deviancy that provided model for future research where he argued that young people joined subcultures as a result of 'inadequate socialisation'. Importantly, he developed the psychopathology of the 'affectionless character' – a deviant young person suffering from the emotional effect of deprivation from material affection in his/her early life. In contrast to Burt (1925), Bowlby (1946, 1953) argued that it was nurture not nature that led to youth delinquency.

Following this British psychoanalytical tradition, a series of studies were undertaken in the UK in the 1950s whose authors argued that subcultural formation by working-class youth 'revealed their inability to integrate in society' (Blackman 2005: 5). These studies identified subcultural formation as a form of deprivation where individuals lacked intelligence and emotional development. Well-known example of these studies are those by Jephcott (1954) who investigated the membership of youth organizations, Kerr (1958) who investigated families in a Liverpool slum, and Mays (1954) who investigated juvenile delinquency, also

in Liverpool. Downes (1966: 111) criticised these British theorists for their use of subculture in combination with psychoanalytic deprivation theory 'to erect an "omnibus" theory of "inadequate socialization" as the origin of delinquent behaviour'.

From the late 1960s the British National Deviance Conference began to criticise American subcultural theory's psychological underpinning of subculture and its association with social pathology. Criminologists such as Downes (1966), who studied delinquent subcultures in Stepney and Poplar, argued for the development of a more indigenous and sophisticated form of British labelling theory: one that 'interpreted youth subcultures in terms of social class relations and social change'. Cohen (1972: 30) argued that it was 'important to make a distinction between subculture and delinquency'. These authors argue that 'working-class youth through their subcultures attempt to resolve ideological contradictions that remain hidden or unresolved in the parent culture' (Blackman 2005: 5).

2.3 Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) – The Birmingham School

Cohen's attempt to distinguish subculture and delinquency became the basis for the CCCS's theory of subculture (Blackman 2005: 5). I consider first the general trend of CCCS research and then I consider those theorists who focused on girls and young women.

2.3.1 CCCS studies of subculture, the general trend

In the second half of the 1970s, CCCS (also referred to as the Birmingham School) produced a series of highly influential texts on the relationship between (predominantly white, male, working class, heterosexual British) youth and popular culture. The work of writers such as Hall and Jefferson (1975), Corrigan (1979) and Hebdige (1979) became formative for the new field of *youth subcultural studies* (Blackman, 2005; Brake 1985). The leading CCCS text was *Resistance through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-war Britain*, edited by Hall and Jefferson (1975). This text reported a collection of studies that looked in detail at the wide range of youth subcultures from teddy boys and skinheads to black Rastafarians. Bennett (1999: 600) describes this text as the 'centrepiece of CCCS research'.

An influential CCCS researcher was Willis (1978). Willis undertook an ethnographic study of motor-bike boys and hippies in the 1960s. In his book − *Profane culture* − he linked being a biker and being a hippie with specific subcultural traits including a particular music preference. The bikers were working-class motorcyclists who preferred the early rock 'n' roll of the late 1950s while the hippies were middle-class drug users with long hair who preferred progressive music. Other examples of CCCS studies of specific groups are those by Clarke (1976) (skinhead culture) and Jefferson (1976) (teddy boys).

The CCCS attempted to represent youth subcultures from the 'inside', drawing on ethnography as well as New Left Marxist and feminist theorising (Griffin 2011: 245). CCCS research took young people's cultural practices seriously, 'in opposition to an academic and popular orthodoxy that viewed working-class youth in overwhelmingly negative terms' (Griffin 2011: 245). Griffin (2011: 245) points out that 'the 'CCCS approach' was never a unified set of ideas or a common framework'. However, Griffin (2011: 246) also notes that 'despite their differences, many of those involved in the early youth sub/cultures project were

grappling with a common set of politically informed theoretical debates' and that this contributed to their work having a sense of coherence.

The CCCS-led study of youth subcultures began at a 'particular historical, cultural and political conjuncture' (Griffin, 2011: 246): 'teenagers' emerged as an increasingly visible social and economic group with significant disposable income, a market geared to youth consumption developed, and an expanding culture industry targeted at producing a distinctive 'youth' market. The wider context of these teenager trends were the social changes deriving from the loss of Empire and the post Second World War's apparent affluence, embourgeoisement, and consensus (Griffin, 2011: 246). However, CCCS researchers considered that class had not, as widely supposed, disappeared in post Second World War UK and they believed class still had a major influence on youth subculture (a Marxist analysis). For example, Clarke et al. (1975) stated that they aimed to put 'class, rather than age and generation, at the centre in theorising the lives of young people' (quoted in Griffin, 2011: 246).

CCCS-influenced researchers treated the cultural practices of working-class youth, such as those of teddy boys, mods, rockers and skinheads, 'as imbued with meaning and political significance, as worthy of study in their own terms and as potentially creative rather than inherently destructive and of minimal cultural value' (Griffin, 2011: 246). These researchers also sought to understand the significance of working-class youth subcultures by exploring the 'cultural and political significance of youth styles, music and popular culture. Youth subcultural theory politicized (working-class) youth style.' (Griffin, 2011: 246).

CCCS researchers aimed to understand how young working-class people reproduce, negotiate and transform their material conditions through signifying cultural practices, but not in circumstances of their own making (Clarke, 2009). They considered that 'working-class youths developed distinct patterns of life and gave expressive form to their social and material life-experience'; thus, subcultures were seen as 'social formations constructed as a collective response to the material and situated experience of their class.' (Griffin, 2011: 246-7). In sum, working-class youth subcultures were viewed 'both as *responses* to the 'material and situated experience' of (primarily white, male and heterosexual) working-class youth, and as attempted solutions to those problems.' (Clarke, 2009: 47).

2.3.2 The study of girls and young women's subcultural practices

A number of writers have pointed to CCCS researchers' focus on white, male and heterosexual working-class youth, thereby rendering the culture of girls and young women 'invisible' in the study of youth subculture. See for example, Griffin (2011), Marshall and Borrill (1984), McRobbie (1978, 1991), McRobbie and Garber, (1976) and Shildrick and MacDonald (2006). I refer again to the lack of research of work on girls and young women's musical tastes when I examine the empirical largely questionnaire-based studies of the correlates of young people's musical tastes.

McRobbie was an early critic of CCCS research. Her major critique of the CCCS theorists, which she wrote together with Garber, is contained in a chapter in Hall and Jefferson (1975) collection, *Resistance through rituals: youth subcultures in post-war Britain* (McRobbie and Garber 1976). These authors pointed out that when girls did appear in CCCS studies, they did so either in ways uncritically reinforcing the stereotypical passive image of women or they

were marginally presented. McRobbie and Garber (1976) sought to remedy this research deficit. In doing so they adopt CCCS perspectives – the centrality of class, the importance of work, leisure and the family, the general social structure within which the subcultures emerge, structural changes in post-war British society, factors defining the subcultures, and added to these the perspectives that of sex and gender structuring. McRobbie and Garber (1976) did not spell out the evidence on which their conclusions were based but McRobbie (1978) gives an account of the methodology she used in her data collection: this, based on ethnography, was similar to that of the other CCCS authors but appeared to be more rounded, including questionnaires and diary-keeping as well as participant observation, taped and untaped interviews and informal discussions. However, she provides less information on her methodology than is expected in academic publications today; in particular, McRobbie did not <u>reflect</u> on her research role − a key concern for current feminist researchers (for understanding reflexivity, see Riach 2009). McRobbie and Garber (1976) described how girls spent more time at home than boys and developed a "bedroom culture" comprising experimenting with make-up, listening to records, reading pop magazines, discussing boyfriends, chatting and jiving. These authors perceived the girls in their study, through their development of a bedroom culture, to resist the dominant culture in society, just as boys did but in a different way.

Four particular points of McRobbie and Garber's (1976) theory of bedroom culture have been discussed and challenged to a considerable extent by later writers.

The *first* point of McRobbie and Garber's (1976) bedroom culture to be discussed by later writers is these authors framed girls' orientation in terms of girls' physical vulnerability; thus, it was chiefly the fear of accusations of impropriety and sexual degradation that led girls to

spend time at home and develop a bedroom culture. In working class values, it was undesirable for girls to hang about on street corners where they might possibly become sexually labelled and get into sexual trouble. While boys could hang around outside, girls were more confined to the home, visiting girlfriends, or going to parties, without involving the more hazardous and socially disapproved hanging about the streets or cafes: in doing so, girls avoided the risk of personal humiliation or degradation such as being stood up or "bombed out". McRobbie and Garber (1976) concluded that the majority of girls found alternative strategies to that of boys. Girls' strategies were complementary to those of the boys: the girls were self-sufficient, interacting among themselves to form a <u>distinctive</u> culture of their own.

The *second* point of McRobbie and Garber's (1976) bedroom culture to be discussed by later writers is their emphasis on media consumption. These authors consider one of the most significant forms of girls' alternative subculture to be the teeny-bopper, which they perceived to be almost totally packaged commercially, directed expressly at 10 to 15 year old girls. It was not expensive for girls to participate in this teeny-bopper culture: only a bedroom and a record player were required; the pop magazines were relatively inexpensive.

The *third* point of McRobbie and Garber's (1976) bedroom culture to be discussed by later writers is their emphasis on teenage girls' romantic involvement with pop stars: pop music provided a framework for this adoration. These authors perceived this obsession with particular stars, for example, Donny Osmond, as "a meaningful reaction against the selective and authoritarian structures" that controlled the girls' lives at school (McRobbie and Garber, 1976: 220).

The *fourth* point of McRobbie's concept of bedroom culture to be discussed by later writers is her use of "codes" in her analysis of the 'messages' in the widely read girls' magazine *Jackie* (see McRobbie, 1991). *Jackie* was a weekly British magazine for girls published between 1964 and 1993 and was the best-selling teen magazine in Britain for ten years, with sales rising from an initial 350,000 to 605,947 in 1976 (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jackie_(magazine) downloaded 25 April 2015). *Jackie* published a mix of fashion and beauty tips, gossip, short stories and comic strips; the centre pages of the magazine usually contained a pull-out poster of a popular band or film star. McRobbie (1991) identified four codes for organising her study: the code of romance; the code of personal domestic life; the code of fashion and beauty; and the code of pop music. McRobbie (1991) concludes from her analysis of *Jackie* that 'the personal' is of prime importance to the teenage girl and that romance, fashion, beauty and pop mark out the limits of a girl's feminine sphere. According to *Jackie*, the ethos for the teenage girl is 'romantic individualism'. The teenage girl is alone in her quest for love: female solidarity or even just female friendship has no major role. The teenage girl must escape the 'catty' atmosphere of female company and find a boyfriend. However, when the teenage girl finds a boyfriend, she must surrender her individuality to him: she must be wiling to give in to his demands, including his plans for the rest of their lives.

Frith (1978) developed McRobbie and Garber's (1976) bedroom culture theory, again adopting CCCS subcultural perspectives. Although he did not conduct specific fieldwork for his study of rock music, he referred to a number of earlier studies (this means that the empirical evidence on which he based his views predates the publication of his book, often by a lengthy period; see his reference to Crichton's (1962) study of young people and leisure in Cardiff). Frith (1978) develops, in particular, the reasons why girls stay at home

more than boys. He argues that the most important reason why girls stay at home is parental control: girls' parents forbid them to go out every night, limit where they go, who with and for how long − this leads to girls as teenagers being more closely integrated into family life. In contrast, parents do not exert this control over boys. Second, Frith (1978) argues that girls stay at home more than boys because they have a domestic role − babysitting and childminding are expected and to some extent other domestic chores such as cleaning and cooking. In contrast boys have no domestic role at home. Third, Frith (1978) argues that girls stay at home more than boys because they spend longer than boys preparing to go out.

Frith (1978) divides girls and young women into three groups. The youngest, 12 to 13 years, whom he sees as being at the least free stage, he refers to (similarly to McRobbie and Garber 1876) teeny-boppers who are focused on pop stars and for whom magazines, gossip, clothes, possessions and pictures are more important than records and music. Firth describes older girls as growing out of teeny-bop culture as they begin more serious dating and dancing. However, for this group, the relationship between rock and bedroom continues with girls still more focused on rock stars than on rock music. Firth's final group are young women who are settling down, finding a husband, and moving from one household to another; they stop dancing and read *Woman* instead of *Jackie*.

Griffiths (1988) in her later study also develops McRobbie and Garber's (1976) bedroom culture theory, again adopting CCCS subcultural perspectives. In contrast to Frith (1978), she undertook an empirical study. She spend a year in a mixed-sex comprehensive school in an in area of West Yorkshire, working with 50 girls aged 12 to16, all but one of whom came from working class homes. Again Griffiths (1988) provides less information on her methodology

than is expected in academic publications today and she fails to reflect on her research role. Griffiths' (1988) study was more comprehensive than McRobbie's (1976) study as she distinguished between the girls in her study, not only by age and race, but also by maturity: for the last of these she distinguished between "mature" and "younger seeming" girls based on physicality and interests (e.g. make-up versus hopscotch). Further, again unlike McRobbie (1976), Griffiths (1988) perceived girls' leisure time to be both constructed and restricted by their class, race and gender. Griffiths (1988) emphasised three gender-specific factors that restricted her subjects' leisure time. First, the girls' leisure was restricted by domestic responsibilities that increased as they became older. Second, the girls' leisure was restricted by parental fears about safety: many places were considered too rough for girls to go, few girls were allowed out alone although most were allowed to go out with a girlfriend/group of girls (but not when it was dark); and buses late at night were not considered safe. Third, the girls' leisure was restricted by the domination of youth clubs by boys: few girls went to youth clubs, particularly because the activities provided were considered to be for boys e.g. football and space invaders. Girls who did attend mostly watched television or stood around talking and watching the boys.

Griffiths (1988) argues that the restrictions on girls' leisure did not prevent girls finding their own space: the girls in her study developed <u>positive</u> strategies to overcome the restrictions on their leisure and to negotiate their own space. Griffiths (1988) sets out three main strategies (the fourth "clubs" appears less relevant). First, the girls in Griffiths' (1988) study resisted the pressures on them to drop their girlfriends once they had acquired a boyfriend and spent part of their leisure time with girlfriends.

Second, Griffiths (1988) found the girls in her study, as did those in McRobbie's study (1991), developed a bedroom culture. However, Griffiths (1988) found that girls' bedroom culture in her study varied considerably among different groups of friends. While no girls stayed at home to the exclusion of going out, staying in had different meanings and took different forms depending on age and stage of adolescence; race was another important factor. She found that mature 12-14 year olds were not allowed out as much as they wanted and found staying at home to be the least satisfactory; they described what they did at home in negative ways, except for playing records and talking to friends (often boys) on CB radio. Griffiths considered the girls' taking the initiative, in using CB radio to contact boys and take control in starting relationships with them, enabled them to go against their expected feminine role. Younger-seeming 12 to 14 year olds had a more positive attitude towards staying in – they went to each others' houses to play games, or read/knitted. Some of the older girls enjoyed spending evenings at home with girlfriends perhaps because they had plenty of nights out. Griffiths (1988) found that Asian girls spent much of their time at home usually in family groups and had interests similar to those of younger-seeming girls. Griffiths (1988) found Afro-Caribbean girls to be closest to McRobbie and Garber's (1976) description of bedroom culture: these girls were, like Asian girls, much more part of extended family groups and did not prioritise privacy at home. Griffiths (1988) found that Afro-Caribbean girls experienced fewer pressures than white girls to go out and to have boyfriends: they were happy to spend evenings at home, doing each others' hair, playing records, talking, helping each other with homework and reading. Griffiths (1988) argues that, for the girls in her study, bedroom culture was a form of resistance for girls, as did McRobbie and Garber (1976). She considers that activities such as CB radio enabled girls to resist their expected feminine role. For the older girls in her study she considers bedroom culture was a way of resisting pressures to spend all their time with their boyfriends.

Third, Griffiths (1988) found that, in contrast to the view of the men CCCS researchers, the girls in her study were <u>not</u> invisible on the streets except as "appendages" to boys. She found the fact that girls, in groups together, were often highly visible on the streets was in accord with the findings of two earlier studies by Smith (1976), Wilson (1978) and two later ones by Griffin (1985) and Lees (1986): the presence of girls on the street was not restricted to deviant girls. Griffiths (1998) found that the activities the girls took part in depended on their age: there was a gradual transition as the girls got older from playing out to "dossing" (hanging around on the streets, gathering at the chip shop and in the local park, or spending Saturdays in town, hanging around the shops). In turn, dossing was gradually replaced by "going out": the girls, as they got older and were in college or in work, were likely to have the funds to go out to places. However, maturity made a difference for the younger girls: mature 12 to 14 years old often combined playing out with more adolescent activities, while younger seeming girls often spent a lot of their time after school playing out.

I have reviewed above the extensive criticism made by McRobbie and others of the CCCS researchers for their neglect of girls and young women in their studies of young people's cultural practices. These critics, however, worked within the theoretical framework as the CCCS, where youth subculture was influenced by class, work, leisure and the family, and general social structure. I now turn to the post-subcultural theorists whose criticism of the CCCS researchers focuses on criticising the CCCS researchers for their reliance on class and other structural factors in the understanding of young people's music and culture today.

2.3.3 Post-subcultural writers' criticism of CCCS scholarship

CCCS researchers were severely criticised, from the mid-1980s onwards, by the post-subcultural theorists. Below, I set out a brief account the post-subculturalists' theoretical criticism of CCCS researchers' concept of subculture and of their reliance on class-based explanations. I then set out the post-subculturalists' methodological criticisms of CCCS research.

I begin with post-subculturalists writers' *theoretical criticism* of CCCS research. Bennett's leading article, published in 1999, sets out his argument for the rethinking of 'the relationship between youth, style and musical taste' (Bennett 1999: 599). His central contention was that the concept of subculture is 'unworkable as an objective analytical tool in sociological work on youth, music and style' (Bennett, 1999: 599). He argued that the musical tastes and stylistic preferences of youth are not tied to issues of social class but were, in fact, examples of late modern lifestyles where notions of identity were 'constructed' rather than 'given', and 'fluid' rather than 'fixed'. He argued that CCCS's concept of subculture was 'deeply problematic' as it imposed rigid lines of division over forms of association which might be rather more fleeting than the concept of subculture with its connotations of coherency and solidarity. He also argued that the concept of subculture tended to exclude from consideration the large area of commonality between subcultures and to imply a deterministic and often deviant relationship with a national dominant culture (Bennett 1999: 603).

Turning to post-subculturalist writers' *methodological* criticism of CCCS research, I note that Bennett (2002: 452), in his substantial critique of the methodology utilised by CCCS scholars, argued that these researchers' work, although empirically grounded, displayed a lack of contact with the social actors at the centre of their research: they did not employ ethnography or other qualitative fieldwork. Bennett (2002) argued that the major problem in

CCCS research was researchers' use of a structural-Marxist approach where they mapped the post-war stylistic responses of working class youth (mods, rockers, skinheads) against a backdrop of socio-economic forces that the young people themselves − the social actors − barely understood. Thus, Bennett (2002) argued CCCS drew upon their theoretical framework to deduce that socio-economic determinants shaped the consciousness of the social actors.

Bennett (2011) pointed out that Willis (1978) was the exception: in his ethnographic studies of bikers and hippies he incorporated these social actors' own accounts in the first half of his book. However, Bennett (2011) criticises Willis (1978) for, in the second half his book, interpreting his findings through theoretical abstraction, arguing that his bikers' and hippies' musical taste, personal image and other consumer choices, which he showed in his 'thick descriptions' to have meaning for his subjects, were *structurally* determined.

2.4 The post-subcultural theorists

I consider first the general trend of post-subculture research and then I consider those theorists who focused on girls and young women.

2.4.1 The general trend of post-cultural research

Post-subculturalists believed that there were substantial changes in youth subculture in the 1980s and beyond that led to the CCCS' class-based approach being outmoded. They consider that youth subcultures 'changed and dissolved as the rave and party scenes emerged and expanded into a global phenomenon' (Griffin, 2011::249: see also Blackman's similar

view, (2005)). The post-subculturalists argue that aspects of feminist and gay/lesbian culture were incorporated into mainstream popular culture and that urban youth became increasingly diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, nationality and culture (Griffin, 2011: 249) Griffin (2011: 249) states that the 1990s brought

> a shift towards more complex constellations of youth-based cultures that bore little resemblance to the more clearly demarcated, classed, gendered and racialised youth subcultural groups of the immediate post-war period.

Leading post-subcultural theorists were Redhead (1990, 1993, 1995) who researched pop culture, Thornton (1995) who researched rave and club cultures, Bennett (1999, 2005, 2011) who researched contemporary dance music, and Muggleton (2000) who researched those with an 'unconventional appearance'.

Redhead (1990, 1993, 1995) made two important points about youth culture in the 1990s that warrant discussion in this review. First, Redhead (1990) draws upon Baudrillard's (1987, 1990) notion of the illusion of 'the end'. Baudrillard (1990) viewed the year 2000, the end of the millennium, as an illusion, part of the fantasy of a linear history, like so many other imaginary endpoints in history. He argued we were not approaching the end of history but instead were moving into a process of systematic obliteration, wiping out the entire twentieth century, secretly hoping, perhaps, to be able to begin again from scratch. Thus, history had stopped meaning, referring to anything.

Redhead (1990, 1993) utilised Baudrillard's (1990) notion of the illusion of the end to criticise past researchers on youth cultures. He states that there has been a pronounced

tendency in both 'academic' and 'popular' sites of youth culture to promote a concept of linear time. Thus, after the Second World War, subcultural styles were perceived to unfold in a linear manner, to evolve, and the relationship between particular musical styles was also perceived to develop in a linear fashion. Redhead (1990, 1993) argued differently, that since in the 1940s, the development of pop music has been circular rather than linear: thus, the 1980s was characterised by recycling and re-combining youth culture and, further, that popular music and deviant youth styles never fitted together harmoniously as proclaimed by some subcultural theorists. Redhead (1990: 26) states:

> It is the recycling and re-combination of the meanings of certain pop and rock (and miscellaneous other musical and non-musical sounds), formats, riffs, drum patterns, networks of notes and vocal ranges that need to be described and accounted for un the cultural politics of pop music.

The second of Redhead's (1990, 1993, 1995) points that warrant discussing in this review is his use of Baudrillard's (1981) concepts of s*imulacra and simulation* to explore postmodern youth culture. Baudrillard (1981) considered simulacra to be copies that depict things that either had no original to begin with, or that no longer have an original, and simulation to be the imitation of the operation of a real-world process over time. Baudrillard (1981) discussed how these concepts apply to current society. He breaks the sign-order for s*imulacra/simulation* into four stages. In the first stage, the simulacrum is a faithful copy, a 'reflection of a profound reality'. In the second stage the simulacrum is a perversion of reality an unfaithful copy. In the third stage, the simulacrum pretends to be a faithful copy, but it is a copy with no original. In the fourth stage − pure simulation, the simulacrum has no relationship to any reality whatsoever: cultural products are 'hyperreal'. For Baudrillard (1981), in today's postmodern society, the simulacrum precedes the original and the

distinction between reality and representation vanishes: there is only the *hyperreal*: originality becomes a totally meaningless concept.

Redhead (1993: 23-24) argued, utilising Baudrillard's theory, that the previous 'depth' model (adopted for example by CCCS researchers) of understanding youth culture, where researchers sought to discover the real subculture, was no longer appropriate − if, indeed, he says it ever was appropriate. Redhead (1993) argued that this was because postmodern culture was characterised by depthlessness, flatness and hyperreality. Redhead (1993) also argued that the previous 'depth' approach to research was ineffective: he contends that pulp fiction such as works by Michael Bracewell (for example *The crypto-amnesia club* (1988), Martin Millar (for example, *Lux the poet* (1988) and Gordon The Shoe 1989)):

> have told us more about the 'feel' of contemporary youth culture than hundreds of pages of sociology of
> youth and criminology and sociology of deviance from the formally academic arena' (Redhead, 1995:88).

Redhead's understanding of postmodern pop was elaborated by Melechi (1993) and Rietveld (1993, 1998) who both wrote, as did Redhead (1993) about raves, acid house and drug taking in the 1980s.

Thornton, in her book published in 1995, was an early critic of CCCS: she identified with the Chicago school and rejected the CCCS. In particular she criticised the CCCS' theoretical concept of subcultures which she finds to be 'empirically unworkable' (1995: 9). Thornton (1995) focused on the British dance scene of the late 1980s and early 1990s, on dance clubs and raves (she defines these as held in clubs outside established venues in unconventional places featuring dance music such house, acid house, techno and jungle music). She describes

youth cultures that focus on dance music and raves as club cultures. These she sees as 'taste cultures' where crowds gather together on the basis of their shared tastes in music, their common consummation of media and their preference for people with similar tastes to them. Thornton (1995) is vague in her book about her methodology, as well as drawing on published data sources, she appears to have conducted participant observation and informal interviews.

In her analysis of British dance clubs and rave culture she draws upon the work of Bourdieu on cultural capital; she in particular draws on his book *Distinction* (1984). Bourdieu (1984) perceived there to be three types of capital: economic capital which refereed to command over economic resources, social capital which referred to resources based on group membership, relationships, networks of influence and support; and cultural capital which referred to forms of knowledge, skills, education, and advantages that a person has, which give them a higher status in society. Bourdieu states that cultural capital can exist in three forms. In the embodied state, cultural capital consists of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; linguistic capital can be understood as a form of embodied cultural capital: it represents a means of communication and self-presentation acquired from one's surrounding culture: an example is using aristocratic slang and not acting 'flash'. In the objectified state, cultural capital consists of cultural goods such as pictures, books, instruments and so forth. In the institutionalised state, cultural capital consists of institutional recognition, most often in the form of academic credentials or qualifications. In his discussion of cultural capital, Bourdieu (1984) argues that higher classes define and display perceptual tools that allow them to appreciate cultural products. Thus, Bourdieu (1984) is concerned with those who have high volumes of institutionalised cultural capital, with those displaying the 'highbrow culture' of the most prestigious social classes. I point out here that Bourdieu' linking of

highbrow culture and higher social status has been criticised by Peterson (1992), who argues that those of higher status are most likely to be 'cultural omnivores', to have broad taste across a wide range of cultural products; thus, those of higher status display 'polymorphous' or 'multicultural' capital. As we shall see in Chapter 3, Tanner et al. (2008) referred to Petersen's (1992) concept of the 'musical omnivore' and included it, in their study, as one style of musical taste.

Thornton (1995) argued that an important advantage of Bourdieu's schema is that it moves away from rigidly vertical models of social structure (as a ladder) to a view of social groups located in a highly complex multi-dimensional space. However, she points out that Bourdieu was concerned with players with high volumes of institutionalised cultural capital, concerned with 'highbrow culture', while she was concerned with those who operated in less privileged domains − young people.

Thornton (1995) coined the term subcultural and regards her concept as more useful than cultural capital in her study of young people. She considers that subcultural capital confers status in the eyes of the relevant beholder. She also argues that in Bourdieuian terms subcultural capital can be objectified and embodied: for subcultural capital fashionable haircuts and well-assembled record collections are the equivalent of books and pictures while using current slang and dancing in the approved mode are the equivalent of using aristocratic slang and having not acting 'flash'.

For Thornton (1995) her concept of subcultural capital has two particular advantages. First, she argues that subcultural capital is not as class bound as cultural capital. Indeed, she argues that 'class is wilfully obfuscated by subcultural distinctions' (Thornton, 1995: 12). Thus,

subcultural capital fuels rebellion against the trappings of parental class. She argues that one reason for the lack of relationship between subcultural capital and class is that such capital is acquired extra-curricularly, not at school.

Second, Thornton (1995) argues that the concept of subcultural capital permits more emphasis to be given to the role of the media − Bourdieu (1984) did not discuss the impact of radio and television in his theory of cultural hierarchy, only films and newspapers. Thornton (1995) argues that media are a primary factor governing the circulation of subcultural capital and that it was impossible to understand the distinctions of youth culture without systematic investigation of young people's media consumption: for her, the media are critical for the definition and distribution of cultural knowledge. Thornton (1995) differentiates between *micro*, *niche* and *mass* media which all play a role in defining and distributing cultural knowledge. Thus, she describes how local micro-media like flyers and listings are means by which club organizers bring the crowd together, niche media, like the music press, construct subcultures as much as they document them and national mass media, such as tabloids, develop youth movements as much as they distort them.

In conclusion, Thornton (1995) strongly contests the Bourdieuian view that subcultures germinate from a seed and grow by force of their own energy into mysterious movements, only to be belatedly digested by the media. She argues that communications media are central to the process of subcultural formation; they are inextricably involved in the meaning and organisation of youth subcultures and that the media participates in the assembly, demarcation and development of music cultures.

Urquía (2005) builds upon Thornton's (1995) work. He adopts her concept of subcultural capital that she derived from Bourdieu (1984) and refines it. He questions Thornton's view that the subcultural capital of rave is valued only in its marginal field and that the power relations in society remain unaffected and that the overall pattern that cultural capital benefits the privileged classes. He set out to explore how salsa is valued and how it is affected by the power relations in society. Urquía (2005) undertook participant observation in a number of London's salsa clubs and conducted 31 semi-structured interviews with young men and women. He found that, instead of different groups generating a hybrid form of salsa to enjoy together, the different groups competed against each other to legitimatise a reinterpretation of salsa that played to their own strengths. For example the United Kingdom Alliance of Professional Teachers of Dancing and Kindred Arts (UKA) became involved with salsa and sought to control salsa teaching by accrediting teachers and documenting the steps. Latin American groups resisted what they saw as UKA's appropriation of salsa, accusing UKA of formalising an intuitive dance and attempting to regulate salsa for their own ends. UKA's success in institutionalising salsa and becoming a significant voice in setting its aesthetics reflected the unequal power between the local ballroom dance organisations and migrant Latin Americans. Thus, a dominant fraction of society appropriated a cultural activity associated with a non-dominant group. I will pick up Urquía's (2005) conclusion that Thornton's analysis lacks consideration of the role of privilege and power in conceptualising subcultural capital in subsection 2.5 below where I discuss bringing structure back into the study of youth culture and its music.

Muggleton in his book published in 2000 refined and developed Redhead's (1995) concept of post-subcultural. Muggleton (2000: 47) situated the transition from subcultural to post-subcultural in the 1980s and 1990s: he describes these as

decades of subcultural fragmentation and proliferation, with a glut of revivals, hybrids and transformations, and the coexistence of myriad styles at any one point in time.

Muggleton (2000) follows Redhead's interpretation of Baudrillard (1983) and asserts that post-subcultures are now concerned with 'surface' and self-authentication. For him, post-subculturalists revel in personal choice that is 'no longer articulated around the structuring of class, gender or ethnicity' (2000: 47-48). Thus, for Muggleton (2000) subcultural identity involves 'free-floating signifiers torn away from social structures'. Muggleton (2000) saw his study subjects as engaging in 'style surfing' (a concept developed by Polhemus, 1996), moving quickly and freely from one style to another as they wished, 'anything goes' and styles are 'mixed and matched'. Indeed, this high degree of sartorial mobility was 'the source of playfulness and pleasure'. Muggleton (2000: 47) argued that subjects did not have to worry about contradictions between their selected subcultural identities as:

there were no rules, no authenticity and no ideological commitment − merely a stylistic game to be played.

While Muggleton (2000) agreed that socioeconomic factors were implicated in the development and formation of subcultures, he argued that this is not to grant legitimacy to the Marxist claim that subcultures are 'solutions' to 'class contradictions'. He argued that the problem with asserting that punks are directly responding to increased joblessness, poverty and Britain's decline − as argued by Hebdige (1979) − is that the link posited between structure and action is never demonstrated by a connecting series of motivations and values. He argued that, despite over half his sample being either unemployed or in causal and part-

time work at the time of interview, only a small minority made any reference to economic conditions and there were certainly no suggestions that their affiliation was a response to such factors.

Shildrick and MacDonald in their article published in 2006 reviewed debates about subculture theory and 'post-subcultural studies' − most of which focused on music cultures, dance scenes and/or stylistic groups. Shildrick and MacDonald (2006) argued that, while concurring with Muggleton's (2005) view that post-subcultural studies should not be understood as a unified body of work, they considered that a number of key themes could be discerned. Shildrick and MacDonald (2006: 127) argued that a 'central aim' of post-subcultural theorists is to:

move away from CCCS subcultural theory and to uncover newer concepts and theories with which to explain contemporary youth cultural identities.

Shildrick and MacDonald (2006) argued that, in direct contrast to the class-based youth cultures identified by the CCCS, contemporary cultures of youth were described by post-subculturalists as being more fleeting and organised around individual lifestyle and consumption choices; whilst some subculturalist concepts profess to take account of the influence of social structure, what is seen to be of *key* significance is the fragmented and individualised ways in which young people construct their identities. These authors referred approvingly to Polhemus's (1996) concept of 'style surfing': young people are more likely to move swiftly through a succession of styles, 'like tins of soup on a supermarket shelf' (Polhemus 1996: 143). Shildrick and MacDonald (2006) agree with Muggleton's words (Muggleton, 2000: 31) that the increased significance of consumption and resulting over

production has led to a situation where youths from different social backgrounds can hold similar views that find their expression in shared membership of a particular subculture.

2.4.2 Post-subculturalists' new concepts replacing subculture

The post-subculturalists developed a number of new concepts to replace subculture. They argued that moving away from CCCS subcultural theory allowed the use of new concepts, such as 'neo-tribes' (see Bennett 2000, 2011), 'lifestyles' (see Miles 2000) and 'scenes' (see Straw, 1991), in attempting to account for the ways in which youth cultural identities were (allegedly) no longer so affected by social/class divisions.

Bennett, in his reflections on post-subculturalism in an article published in 2011, explained how Maffesoli (1996) developed the concept of *neo-tribe* as a means of addressing what he perceived to be the new patterns of sociality. According to Maffesoli (1996: 98), the neo-tribe was

> without the rigidity of the forms of organization with which we are familiar, it refers to a certain ambiance, a state of mind, and is preferably to be expressed through lifestyles that favour appearance and form.

Bennett (2011: 495) perceived the fluid membership of the dance club crowd as indicative of

> a neo-tribal sensibility inspired by fragmentation of youth style and the fragmented text of dance music itself (a product of digital sampling and the mixing and 'mashing' techniques employed by DJs).

Bennett (2011) saw, as core to the neo-tribal approach to the study of youth culture, the way in which this concept allowed for new understandings of *how* and *why* young people are brought together in collective affiliation. While subcultural theory argued that individuals were 'held' together in subcultural groups by class, community, race or gender, neo-tribal theory allows for taste, aesthetics and affectivity to be the primary driver for participation in collective youth cultural activities.

A second new concept introduced by the post-subculturalists was *lifestyles*. This concept stemmed from Weber and Veblen's work (see Bennett, 2011). In the 1990s there was a resurgence of interest in lifestyle theory. A key figure in the resurgence was Miles (1995, 2000). Miles (1995: 36) argued that in late modernity contemporary youth's patterns of cultural consumption have undergone:

> transition from pragmatic and unified subcultural identities to a shifting mosaic and juxtaposition of styles.

A third new concept introduced by the post-subcultural was *scenes*. Straw (1991) had considerable influence on post-subcultural theorists. Straw (1991: 379) argued that scenes often transcend particular localities,

> reflecting and actualising a particular state of relations between various populations and social groups, as these coalesce around particular coalitions of musical style.

Following Straw (1991) a number of post-subculturalists theorists have argued that scene is a better framework for exploring issues of collectivity and cohesion than subculture: scenes are

spaces for individuals to come together bound by musical tastes, whilst for subcultures individuals are bound by class and community.

2.4.3 The specific study of girls and young women's leisure after CCCS-influenced studies

The main contributors to the post-cultural school largely ignored the music and leisure of girls and young women, although possibly not to the same extent as did CCCS researchers. However, some researchers have, through their criticism of the theory of bedroom culture as advanced by McRobbie and Garber (1976), developed an understanding of bedroom culture that is more in line with post-subculturalist thinking. From my reading of the literature, I detect two major challengers to McRobbie and Garber (1976) and their understanding of girls and young women's bedroom culture.

Lincoln (2005): teenagers as active agents and dynamism and fluidity in bedroom culture and subversion of the public/private binary

Lincoln (2004, 2005) argues that, while McRobbie and Garber (1976) and McRobbie (1991), are highly critical of the failure of CCCS research to include the culture of girls and young women, they do not consider the concept of subculture to be flawed. Lincoln (2004, 2005) regards McRobbie and Garber's (1976) and McRobbie's (1991) work on the role of girls, with its emphasis on the influence of class and the spheres of school, work and family, to be an "add on" to CCCS subcultural theory, part of the subcultural paradigm that she seeks to challenge. Lincoln concentrates her criticism of bedroom culture on McRobbie and Garber (1976)/McRobbie (1991). Lincoln sets out her arguments in two articles (2004, 2005). In my

opinion, her arguments are clearer in the later article, particularly for understanding her concept of "zoning"; further, her first article was based on interviews with only four teenage girls, whereas her second article was based on interview with 40 teenage boys and girls. I base my discussion below on her second article.

Lincoln (2005) drew her arguments from an ethnographic study of 40 boys and girls, aged 12 to 19, living in Manchester and Cheshire whom she contacted through snowballing. She emphasises that she interviewed (using a tape recorder) her subjects in small friendship groups in their bedrooms where she could view her subjects' bedrooms as well as talk to them. She argues that interviewing in her subjects' bedrooms meant they were in control of the situation and that, as a result, they felt relaxed, speaking to her fluently and confidently. Lincoln (2005) does not reflect on her role in her research; in particular, she should have discussed how she presented herself in the teenaged girls and boys in their bedrooms.

Lincoln (2005) found that the teenagers in her study had considerable access to technology: as well as a means of playing records − part of the 1970s bedroom culture − the teenagers in the 1990s also had TV, stereo mobile phone and internet (though only a few had access to the internet in their bedrooms). Lincoln (2005) argues that as a consequence, teenagers' bedroom culture is not now "almost totally packaged" as McRobbie and Garber (1976) believed. She argues that bedroom culture is not (and she adds that it is indeed questionable if it ever was) learned through magazines aimed at teenage girls.

I summarise Lincoln's (2005) major arguments: I acknowledge that her arguments are strongly interlinked.

First, I summarise Lincoln's (2005) argument that McRobbie and Garber (1976) were mistaken in their theory of bedroom culture to view girls as passive, devoid of individuality and interest in wider culture, spending their time consuming pop music, and indulging in fantasy and romance about pop stars − all the time remaining within their traditional culture of domesticity. Lincoln (2005) perceives teenagers to be <u>active agents</u>, making choices from a plurality of cultural forms. Thus, for her, bedroom culture is not standardised in a one-dimensional form: bedroom cultures "exist in their plurality… and are unique to the individual occupying the bedroom" (Lincoln, 2005: 402).

Second, I summarise Lincoln's (2005) argument that the teenagers in her study were cognitively and actively interested in music in its own right and music was a cultural construct that the teenagers in her study engaged with and nurtured: the teenagers did not, as argued by McRobbie and Garber (1976) perceive music to be merely background to teenagers' romantic fantasies about pop idols. Lincoln's (2005) teenagers were concerned with the lyrical composition or construction of music in creating atmosphere and identity in their bedroom space. They used music as a way of creating a specific type of atmosphere in their bedrooms: the dynamics of this were primarily controlled by the individual, depending on their age, their mood, the time of day, what other activities they are involved in and who else is occupying that space (for example, friends or siblings). Lincoln (2005) refers to DeNora (<u>2000</u>), whose research demonstrates that, not only do both teenage boys and girls engage in bedroom culture, but also that, as a cultural form, music is integral to the creation and evolution of their youth cultural biographies, and works as a 'soundtrack' to their social lives.

Third, I summarise Lincoln's (2005) argument that her concept of zoning is superior to McRobbie's (1991) concept of **"**coding" in understanding teenagers' bedroom culture. Lincoln (2005) criticises McRobbie's (1991) use of codes for the contents of *Jackie* on the grounds that they depict bedroom culture as largely abstract, not taking into account the importance of the dynamics, complexities and inter-relations of physical and virtual spaces in which cultural activities take place and that they are directed solely by the ideology and pursuit of romance. Lincoln (2005) defines her concept of a zone as a highly flexible and multi-interpretable spatial setting that can be physical, social, mediated, atmospheric or time-spaced. She envisages that a teenager's bedroom is significantly shaped by an ever-increasing number of "pathways" that mediate and intercept zones through various media forms such as TV, radio, internet, magazines and music that create networks of cultural information and the accumulation of youth "cultural capital" (as described by Thornton (1995)). Lincoln (2005) explains how "pathways" are created through the exchange of cultural activities and interests as well as access to equipment and technology through which, for example, music is accessed. She refers to Lefebvre's (1991: 77) argument that social space "contains a great diversity of objects, both natural and social, including the pathways that facilitate the exchange of material things and information". Thus, Lincoln (2005) argues that the focus of teenagers' use of music was not one-dimensional, on romance as posited by McRobbie and Garber (1976), but instead has multiple foci. Lincoln (2005) argues also that zones can exist within zones: thus, within a bedroom zone, a music zone exists. Thus, zones can be multilayered.

An important aspect of Lincoln's (2005) concept of zones is the dynamic emphasis she puts on individual choice: zones are multiple as pathways are created through each teenager's

choice with the result that no two teenagers' bedrooms are the same. Lincoln (2005) considers her understanding of the uniqueness of each teenager's bedroom space to have more explanatory power than McRobbie and Garber's (1976) subcultural understanding of a teenager's bedroom as a space rigidly defined through "style" and "membership". Lincoln (2005) found teenagers controlled music it in a diverse number of ways, particularly through choice and volume.

A further important aspect of Lincoln's (2005) understanding of zones and pathways is her emphasis on <u>fluidity</u>: both are "of the moment". Pathways may be carved out via things that need to be done, for example homework; they then channel into and open up zones. For example, she states that the creation of atmosphere through music is often spontaneous and inter-changeable. Bedroom culture in her study was fluid as the teenagers in her study continually transformed it. In terms of music, the way in which the teenagers used music depends on the way they are feeling at any particular time, what activities they are engaged in and what might be going in their public social lives.

Fourth, I summarise Lincoln's (2005) argument that McRobbie and Garber (1976) were mistaken in their portrayal of bedroom culture as a wholly private space and that they failed to consider the ways in which teenage cultural life (including music) flows in and out of public and private spaces, largely directed by the teenagers themselves as social reflexive, active agents. For Lincoln (2005), music was a medium for which the boundaries of public and private space are blurred. She argues that music shifts between the private space of the teenage bedroom and public spaces such as clubs. For example, teenagers when they are going out for an evening may use music in their bedrooms as a "prequel" (getting ready to go out, meeting up with friends) and a "sequel" (carrying on socialising after a night out).

Lincoln (2005) also argues that telephoning friends in the bedroom and using the internet for accessing music also blurs the public/private divide.

Fifth, I summarise Lincoln's (2005) argument that McRobbie and Garber (1976) were mistaken in regarding the role of music as being in the background and peripheral to the teenage girls' fantasy world of romance based around the adoration of a pop idol. Lincoln (2005) found that for the teenagers in her study music played an integral role in the construction and evolution of their cultural lives; music was a constant mediator of the emotional tone of bedroom culture and a "soundtrack" (DeNora, 2000) to their social lives. The selection of what music to listen to was an important part of teenagers' bedroom culture.

I consider the most valuable aspect of Lincoln's (2005) understanding of teenagers' bedroom culture to be her view that teenagers are active agents in the creation of their unique bedroom cultures and that the bedroom cultures teenagers create are dynamic and fluid. Her understanding of bedroom culture parallels that of the post-subculturalists who re-examined the place of subculture in the study of young people: compare, for example, Muggleton (2000) with his concept of a pick and mix approach to style and Bennett (1999, 2000) with his view of the fragmentation of youth style, fluid boundaries and floating memberships.

I also consider that there are difficulties with Lincoln's (2005) theory and research. First, her concept of zoning is over-complex, especially her emphasis on the physicality of zones and her additional elements of "pathways", zones within zones and the multi-layering of zones: these do not add to her important contribution, that of an emphasis on the fluidity and dynamism of teenagers' bedroom culture. The overly-complex nature of Lincoln's (2005) zones is also criticised by Kearney (2007). Further, Lincoln's (2005) understanding of

teenagers' use of the internet seems out-of-date, even for the 2000s. Lincoln (2004, 2005) reports the teenagers in her study she interviewed used the internet for college work and for downloading music. Although Lincoln's (2005) focus was teenagers' musical style, still some discussion of the internet as a means of communication would have been a useful addition to her work. Further, technology has developed rapidly in the 2000s; technical devices, such as the iPad, are now more mobile and multifunctional and the concept of teenagers' bedrooms being physically zoned when the teenagers are in fact using the same device for different activities becomes problematic. Third, while it is a very positive point that Lincoln (2005) included both boys and girls in her study, she does not, however, make a systematic attempt to compare and contrast boys and girl's bedroom culture and to consider how society's views of boys' and girls' roles might interact with the development of teenagers' bedroom culture.

Kearney (2007): socio-historical change, from media consumption to media production, the development of counterpublics and the reconfiguring bedroom spaces to develop 'subaltern counterpublics'

Kearney (2007) considers that given the time elapsed since McRobbie and Garber's (1976), it is time to revisit the theory of bedroom culture and consider how applicable that theory is to girls' current recreational experiences. She did not conduct a study of her own but reviews the empirical data collected by others.

In the first part of her paper Kearney (2007) questions the current validity of McRobbie and Garber's (1976) construction of media consumption as central to bedroom theory. She includes in her criticism for a consumption-centred view of bedroom culture the post 1970s research conducted by Steel and Brown (1995) in their American study and by James (2001)

in her Australian study. She also criticises Lincoln (2005), stating that Lincoln has a narrow vision of the possible recreational practices that take place in her bedroom culture zones – school work, talking on the phone, watching TV, reading magazines, and preparing for a night out. In fact, she states that virtually every scholar who has studied adolescent room culture had reproduced this media consumption focus which has led to a skewed perspective on girls' domestic media practices. Her view is that those writing on bedroom culture since McRobbie and Garber have ignored the social changes in the context influencing girls' activities that have taken place since the 1970s.

In the second part of her paper - Kearney (2007) argues that the socio-historical context has changed significantly since the 1970s. Today, different options exist for girls' cultural practices. She states that a growing number of girls are now engaged in media production within their bedrooms and that the most important factor contributing to the change in bedroom culture is the introduction of inexpensive, user-friendly productive media technologies. Based on reported research in the USA, Kearney (2007) perceives girls' bedrooms to productive spaces, not non-productive, consumerist-oriented ones. She considers that recent developments in media technologies have contributed to an increase in the domestic cultural productivity of American girls. Further, she considers that the circulation of girl's media texts beyond their homes, a product of girls' media usage, has subverted the public/private binary that has historically limited girls' experiences: girls use their bedrooms as distribution centres, sending texts well beyond their homes to audiences far outside their local communities; of importance has been the development of an infrastructure for the distribution of girls' *zines*, for example, Riot Girrl Press (a grassroots mail-order business that in the 1990s reproduced and distributed girls' zines at a low cost). Thus, Kearny (2007) argues girls are not retreating to private bedroom spaces, but through their production and

exchange of media texts they are <u>reconfiguring</u> bedroom spaces to develop "subaltern counterpublics" (Fraser, 1993), parallel discourses that can better serve their interests and goals. Girl bloggers, web-designers and media producers are able to upload material to the internet and, in doing so, they are subverting the traditional gender dynamics of cultural production. Girls' productive activities are leading to more and more representation of girls and a further democratisation of media culture.

In my opinion, Kearney's (2007) view that McRobbie and Garber's (1976) bedroom culture needs updating due to socio-historical and technical change since the 1970s is welcome and her emphasis on girls as media producers instead of mere media consumers further development of Lincoln's (2005) view of girls as agents.

I make two main criticisms of Kearny's (2007) theory and methods. First, I consider that her view that 'virtually every scholar' who has studied adolescent room culture had reproduced McRobbie and Garber's (1976) passive, consumerist and private perception of girls' bedroom culture, which has led to a skewed perspective on girls' domestic media practices, is over-stated. There are a number of references to girls' active role in bedroom culture in earlier studies. For example, Griffiths (1988), as we saw above, reported the girls in her study to use CB radio to contact boys and considered that this enabled girls to go against their expected feminine role. Further, Griffiths reported girl in groups to be highly visible on the streets, as did Smith (1976), Wilson (1978), Griffin (1985) and Lees (1986). Further, I highlight Baker's relatively recent ethnographic study of young girls in Australia (albeit based on a very small number of girls). Baker (2004:75) found that these girls in their bedrooms were far from passive consumers of pop music but, instead, they undertook musical activities that were "complex, highly nuanced and far from "trivial" and "serious".

Baker (2004) states that these musical activities allowed the girls to inset themselves into the adult world and the process of production. I refer also to Bovill and Livingstone's (2001) study. Although the focus of their 12-European nation study was focused on collecting data on the impact of media ownership on how much time children and young people spent in their bedrooms and the impact of the time spent on their social isolation and on their relationships with their parents, these authors draw an interesting conclusion on change in public private binary. They perceive media-rich bedroom culture to contribute to the shifting of the boundary between public and private sectors: due to the perceived failure of a more public outdoor leisure culture (access, cost, variety and so forth), the media-rich bedroom becomes increasingly the focus of peer activity and the media themselves through their contents bringing the outside world indoors.

My second criticism of Kearny (2007) is methodological. Kearney (2007) did not conduct a specific empirical study to explore how many girls participate in culturally productive counterpublics in their bedrooms and calls for new research; she draws her conclusions from the more general research of others. I consider that she is too confident in the exposition of her new theory of girls' bedroom culture.

2.4.4 Criticisms made of post-subculturalists' scholarship theoretical and methodological approach

A number of writers have criticised the post-subcultural theorists work on youth culture and its music. However, these writers do not advocate a wholesale return to CCCS theory and methodology.

Beginning with *theoretical* criticism of post-subculturalists' criticism of post-subculturalists' theoretical basis, Blackman, writing in 2005, argued that post-subculturalist writers adopted a deterministic (i.e. Marxist) interpretation of CCCS researchers' position that was unjustified and that, in fact, CCCS researchers drew from a wide variety of theorists. Blackman (2005: 5) pointed out that Cohen (1972), for example, drew upon Lacan's concept of the 'imaginary' and on Claude Levi-Strauss's concept of 'myth'. Blackman (2005) argued that the post-subculturalists reacted to what they saw as CCCS researchers' prioritising of the collective by focusing on personal emancipation and self-fulfilment of the individual. However, Blackman (2005) argued that the post-subculturalists' development of new concepts, such as tribe and lifestyle, lacked theoretical coherence as they ignored explanatory power at the collective social level.

Shildrick and McDonald (2006: 136) also argued that post-subculturalists:

> downplayed and sometimes ignored the significance of social divisions and inequalities of power in young people's cultural lives.

Shildrick and McDonald (2006) made, however, a different point from Blackman. These authors argued that, by focusing on the most obvious stylistic forms of contemporary youth culture (whose adherents might be argued to be predominantly drawn from more advantaged social positions), the post-subculturalists were less likely to uncover evidence of how class, and other social divisions, delimit youth cultural possibilities. Thus, Shildrick and McDonald (2006) accused post-subculturalists of over-emphasising those researchers who adopt the 'spectacular' for music, dance and style of contemporary youth culture: these authors pointed out that goths, for example, tend to be disproportionately from the middle class (see

Hodkinson's study of goths, 2002). These authors argued that this over-emphasis on the spectacular leads post-subculturalists to ignore the youth cultural identities and practices of working-class youth, especially those in the most marginalised and disadvantaged sections. They argued that majority of young people in Britain did not come near the sort of post-subcultures described in most prominent youth culture research: for some young people at least, social divisions still shaped youth cultural identities,

Shildrick and McDonald (2006: 126) urged researchers to accept:

> that, for some young people at least, social divisions still shape youth cultural identities, the postmodern tendency to celebrate the fragmented, fleeting and free-floating nature of contemporary youth culture becomes difficult to sustain.

Shildrick and McDonald (2006) pointed to a number of examples of recent youth research that, although not directly or wholly concerned with youth culture, nevertheless, do throw light on the ways in which young people's cultural identities continued to be 'closely intertwined with family histories, gender, place, class, region and locality' (Nayak 2003: 320). Shildrick and McDonald (2006) referred, amongst others, to studies by MacDonald et al. (2001), Chatterton and Hollands (2002), Bosé (2003), Nayak (2003) and Pilkington (2004).

I take Bosé's (2003) study as an example. In a study in Manchester, Bosé (2003) focused directly on the experiences of excluded young black people; many of them described themselves as part of an underclass and pointed out the difficulties of living in deprived and disadvantaged communities. Her subjects were excluded economically from the city's

nightlife; this was further exacerbated by their experiences of racism. Bosé (2203) argued that it was essential to analyse properly the substructure of young people's lives.

Whilst the studies above that Shildrick and MacDonald (2006) referred to are not principally cultural studies of youth, these studies recognised that not all young people share equally in a new postmodern youth culture. Unlike post-subcultural theorists, these writers purposely have at least attempted to include economically disadvantaged young people in their research empirically, and/or theoretically, and have found – consistently – that contemporary youth culture remains deeply divided. Shildrick and McDonald (2006: 133) state that:

> The overriding conclusion of these studies of less flamboyant, less stylistically spectacular youth is that the sorts of free cultural choice described by more postmodern, post-subcultural perspectives tend to be reserved for the more privileged sections of dominant cultural groups.

Hesmondhalgh (2005) strongly criticised the concept of neo-tribe put forward by subculturalists to replace subculture, particularly those put forward by Bennett (1999). Hesmondhalgh (2005) argued that Bennett (1999) had an uncritical view of consumerism: that Bennett (1999) neglected factors that might constrain consumers' choices, such as poverty, addiction, mental illness, marginalisation, disempowerment, unequal access to education, childcare and healthcare. Hesmondhalgh (2005) argued that Bennett (1999) appears to consign such states and processes to the category of 'structural issues' that are negotiable by 'self-creating subjects'. Hesmondhalgh (2005) considered that Bennett's (1999) concept of 'the cultural relationship between youth, music and style' appeared to be arguing that youth can do whatever they wanted with music and style.

Hesmondhalgh (2005) also argued that post-subcultural researchers such as Willis (1978) misused the term *homology* (a term originally developed in the natural sciences to refer to a correspondence between origins and development). While Marxist sociologist used the term to refer to correspondence between art and society, Willis (1978) used it to refer to correspondence between collectivities of people (for example, a youth motor bike gang) and cultural forms (for example, early rock music). Hesmondhalgh sets out how Willis' use of homology has been criticised by Middleton (1990) in his in his important and influential book *Studying Popular Music*. Middleton (1990) argued that Willis (1978) failed in his study to demonstrate clear connections between liking for particular kinds of music and particular groups. Middleton (1990) argued that it is difficult to link liking Buddy Holy records − popular with the biker boys − with aggression. He points out that other non-biker groups also liked Buddy Holly.

Turning to *methodological* criticism of post-subcultural research, some early post-subculturalists did not conduct any systematic research into youth culture to support their theory. Redhead (1990) merely mentions casually at the end of his book *The end of the end-of-the century party* to his alternative perspective to pop culture being based on 'interviews with disc jockeys, record label owners, musicians, producers, writers and fans' (2000:88). Melechi (1993) and Rietveld (1993, 1998), who do not refer to any methods they used to support their views. Other post-subculturalists undertook ethnographic research. Both Bennett (2002) (in his methodological critique of youth culture research) and Hodkinson (2005) criticised the tendency for post-subculturalists to undertake ethnographic research on groups where they were 'insiders': where researchers drew upon their insider knowledge of urban spaces and their familiarity with the patterns of everyday life that occur there. Some

post-subculturalists, see for example, Thornton (1995), did not conduct any specific fieldwork of their own but drew on a variety of published sources.

Bennett (2002) referred to a number of contemporary ethnographers who had used their familiarity and knowledge to assist substantially in gaining access to particular social groups and settings and to decide what roles to play once they have achieved access. Bennett (2002) cited, as examples, Armstrong's (1993) study of the 'Blades' (supporters of Sheffield United). However, Bennett (2002: 461) criticised these ethnographers for displaying 'an uncritical acceptance of insider knowledge as an ends in itself'. For example, Bennett (2002) criticises Malbon (1999) who conducted a study of dance club culture. Bennett (2002) pointed out that, although Malbon (1999) stated that he believed that his background as a clubber was crucial in establishing his credentials as someone who was genuinely interested in and could emphasise with clubbers, Malbon failed to evaluate his insider knowledge: in other words Malbon did not *reflect* on his role in his research.− he needed to add *critical reflexivity* to his study.

Hodkinson (2005) pointed, as did Bennett (2002) to the advantages of the insider role in research on youth cultures − helping in practical matters of securing access and developing *rapport* (see Chapter 4 for discussion of rapport) as well as providing understanding of the findings once they have been produced. However, Hodkinson (2005: 146) also referred (as did Bennett 2002) to the crucial need for those who have a *dual identity* in a study − both researcher and youth culture participant − to utilise a:

> careful, reflexive research approach to ensure that any potential benefits of their initial proximity are realised without the emergence of significant difficulties.

Thus, Hodkinson (2005) argued that insider researchers should, when writing up their findings, discuss their position and the way in which this may have affected their research.

MacRae (2007) made similar points to Bennett (2002) and Hodkinson (2005), emphasising the need for critical reflexivity.

I make the additional point in this discussion of post-subculturalists' methodology that, despite post-subculturalists criticising the subculturalists for ignoring the cultural and musical taste of girls and young women, they did little to rectify this omission. As we saw above, there were only a limited number of post-subcultural studies of girls and young women. As late as 2008, Tanner et al. (2008: 123) stated:

> the musical interests of female adolescents have rarely been a focus of attention, even though they are
> known to be significant consumers of music.

2. 5 Bringing structure back into the study of youth culture and its music

More recently a number of writers have called for structure to be brought back into the study of youth culture and its music. Important writers here are Hesmondhalgh (2005) and Hodkinson (2012). Muggleton (2005) and Bennett (2011), whose contributions to post-subculturalism I discussed above, have also argued, in reflective reviews of post-subculturalism, for the return of subculture in tandem with post-culture. Thus, Muggleton (2005: 205) stated:

while reports of the death of subculture are greatly exaggerated, the continued use of this concept in future research is perhaps likely to emphasise certain CCCS connotations of group coherence, consistency and commitment in addition to the postmodern traits of flux, fluidity and hybridization that are seemingly constitutive of certain youth cultural forms and activities in the new millennium.

And Bennett (2011: 502) stated:

there would seem to be increasing mileage in the development of a refined strand of youth cultural studies in which elements of post-subcultural and subcultural theory are combined to forge a more effective mapping of a contemporary youth cultural terrain in which youth identities forge an increasingly complex mix of global and local cultural influences.

Hesmondhalgh (2005), although he strongly criticised the work of the post-subculturalist, did not advocate a return to the concept of subcultures. Instead, Hesmondhalgh (2005) suggested two new concepts for the study of youth culture and its music: *genre* and *articulation*. In his article Hesmondhalgh (2005) described how the term *genre* has been taken up in the study of popular music in order to understand the relationship between production of music (music companies) and its consumption (audiences). Hesmondhalgh (2005: 33) stated that the most significant potential of this term is the provision of the basis for a theorised understanding of the relationship 'between music and the social'. Hesmondhalgh (2005) approved of Toynbee's (2000) drawing attention to often effaced or submerged *political* importance of the relationship between music and the social: 'Genre is seen to express the collective interest or point of view of a community' (Toynbee 2000: 110).

Hesmondhalgh (2005) argues that *articulation* can replace the heavily criticised concept of *homology*. He refers to Hall (1996: 141): this author sees articulation as

the form of the connection that can make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions. It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time.

Middleton (1990) used the concept of articulation to discuss the complex, mediated relationship between musical forms and practices on the one hand and social structure on the other. Toynbee (2000: 114) built on this and, echoing Middleton (1990), he sought to dethrone 'homology by making it 'just one kind of link between community and social practices' alongside a number of *other* potential articulations. For Toynbee (2000: 114) some sorts of community have a social constitution that is reflected, extended or resonated in musical genre, but elsewhere Toynbee (2000) also pointed out that *both* community and other types of relationships can exist alongside each other.

Hodkinson, who earlier conducted a study of goth identity style and subculture, argued in his article published in 2012, that researchers should not reduce the underlying significance of youth cultural groups to the *spectacular specifics* of youth groups: the 'looks, sounds, texts and practices which make them most obviously unique or extra-ordinary' (Hodkinson, 2012: 568). He stated that he preferred a broader appreciation of youth cultural groups, such as goths, metallers, punks, clubbers and skaters, one that includes analysis of the complex sets of *social and institutional processes* through which youth groups emerge, expand and recede. Hodkinson (2012) also argued for the analysis of the other participants involved in these processes such as promoters, organisers, media and commerce who enable a scene to function. Hodkinson (2012) contended that such a broader appreciation can led researchers to

identify the marked *similarities* between youth groups in their values and group ideologies and in their practices of identification and distinction. Hodkinson (2012) advocated that researchers in the future should emphasise the communalities between youth groups as well as their more unique elements: the interaction of communality and spectacular.

So far, there has been little empirical work where the researchers have followed Hesmondhalgh's (2005) approach and adopted a theoretical framework that seeks to understand the relationship between 'music and the social': one that combines consideration of the influence on young people's music preferences of both structural factors and non-structural 'of the moment', fluid and ephemeral factors, such as the beat of the music. However, there are two studies that have begun this process. The first study that seeks to understands the relationship between 'music and the social' is that by Boyle et al. (1981) in an earlier study in the USA, who attempted to capture in their self-report survey elements of structure such demographics and home influences as well as aspects of musical form such as lyrics, melody and rhythm. However, Boyle et al.'s (1981) study was limited in that it was confined to pop music. I discuss Boyle et al's questionnaire-based study in more detail in Chapter 3. The second study that seeks to understand the relationship between 'music and the social' is that by Urquía (2005) which I reviewed above. Urquía (2005) supported Thornton (1995) in her attempt to move the discussion of cultural capital away from explicit the class connotations of the CCCS but he also argued that in his study of salsa, that while this dance might be seen as subcultural capital displayed in marginal social field in order to establish a hierarchy of those in the know and those not, yet, this subcultural activity could still be susceptible to the values of the dominant sections of society.

2.6 My theoretical approach to the role of subculture in the study of young people's identification with musical genres

I consider that Hodkinson's (2012), and particularly Hesmondhalgh's (2005), approach to be the most suitable for my study of how young people in two schools in the Manchester area choose what music they like. I chose this approach for its flexibility and for its recognition of the influence of social background factors, such as social class, gender and race, as well as musical forms and practices. I adopted Hesmandhalg's concepts of *genre* and *articulation*. Thus, I consider that some young people's musical preferences can be explained in terms of community factors (social background factors as well as demographic factors). For other musical preferences I adopted Hesmondhalgh's (2005:114) statement

> ...the fit between communities and style is less direct, or genres can encompass huge areas of social and geographical space which can hardly be described as communities at all.

I have discussed above how both the CCCS-influenced and post-subculturalist researchers have often failed to include the youth culture and the music of girls and young women. I consider that Hesmondhalgh's (2005) and Hodkinson's (2012) flexible and comprehensive approach should of necessity include an appreciation of the role of sex (gender) in the development of young people's musical preferences. My study of a boys' school and a girls' school gave me a good opportunity to investigate sex/gender differences in the development of musical tastes. I also chose to focus in my study a substantially lower age range than that adopted by other researchers interested in young people's musical preferences (see Chapter 3 for the age ranges selected by other researchers on the development of young people's musical preferences). I suggest that it is important in research on this topic for a researcher to

consider the effect of particular sex/age combinations. However, I did not over-focus in my study on the affects of sex and age on young people's musical preferences as, in line with my flexible and comprehensive approach, I sought to collect data that could be used to support both those factors emphasised by CCCS-influenced researchers and those emphasised by post-subculturalists.

I argue that it was feasible for me to conduct a questionnaire survey with both closed-answer and open-answer questions to investigate the factors affecting my two school pupils' preferences for different kinds of music. However, I point out that such a survey requires careful qualitative-based framing, especially since the subjects in my study were younger than those considered by other researchers.

2.7 Factors of interest for my empirical study of young people's music preferences based on my review of the Chicago School, the early British theorists, the CCCS researchers and the post-subculturalist researchers

I suggest, based on my review of the schools of thought in this chapter, that the following factors would be of interest in designing data collection in my study:

- Class/socio-economic status such as occupational status of head of research subjects' household
- Experience of living in an area of social deprivation
- Experience of living in an urban as compared to a suburban environment
- Demographic characteristic such as sex and age

- Musical form and fashion (media)

I chose, for ethical reasons, not to investigate whether the research subjects in my study had psychological or drug-related problems, were school truants or were engaged in delinquent activities.

CHAPTER 3: Literature: Survey-based empirical studies of young people's musical preferences and of the independent factors correlating with its development

Introduction

In the previous chapter I reviewed the theoretical debate about the role of subculture in the development of young people's musical identification or preferences. Both the CCCS and post-subculturalist researchers undertook fieldwork: the former tended to rely on textual analysis and to draw explanations from wider economic and social trends, while the latter tended to rely on 'insider' participant observation studies. However, there is another group of researchers working in the field of young people's musical preferences whose work is distinct from that both of the CCCS and post-subculturalist researchers. In their fieldwork this third group of researchers utilised questionnaire surveys, together with statistical analysis of the data they collected, in their attempts to study young people's musical preferences and to examine the influence of different factors upon its development − these researchers focused in their choice of influences on young people's musical preferences largely on their demographic characteristics and on their family and school experiences. I call this third school of researchers the *youth music survey researchers*. It is interesting to note that the CCCS and post-subculturalists on the one hand, and the youth music survey researchers on the other, seldom cross-reference each other.

In this chapter, I review the youth music survey researchers' perceptions of the concept of young people's musical tastes. I then go on to review these researchers' attempts to investigate the relationship between a number of specific independent factors and young people's musical preferences. I identify a research gap in the literature, critique the survey-based empirical studies of young people's musical preferences and discuss the implications of their research for my study.

3.1 Youth music survey researchers' different perceptions of the concept of young people's musical tastes – my dependant variable

In early studies by May (1985) and Greer et al. (1974), the researchers played to the children in their studies recorded pieces of music/songs representing what the researchers considered to be a number of generic musical styles: the children were then asked to give their preferences (Hargreaves et al., 1995).

In a later study Hargreaves et al. (1995) undertook a small pilot study to assess the validity of the list of musical labels they presented to their questionnaire respondents that they used instead of relying on auditory stimuli. The researchers created a pool of 25 musical labels and on the basis of the pilot study members' reactions, created an eventual list of 12 musical labels that were clearly meaningful to them.

Colley (2008) refers to the styles she used being those styles successfully piloted and used by Hargreaves et al. (1995) in their study referred to above.

Other studies of young people's musical taste set out categories of music for their subjects derived from their own understanding of music, for example, Tanner et al. (2008), Roe (1992), Christenson and Petersen (1998). The tendency in these studies is to include a wide range of musical tastes: thus, they include classical music, opera and jazz; for example, see Tanner et al. (2008), Colley (2008), Roe (1992) and Hargreaves et al. (1995).

There have been two recent studies that undertook statistical analyses of young people's musical taste in order to produce life style typologies: Colley (2008) and Tanner et al. (2008). Colley (2008) developed a typology of men and women based on a principal components analysis of her undergraduates' musical preferences. I set these out in tables 3.1.and 3.2.

Table 3.1: Colley (2008) life styles and musical tastes for males

Factor loadings	Music type
Sophisticated	Blues
	Jazz
	Classical
	Opera
Traditional	Folk
	Country
Heavy	Heavy Metal
	Rock
Rebellious	Reggae
	Rap
Chart pop	Chart pop

Table 3.2: Colley (2008) life styles and musical tastes for females

Factor loadings	**Music type**
Sophisticated	Blues
	Jazz
	Classical
	Opera
Heavy	Heavy metal
	Rock
Mainstream	Folk
	Chart pop

	Blues
	Country
Rebellious	Reggae
	Rap

Tanner et al. (2008) utilised cluster analysis to group their high school students on the basis of their response to the questionnaire into seven groups with different lifestyles. I set out their life style classification in Table 3.3. I consider that Colley (2008) adopted style labels that had, to some extent, judgemental tendencies, for example, the label 'rebellious'.

Table 3.3: Tanner et al. (2008) life styles and musical tastes (for both males and females)

Life style	**Musical type**
Club Kids	Techno and Dance
	Pop and New Pop
	Hip Hop and Rap
Black Stylists	Soul Rhythm and Blues
	Hip Hop and Rap
	Reggae and Dance Hall
New Traditionalist	Classical Music and Opera
	Jazz
	Soul, Rhythm and Blues
	Country and New Country
	Pop and Top
The Hard Rockers	Heavy Metal (hard rock)
	Alternative (Punk, Grunge)
The Abstainers	Marginally interested in music
Ethnic Culturalist	Soul, Rhythm and Blues
	Jazz
	Classical Music and Opera
	Country and New Country
	Techno (Dance)
	Pop and Top
Musical Omnivores	Above for all 11 genres

3.2 Literature on independent factors influencing young people's musical taste

There is more recent literature on the psychological correlates of young people's musical tastes than there has been on the social correlates of these. Examples of recent literature on

the psychological correlates of musical taste are Brown (2012), who conducted a study of the music preferences and personality among Japanese university students, and Langmeyer et al. (2012), who conducted a study of Germans in their twenties concerned with what music preferences reveal about personality.

Table 3.4 sets out the most relevant empirical studies that discussed the impact of social factors on the development of young people's musical tastes.

Table 3.4: Summary of key studies of independent factors affecting young people's musical tastes

Authors	Date	Country	Respondents	Methods
Tanner et al.	2008	Canada	School students aged 13 to 18, male and female	Questionnaire survey, used existing large data set
Roe	1992	Sweden	15-16 year old school children	Large questionnaire study
Colley	2008	UK	Undergraduates, male and female	Questionnaire study
Christenson and Peterson	1998	USA	Undergraduates	Questionnaire study
Hargreaves et al.	1995	UK	Secondary school pupils: two groups of school children 11-12 and 15-16	Questionnaire study
Boyle et al.	1981	USA	School children in grades covering 10 to 16 years and 'college' students	Self-reports

I organise my review of the studies' findings for the influence of independent factors on young people's musical tastes as follows:

- Demographic factors − sex/gender, ethnicity/race, age

- Home/social class (including parents' musical tastes) *versus* school/anticipated future status factors

- Cultural capital (includes musical activities)

- Peer group activity influence including friends' and siblings' musical tastes

I begin by examining previous studies' findings on the correlations between the demographic factors of sex, ethnicity/race and age with young people's musical preferences. When I review below specific studies that have investigated the influence of sex on young people's musical preferences, I use the term sex, not gender, to refer to the differences between boys and girls.

Turning first to the demographic factor of *sex*, as I stated in Chapter 2, there has been a relative lack of research on girls' musical interests despite their being known to be significant consumers of music (Tanner et al,.2008; Roe 1999; Bielby 2004; Shildrick and MacDonald, 2006). Three sets of youth music survey researchers have included noteworthy consideration of girls' and young women's musical tastes: Roe (1992), Christenson and Petersen (1998) and Hargreaves et al. (1995).

Roe (1992) found in his Swedish study of 15 to16 year old school children that sex was related to five of his eight music types. Girls gave a higher rating for liking to pop, disco and synth while boys gave a higher rating of liking to heavy metal and blues. Roe (1992) argued that his finding shows that sex plays a central role in developing musical preferences. He also discusses the inter-relationships he found in his study between sex, socio-economic background and school achievement.

Christenson and Petersen (1998) found in their study of undergraduates in the USA that there were considerable differences between young men's and young women's music preferences. Young women more than young men liked music forms, such as mainstream pop, contemporary rhythm and blues, soul, black gospel and disco. In contrast, young men more than young women liked 'harder' forms, such as 70s rock, southern rock, psychedelic rock and blues. The results of Christenson and Petersen (1998) data analysis are complex: they found the underlying structure of music preference to be multivariate and that it could not be explained by two/three factors. However, it was clear in their study that young women preferred *mainstream*, whereas for young men *mainstream* was *unhip*. Christenson and Petersen (1998) understood their findings as follows. For young men, music use and allegiance was *central* and *personal.* The music young men choose was 'masculinist' and 'macho-aggressive', they took case to avoid the mainstream and the romanticism generally associated with it. For young women, in contrast, their orientation might be described as *instrumental* and *social.* Their choices were more guided by what music can do for them, either personally (as in mood control) or in connection with peer and courtship interactions (for example, dancing). Christenson and Petersen (1998) considered that the differences were traceable to a variety of problematics: a popular music industry that was dominated by men from top to bottom, an educational system that, in spite of egalitarian ideology, still pushed men and women in different directions and a culture that continued to define opportunity and expectations along gender lines.

Hargreaves et al. (1995) undertook a study in the UK of two groups of school children: 11 to 12 and 15 to 16. These authors found that the boys in their study liked heavy metal and rock more than girls. The authors argued that the findings for the boys could be explained in terms of the stereotype of masculinity that has been frequently been associated with these styles of

music. They found that the girls liked a wider range of styles than the boys; girls were significantly more likely to like chart pop, reggae, jazz, classical, folk and opera than boys. However, these authors found no differences by sex for rap, acid/house, blues and country and western.

There have been two more recent studies of the effect of sex on young people's musical taste by Colley (2008) and by Tanner et al., (2008); the latter study is particularly valuable for those interested in the correlates of young people's musical preferences.

Colley (2008) focussed specifically on gender and gender-related differences in young people's musical taste. In a questionnaire survey of British undergraduates, Colley, (2008) found that there was a greater liking of chart pop among young women and a greater liking of heavy metal, folk, rock and blues among young men. Rap was the only genre that did not show some sex difference. Colley (2008) considered gender differences in musical taste as being linked to traditional gender-role-related attributes and young men's and young women's development. She argued that lighter mainstream music tended to have lyrics that focused on emotions and relationships with others − the concerns of young women, while heavy music was associated with aggression, dominance and rebellion − the concerns of young men. She pointed out that heavy metal and heavy rock music have particular musical connotations and had been linked to both antisocial behaviour and physical regression (for example, see Rubin et al., 2001). Colley (2008) concluded that young men tended to distance themselves from young women's tastes. She also suggested that self-presentational concerns played a significant role in men's musical taste: young men do not want to engage in music styles strongly associated with women.

In contrast to Colley (2008), who focused in her study primarily on sex, Tanner et al. (2008) did not devote much space in their article to discussing the impact of sex differences on young people's life styles and musical tastes; they were more concerned with school experiences. These authors found, after analysing their data base of Canadian high school students, that sex was less important than race and ethnicity, and of the same importance as age.

I set out in Chapter 2 how CCCS subculturalist researchers, such as McRobbie and Garber (1976) devised the bedroom culture theory, a theory that perceived girls to spend more time at home than boys and to spend this time in the their bedrooms, experimenting with make-up, listening to records, reading pop magazines, discussing boyfriends, chatting and jiving. Later, as we saw, Lincoln (2005) challenged the subculturalist framework of bedroom culture. She understood teenagers in their bedrooms to be active agents in the creation of their unique bedroom cultures which were dynamic and fluid. Thus, her understanding of bedroom culture parallels that of the post-culturalists such as Muggleton (2000) and Bennett (1999, 2000). However, I found little or no reference to bedroom culture theory in my review of the youth music surveys literature. The only mention is by Tanner et al. (2008: 123) who referred to bedroom culture, describing the research that supported it as several decades old and giving their opinion that sex/gender differences in contemporary music preferences was an open question.

Turning to the demographic factor of *ethnicity/race*, I note that Shildrick and MacDonald (2006) refer to a number of important recent studies of youth musical tastes that consider the role of ethnicity/race. These were by Back (1996), Alexander (2000) and Gunter (2004). However, these studies did not specifically focus on black/Asian youths' musical taste. In

contrast, Tanner et al. (2008) in their study of life styles and musical tastes include ethnicity/race as an independent factor.

Tanner et al. (2008) found that ethnic and racial identity correlated with a number of their teenage lifestyles.

- Club Kids were mainly white

- Black Stylists were largely though not exclusively black, some South Asian representation

- New Traditionalists contained a substantially higher proportion of Asian students

- Ethnic culturalists were significantly more likely to be Asian and South Asian

- Hard Rockers were predominantly white

- Abstainers predominantly were white (though not significantly so)

- Musical Omnivores were significantly Asian

Tanner et al. (2008) concluded that, in terms of demographic factors, musical tastes are more greatly affected by ethnicity/race than by sex and age.

Turning to the final demographic factor of *age*, two notable studies have considered the effect of age on young people's musical preferences. The first is by Hargreaves et al. (1995), who found in their study of two groups of school children (11 to12 and 15 to 16) that there were significant differences by age for musical taste. Combining the boys' and girls' scores for liking music genres by eye, these authors' table appears to show on page 247 that there were age differences for the following genres (the authors presented their findings for age broken down by sex and did not give an overall breakdown by age).

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- Rap: higher score for younger children, liking for rap declined largely and sharply after ages 12 to 13

- Rock: higher score for older children

- Reggae: higher score for younger children

- Jazz: higher score for older children

- Country and Western: higher score for older children

- Folk: higher score for older children

- Heavy metal higher score for older children

Hargreaves et al. (1995) found no age differences for acid/house, blues, classical, chart pop and opera. They concluded that the decline in preference for a wide variety of styles in adolescence was very clear between these two age groups.

The second is by Tanner et al. (2008), who studies for high school students aged 13 to 18, included age as an influence on musical tastes in their study, The found that:

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- Club Kids were younger

- Black Stylists were younger

- New Traditionalists were older

- Ethnic Culturalists were older

- Hard Rockers were younger

- Abstainers no difference

- Musical Omnivore: were older

I turn now to consider the respective roles of *home/social class versus school/anticipated future status* as factors in the development of young people's musical taste. As I pointed out in Chapter 2, there has been considerable debate about the importance of social class/background as a factor affecting young people's musical taste. This debate made little reference, however, to the affect of young people's school experiences and career/social class aspirations on their musical preferences. Below I review those studies that investigate to what extent and how young people's social background/class, school and anticipatory socialisation affect their development of a musical taste.

Roe (1992) compared the effects of social class versus school/anticipated school future on young people's musical preferences in Sweden. I set out the measures he used below:

- Socioeconomic status: occupations of fathers and mothers (note that he found adolescents were very vague about mothers' occupation)

- Grades: these were awarded to each student at the end of autumn term of the ninth year (researchers had access to school records)

- School satisfaction: he used a scale (e.g. degree to which pupil agreed that he/she was 'rather happy at school')

- Anticipated school future: he asked respondents how many years after ninth grade they intended to continue their studies and status of course the respondents specified

Roe (1992) found, for home versus school achievement that a taste for classical music, jazz and blues was directly associated with high school achievement, even after controlling for socio-economic background: thus, home influence was of limited importance to the

adolescents. Roe (1992) concludes that his findings are consistent with Bourdieu's (1984) argument that cultural practices such as preference for music are closely linked to educational level and only secondarily to social origin.

Roe (1992) found, for school achievement versus feelings, that a taste for heavy metal rock can be seen as at the opposite end of the cultural legitimation continuum and was characteristic of discontented low-achieving, mostly male students from lower working class backgrounds. Hence Roe (1992) argued that the best predictor variable was students' level of satisfaction at school. He argued that his results support the view that school pupil failures tend to react to the ascription of a negative status by becoming discontented with school and by developing allegiance to musical styles which are in opposition to the culture that they perceive school to represent.

Roe (1992) went on to argue that his adolescents' anticipation of their future status also affected their musical tastes. He contended that successful students recognising their current high status (in school), and anticipating a future in a high status position, begin to cultivate a taste for 'high brow' culture – which they see as relevant for their future. Conversely those unsuccessful in school, who see the school as consigning them to low status futures, reject the academic world and its intellectual cultures, and develop a taste for 'low brow' culture. Roe (1992) argued that adolescents' perceptions of their future are important in helping to explain their current media-related behaviour and that, while not neglecting the past, greater attention should be paid to adolescents' perceived future.

Roe (1992) additionally discussed the interaction of sex and school achievement. He stated that cross-tabulating school achievement by sex showed that males were over-represented

among below-average achievers, while white females were over-represented among above-average achievers. This he argued might explain why he found a male preponderance among those using heavy metal symbolically to express their discontent (as referred to above). For popular music, there seemed to be no direct corollary for females to the ways in which low-achieving, discontented adolescent males used heavy metal to express their disapprobation with the dominant culture.

Tanner et al. (2008) set out a number of findings from their study on importance of young people's school experiences versus their home experiences in their choices of life style and music tastes. High school students also spent a lot of time in school, an arena experienced as highly competitive and status conscious. Tanner et al. (2008) used the following measures for their home versus school comparison:

Home

- Parental employment (labour force participation)
- Subjective social class (whether the respondent feels that they are poor, middle class, or wealthy, as based on answers to the question 'Most of the time when growing up, how would you describe your family's financial or economic situation?')
- Parental educational attainment
- Family intactness – whether or not respondents grew up in a two parent household

School

- Self-reported grades
- Skipping school
- Suspension from school

- Educational stream (academic versus non academic streams - allocation of students to different programmes of study based on ability is standard organizational practice in North American high schools)

- Degree of importance attached to education

- Educational future – how much and what sort of schooling a student expected to attain (asked students to anticipate whether they would finish high school, or move on to some form of post-secondary education, including community college, undergraduate university degree, graduate university degree, or professional training (i.e. medicine, law).

I set out Tanner et al.'s (2008) findings for their home versus school comparison in terms of their seven groups with different lifestyles.

Tanner et al. (2008) found that parents' socio-economic status characteristics were *not* particularly salient predictors of their children's musical tastes. However, maternal education and employment did exert some influence on some tastes as follows:

- Black Stylists were more likely than others to have employed mothers whereas ethnic culturalists were not

- New Rationalists reported university-educated mothers whereas Abstainers and Ethic Culturalists were significantly less likely to report this

- Black Stylists were less likely to come from two-parent families

Tanner et al. (2008) found that students' own educational achievements and educational expectations exerted a stronger influence on their musical preferences than did home

influences (particularly so for students less likely to be regarded by the school as good students), in terms of their seven groups:

- Black Stylists characterised by school suspensions, frequent absence from school, paucity of 'A' grades, more modest educational goals for themselves

- Club Kids characterised by frequent absence from school, paucity of A grades, more modest educational goals for themselves

- New Traditionalists characterised by high performance, never suspended, rarely missed classes

- Hard Rockers were less easily classifiable; they were advanced stream students who did not report particularly good grades nor were likely to feel that education was an important part of their lives. However, their relative disaffection from education did not translate into the oppositional practices of skipping and suspension.

- Musical Abstainers, for this group good attendance was their only hallmark

- Musical Omnivores and Ethnic Culturalist were largely devoid of distinguishing educational characteristics.

I turn now to consider the role of *cultural capital* in the development of young people's musical tastes. I refer here to studies undertaken by Tanner et al. (2008) and Colley (2008).

Tanner et al. (2008) argued that a young person acquired cultural capital from his/her home environment but an ambitious and talented young person, *without* such capital from home, could acquire it him/herself. Tanner et al. (2008) state:

Young people begin school with different family based endowments. Those with large endowments – students from high status backgrounds – find their cultural practices rewarded with good grades and placement in academically oriented programmers. Students without those endowments – those from lower class backgrounds and less familiar with the codes of middle-class culture – do less well in school, as is made clear to them by the sorting and evaluating practices employed in schools.

In their study Tanner et al. (2008: 126) used cultural capital as:

a measure of how different individuals and groups gravitate towards, or away from, particular musical constellations. Our assumption is that familiarity with high cultural pursuits provides students with a set of cues (Mohr and DiMaggio 1995) or 'rules of the game' (Aschaffenburg and Maas 1997) by which they can interpret the meaning and significance of various popular music genres. This assists young people to decide which musical genres to appropriate and include in their listening repertoires and those that they are better off distancing themselves from (Trondman 1990). Knowing something about their involvements with high culture might tell us about how high school students evaluate different genres of popular music.

Tanner et al. (2008) created a cultural capital index of the frequency of young people's involvement in seven activities that encompassed traditional highbrow pursuits. These activities were playing a musical instrument, attending cultural events, going to the library, going to the symphony or opera, going to the museum, reading a book for pleasure, and involvement with hobbies.

Tanner et al (2008) found that:

- Those with cultural capital were Musical Omnivores, New Traditionalists, Hard Rockers
- Those without cultural capital were Club Kids and Black Stylists

- Those groups where there was no connection between musical taste and possession of cultural capital were Ethnic Culturist and Musical Abstainers

Colley (2008) in her study focuses on one of the aspects Tanner et al. (2008) included in their cultural capital index; this was playing a musical instrument. She includes 'training' as a measure in her study.

Colley (2008) measured training as follows: Participants' musical training was graded on the following 4-point scale:

0 = no or very limited training

1 = Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) Grades 1 to 3;

2 = ABRSM Grades 4 to 5;

3 = ABRSM Grade 6 or above

Colley's choice of ABRSM suggests that she collected information on young people's competence in playing musical instrument and, possibly, singing, but not dancing.

Colley (2008) states that she found musical training to be a significant predictor for her undergraduates' liking for the more musically sophisticated [sic] styles of music. A liking for blues, jazz, and classical significantly correlated with musical training, particularly for the latter two. Colley (2008) does not discuss the influence of musical training any further.

I turn now to consider the role of *peer group activity* in the development of young people's musical tastes. Tanner et al (2008: 18) argued that peer group activity had an obvious

influence on young people's musical taste, pointing out that peer groups provide their members:

> with an identity and sense of belonging different from, and sometimes in conflict with, that bestowed by the family or sponsored by the school.

Tanner et al. (2008) referred to publications such as those by Roe (1999) and by Gelder and Thornton (1997) where it was argued that academically successful students might eschew peer group activity, or orientate themselves towards adult approved versions of it, while the less successful embroil themselves in anti-school subcultures in which popular music was used as a symbolic expression of rebellion or resistance.

Tanner et al. (2008) distinguished between ordinary peer leisure and riskier pleasures that, whilst not necessarily against the law, were unlikely to be viewed very positively by parents or other adult authority figures. They also identified domains of explicitly criminogenic leisure. They created four indices of *peer group activity*: peer dominated *leisure* (friend-dominated activities, for example, coffee/shopping with friends), *hedonistic leisure* (e.g. going to raves), one index of drug use, and another an index of *delinquency*.

Tanner et al. (2008) related their subjects' scores on the four indices to their musical types:

- Club Kids were significantly likely to report taking part in peer group activities and in hedonistic leisure activities
- Black Stylists were significantly likely to report taking part in peer group activities and in hedonistic leisure activities as well as drug use and delinquency

- Hard Rockers were significantly likely to report taking part in peer group activities and in hedonistic leisure activities and drug use

- Musical Omnivores were significantly likely to report taking part in peer group activities and in hedonistic leisure activities

- New Traditionalists and Ethnic Culturalists: these types were not likely to report peer group activities, hedonistic leisure activities, drug use or delinquency.

3.3 Tanner et al.'s (2008) *omnivores and univores,* and elite and dissenting musical taste

Tanner et al. (2008) made a specific argument about *omnivores* and *univores* and elite and dissenting musical taste. For completeness of the literature on the factors affecting the development of young people's musical tastes, I set out Tanner et al.'s (2008) argument and findings for the relationships they specified between academic elite status and having an omnivore or a univore musical taste. However, given the ways in which my two British schools were organised and my ethical concerns over collecting data on my pupils' academic progress (see the subsection below), my study was not able to contribute to the development of Tanner et al.'s (2008) omnivores/univores theory.

Tanner et al. (2008) start with the ideas of Peterson (1992) on adults' musical listening. Peterson sought to redress Bourdieu's view that those in high status groups focused on highbrow culture (see Chapter 2 of my Dissertation). Peterson (1992) in his study showed that members of high status occupational groups were more likely to report liking, not only

classical music and opera, but also many types of popular music: i.e. their interest in cultural pursuits was broad, not narrow. Thus Tanner et al. (2008: 120) identify the contemporary signifier of wealth and status, not as refined interests, but as polymorphous ones: members of high status groups are *omnivores*. In contrast, low status individuals, the univores, involve themselves more or less exclusively in particular musical genres seen as low status, such as bluegrass, country and western, heavy metal, and rap − these are the types of music that omnivores refuse to listen to.

Tanner et al.'s (2008) findings for the omnivores, the smallest group in their study, did not fit Peterson's description. As Table 3.3 sets out, his omnivores liked *all* musical genres − classical and pop including rap; they disliked, and only just, country music. However, their omnivores were *not* part of an academic elite; they possessed cultural capital: they were neither particularly good students nor especially ambitious ones.

Tanner et al. (2008) found several groups in their study to show some resemblance to univores. Black Stylists, the least successful students and also the group most extensively involved in peer group activity, especially in its most deviant forms, reported a strong liking for rap and a strong dislike of heavy metal, punk and grunge. Tanner et al. (2008) found the Club Kids, the largest group in their study, to be similar to the Black Stylists but less deviant; they reported a liking for techno and dance, mainstream pop, and hip-hop and rap. Tanner et al. (2008) found that the younger, predominately male, and overwhelmingly white Hard Rockers, who were competent, university-bound but unenthusiastic students, reported liking heavy metal, together with punk and grunge, but disliking rap, as well as having a low regard for jazz, soul, rhythm and blues, reggae and dancehall.

Tanner et al. (2008) found wider musical tastes were reported by the Ethnic Culturalists. They found the Ethnic Culturalists, who were older, with a significantly larger Asian and South Asian membership, reported liking ethnic music, together with soul and R&B, jazz, classical music and opera, country music techno and dance, and mainstream.

Tanner et al. (2008) found that the New Traditionalists, the group at the top end of the school hierarchy who routinely had 'A' grades, rarely missed classes and were never suspended and who were dominated by females and Asian students, did not report as wide musical tastes as the Musical Omnivores despite their higher levels of achievement and behaviour. The New Traditionalists reported a liking for classical music and opera as well as popular music; indeed they liked some types of popular music more than they liked the classical forms. However, they disliked some genres such as rap.

3.4 An example of a quantitative study that contrasted the influence on young people's musical preferences of social background with that of music characteristics such as melody, mood, rhythm and lyrics

I referred to Boyle et al's (1981) study at the end of Chapter 2 when I discussed Hesmondhalgh's (2005) view that the social and music should be combined. Boyle et al.'s 1981) in their early questionnaire-based study adopted a different approach towards investigating the influences on young people's pop preferences from the studies reviewed above. I found this study interesting as the researchers attempted to capture in their self-report survey elements of structure such as demographics and home influences as well as aspects of musical form such as lyrics, melody and rhythm. As we saw in Chapter 2, Boyle et

al.'s (1981) study was limited in that it was confined to pop music: the subjects were presented with a list of pop songs from which to choose. Despite this shortcoming, I found Boyle et al.'s (1981) approach valuable for developing my ideas about exploring the factors affecting pupils' musical tastes.

Boyle et al. (1981) utilised a wide age range, including relatively young respondents (their 397 respondents were selected from grade 5 (10 years old), grade 7 (12 years old), grade 11 (14 years old), grade 11 (16 years old) and a college). These researchers asked young people to complete 'self reports'. They collected information on these young people's backgrounds, this consisted of information on grade, sex, music experiences, self-assessment of own music ability, ratings of parental and sibling interest in music, indicators of parental and sibling music-style preferences, and a scale assessing the importance of pop music in their own life. For pop music preference Boyle et al. (1081) asked their respondents to choose the titles of their three favourite pieces of pop music from a given selection. Following this list were 11 reasons why people might like songs. The respondents were then asked to rate on a five-point scale of importance, the extent to which each reason had influenced their preference for each of their three songs. The 11 reasons listed were singer/vocal group, lyrics, mood, instruments used, melody, rhythm, harmony, peer influence, danceability, hearing the song on the radio and sentiment. The researchers found that melody, mood, rhythm and lyrics were the most important reasons for preferring a pop song; peer influence and hearing it on the radio were less important reasons for song preference. The researchers found limited differences in respondents' ratings when they compared different levels of music experience and different assessment of the importance of pop in own life. They found no differences in the respondents' ratings by sex, by respondents' assessment of own musical ability, or by parental and sibling interest and preferences in music.

3.5 The research gap, critique of the survey-based empirical studies of young people's musical preferences and implications for my research

I begin by setting out my theoretical position. In Chapter 2, I discussed Hesmondhalgh's (2005) theoretical position that researchers should emphasise flexiblility and should recognise the influence of social background factors, such as social class, gender and race, as well as musical forms and practices. However, so far, few researchers have endeavoured to capture aspects of both structure and musical form. Neither the youth music survey researchers whose work I have reviewed in this chapter (apart perhaps from Boyle et al. (1981) but whose attempt to do so was limited) nor the CCCS researchers and the post-subculturalist researchers attempted to do this. I decided in my study that I would adopt Hesmondhalgh's (2005) theoretical position and that I would seek to capture the structural and the more ephemeral, music form aspects of young people's musical preferences utilising both quantitative and qualitative methodology to do so. I also considered that qualitative research would be valuable in particular, given that the school pupils in my study were younger than most of the subjects in other research: their musical preferences might be affected by their being subject to more parental control, by their having less spending money and by their having less skills in accessing music. Qualitative research would enable me to take a fresh look at how these younger people developed their musical tastes.

I review a youth music survey researchers' use of factors in their studies and discuss how I chose to conduct my research. The subjects in my study, who were aged 11 to 15, were

younger than those of most previous researchers in this field and their younger age had implications for my choice of independent factors and how I measured them.

First, I discuss how some youth music survey researchers, for example, Tanner et al. (2008), Roe (1992) and Christenson and Petersen (1998) present their subjects with *a priori* musical genres. I disagree with this notion that young people should be presented with prescriptive classifications of music.

In categorising the musical tastes of the pupils in my study I was concerned:

- Not to impose an 'outside' understanding of how the pupils in my study categorised modern popular music.
- Not to use dated categories of modern popular music. I note that, although Tanner et al. (2008: 127), themselves set out *a priori* categories for the high school students to like/dislike, they comment that categories of popular music have short shelf lives.
- To take account of how boys and girls from the two schools differed in their categorisation of modern popular music.

I decided in my study to base my categorisation of the pupils' musical tastes directly upon their opinions. In consequence I decided to ask the pupils themselves for their opinions on:

- How many categories of modern popular music they thought there were
- What they called these
- What songs they considered were representative of each genre.

In order to complete these tasks, I conducted focus group discussions with small numbers of pupils in the boys' and girls' schools.

A number of the youth music survey researchers included classical, opera and jazz as part of the music they presented to their subjects (for example, see Tanner et al. (2008), Colley (2008), Roe (1992) and Hargreaves et al. (1995)). As my dissertation was focused on modern popular music, I asked my subjects for their opinions on modern music only and overall they did not recognise classical, opera and jazz as modern music.

I discuss what demographic variables others have included in their studies and what factors I decided to include in mine. I agreed with Colley's (2008) view that sex and the impact of the gendered nature of culture has been generally neglected in the study of young people's musical preferences and, as she did in her study, I gave sex and the gendered nature of culture an apposite role in my study.

I decided to follow Tanner et al.'s (2008) emphasis on the importance of race/ethnicity as a demographic correlate of younger people's musical taste and include this factor as an independent factor in my study, although I note that the two schools to which I had access had a minority of non-white pupils.

In the studies reviewed above, there was less empirical evidence that age was an important predictor of young people's musical taste. I decided to include age as an independent factor in my study on the ground that my study was intended to cover the age range from 11 to 15.

I discuss the role of home/social class *versus* school/anticipated future status as independent factors in the development of young people's musical taste. In terms of social background/class or home experiences, Tanner et al. (2008) were strongly of the opinion that students' own educational achievements and educational expectations exert a stronger influence on their musical preferences than do home influences. However, I decided to include social background/class as independent factor in my study, if only to contrast its importance with that of school experiences in how my school pupils developed their musical tastes. I considered that it was possible that my pupils' greater youth compared to the subjects of Tanner et al. (2008) and other researchers' studies might lead to social background/class becoming more important.

I decided to collect occupational data from whomever the pupils considered to be their 'Head of Household' rather than asking for both their mother's and father's occupations. Although, Roe (1992) had found his research subjects to be rather vague about their mother's occupations, I thought it important to give my pupils the chance to give their mother's occupation, should they consider her to be the head of the household. Using head of household also avoided the difficulty when the pupils lived with only one parent. I classified the occupations of the pupils' head of household using the Market Research Society's classification (see Chapter 4). Indeed, in the event, many of my pupils provided both their mother's and father's occupations, particularly where both parents had high status occupations. Perhaps the pupils were unsure which occupation had a higher status or income and therefore constituted 'head of household'. Some pupils also neglected to answer this question, with a couple of pupils responding by writing 'None of your business'. This validates my fear of being too intrusive – after all I was dealing with pupils aged 11 to 15 and simply could not ask questions of too personal or intrusive a nature. Although Tanner et al.

(2008) asked their subjects whether or not they grew up in a two parent household, I considered it potentially alienating to ask my pupils this.

I decided that it was ethical to ask my pupils for their postcodes as this was not individually-personal information. From the postcodes I would be able to obtain data on the social deprivation in my pupils' neighbourhood and whether the neighbourhoods they lived in were urban or non-urban. However quite a number of pupils declined to give their full postcode – again perhaps in the event this was personal information that some pupils found to be a step too far, or perhaps some of the younger pupils simply didn't know their full postcode.

As did Boyle et al. (1981), I asked my pupils to what extent they considered their musical taste resembled those of their parents and siblings. In my classification of models (see below) I classified sibling influence as a type of peer group activity. I also added a question, one that Boyle et al. (1981) did not ask, on the extent to which my pupils considered their musical taste resembled those of their friends.

In terms of school experiences, my British schools did not stream pupils in the same way as Canadian/American schools: Tanner et al. (2008) used educational stream in their American study. My schools only had sets for a few subjects, for example, maths. Roe (1992) had access to school records on pupils' grades which he used as a variable in his study. However, I considered it unethical to approach the schools in my study for information on the pupils' course and exam marks. In particular, I did not want to alienate the low-achieving pupils. Tanner et al. (2008) obtained their data on their respondents' academic achievements from a pre-existing data base: such a data base was not available to me.

Tanner et al. (2008) used skipping school and suspension from school as variables in their study. However, I considered that asking the pupils for information on these activities would alienate those who skipped school or had been suspended. I also considered that collecting such information would be unacceptable for my two schools head teachers. Similarly, I rejected asking my pupils' to record their satisfaction with their schools.

I took the decision that it was ethical and acceptable to the school's head teachers to ask the pupils two questions, one about their career ambitions and one about their anticipated future status, as signifiers of their feelings of academic success. I considered that the pupils would be happy to answer these questions. I did not ask about the pupils' future educational plans – this was a possible oversight. I also asked my pupils about the specific anticipated future occupation.

I included a question on my pupils' aspiration for a future career in music. To my knowledge, no previous researcher has included this question. I considered that my pupils would be happy to answer this question.

In terms of the measurement of cultural capital, I set out above, how Tanner et al. (2008) considered cultural capital to be an important variable for inclusion in their study. However, I wanted to keep my questionnaire as simple as possible given that I was dealing with children aged 11 to 15, younger than those in most other studies (Tanner et al. (2008) in their study included the 13 to 18 year range, Roe's (1992) focused on 15-16 year olds and Colley's (2008) focused on undergraduates). I therefore decided not to include a cultural capital index in my questionnaire as Tanner et al. (2008) did in theirs. I did, however wish to collect data on my pupils' musical activities. In this, I took a wider view, focusing more informally on

taking part in musical activities rather than passing music exams (as did Colley, (2008)) and including dancing as a musical activity along with singing and playing an instrument.

In terms of peer group activity, Tanner et al. (2008) created four indices of peer group activity: peer-dominated leisure, hedonistic leisure, drug use and delinquency. Ethical difficulties prevented me asking pupils in my two schools for details of their drug use and their delinquent activities. I also considered that collecting information of the degree to which my pupils' musical tastes resembled those of their friends was a more interesting aspect of peer group than asking them to what extent they took part in peer group activity and hedonistic leisure activities. I also considered it interesting to ask my pupils to what extent their musical tastes resembled those of their siblings. I considered siblings' musical tastes as part family, part peer group; I included siblings as leisure associates as they were persons who were nearer their own age than their parents.

In terms of means of listening to music, I was interested that Boyle et al. (1981) included listening to the radio as one of his variables in their study. No other researchers to my knowledge have considered the influence on young people's musical preferences of the means by which they listen to music. However, today there are considerably more ways of listening to music available for young people than listening to the radio alone. I decided to take careful note in my focus group discussions to what extent the pupil participants referred to the different means of listening to music and the effect listening to different means had on their musical tastes.

Chapter 4: Methods

Introduction

In this chapter, I begin by defining quantitative and qualitative research and then I discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the two methods. I then explain the different views on the validity of adopting a mixed-method approach and the advantages and disadvantages of such an approach. I then turn to my own study and describe the two research sites (schools) that I selected. I then explain the mixed methods approach I adopted. I then set out details of my pilot study, my focus group discussions and my questionnaire survey where I used open and closed-answer questions; I also discuss the how I sought to increase response in my questionnaire design. I then set out how I selected my questionnaire survey respondents and the response to my questionnaire survey. I then describe how I edited the questionnaires, input the data into SPSS and performed statistical calculations on these data. I set out in Appendixes 4 and 5 explanations of the sampling and statistical techniques I used in my study.

4.1 Quantitative and qualitative strategies in research methods

Research strategies can be quantitative or qualitative. These research strategies differ in their choice of a deductive or an inductive approach, their epistemology and their ontology. Table 4.1 summarises the arguments made below. My discussion on general matters in this chapter is based upon Bryman (2012), Bryman and Bell (2013), Grover et al. (2000) and Pallant (2103).

Table 4.1 Differences between quantitative and qualitative research

Orientation	Quantitative	Qualitative
Deductive/inductive orientation Which comes first: theory and findings?	Deductive research method Theory → findings	Inductive research method Findings → theory
Epistemological orientation. Can scientific and social phenomena be studied in the same way?	Positivism: Scientific phenomena and people can be studied in the same way.	Interpretivism: Scientific phenomena and people cannot be studied in the same way. People's behaviour must be understood through their own eyes.
Ontological orientation What is real and what is not real?	Objectivism: Social phenomena are real; they are separate from people.	Constructionism: Social phenomena do not exist independently of people. Instead social phenomena are continuous social interactions between people.

Quantitative research

In quantitative research the principal orientation to the role of theory in research is *deductive*. Quantitative researchers take current theory and knowledge about a field of research and from these derive *research hypotheses*. Researchers then go into the field to collect the relevant *data*. After collecting their data the researchers then compare their data with their research hypotheses and decide whether they are supported or not. The sequence for quantitative research is Theory → Findings. However, after analysing their findings, researchers then decide how their supported research hypotheses affect the current state of

theory. While the previous steps were deductive, this step is inductive. Researchers infer the implications of their study findings for current theory.

The epistemological orientation in quantitative research is *positivist*. A positivist orientation assumes that only research phenomena that can be measured can be properly described as knowledge. Quantitative researchers believe that social science research should imitate natural science research. Thus, organizations and people can be studied the same way as a hydrogen atom. This leads to the belief that research can be conducted in a way that is *value free*.

The ontological orientation in quantitative research is *objectivism.* In quantitative research, social phenomena are seen as objects, as having an existence independent of people. This is *objectivism*, a position that asserts that social phenomena have an objective existence independent of social actors.

The main type of quantitative research is the questionnaire survey. Other kinds are contents analysis and secondary analysis of data. I describe questionnaire surveys in this chapter as I adopted this method in my study. Questionnaire surveys (and other quantitative methods) collect data that can be subject to statistical analysis enabling researchers to draw inferences from the data they have obtained about their samples to the populations concerned i.e. researchers can make *generalisations* about their data. However, researchers can only properly draw inferences from probability samples, not from non-probability samples.

Questionnaires can have closed-answer or open-answer questions. In closed-answer questions the respondents choose from a list of answers or add one word answers (for example, place of

birth). In open-answer questions the respondents write their answers (generally more than one word) in a blank box set out in the questionnaire. Open-answer questions collect qualitative data and researchers afterwards devise a coding frame for the open answers and then code each answer. The main disadvantage of these questions is that coding the answers is time-consuming.

Researchers designing questionnaires need to take care as, once the questionnaires are distributed, they cannot change their minds about what questions they want to ask or how they want to ask them. Researchers need to be aware that they will not be present when the respondents who are filling in the questionnaire find a question difficult to answer. Researchers need follow a number of basic rules, such as avoiding leading questions, double-barrelled questions, over-lapping answer categories, non-exhaustive answer categories and sexist/racist/disablist language. Researchers must also be aware of respondent fatigue. Specifically, in open-answer questions, researchers also need to be aware that they cannot probe respondents' answers and that respondents may be reluctant to write answers.

A major difficulty for self-completion questionnaire surveys is the generally lower response rates than for interviews. A low response rate indicates that the survey findings might be *biased* as those respondents who fill in the questionnaire might differ in specific and significant ways from those who did not. Researchers can take a number of steps to reduce non-response such as giving a questionnaire an attractive appearance, and adding an introduction letter explaining the purpose of the research and assuring respondents of the confidentiality of their answers. Most importantly, researchers should pilot their questionnaires before administering it.

The response rate is calculated as follows:

Number of usable questionnaires   x100
Total number of questionnaires distributed

Mangione (1996) classified the acceptability of survey response rates: at one end of the scale, over 85 percent is 'Excellent' while, at the other end, less than 50 percent is 'Not acceptable'.

Qualitative research

In qualitative research the principal orientation to the role of theory in research is *inductive*. In such research concepts and theories emerge from the data. Thus, researchers first collect data and then draw generalisations from it leading to the development of theory. The new theory is an outcome of the research. Thus, the sequence for quantitative research is Findings → Theory. However, qualitative methods are often criticised for their lack of *generalisability* to other groups or social settings.

In qualitative research the epistemological orientation is *interpretivism.* In quantitative research social phenomenon are seen as fundamentally different from natural science. Qualitative researchers seek to *understand* human behaviour: to see through the eyes of the people they study. Qualitative researchers provide much more description of their findings than do quantitative researchers: they show *how* and, very importantly, *why* people behave in a certain way. Qualitative data is usually analysed in an *iterative* manner, with researchers going back and forth between data and the development of themes.

In qualitative research the ontological orientation is *constructionism*. In qualitative research, researchers do <u>not</u> see social phenomena as having an existence independent of social actors/people. Qualitative researchers see *social phenomena* as being produced by social actors and as continually being made by social actors.

There area number of qualitative research methods such as participant observation, focus groups and qualitative interviewing, I describe the last two of these as I used these methods in my study.

The *focus group* method is a form of group interview where there are several participants and a moderator (usually the researcher), where there is an emphasis on a fairly tightly defined topic, and where there is an emphasis on group interaction and the group's combined construction of meaning. Focus groups can meet once or on a number of occasions. Researchers usually choose to use between 12 and 15 focus groups. However, if the researcher is combining focus groups with other research methods, he or she can choose a smaller number. The usual number of participants in a focus group is between six and eight. If there are more than eight participants, it can be difficult for the moderator to manage the group. Some researchers in focus groups prefer to use just one or two very general questions to stimulate discussion. Other researchers prefer to use more questions and to have more structure with time limits allocated for discussion of each question. An important advantage of focus groups over in-depth interviews is that the participants can *probe* each other for the reasons why they hold certain views: they can challenge and ague with each other. In contrast, in an interview, interviewers ethically cannot challenge their interviewees when they give inconsistent answers or appear to be covering something up.

The researcher can select natural groups to be his/her focus groups (for example, a work team) or groups where he/she brings participants together specifically for the focus group discussions. For selecting participants specifically brought together for the research project, the researcher can select them *randomly* from a list of possible participants (sampling frame), or he or she can use 'snowballing' to find participants − asking one participant to recommend another and so on. When the researcher has a list of possible participants with information on each one, he/she may *stratify* the focus groups by factors such as industry, occupation/profession, organisational position, and personal criteria such as sex. Researchers may find focus groups difficult to organise as making contact with participants and arranging for them meet at a mutually convenient time takes a long time. Further, 'no shows' on the day can be a major problem.

Focus group moderators should not be intrusive and should allow the focus group participants wide latitude in discussing these questions set for them. If focus groups widen the discussion so much that they are no longer discussing matters relevant to the moderator's questions, moderators may need to refocus the participants' attention. Also moderators may need to intervene in discussions when specific points of interest are not picked up by the focus group participants. Researchers record focus group discussions and then transcribe them. It is harder for researchers to keep control in focus groups than it is in one-to-one interviews.

In-depth interviews are another important qualitative research method. I discuss in particular their use in *pilot studies* as this is how I used them in my study. Conducting pilot studies are very important in the research process (Teijlingen and Hundley, 2002). Such interviews can focus on feasibility assessment or on pre-testing particular research instruments, such as a questionnaire. Feasibility piloting can refer to undertaking a small scale version of a major

study or it can refer, in a smaller study, to a more limited investigation where the use of qualitative methods can help the researcher decide whether or not a planned study is feasible. Conducting a pilot/feasibility study does not guarantee success in the main study; however, to do so does increase the likelihood of success.

In-depth interviews are usually unstructured and researchers typically have only a list of topics for discussion, set out in a *checklist*. The questioning style is typically informal and researchers may vary widely between interviews the way they frame/ask questions and how they order them. The in-depth interview is in the form of a conversation.

In in-depth interviews, it is vital for interviewers to develop *rapport* with the interviewees. Rapport means establishing a relationship with interviewees that encourages them to participate in the interviews. However, researchers need to be careful that rapport does not lead interviewees to seek to please interviewers by giving the answers interviewees think interviewers would like. Factors such as gender, age, race and social class differences between the interviewers and interviewees can affect the development of rapport.

4.2 Combing quantitative and qualitative research

4.2.1 Two views on combining quantitative and qualitative research strategies

There are two views on whether a researcher can combine quantitative and qualitative research strategies. In the *epistemological* view, researchers consider that quantitative and

qualitative research methods *cannot* be combined as these methods are embedded in incompatible epistemological principles. For example, participant observation is not simply a way to go about collecting data, it is also a commitment to a specific orientation about the role of theory in research, an understanding about the differences between scientific and social phenomena and an understanding of what is real and what is not real. In the *technical* view, researchers acknowledge the fact that quantitative and qualitative research methods have different understandings but argue that research methods can be seen as autonomous. Thus, quantitative methods *can* be combined with qualitative methods. Further, researchers see multi-method research as positive feature of research design.

4.2.2 The advantages and disadvantages of using mixed methods in social research

I set out below the <u>advantages</u> of using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. I base my account on Bryman and Bell (2013).

(i) Multi-strategy research can combine a quantitative static snapshot focus data collection with qualitative process of data collection where the researcher moves between data collection and analysis.

(ii) Multi-strategy research enables researchers to investigate subjects' perspectives in an unstructured manner and also to investigate specific research issues in a structured way

(iii) Multi-strategy research can give qualitative-based research more generality. As findings from qualitative research are sometime criticised for not being generalisable to other social

settings, giving a study some quantification by also using a questionnaire survey can enhance the generalisability of the study's findings.

(iv) Multi-strategy research can facilitate the interpretation of relationships between variables. One of the problems that frequently confront quantitative researchers is how to understand these relationships (does A cause B or B cause A?). Using both quantitative and qualitative ways to investigate the relationships between variables can improve the understanding of relationships.

(v) Multi-strategy research allows researchers to study different aspects of the same social phenomena. Researchers can use quantitative research to explore one aspect of social phenomena and qualitative research to explore another.

(vi) Multi-strategy research can help researchers solve research puzzles. When researchers using one research strategy have unexpected findings (puzzles), switching to another research strategy can be useful.

There are, however, <u>disadvantages</u> in using mixed research methods;

(i) Researchers need more resources in order to conduct both quantitative and qualitative research. Further, researchers need to design procedures for merging the two datasets (for example, turning qualitative data into quantitative data through a coding process).

(ii) Researchers in their studies may find differences between the findings for their quantitative and qualitative data collection. As Jick (1979) states, reconciling disparate views

in data collected by different methods is a delicate exercise. There have been two approaches to this problem. In the *first* approach, researchers are urged to reconcile the differences in data collected by different methods. Newby (1977) stated that when he encountered such differences in his study of farm workers, he 'instinctively' trusted his participant observation data. Bryman (2012) concurred with Newby (1997) and referred to the greater richness and depth of participant observation and to the researchers' greater proximity to the people they study inspiring greater confidence in such data. In the *second* approach, it is considered arbitrary to favour one set of findings over another. Instead of preferring one set of data to another, those advocating the second approach argue that such divergence can turn out to be an opportunity for enriching the explanation (Jick, 1979; Piano Clark et al., 2008). Researchers seeking explanations for divergent results may uncover unexpected results or unseen contextual factors that can lead to alternative and more complex explanations being generated. The researchers become builders and creators, piecing together many pieces of a complex puzzle into a coherent whole.

4.3 My choice of research sites for my study

In social science research it is very difficult to secure access to school pupils given head teachers' legitimate concern for the welfare of their pupils. As a Master's student I had little chance of securing access in a school where I was not known to the teachers. Therefore, I had little option but to choose my schools on an *availability* basis as this way I was most likely to be successful in securing *access*. I chose the Roman Catholic boys' school as I was known to its head and staff as I had been, for six years in that school, a peripatetic music teacher (giving individual drum lessons to ten pupils each year). The boys' school had a Roman

Catholic sister school and I secured an introduction to this sister school from my contacts at the boys' school. The head teachers of both schools gave me permission to conduct my study in their schools. Thus, both of the schools to which I secured access were single-sex Roman Catholic schools.

Both schools were located south of the Manchester M60 ring road in an affluent area. Both schools had academy status and children sit an entrance exam to enter both schools; the children also had to be Roman Catholic. Neither school operated a restricted catchment area and, in consequence, both took in pupils from a wide variety of areas around Manchester, Cheshire and the North West region in general.

I was aware that selecting single sex schools would have an impact on my study's findings. This impact would be most relevant for the focus group discussions. Below, where I discuss the use of focus groups in my study, I reflect on the effect on the discussions of having all boy and all girl focus groups. In my conclusion I will speculate on how the choice of single-sex schools may have affected my findings, particularly for the focus group discussions.

4.4 My adoption of a multi-method strategy

I agree with the *technical* view given above, that quantitative and qualitative research can be combined. I agree with Piano Clark et al. (2008) and with the classic views of Eisenhardt (1989) and Mintzberg (1979) that combining quantitative and qualitative data is highly synergistic. I chose to use both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection for my study. In my study I decided, where I found differences in the data I collected by method, I

would not favour one data set over another. Instead, I decided to welcome any divergences I found between findings collected by my different methods and to use these to seek to enrich my explanations and to produce suggestions for future research. The social world is not like physical world and not finding convergence between the data sets collected by different methods is commonplace and not a disaster.

I explain how my use of quantitative and qualitative methods assisted my study:

(i) My unstructured investigation of my pupils' views in my qualitative research (my in-depth pilot feasibility interviews and my focus group discussions) helped me to design essential features for the later structured quantitative research I undertook (my questionnaire survey)

(ii) My use of qualitative research (my focus groups and the open questions in my questionnaire) helped me to understand/interpret the statistical relationships between variables I discovered in my analysis of quantitative data in my questionnaire survey.

(iii) My quantitative research (derived from my questionnaire survey) gave my qualitative findings (derived from my focus groups) more *generality*.

4.5 My pilot study

I conducted a pilot study using in-depth interviewing in order to assess the feasibility of my research project. (I later conducted another pilot study to pre-test my questionnaire.)

The *purpose* of my pilot/feasibility was two-fold. First, I wished to establish the likelihood that the pupils in my selected schools would be being willing to take part in my study. I also wanted to assess the extent to which they might be interested in modern music, be able to identify and label genres and subgenres in modern music, and to be able to link specific songs to specific genres and subgenres. I hoped to secure a preliminary understanding of how young people classify genres and subgenres in modern music in order to help me when conducting the focus groups.

Second, I wanted to explore what factors young people saw as important in influencing their musical tastes. I conducted my pilot/feasibility study at the early stages of my study at the same time as I was exploring the literature on young people's musical preferences.

I chose my subjects for my in-depth interviews on a *convenience* basis. I chose four boys from the boys' school where I teach to whom I gave individual drum lessons. These boys were from Years 7 to Year 11. I did not include these boys in my focus groups; as the returned questionnaires were anonymous I do not know if they were randomly selected to be respondents in the questionnaire survey. The in-depth interviews lasted for approximately 15 minutes each. It was easy for me to establish rapport with my subjects as I had taught them for some time and they appeared to enjoy their drum lessons. I took extensive notes during the interviews.

I began each in-depth interview by explaining to the interviewee what my research project was about and for what I would use the collected data. I also reassured him that all replies would be treated confidentiality. I ensured privacy for the interview so that the boy would feel confident that what he said would not be overheard.

My in-depth checklist was simple and consisted of a list of the following topic headings:

- Pupils' interest in and knowledge of modern music

- Pupils' ability to identify and label modern musical subgenres, and link subgenres with specific songs (song signifiers)

- Views on influences on young people's development of musical preference.

Since the four boys took drum lessons, they were likely to have more knowledge of music that those who did not take music lessons. Nevertheless, I consider that findings from my pilot interviews played a valid role in assessing the feasibility of my proposed study. I acknowledge that in the conclusions I drew from my pilot study that I set out below, the extent of interest in and knowledge about modern music may be over-stated when applied to the general populations in the two schools in my study. I decided that my pilot study findings, although to some extent possibly biased by my selection of boys to whom I have drum lessons, suggested that my proposed study of young people's musical preferences was feasible.

(i) The in-depth interviewees responded very positively to taking part in a study of young people's musical tastes.

(ii) The in-depth interviewees were very interested in modern music and it played an important part in their lives. They considered that other young people they knew were also interested in modern music.

(iii) The in-depth interviewees were capable of developing a reasonably detailed classification of broad musical genres and subgenres. While they were able to identify songs that they liked, they were less sure about linking specific songs to specific subgenres.

(iv) The in-depth interviewees suggested a number of factors that they considered could influence their own and other young people's musical preferences. These concerned being involved in music (whether outside of school or within school), learning a musical instrument, parents' or siblings' interest in music and ethnic and social background.

4.6 My focus groups discussions

My focus group discussions' qualitative method built upon the understanding of young people's knowledge and classification of modern music that I had obtained from my in-depth pilot interviews. The *purpose* of my focus group discussions was to collect data that would help me understand *how* the pupils understand modern music. I wanted to benefit from the focus group's ability to bring to the fore issues that the pupil participants considered important. I also hoped that the focus groups would bring issues to the surface that I had not thought of previously. My focus groups also gave me the opportunity to understand *why* the participants felt they way they did. I was able to collect data that would help me to understand what factors the participants considered impacted upon the development of theirs and young people's musical preferences.

I intended using data from my focus groups' discussions to build a collective classification of how the young people in my study understood modern music. I did not want to impose a typology of modern music on them. I noted in Chapter 3 that researchers in a number of studies of young people's musical preferences present to their research subjects a pre-made taxonomy of modern music. In my study I was at pains to understand how my subjects defined modern broad musical genres and subgenres and what songs they saw as representing these genres/subgenres.

It was relatively easy for me to organise focus groups in my two schools where the pupils were readily available for selection for, and participation in, the focus groups, and, given the popularity of my research project among the schools' pupils (see below), there were unlikely to be 'No shows'.

I used a variety of random sampling techniques to select the participants for my focus groups. My first sampling stage was *stratified sampling*: I treated the pupils at the boys' and girls' schools as separate strata. For the second stage, I used different sampling techniques for the boys' and girls' schools. At the girls' school, the tutorial groups were year-based and I used *stratified sampling* to select girl participants as I wished to control how many girls were drawn from each year. I decided to emphasise the middle age range and drew two groups from Year 9, one group from Year 8 and one group from Year 10. I drew eight pupils for each group. I used the Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10 Class Registers as my sampling frame. I numbered each girl's name on the Class Register, assigning the numbers alphabetically. I generated a set of random numbers using the internet random sampling program *randomorganiser.org* and I selected the required number of girl participants from the Registers for each year. None of the selected pupils were absent from school that day.

I could not use the above procedure for the boys, as the boys' school policy was to have mixed-age tutorial groups – a policy introduced in order for the boys from different years to get to know each other in the hope that this would reduce bullying. Instead, I used *cluster sampling*. I numbered the boys' tutorial groups and then randomly chose four of them. Within each of these four tutorial groups I chose all the boys in Years 8, 9 and 10 (a *100 percent sample*).

Table 4.2 sets out the focus groups for my study.

4.2 Table of focus groups and their participants

	Number in group	Sex	Year	Ages
1	8	Boys	8	12-13
2	8	Boys	9	13-14
3	8	Boys	9	13-14
4	8	Boys	10	14-15
5	8	Girls	8	12-13
6	8	Girls	9	13-14
7	8	Girls	9	13-14
8	8	Girls	10	14-15

I conducted the focus group discussions during the boys' and girls' tutorial periods. The girls' tutorial periods were held for 30 minutes after their lunch break and the boys' tutorial periods were held for 30 minutes first thing in the morning. I asked the selected pupils to come to the schools' recreational areas or to a spare classroom away from other pupils and staff. The discussion groups lasted for 20 minutes: longer periods were not possible given that the tutorial periods lasted only 30 minutes. No pupil refused to participate, although they were informed that they could decline to come with the others to the locations where the focus groups were held if they so wished. I did not have any 'No shows'. All the pupils selected for

the focus group discussions attended. For the focus group discussions in the girls' school, a female teacher came in at the beginning of sessions and at the end, to check that all was well, presumably to ensure the safety of the girls. This did not happen at boys' school where I was already known as one of the peripatetic music teachers.

I began each focus group by explaining again to the pupils that taking part in the discussions was voluntary and that anyone who did not wish to participate was, of course, free to leave. I then explained to the participants what my research project was about and for what I would use the data I collected. I asked the participants' permission to record the session and also assured them that anything they said would be confidential. I gave each pupil in each focus group a sheet of paper (set out in Appendix 1) on which I set out a number of questions for them to discuss.

(i) How many types of modern music can you identify?

(ii) What names would you give each type? Please can you make a list of songs that represent each type?

(iii) What factors do you think influence what types of modern music young people like?

I took care when moderating my focus group discussions to retain control. I was able to control the discussions while at the same time allowing the pupils to express their own views on modern music. While the pupils were very enthusiastic, their being younger than me led them to respect my attempts to refocus their discussions when necessary and to bring points to their attention that I felt they had neglected. I found few instances of some pupils' dominating the discussions and, when it did happen, I was able to encourage all participants to contribute.

Having recorded my pupils' focus group discussions with a voice pen, I then transcribed my recordings. When transcribing one-on-one interviews, it is relatively simple for the researcher to identity which voice belongs to the interviewer and which to the interviewee. When I was transcribing the focus group discussions, I found it difficult, with a sufficient degree of accuracy, to identify each participant and to give him/her a pseudonym: the participants in each focus group in my study were all the same sex, of the same age and nearly all had Manchester accents. Other researchers have solved the difficulty of identifying each focus group participants and producing transcripts with each contribution attributed to a particular participant by videoing the discussion session, see, for example, Puchta and Potter (2002) who videoed the participants in their market research focus groups. However, due to ethical considerations I was not able to video the relatively young focus group participants in my study. In Chapter 5, where I discus the findings for my focus groups, I adopt two methods for reproducing quotes from my focus group transcripts: (i) where I reproduced a short conversation between two or more focus group participants, I append to the quote Boy/Girl 1 and his/her age, Boy/Girl 2 and his/her age and so on. (ii) where I reproduced quotes that were not part of a conversation, I append to the quote just the sex and the age group.

As I had selected single sex schools for my study, my focus groups consisted of either all boys or all girls (it would not have been possible to organise mixed focus groups given my assurances to the Heads of the two schools that I would minimise disruption to the schools while conducting my study). I acknowledge that the use of single sex focus groups could have an effect on my findings. When planning my focus groups, I considered that having single sex focus groups could be an advantage. There is evidence that, in mixed-sex classes, boys have a marked tendency to speak up more than girls, to interrupt girls and to fail to

endorse ideas introduced or developed by girls (Baxter, 2002a; Baxter, 2002b). Specifically for expressing music preferences, Colley (2008), drawing on the work of Bussey and Bandura (1999) and of (Martin, 1993) argues that young men/boys make a point of not liking music identified with young women/girls as they do not wish to engage with styles strongly associated with the opposite gender. Thus, it was possible that having girls-only focus groups in my study would encourage girls to speak up and to give their opinions without being submissive to the boys and without holding back for fear of criticism from the boys.

I also acknowledge that I was likely to be seen differently in the two schools, not only because I am male and therefore the same sex as the boys and not the girls, but also, and perhaps more significantly, I was well known to the boys' school, having been a peripatetic teacher there for a number of years. In contrast, I had no prior relationship with the girls' school. I therefore had a dual identity at the boys' school, that of both drum teacher and researcher, whereas in the girls' school I was only a researcher. At the boys' school, I was a peripatetic teacher (for over six years I have taught the drums to approximately ten pupils a year on a one-to-one basis) and I was also involved in the boys' school's extra-curricular music activities, such as the chamber choir and a lunchtime 'school of rock' workshop.

I discuss in Chapter 5 how I analysed the transcripts of the focus group discussions in order to produce an overall taxonomy for using in my questionnaire.

4.7 My questionnaire survey

The *purpose* of my questionnaire survey was to collect quantitative data that I could subject to statistical analysis. The design of my questionnaire, which combined closed-answer and open-answer questions, drew upon the data derived from the focus group discussions, making use of pupils' collective classification of modern music genres and subgenres and of subgenre-signifying songs in the development and organisation of my questions (see Chapter 5). I also made use of my pupils' views in the focus groups on what were the social factors influencing the development of their musical tastes in the closed-answer questions; their views also helped me in framing the open answers that I posed at the end of my questionnaire.

In the *closed-answer questions* I sought to collect quantitative data in order to explore statistically which social factors correlated with preferences for the different types of modern music developed by the pupils participating in the focus groups. I hoped that the use of statistical techniques for analysing my questionnaire data could improve the *generalisability* of my study findings about how young people develop their musical preferences. I also wished systematically to compare the opinions of different groups of my respondents, for example, boys *versus* girls, those with higher social status background *versus* those with a lower social status background, and those taking part in musical activities *versus* those that did not.

In the *open-answer questions* I sought to capture data that would help me evaluate the theories set out by post sub-culturalists of how young people come to identify with modern music. I consider it problematic in a study to investigate 'the quickening circular flow of musical genres, subgenres and attendant youth styles [that] blurs into what Polhemus (1997) terms a "supermarket of style"' (Bennett 2002: 457) other than by 'insider' research, which

usually involves a longer time period than that available to a Masters' student and, as I argued in Chapter 2, often suffers from *dual identity* difficulties. In my open-answer questions, I focused on eliciting the respondents' opinions and allowed them to answer in their own terms and also to give answers that I had not contemplated.

Turning to measurement of the *dependent variables* in my questionnaire, I adhered to my view young people should be allowed to classify musical genres/subgenres and songs in their own way and, accordingly, I based the classification of genres and songs on those suggested by the focus group participants. I asked the questionnaire respondents to indicate on a scale to what extent 25 songs and 11 musical subgenres were to their musical tastes. I set out in chapter 5 how I went about classifying the pupils' perception of how modern music is divided into broad genres and subgenres and identifying specific songs to represent genres/subgenres. I explain how I grouped the signifier songs into song groupings and the subgenres into subgenre groupings (broad musical genres). The groupings were the same for song groupings and subgenre groupings: urban, rock, pop and folk/country.

Turning to measurement of the *independent variables* in my questionnaire, I divided these into sets based on the understandings I developed in Chapter 3 on how influences on pupils' musical preferences can be grouped. Table 4.3 summarises the independent variable measures set out in my questionnaire. I used both closed-answer questions, and questions requiring simple answers, for example, filling in a word in a box.

Table 4.3 Questionnaire's set of independent variables and variable numbers in questionnaire

Influences	Specific information	Question number	Variable number/label
Demographic	Sex	Q1	v4
	Ethnic group	Q2	v5
	Age	Q3	v6
	School year	Q4	v7
Social background	Location of home	Q5	v8
	Post code	Q6	
	Employment status of head of household	Q7	v9
	Live inside/outside Manchester ring road	Coding based on Q6	Created variable
	Occupation of pupil's head of household	Q8	v10
	Extent to which musical tastes are similar to parents	Q16	v18
School success	Extent of ambition for future career	Q13	v14
	Career would like to have in the future	Q14	v16
Desire for musical career	Extent to which has considered a career involving music	Q15	v17
Cultural capital	Plays a musical instrument/s	Q9	v11
	Kind/s of musical instrument played	Q10	v12
	Takes part in singing activities, group or solo	Q11	v13
	Takes part in dancing activities group or solo	Q12	v14
Peer group	Extent to which musical tastes are similar to siblings	Q16	v19
	Extent to which musical tastes are similar to friends	Q16	v20
Means of listening to music	Extent to which media are used foe listening to music	Q7	v21-v27

I make a number of points about my question wording and my coding for my independent variables.

(i) I used "gender" instead of "sex" although I was in fact seeking biological not social information. I did this to reduce the possibility of receiving silly answers from the pupils such as "Yes, please!" or "Not yet, I am only 12!"

(ii) I used the classification for ethnicity set out in *British Social Attitudes Survey* (2013*)* − see questionnaire

(iii) For pupils' home location, I set out a number of specified areas in boxes for respondents to tick, together with an 'Other' category (I coded 'Other' areas at the data input stage). I numbered these areas and input them into my SPSS data set. I then recoded my data pupils' home locations as being inside or outside the M60 Manchester ring road, working on the assumption that areas outside the ring road were generally more affluent than those areas inside the ring road.

(iv) For postcode, I asked respondents to write down their postcodes. I then used *SN 5837 GeoConvert Postcode Data 2006* (used with permission of the Controller of HMS) on the internet to obtain the score for social deprivation for that postcode area. I categorised the raw scores as follows (the higher the score the greater the extent of social depravation). I grouped the raw scores into 6 categories: 1.00 to under 10.00, 10.00 to under 20.00, 20.00 to under 30.00, 30.00 to under 40.00 and 40.00 or more.

(vi) Where I used scales for answer categories I used a 1 to 7 scale rather than a 1 to 5 scale in order to increase the spread of response for the middle values.

(vii) The respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they used the following means to access modern music: radio, television, MTV/other music television channels, YouTube, internet media players, internet streaming and games consoles.

(viii) For pupils' head of household employment status, I used the answer categories "Employed", "Unemployed" and "Pensioner".

(ix) For classifying the occupation of head of household, I used the social class classification scheme set out in The Market Research Society (1991) for coding occupations filled by the respondents for their questions to questions 8 and 14. Table 4.4 sets out the framework of how Market Research links occupations and social class.

(x) I considered that musical tastes of siblings could be considered as either part of social background/family influences or as part of peer group influences. I chose to classify siblings' musical tastes with those of their friends, as peer influences, given the generally smaller age differences between siblings and respondent pupils than between parents and respondent pupils. Only 19 of my respondents did not have a sibling.

Table 4.4 Market research classification of occupations

Grade	Social class	Occupation
A	Upper middle class	Higher managerial, administrative or professional
B	Middle class	Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional
C1	Lower middle class	Supervisory or clerical and junior managerial, administrative or professional
C2	Skilled working class	Skilled manual workers
D	Working class	Casual or lowest grade workers.
E	Those at the lowest levels of subsistence	Pensioners and others who depend on the welfare state for their income

(Source: The Market Research Society, 1991)

Turning to my use of *open-answer* questions, given the time involved in coding open-answer questions, I included only two of these in my questionnaire, placing them at the end. I

provided reasonably large boxes for the pupils to fill in their answers. My two open-answer questions were:

- Q20 which asked the pupils to explain why they liked the music they preferred
- Q21 which asked the pupils what they thought influenced their taste in modern music

4.8 Improving response in my questionnaire survey

I sought to increase my questionnaire response rate by several means.

(i) I designed an attractive layout for my questionnaire and ensured that my instructions for filling in the questionnaire were comprehensive, that my questions and (where relevant) answers were clearly set out and that the questionnaire was not too long. I considered that *clarity* was particular important given the young age of my respondents.

(ii) I ensured that the introductory letter that I gave the pupils at the same time as the questionnaire had an attractive layout (my letter is set out in Appendix 2). In this letter, a letter which explained why I was undertaking the survey, I also assured the pupils that their replies were confidential and that their participation in the questionnaire survey was voluntary. I also thanked them for taking part.

(iii) I *piloted* my questionnaire with a small group of friends and child acquaintances. After these individuals had filled in the questionnaire, I discussed with them to what extent they understood the questions, whether they considered that any factors relating to development of

a pupil's musical identification had been omitted, and whether there were any extraneous questions that should be discarded. I also asked them to look for typos. These individuals informed me that the A4 sized format was larger than necessary and could appear daunting to the pupils. Therefore, I decided to use a smaller booklet format, more manageable for participants to complete, easier for the teachers to administer, and cheaper to produce. I also corrected several typos that the individuals had pointed out.

4.9 My choice of respondents for my questionnaire survey

Turning to my choice of respondents for my questionnaire survey, I set myself a target sample of approximately 200 pupils. I considered that number would give me a reasonable chance of finding *significant* differences between groups in my sample. I selected 100 boys and 100 girls from my two schools. I selected these in the same way as I did for the focus groups (see above), using random numbers and different types of sampling. The girls' and boys' tutors distributed the questionnaires to those in their tutorial groups, together with a copy of my accompanying letter. The respondents filled in their questionnaires during their tutorial periods and then handed back to their tutors. Some boy and girls were not available due to prior commitments.

4.10 Response to my survey

In terms of *response* to my questionnaire, all of the pupils who received my questionnaires returned them, highlighting the enthusiasm the pupils showed for my study. Thus, the response rates for the boys and girls were 100 percent. I received 84 completed questionnaires from the boys' tutors and 93 completed questionnaires from the girls' tutors making a total of 187 completed questionnaires. I considered this total to be sufficient for using statistical measures such as multiple-regression.

4.11 Editing the questionnaires

I edited the questionnaires that I received back from the respondents. I noticed that girls took considerably more care than boys when in filling out their questionnaires. Their responses to open questions were much more detailed.

I encountered the following problems:

- One boy made zigzag patterns of his answers for his songs identifications (Q18). I omitted his answers for this question from my analysis.

- A few boys clearly did not take the questionnaire as seriously as I had hoped, giving silly answers such as 'Danish pastry' or 'Because Tim likes it'. I disregarded these answers to the questions.

- The pupils answered the question about their ethnicity in a very detailed manner. A substantial number ticked the 'Other" answer and then filled in a mixture of ethic groups: they appeared to be listing the ethnicity of their grandparents. When this happened I generally took the first ethnic group they mentioned. I also coded Irish/other as Irish,

Mixed race with an Asian element as Asian, and Mixed race with a Black Caribbean or African element as black.

- A number of pupils filled in the name of the areas where they lived but declined to fill in their postcodes.

- The pupils' description of the occupation of their head of household was sometimes vague. I chose to ask them to fill in a box for this question as I considered that using a social class classification, such as that by Market Research, would have a negative impact on pupils whose head of household's occupation was in the lower categories.

4.12 Inputting the data into SPSS and data checking

Having edited to account for problems as best I could, I input my questionnaire data into SPSS. I then ran *frequencies* for each variable to check for data-inputting errors, for example inputting a 3 score for sex. I also checked for marked skewness of scores for each variable (however, skewness is not too much of a problem for multiple-regression as its calculation takes account of skewness).

I typed out all of my respondents' responses to the open-answer questions. I read them carefully and then devised a coding frame (see Chapter 6). I then coded each respondent's answers and input the resulting quantitative data into my SPSS data set.

4.13 Running multiple regressions and controlling data by independent factors

I utilised hierarchical multiple regressions, available in SPSS, to identify which of my factors had the most impact on pupils' musical preferences. Before evaluating the regressions models produced by SPSS I ran a number of tests for multicollinearity and for outliers, normality, linearity and homoscedasticity.

When I failed to find any significant relationships between preferences for urban and rock songs and any independent factors (see Chapter 6) I utilised the statistical technique of *controlling* my data by independent variables. I controlled first by sex and second by occupation of pupil's head of household. In this chapter, I explain what it means to control data by an independent factor.

A group of researchers may find in their data set that there are no significant relationships between liking a song grouping or liking a music subgenre grouping and any of the independent factors they have included in their study. The researchers do not, however have to give up at this point. They can try *controlling* their data by an independent factor in order to see if they can find any significant relationships when they do this. *Controlling* a data set by an independent factor means splitting the data file into two. For example, researchers who wish to control their data file by sex split their data into two, putting boys in one group and girls in another. The researchers then run multiple hierarchical regressions separately for each group. The researcher then looks to see if there are any significant relationships *just for boys* and *just for girls* between liking a particular genre of music and independent factors in the

study. The researchers may then find that, *just for boys*, there is a significant relationship between liking rock music and playing a musical instrument. The researchers may also find that, *just for girls*, there is a significant relationship between liking rock and having parents with similar musical tastes. The researchers conclude that there are different patterns of relationships between liking rock for boys and for girls. These relationships were *masked* when the researchers considered the data set as a whole. By splitting the data file by sex, the researchers are *not*, however, suggesting that sex is a factor affecting a preference for rock.

Chapter 5: Findings from focus group discussions

Introduction

As I stated in my methods chapter, I had two purposes when undertaking the focus group discussions in my study:

(i) To understand how pupils perceived music to be divided into broad genres and subgenres and how they perceived specific songs to represent or signify the genres and subgenres. I sought *subsequently* to use this taxonomy for the questionnaire in order to classify the questionnaire respondents' musical preferences for statistical analysis.

(ii) To collect qualitative data on the pupils' opinions on the factors affecting young people and their own preferences for different musical genres. I collected this qualitative data both to assist me in designing my questionnaire but also as data in its own right to compare with the quantitative data I collected from my questionnaire survey.

In Chapter 4, I set out the composition of eight focus groups. When reporting my findings, since I used single sex focus groups, I present my findings for the boys' and the girls' groups separately, specifying when the two groups had similar views and when they did not. As I organised the focus groups by school year, both for convenience (the girls' school tutor groups are organised by school year), I was able to draw, when relevant, distinctions by age differences between the focus groups' views.

In this Chapter, I begin by discussing the response of the focus group participants towards taking part in the discussions and my reflections on my role as researcher. I then discuss how I classified the pupils' perception of how modern music is divided into broad genres and subgenres and their perception of which songs represented the genres/subgenres. I then discuss the pupils' opinions on the factors affecting preferences for different musical genres and consider how my findings relate to those set out by the different schools of thought on young people's music preferences. Finally, I give an overview of my study's findings from the focus group discussions, the relationship between my focus group findings and extant schools of thought on young people's musical preferences and suggestions from my focus group findings for my questionnaire survey.

5.1 Pupils' response to taking part in the focus group discussions and my *critical reflection* on my role as researcher.

I found the pupils to be enthusiastic about participating in the focus groups. Taking part in the focus groups and discussing music appeared to be considerably more interesting for them than doing their homework or silent reading as they normally did in their tutorial group periods. It was easier for me in the setting of my two schools than it would be in business organisations to select and contact the focus group participants and to arrange times for their discussions to take place. Also I had no difficulty with 'no shows' as the pupils were keen to take part in the focus groups and as the focus groups took place in their schools, involving little effort on their part to attend. As I teach as a peripatetic drum teacher at the boys' school,

I was able to see the reaction of those pupils not invited to participate in the focus groups. These pupils who had not been invited to take part appeared very interested in what was going on and some expressed a desire to be involved, asking when they could be in a focus group. Indeed, the event had created a buzz round the school: there was something going on to do with music and pupils wanted to be involved. I note, however, that getting out of their morning tutor period may have been a driving factor for some of this enthusiasm.

I observed some differences between boys and girls in their reaction to taking part in the focus groups. The girls were more enthusiastic than the boys during the focus groups: they chatted extensively to each other and generally talked much more than the boys. Indeed, something happened in the girls' focus groups but not in the boys' focus groups that shows a marked difference between them: such was their enthusiasm, the girls resorted to holding their hands aloft in order to take turns speaking as so many wished to express opinions at the same time. This practice, however, was not necessary within the boys' focus groups and, in general, I was required to moderate discussion less during the boys' focus groups. The girls required less prompting and less encouragement than the boys did; their talking at length required more moderation and led, sometimes, to less focussed discussion.

Another example, of the girls' greater confidence and enthusiasm was the fact that often one would break into song during the focus groups and the others girls would then join in. Other than the occasional one-line rap or impersonation for purposes of humour, the boys did not display anything like the same confidence or enthusiasm and, even if they had such enthusiasm, I could not help but feel they did not show it outwardly, perhaps for fear of the judgement of their peers. One Year 8 girl said something of considerable interest, with confidence and without fear of derision.

> I don't listen to the charts, I listen to radio four – it has lots of classical music. [Girl, 12 -13 years]

I found that the boys were generally less enthusiastic during the focus groups and became even less enthusiastic the older they were. The boys' focus groups sometimes tended to be dominated by one or two of them and there was the odd occasion where a boy failed to contribute much at all. The Year 10 boys' focus group was noticeably quieter than the other boys' focus groups (the Year 8 group and the Year 9 groups) and, while this may be attributed to age, I feel it important to point out that the members of this group did not consider themselves to be a particularly musical form, even though they had a music teacher as their form tutor. None of them played a musical instrument and they stated that none of them had a particular interest in music. I draw the following quotation from the year 10 boys' focus group to illustrate this fact.

> We're not really a very musical class, like none of us play an instrument and we're not really that into music – we've got Mr X [A music teacher at the school] as well [laughter]. [Boy, 14 – 15 years]

It is therefore difficult to say whether their age contributed to their lack of enthusiasm or whether it was simply a lack of interest.

I also need to recognise, however, that the boys' focus groups were held during their morning tutor period, the first school activity of their day, from 9:00 to 9:30 am, whereas the girls' focus groups were held during their tutor period in the afternoons between 1:30 to 2:00 pm. It could be that part of the reason the boys were less enthusiastic was due to the earlier time at

which their focus groups were held. Teenagers, perhaps particularly teenage boys, are after all not known for being at their best first thing in the morning! This time difference was wholly unintended. I had assured the head teachers of the two schools that I would cause minimum disruption to their school day and that I would hold the focus groups and have pupils complete the questionnaires outside of lesson time.

I reflect on the impact on my findings of having single sex focus groups. I consider that the absence of boys in their focus groups contributed to a significant extent to the girls' greater enthusiasm and eagerness to discuss music in their groups. I consider that my use of single sex focus groups avoided the domination of discussions by boys likely in mixed sex situations, as suggested by Baxter (2002a, 2002b). I consider that my use of single sex focus groups also avoided the problem suggested by Colley (2008) that boys make a point of not liking music identified with girls and do not wish to engage with styles strongly associated with girls. I consider that, if I had had mixed sex focus groups, the girls would not have talked at such length and with such enthusiasm for folk/country music and its songs, and would not have given such detailed views about Taylor Swift's music (see below). As we shall see in Chapter 6, a preference for folk/country songs was strongly and significantly linked to being a girl. I also consider that, if I had had mixed sex focus groups, the boys would have been more talkative as they might not have wanted the discussions to be dominated by the girls. It is possible that the boys would have rejected protracted discussion about Taylor Swift's music as unacceptably 'girly', interrupted the girls and moved the discussion in a different direction.

I also reflect on my different roles: being a researcher and teacher in the boys' school and being just a researcher in the girls' school. This difference could have contributed to the boys

in the focus groups being quieter than the girls, although none of the focus group boys happened to be ones to whom I gave individual drum lessons. The boys could have been to some extent nervous of contributing to the focus groups (despite my reassurances) as they might have feared consequences since I was a teacher in their school. In contrast, the girls knew that, while they would see me during the focus groups, they would most likely never see me again.

5.2 Classifying the pupils' perception of how modern music is divided into broad genres and subgenres and identifying specific songs to represent genres/ subgenres.

Both the boys and girls in discussions in their focus groups demonstrated considerable knowledge of modern music and they were able to discuss, to a satisfactory extent, how they saw modern music to be divided into genres and subgenres and what songs represented which genres. Below I discuss first how the focus group participants classified genres and subgenres and second how they perceived certain songs to represent certain genres and subgenres.

5.2.1 Focus group participants' perception of genres and subgenres

The pupils participating in the focus groups showed great confidence in naming different musical genres, often reeling off long lists of genres and types.

In order to devise an <u>overall</u> classification of pupils' perception of the genres and subgenres comprising modern music for use in my questionnaire survey, I set out a large table listing all the genres and subgenres suggested by the focus group participants and itemising the differences between the boys' and girls' focus groups. I then focused on identifying commonalties and resolving the differences between boys and girls. I conducted my analysis in an *iterative* manner, moving backwards and forwards between my data and my developing taxonomy.

My overall table showed that there was a difference between boys and girls for whether or not the music genres of classical, opera and jazz were part of modern music. The boys mentioned such genres disparagingly and, although the girls did mention these music genres and were less disparaging in their discussion, they did not clearly state that these types of music were part of modern music in the same way as they did pop and folk/country. I decided not to include classical music, opera and jazz when drawing up the overall taxonomy.

My overall table showed that there was a reasonable level of agreement for the boys and for the girls that there were three major genres within modern music − pop, rock and urban − and I included these in my taxonomy.

Beginning with the urban genre, my overall table showed that there was a difference between boys and girls when discussing subgenres within this genre. The boys discussed in considerable detail their perception of the difference between hip-hop and rap: they considered rap music to be more concerned with the vocals and hip-hop to be more about the music. I draw these quotations from a year 9 boys' focus group discussion to illustrate their view.

Hip-hop's like the overall genre and then you can split it into smaller genres like rap and dubstep or dancehall or whatever. [Boy A, 13 – 14 years]

Hip-hop and rap *are* different though. It's like rap is more about the lyrics and hip-hop is all about the music. Like, you can have hip-hop without any rapping in it. [Boy B, 13 – 14 years]

Yeah, and rap music is sometimes faster, and the rapping in rap music is faster [Than in hip-hop]. Like MC-ing and that, that's rap music, not hip-hop. And like, rap battles and stuff – that's not really hip-hop. [Boy C, 13 – 14 years]

Hip-hop *is* slower and more about the music. And you get singing in hip-hop but you don't really get that in rap – rap's like more hardcore. [Boy D, 13 – 14 years]

In contrast, the girls did not draw a distinction between hip-hop and rap, considering them to be the same. I included hip-hop and rap as one category as I considered that to include them as separate genres could create random responses from the girls in the questionnaire survey.

Within the urban genre, there was another difference between boys and girls for subgenres: this time for drum & bass. The boys focussed on detailed differences within this genre, referring to different kinds of drum & bass such as 'liquid', 'jump up' and 'jungle'. In contrast, the girls went no further than mentioning drum & bass. I included in the overall taxonomy just drum & bass. I included drum & bass as one category as I considered that including distinction between different types of bass & drum would lead to random responses for the girls in the questionnaire survey.

Both boys and girls identified Dubstep as a subgenre within the urban genre and I included this in the overall taxonomy.

Turning to the pop genre, my overall table showed that there was a difference between boys and girls concerning R&B. Some of the girls drew a distinction between modern R&B and the older style they referred to specifically as 'Rhythm and Blues' as opposed to the shortened 'R&B'. I add this quotation from a year 9 girls' focus group to illustrate their view.

It depends what you mean by R&B. Like is it the older version, like what's it called? [Another girl answers 'Rhythm and Blues'] Yeah, that's more like soul music, or is it [Does one mean] the modern style R&B, like Rihanna, 'cause that's more modern and pop-y. [Girl, 13 – 14 years]

The boys also referred to the soulful quality of R&B (see the quotation below from one of the boys' year 9 focus groups); however, they did not perceive a difference between 'Rhythm and Blues' and 'R&B'. I included R&B as one category as I considered that including a distinction between 'Rhythm and Blues' and 'R&B' could lead to random responses from the boys in the questionnaire survey.

R&B is like pop music but like, of a certain style. It's more like hip-hop than other pop [Music]. The singing is more like soulful and the artists are usually black or influenced by more black music. [Boy, 13 – 14 years]

For electronic music as a subgenre of pop, the girls went into more detail than the boys when discussing this genre, dividing it into electronic pop, electronic rock and 'electronica', whereas the boys only mentioned electronic music. I included electronic pop as one category

as I considered that including these distinctions within electronic rock could lead to random responses from the boys in the questionnaire survey.

Both boys and girls identified mainstream pop as a subgenre within the pop genre and I included this in the overall taxonomy.

Turning to the rock genre, my overall table showed that boys and girls concurred that, within the genre of rock, there were four subgenres: rock, electronic rock, indie and emo.

Turning to the folk and country genre, my overall table showed that there was a difference between boys and girls. The girls cared more for, and were more knowledgeable about folk and country music than the boys (although the girls' understanding of what folk and country music appeared to contradict that of the current literature on the subject (see, for example, Colley (2008) and Tanner et al., 2008)). The boys rarely mentioned folk or country as genres and, when they did so, they did so disparagingly. As the girls stressed their interest in folk and country I added this to my taxonomy as a fourth genre. I note that those focus group participants interested in this genre considered 'country' to be American folk music and 'folk' to be British/Irish folk music.

I set out in Table 5.1 the genres and subgenres in the overall taxonomy derived from my analysis of my overall table.

5.2.2 Focus group participants' perception of songs representing genres and subgenres

Having established the grouping of genres and subgenres in my taxonomy from my overall table I then sought to use this table to add the names of songs representing the subgenres. However, I encountered some difficulty in doing this.

The *first* difficulty I faced in my analysis of my findings for the focus group participants' suggestions for song signifiers was the extent to which the participants disagreed with each other to a considerable extent about which songs belonged to which subgenres: whether a certain song belonged to rap or to hip-hop, to hip-hop or to R&B, and to R&B or to pop.

I cite as examples of participants' disagreement with each other about the match between songs and subgenres, their argument over whether 'What's My Name' by Rihanna was pop or R&B music, whether 'Mirrors' by Justin Timberlake was pop or R&B, whether 'OMG' by Will.I.Am was pop or R&B, whether 'Mr Brightside' was rock or indie and whether '22' by Taylor Swift and 'Call Me Maybe' by Carly Rae Jepsen were pop or country.

I also give as an example of how, in the boys' year 10 focus group discussions, the participants disagreed to a considerable extent in which genre to place the artist Jay-Z.

> Like, for example, Jay-Z. He makes loads of different styles of music so where do you put him? [Boy A, 14 – 15 years]

> Oh, come on, Jay-Z's definitely hip-hop. [Boy B, 14 – 15 years]

> Yeah, well he was originally, but nowadays he's more like R&B and that, like all the songs he did with Rihanna and stuff. [Boy A, 14 – 15 years]

Yeah but that's just like when he features on other peoples' stuff, when he does his own music it's still hip-hop. [Boy C, 14 – 15 years]

As a result of the focus group participants disagreeing with each other over which songs were signifiers for which genre, I decided to stop trying to match songs to subgenres and, instead, I adopted a strategy of grouping together the pupils' suggestions for song-identifiers for the subgenres into a list for each broad genre. As the participants' disagreements did not extend beyond the broad genres, this strategy solved the difficulty I encountered for the pupils disagreeing over which songs were representative of which subgenres. For example, we saw that above that the participants disagreed whether a particular song represented rap or to hip-hop. As Table 5.1 shows, the participants considered both rap and hip hop to be part of urban music.

The *second* difficulty I faced in my analysis of my findings for the focus group participants' suggestions for song signifiers reinforced my decision to group signifier songs into genres and not subgenres. I found that both the boys and the girls struggled to some extent to name specific songs to represent dubstep and drum & bass. I consider that the pupils' difficulties in giving song examples for these subgenres might have been due to dubstep and drum & bass not being produced in the same manner as the other subgenres. In these subgenres singles are often released as opposed to albums. These singles can consist of mixes or versions of the same song by different artists and producers, feature different MCs, and involve collaborations between artists. These facts perhaps made it difficult for the pupils to remember exactly which artist released which song. However, my strategy of adopting genres rather than subgenres as the category for

grouping signifier songs solved this difficulty as the participants grouped both dubstep and drum & bass in the urban category.

The *third* difficulty I faced in my analysis of my findings for the focus group participants' suggestions for song signifiers relates to my strategic decision to group songs by broad genre. For the urban, rock and pop genres I found myself faced by a wide disparity of suggested signifier songs. I decided to adopt as a working rule to accept songs as representative of the pupils' classification only if they had been mentioned by at least two or more separate focus groups. This process yielded me six songs or more for each of these three genres.

The *fourth* difficulty I faced in my analysis of my findings for the focus group participants' suggestions for song signifiers relates to the folk/country genre. As I sated above, the girls were very keen to talk about country music during their focus group discussions and were knowledgeable about it while the boys were not. However, the girls struggled to come up with a general consensus of songs which satisfied my criteria for song selection. Of considerable interest was the debate in the girls' focus groups about the artist Taylor Swift. The girls appeared to be big fans of Taylor Swift and there was much discussion about what they perceived to be a significant change in the style of her music from her earlier album and single releases to her music released more recently. In one of the focus groups, some girls stated that they preferred the earlier country-feel of her music and felt as though she had 'sold-out', or perhaps been pressured to change by her record company for increased sales/profits. Other girls in this group were not so familiar with her earlier material but were huge fans of her more recent material.

The girls in this group and others focus groups debated considerably about whether Taylor Swift should be considered to be a country/folk artist or a pop artist since she had started out as a country performer and since her music videos and fashions were country-inspired. In the event, the girls decided that Taylor Swift was folk/country rather than pop. In my opinion, Taylor Swift's popular first few albums/releases were clearly folk/country − pursuing the country dream in Nashville. I consider her later music, however, could be considered more as country-pop, although she still sang with a southern accent to some extent. My analysis of the focus group data suggested that it was primarily Taylor Swift's country accent that led the girls to consider her to be folk/country.

Although the girls in their focus groups had not overwhelmingly placed Taylor Swift as a folk/country artist rather than a pop artist, my strategy of using only the songs most mentioned during the focus groups as representative of an artist led me to choose '22' (not the most country-styled of her releases to date) as one of the song signifiers for the folk/country genre in my study. Thus, I listed Taylor Swift's song '22'as a signifier song for folk/country in my questionnaire, given my view that the music taxonomy I devised for my study should, reflect the views of the pupils themselves, not my own.

Similarly, the girls in the focus group debated the classification of Carly Rae Jepsen's song 'Call Me Maybe': the girls considered this to be a folk/country song although in my opinion this song is, if anything, less folk/country than Taylor Swift's '22'.I also included this song as one of the song signifiers for the folk/country genre in my study.

The third song the girls in their focus groups considered to be representative of the folk/country genre was 'I Will Wait' by Mumford & Sons. The girls' labelling of this song as folk/country is much more in line with my view of what is folk/country.

The focus group participants, in effect the girls, were able to name only these three songs for the folk/country genre. This created a potential statistical problem for me as a minimum of three items is required to create a testable scale. While I had three songs, I did not have any other songs that I could drop if the score for scale I created was less than the required level (I used the Cronbach Alpha scaling test that requires a score of .7 or above).

Table 5.1 sets out my identification of the participants' collective views on the songs representing each genre. The focus group participants' taxonomy differed in some respects from the taxonomies adopted by authors such as Tanner et al. (2008) in their Canadian study, Roe (1992) in his Swedish study and Colley (2008) and Hargreaves et al. (1995) in their British studies. Also these authors included classical music, opera and jazz in the selection of subgenres they included. It is apposite to note here Tanner et al.'s (2008: 127) comment that change is the essence of popular music and specific musical styles have only a short shelf life. My study was conducted in 2013; some time after these authors conducted theirs. I note, in particular, that the pupils in my study considered reggae, acid/house, techno dance (included by some of these authors) to be out-of-date, no longer listened to by young people.

Table 5.1 Focus group participants' perception of modern music's musical genres and representative songs

Broad genre	Subgenre	Representative songs for broad genre*
Urban	Drum & Bass v54	Gold Dust – DJ Fresh v34 Waiting All Night – Rudimental Ft. Ella Eyre v48
	Dubstep v55	Blind Faith – Chase & Status Ft. Liam Bailey v31 Bangerang – Skrillex Ft. Sirah v30
	Hip-Hop/Rap v59	Lose Yourself – Eminem v38 Run This Town – Jay Z Ft. Kanye West/Rihanna v43
Rock	Rock v63	Gold On The Ceiling – The Black Keys v35 Super Black Hole – Muse v46
	Electronic Rock v57	Owl City – Fireflies v33 Pompei – Bastille v42
	Indie v60	Mr. Brightside – The Killers v40 A Team – Ed Sheeran v29
	Emo v58	The Anthem – Good Charlotte v47 Welcome To The Black Parade – My Chemical Romance v49
Pop	Pop v61	What Makes You Beautiful – One Direction v50 Superbass – Nicki Minaj v45 OMG – Usher Ft. Will.I.Am v41
	Electronic Pop v56	La La La – Naughty Boy Ft. Sam Smith v37 White Noise – Disclosure Ft. Aluna George v52
	R&B v62	Mirrors – Justin Timberlake v39 What's My Name – Rihanna v51
Country/Folk	Country/Folk v53	22 – Taylor Swift v28 Call Me Maybe – Carly Rae Jepsen v32 I Will Wait – Mumford & Sons v36

5.3 Pupil's opinions on the factors affecting young people and their own preferences for different musical genres

I analysed my focus group discussion data on the participants' views on what influenced the music preferences of themselves and of young people in general *iteratively*, moving backwards and forwards between my data and this developed into a number of distinct themes for their opinions on how the development of young people's music preferences was influenced. I set out a list of my themes below. I then go on to review each of these themes and then compare my findings with theorists from the different schools of thought consider young people's music preferences to be influenced.

- Theme A: Stereotypical view of those young people preferring urban and heavy rock music

- Theme B: The influence of structural factors on music preferences

- Theme C: The influence of friends on young people's music preferences and the associated issue of the impact of peer pressure

- Theme D: The influence of taking part in musical activities on young people's music preferences

- Theme E: The influence of the means by which young people access and discover music on their music preferences

- Theme F: the influence of the music itself and the artists on young people's music preferences

Theme A: Stereotypical view that disadvantaged young people prefer anti-establishment urban and heavy rock music

A strong theme that emerged from my analysis of the focus group discussions was that my focus group participants saw young people from deprived social backgrounds, young people

with psychological problems, such as depression, or young people who had troubled upbringings as having a marked propensity to like music drawn from, either the heavier forms of rock genre, such as heavy metal, gothic or EMO, or from urban subgenres, such as rap or hip-hop. The participants considered that the negative experiences that these young people went through led them to develop these tastes. When the focus group participants gave their views on the relationship between having a deprived social background, a difficult upbringing and associated psychological problems and a preference for heavy rock or hip-hop/rap, they tended to refer to other young people, not themselves.

The view that a disadvantaged background led to a preference for heavy rock and/or urban music was particularly marked in the boys' focus groups. The boys put forward their view that a deprived social background, difficult upbringing and associated psychological problems could lead to a preference for young people liking music such as heavy rock or rap and hip-hop. A number of boys explained very clearly how they saw this relationship. While they were speaking, most of the other boys in their respective groups expressed agreement.

The following quotations are drawn from discussions in the boys' focus groups about whether a young person's background affects the type of music to which they are likely to listen. These quotations demonstrate a difference between the younger and older boys. The youngest boys tended to speak of disadvantaged or deprived young people liking heavy rock or rap and hip-hop, while older boys tended refer to young people liking this music as depressed, perhaps because of being unhappy at home, thereby placing less emphasis on social class factors and more on psychological factors.

Year 8 focus group:

It definitely does [Other boys agree, saying "yeah, yeah"]. If you've had a bad background, like parents are junkies and smoking, you wanna listen to all that more rappy, heavy, grimy stuff. [Boy A, 12 – 13 years]

Yeah, like listen to something that expresses what they feel. If they have a lot of pent up rage they'll listen to lots of shouting music or rappy stuff. [Other boys agree, saying "yeah"]. [Boy B, 12 – 13 years]

Year 9 focus groups.

If they aren't very happy at home and don't really like it [at home], they might listen to something like heavy metal just to take out their anger. [Boy A, 13 – 14 years]

[Another boy interjected saying] "Not just metal, it could be rap or hip-hop". [A chorus of agreement, saying "Yeah"]. [Boy B, 13 – 14 years]

During a discussion about what "heavy" music means, other boys explained in more detail the kinds of music which some young people preferred.

Rock, goth. Big, rough people. BO [body odour], emo, really heavy guitars and screaming. Emo-y people who dye their hair black. Emotionally disturbed goths [Laughter]. [Boy A, 13 – 14 years]

I think they're quite into music, but into a certain, that one type, that other people might find depressing. [Boy B, 13 – 14 years]

A more nuanced view was given by one of the oldest boys during the year 10 boys' focus group, who suggested that the strength of the relationship between social and psychological difficulties and music preferences could vary to some extent.

> Well, it depends on the person sometimes I think. Say you've had a bad upbringing, you might wanna listen to happy songs – you might, it varies for different people. But yeah some bands like 'Pierce the Veil'; a lot of depressed people listen to them and go to concerts and stuff. It's heavy metal [Pierce the Veil], like 'Slipknot'. [Boy, 14 – 15 years]

In the girls' focus groups there was considerably less discussion on the relationship between social and psychological difficulties and young people's music preferences. However, during discussions, they displayed similar views to the boys but expressed them in less strong terms. I drew the quotations below from a discussion in one of the girls' year 9 focus groups about whether a young person's background affects the type of music they are likely to listen to.

> A lot of like gangster people are like "oh yeah, I'm a gangster" and listen to like "cool" music for where they are [the area they live in]. [Girl A, 13 – 14 years]

> Yeah definitely, it can do. [A chorus of agreement among the other girls] Also, the area you come from. In certain places, like a lot of my friends who live in Mosside [nearer to central Manchester] and stuff, they listen to more like reggae and that kind of style, whereas people round here [the girls' school is in another part of Manchester] listen to more pop and stuff. [Girl B, 13 – 14 years]

An older girl's analysis was more nuanced: she identified two, as she saw it, separate elements of a young person's background that can affect their musical preferences. This quotation is taken from a year 10 girls' focus group.

There's your cultural background and then there's also like if you come from a disturbed background. [The others agreed, saying 'yeah' and another added the following] It's not *just* your cultural background. [Girl, 14 – 15 years]

Thus, the girls appeared to draw a distinction between cultural background and coming from disturbed background.

Discussing Theme A*:* I found substantial discussion in the focus groups, particularly in the boys' focus groups, that a young person with a deprived social background, a difficult upbringing and associated psychological problems was likely to have a preference for heavy rock and hip-hop/rap music (or to use a shorter phrase for anti-establishment music). It appeared that the focus group participants referred to *other* young people in setting out this view, not to themselves. Their assertion of the link between a disadvantaged background and a preference for anti-establishment music was very much a "Not me" argument. Jumping ahead a little, I show in Chapter 6 that the questionnaire respondents as a whole preferred folk/country and pop to urban and rock music. Bearing this in mind, the focus group participants appeared to be saying that, while they themselves were not from deprived social backgrounds, had not had difficult upbringings or did not have associated psychological problems, they understand how *other* young people who had had these experiences, could have developed the musical taste for anti-establishment music.

It is arguable that the focus group participants are to some extent stereotyping disadvantaged young people. This suggestion of stereotyping by the focus group participants in my study − disadvantaged young people prefer more anti-establishment music − is similar to race stereotyping. For example, I refer to the American study by Quillian and Pager (2001). In the

USA, crime rates are objectively associated with the percentage of blacks in a neighbourhood. However, these authors found in their analysis of the findings of a number of studies that whites (and Latinos) systematically over-estimated the extent to which the percentage of blacks in a neighbourhood and the neighbourhood crime rate was associated: the whites (and Latinos) had a stereotypical and negative view of their black neighbours. The stereotyping of disadvantaged young people I found in my study is also similar to the stereotyping of women managers. Studies have shown women managers to be stereotypically seen, especially by men managers, as less self-reliant and competitive and more sensitive to the needs of others. However, studies of actual decision-making in organizations have not demonstrated any differences in the way men and women manage for example, see Rutherford (2001).

The focus group participants' negative views on those who preferred heavy rock and urban music resembles that of the early (pre-CCCS) British theorists who relied on psychological and psychoanalytical techniques in their study of youth subculture. As we saw in Chapter 2, writers, such as Bowlby (1946) and Jephcott (1954) referred to youths joining subcultures as a result of inadequate socialisation. We also saw how other researchers such as Jephcott (1954), Kerr (1958) and Mays (1954) investigated working-class youth and revealed their inability to integrate in society. As I demonstrated in Chapter 2, academic opinion on young people and subculture has moved on considerably since these early British theorists set out their opinions on the inadequacies of deviant young people. It is possible that the focus group participants' youthfulness and relative lack of experience of other communities means that they were not able to look beyond the stereotypes available in the low-level media in understanding the link between cultural experiences and music preferences. The fact that it was the boys in the focus groups who were particularly likely to put forward this

stereotypical view can perhaps be linked to national data that show boys to have less positive attitudes towards reading than girls and are outperformed in reading by girls; boys are also less likely than girls to seek out more reading opportunities (Clark, 2012). While the focus group participants' views about other young people's musical tastes could be dismissed as stereotypical, socially unaware and of little interest, it should be remembered that young people are affected by these views when they use their pocket money and wages from part-time jobs to buy CDs and download music.

Theme B: The influence of structural factors on young people's music preferences

In discussing this theme, I consider the views of the focus group participants on the influence of the subcultural/structural factors of class/community, family, sex, age and race on young people's music references.

There was little or no discussion in the focus groups in my study of the influence of class/community, sex and race on young people's music preferences and there were only a limited number of references to age. There was, however, considerable discussion in the focus groups of the influence of family members, parents in particular and, to a lesser extent, siblings.

Both the boys and the girls, but particularly the girls, placed considerable weight during the focus group discussions on the influence of family on the music preferences of young people. An example of this difference is the large number of references made in the girls' focus groups to Irish backgrounds being an influential factor in developing musical tastes. A

number of the boys also had Irish backgrounds but did not mention this as a significant factor in the development of their music preferences.

The following quotations are drawn from the girls' focus groups and focus on the influence of family on their music preferences. A number of the statements below were made when discussing how a person's background affects their music preferences. These quotes are a small selection only of the many examples that showed clearly how the girls' attitudes differ from those of the boys, suggesting the girls felt that their parents have a considerable influence on their musical preferences.

Me and my dad love the same music and we play it really loudly. [Girl, 12 – 13 years]

My dad listens to country music, so I like old music. [Girl, 12 – 13 years]

My mum and dad are from an Irish background, so they brought me up with country music. [Girl, 13 – 14 years]

Being Irish, you get all that Irish music growing up, especially when you're visiting family or when all the family are together for holidays. [Girl, 14 – 15 years]

Obviously, 'cause my family are from Ireland, so I know Irish music and it's lead on to folk music, which leads on to 'Mumford and Sons' and other artists. [Girl, 13 – 14 years]

Yeah, well I'm Egyptian so I listen to Arabic music, 'cause that's what my parents listen to. [Girl, 13 – 14 years]

My dad listens to loads of folk music so I've grown up listening to folk music. [Girl, 13 – 14 years]

Yeah, I listen to the same music as my parents. [Girl, 13 – 14 years]

My dad and I sometimes complain about my sister, 'cause she's got really bad taste in music – she likes 'One Direction' [Groans and laughter from the other girls]. I take after my dad a lot, it depends which parent you take after - you might like more their sort of music. [Girl, 13 – 14 years]

My dad, he's not into like the popular songs I listen to, so whenever we're in the car he listens to 'The Killers' or 'Oasis' or something. So they've been drilled into my head. I know all the words and stuff, so when I come back to it, I actually like it. [Girl, 14 – 15 years]

I think that 'cause they've come from a different era [parents], sort of, it's a lot different to how we understand music. Listening to radio, it's not like the music they've grown up with, so it's hard for them to relate. [Girl, 14 – 15 years]

In contrast, one girl had a different view. She considered that young people may like older music that their parents do not necessarily like:

Yeah, well the main artist on my phone is 'The Beatles', but my parents don't listen to them or even my grandparents. So I don't think it's just the era [That affects your taste], it's the taste in that era. [Girl, 13-14 years]

When specifically referring to siblings' musical tastes, the girls did not consider these to be an important influence on their music preferences. I set out the following quotations drawn from the year 8 girls' focus group.

My brother listens to awful music [Agreement and laughter]! [Girl A, 12 – 13 years]

Yeah, teenage boys have the worst taste in music ever [Laughter]! [Girl B, 12 – 13 years]

Similar views were demonstrated in the year 9 and 10 girls' focus groups respectively.

> No, not really [whether or not siblings share the same music taste]. It depends if they're [the siblings] older or younger. [Girl A, 13 – 14 years]

> No, unless you're of a similar age, you wouldn't really listen to the same music. [Girl, 14 – 15 years]

I drew the following quotations from discussions in the boys' focus groups about how young people first discover new music and the factors that influence their musical preferences.

> If their parents love rock and all they play is rock, that has an influence on a young person – they'll think 'I quite like rock' or they'll hate it. [Boy A, 13 – 14 years]

> Yeah, they might feel their parents' passion for it [rock music] or they might get really sick of it. It depends on their relationship with their parents. [Boy B, 13 – 14 years]

One boy spoke of the influence of a sibling on his music preferences.

> I think it was my brother who got me into rap music, he's in year 11 [therefore an older brother]. [Boy, 12 -13 years]

Discussing Theme B: I begin with *home* influence as a structural factor influencing the music preferences of young people, I found in my study that the focus group participants considered that family, particularly parents, had a significant influence on young people's musical preferences; this provides partial support for a subcultural and structural view of the influences on young people's musical taste. Thus, my findings concur with that CCCS

researchers' emphasis on the influence of community on youth subcultures including their choice of music (for example, Hall and Jefferson, 1975). CCCS researchers took a positive view of young people and viewed the working-class youth subcultures that were the focus of their studies as responses to the material and situated experience of primarily white and male working-class youth and as attempted solutions to those problems: see for example the study by Willis (1978). On the other hand, my findings do not support the views of the youth music social surveyors, such as those by Roe (1992) and by Tanner et al. (2008). These authors were concerned with the opposing influences of home and school on young people's music preferences. Roe (1992) found that home influence was of limited importance to his subjects, secondary to that of school. Similarly, Tanner et al. (2008) found that students' own educational achievements and educational expectations exerted a stronger influence on their musical preferences than did home influences.

Sex, race/ethnicity and *age* are also structural factors argued by CCCS and youth music survey researchers to influence youth people's musical preferences. However, as we saw above, the focus group participants in my study did not refer to sex and race/ethnicity as factors that affected young people's music preferences and they made only a limited number of references to the influence of age.

More specifically regarding my focus groups' view that *sex* was not an important influence on young people's music preferences does not accord with the position posited by McRobbie and Garber (1976) that girls preferred pop. Nor are my focus group findings in accord with those of the youth music survey researcher such as Roe (1992), Christenson and Petersen (1998), Hargreaves et al. (1995) and Colley (2008) who found in their studies that sex played a central role in developing musical preferences: girls were found to like "softer" music such

as mainstream pop, disco and R&B with boys preferring "harder" music such as different types of rock, heavy metal and blues. Tanner et al. (2008) in their study came, however, to a different conclusion that sex was a less important on musical style than race and ethnicity.

More specifically, my focus group finding that *race/ethnicity* was not considered to be an influence on young people's music preferences was not in accord with the finding of youth music survey researchers Tanner et al. (2008) in their Canadian study that ethnic and racial identity was significantly correlated with a number of their teenage lifestyles. I consider that the focus group participants' lack of reference to the influence of race/ethnicity on young people's musical tastes compared to those of Tanner et al. (2008) was possibly a consequence of the ethnic makeup of the pupils in the two schools. Although in the 2011 census, Greater Manchester's population comprised 10.14 percent Asian or British Asian, 2.76 black or British black, 2.26 percent mixed and 1.02 other not white or British white, this was not reflected in the ethnic makeup of the schools' pupils. While there was a substantial number of pupils from Irish backgrounds − reflecting the fact that the two schools were Roman Catholic − few pupils had black or South Asian ethnic backgrounds.

More specifically, my focus group finding that *age* was considered only marginally to be related was not in accord with the findings of the youth music survey researcher Hargreaves et al. (1995): for example, younger children liked music such as rap and folk and older ones liked music such as rock, reggae, country and western, folk and heavy metal. Nor are my focus group findings in accord with those of the youth music survey researchers Tanner et al. (2008) who found that age was a significant influence on young people's musical style: for example, Club Kids and Hard Rockers were younger and New Traditionalists Ethnic Culturalists were older.

More specifically, with respect to my focus group finding that class/socio-economic status was considered to be an influence on young people's music preferences, my finding that a substantial proportion of the focus group participants, particularly the boys, considered that disadvantaged young people liked anti-establishment rock and hop-hop/rap is, as I set out in my discussion in Theme A above, in accord with the views of the early (pre-CCCS) British theorists who relied on psychological and psychoanalytical techniques to study subcultures. The focus group participants' negative views of these young people's subculture concur more closely with the theorists than they do with the later CCCS researchers who had an optimistic view of youth subculture. My focus group findings do not concur with that of youth music survey researchers Tanner et al. (2008), who found that parents' socio-economic status characteristics were <u>not</u> particularly salient predictors of their children's musical tastes.

Theme C: The influence of friends on young people's music preferences and the associated issue of the impact of peer pressure

Both the boys and the girls in the focus groups in my study considered that the influence of friends played an important role in developing music preferences. I draw the following quotations from the boys' focus groups. The first boy refers to the influence of friends becoming more important as young people grow older.

That's usually TV and radio. [That influence the development of music preference] I'd say it's your friends as well. You might be influenced by your parents when you're younger and then by your friends when you're slightly older. It's the environmental factors. [Boy, 14 – 15 years]

Another of the boys argued that the influence of friends is more prominent than the influence of parents and the others in his group broadly agreed; one boy suggested that, at their age, the influence of their parents has diminished and the influence of their friends is now more important. I illustrate this with the quotations below.

I think it's more what other people listen to [that influences music preferences]. It's your friendship group [that most influences musical tastes]. Generally, people post it [the music they like] on social media and now they'll tweet the video link. [Boy A, 13 – 14 years]

Yeah, I'd say it's mainly your friends at this age. I'll only listen to music with family if it's in the car, and that's usually just the radio. [Boy B, 13 – 14 years]

Turning to the girls, I draw the following quotations from a year 9 girls' focus group.

I'm more influenced by my friends' music tastes, but then my parents aren't really into music that much. [Girl A, 13- 14 years]

Yeah, same as X, I listen to what my friends listen to and then I think I can get a feel for the music. [Girl B, 13 – 14 years]

I also draw the following quotation from the year 10 girls' focus group.

Your friends tend to tell you about bands and then you think 'yeah, I'll check them out', but then I'm usually friends with people who have similar music tastes [to her] anyway. [Girl, 14 – 15 years]

The girls did not, however, make any contributions to the discussion that reflected a girls' bedroom culture: they did not mention girls in their bedrooms discussing pop stars and their music and in this process influencing each other's musical tastes.

Turning to the associated influence of *peer pressure* on young people's music preferences, both the boys and girls in their focus groups referred to the importance of being seen to be 'cool' by one's peers. The boys referred very strongly to this pressure and went so far as to say it restricted their musical tastes significantly.

I draw the following quotations from a year 9 boys' focus group discussion about why they feel young people do not listen to the genres of music they consider as being an older taste.

> They [young people] don't listen to like jazz, blues and the other ones [Other 'older' genres], they're not like cool [General agreement from the other boys saying "Yeah"]. No classical, no jazz, no blues, no country. [Boy A, 13 – 14 years]

> 'Cause it's not cool. It's like the phase – at the moment you don't listen to it and then it might change later. [Boy B, 13 – 14 years]

The following quotation is drawn from a debate in a year 9 boys' focus group about whether young peoples' friends greatly influence the music they listen to.

> I think your friends influence the music you listen to a bit [Mixed response from the other boys, some agreeing, saying 'yeah' and others saying 'hmmm, maybe, not necessarily'], I wouldn't say it affects your taste, just what songs you *think* you should listen to. [Boy, 13 – 14 years]

I drew the following quotations from a year 9 boys' focus group discussion about the pressure from peers and friends to be cool.

People are two-faced in music [people who listen to music]. What they want to listen to and then what they say they listen to and what they have [the music they have on mobile phones/iPods] just to pretend they listen to it. [Boy A, 13 – 14 years]

People might also say they listen to popular music just for friends or to look like they're cool. I mean X here listens to opera. [Boy B, 13 – 14 years]

What? [Said by X]?! [Boy C, 13 – 14 years]

You just insulted him! [Said by another boy and followed by the laughter of all, including X]. [Boy D, 13 – 14 years]

Oh man! You're not talking loud enough for me to hear [Said by X]! [Boy C, 13 – 14 years]

When discussing whether liking opera was something they would keep to themselves, X responded by saying:

Yeah, well unless you've a select group of friends who'd accept that, there are other ones who'd laugh at you, friends that you don't *really* know. [Boy C, 13 – 14 years]

Another boy affirmed what X was saying:

Yeah, people that you kind of know yet don't. They wouldn't appreciate you listening to opera. With closer friends you'd be willing to say that you listen to opera [General agreement of the other boys, saying "yeah, that's true"]. [Boy E, 13 – 14 years]

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The following quotations drawn from the year 8 boys' focus group discussions reflect the boys' desire to fit in with their peers and how that impacts their music listening habits.

A lot of the time it's just people thinking songs are funny, like 'Gangnam Style'. If there's a dance to it everyone will like it [Other boys agree saying 'yeah, yeah']. [Boy A, 12 – 13 years]

Yeah - if it's a good or catchy dance. [Boy B, 12 – 13 years]

No-one actually listens to that. They just do it at parties. I'll never forget those songs 'cause they're driven into your head and they're so bad [Laughter]. [Boy C, 12 – 13 years]

In the other year 9 boys' focus group the boys spoke about wanting to keep up to date with what other young people are listening to and feeling left out if they were not able to.

People [young people] listen to the radio and the charts and that, they're seeing what's the most listened to and they think 'oh, I'll listen to that then' to see what it's like. [Boy A, 13 – 14 years]

If it's like popular and you're not listening to it, you feel a bit left out and want to listen to it, so. [Boy B, 13 – 14 years]

When discussing whether or not they listened to a variety of genres the boys from the year 10 boys' focus group responded in this way.

Yeah lots of different kinds [A chorus of agreement saying yeah, yeah] but mostly modern ones. [Boy, 14 – 15 years]

The girls placed less emphasis on the effect of peer pressure on young people's music preferences; however, they did discuss this influence and held similar views to those of the boys. The girls' discussion lacked the verve and length of the boys' discussions. I draw the following quotation from the girls' discussions about the impact of friends and friendship groups on music preferences.

> I think you get pressured into liking stuff you wouldn't usually listen to if you weren't friends with those particular people. [Girl, 13 – 14 years]

I draw another quotation from the general discussion during the girls' focus groups that shows how aspects other than the music itself can play an important role in making some music 'cool' to listen to.

> I think the aesthetic appeal of the singer [attracts consumers to their music]. You know how like 'Lady Gaga' dressed up in all, you know, different fashions - you think 'Oh she's a cool kid' [General agreement with girls' saying 'yeah, she's cool']. [Girl, 13 – 14 years]

Reviewing Theme C: I argue that the influence of friends should be seen as distinct from the influence of home: with friends, young people can often go beyond of their local communities and make contact with a wider social circle based on school, leisure pursuits and music events. The influence of friends, and associated with this the influence of peer groups, on young people's musical tastes has been under-researched and there are few other studies with which to compare my focus group findings. The influence of friends was not investigated specifically in CCCS researchers' studies and the youth music survey researchers paid only a little attention to this influence. Tanner et al. (2008) refer to peer

groups in their study but they were concerned with the influence of taking part in peer group *activities*, such as hanging out in coffee shops, *not* with friends/peers' musical tastes.

In terms of my finding that the girls in the focus groups made less reference to peer pressure on what music they listen to, I suggest that bedroom culture theory (McRobbie and Garber, 1976; Griffiths, 1988; Lincoln, 2007; Kearney, 2007; Baker 2004) might give an interesting insight. Although the focus groups participants did not refer specifically to girls listening and discussing music with a small number of girlfriends in their bedrooms, I suggest that, if girls are accustomed to discussing music with just one or two friends in their bedrooms instead of doing so within a larger group or gang in a public space such as the street, girls might have experienced less peer pressure to conform to what is 'cool' in musical taste. I also suggest that a link here with my finding above that the girls were more confident, enthusiastic and outspoken in the (all-girl) focus groups and more willing to give unpopular opinions: maybe the focus groups functioned as pseudo bedroom groups, albeit a larger one than normal, and the girls, therefore, felt more relaxed in expressing their opinions in the focus groups.

Theme D: The influence of taking part in musical activities on young people's music preferences

The focus group participants referred to the effect of playing a musical instrument on young people's music preferences but did not spend a much time in discussing this. The boys' focus groups made more mention of this influence than did the girls'. I set out following quotations from the boys' focus group discussion.

> If a person plays an instrument, if they are learning or like playing a certain song, that could be how they listen to music. [Boy, 13 – 14 years]

> Whether you play an instrument and what instrument you play could have an effect. People getting involved in music might change the music they listen to. [Boy, 14 – 15 years]

The boys also discussed whether it made a difference if you played an instrument within school or outside of school and considered the environment in which the musical instrument was played to be important; they considered that playing music at school was a more formal activity.

> Yeah, it definitely makes a difference [Whether you play inside or outside school], 'cause music in school can be quite formal [Others agree saying "Yeah"]. [Boy 13 – 14 years]

The focus group participants did not link the playing of a musical instrument with any particular music preferences. Further, there was little or no discussion in the focus groups of the effect of taking part in singing or dancing activities on young people's music preferences.

Reviewing Theme D: Playing a musical instrument and taking part in singing or dancing activities increases a young person's cultural capital: he/she is likely to acquire more knowledge of music and, possibly, familiarity with a wider range of genres. However, the focus group participants spent little time discussing the influence on young people's music preferences of taking part in music activities. It is particularly surprising that the girls in the focus groups failed to do this. Jumping ahead a little, I show in Chapter 6 that the a considerable proportion of the girls in the questionnaire survey reported taking part in

musical activities, particularly singing and playing an instrument, and they were much more likely to do so than the boys in this survey.

The influence of taking part in musical activities on young people's music preferences is an under-researched area, particularly for the influence of taking part in singing and dancing activities and there are few studies with which to compare my findings for the focus groups. My findings do not concur with those of Tanner et al. (2008) who found in their study that the possession of cultural capital was associated with identification with a Hard Rocker musical style and a lack of cultural capital with being a Club Kid (with a preference for techno and dance, pop and new pop, and hip hop and rap) and being a Black Stylist (who also had a preference for with a preference for hip hop and rap but combined this preference with a preference for soul rhythm and blues, and reggae and dance hall). However, it is difficult to draw a fair comparison between the findings from my focus groups and those from Tanner et al's (2008) study as I focused on taking part in musical activities including singing and dancing while Tanner et al. (2008) included 'high brow' activities such as attending cultural events, going to the symphony or opera and going to the museum and only included playing a musical instrument, not singing or dancing. My focus group findings also do not concur with those of Colley (2008) who, as we saw above, focused on qualifications for playing a musical instrument. She found musical training to be a significant predictor for her undergraduates' liking for the more musically complex styles of music, including blues.

Theme E: The influence of the means by which young people access and discover music on their music preferences

As we say in Chapter 3, previous researchers have not considered the influence on young people's music preferences of the means by which they listen to music. In the focus group discussions in my study, neither the boys' nor the girls' focus groups had much to say about how the way they accessed music affected their music preferences. However, both groups were very vocal about how they accessed music and showed a keen interest in the varying technological means of finding and listening to music.

I found that the boys and girls used these technologies to some extent in different ways. The boys used the technology to access music of which they were already aware, whereas the girls used it more as a means of discovering music and artists new to them. There was also a marginally noticeable difference by age – in particular, the younger boys, seemed to rely more on social media and on an array of music listening services available on the internet, while the older boys and the girls, while paying similar attention to such services, paid more attention to the television and radio. For the girls and for the older boys (but not younger boys), talking to friends online was an important way of discovering new music.

I set out the following quotations from the boys' focus group discussion illustrating how they accessed music and discovered music.

Year 8 boys spoke almost exclusively about social media and music listening services on the internet.

> People [Young people] mostly use iPods, phones and laptops to access things like Youtube, Spotify and iTunes. You'll have like online friends who you share similar tastes with and you'll recommend stuff to each other by posting songs on Facebook or sending video links. [Boy A, 12 – 13 years]

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Also [People also use], social media, like Facebook and Twitter. [Boy B, 12 – 13 years]

Yeah, or at school people will Bluetooth stuff between their phones as well. [Boy C, 12 – 13 years]

Year 9 boys used a wider number of means of access; they did not rely only on the internet. The following quotations are drawn from discussion about how young people access music.

Downloading [music from the internet] and just listening to it [Others agreed saying "Yeah, downloading"].

[People access music via] TV and radio, the internet mostly, torrent websites and free downloads [Others agree strongly saying "Yeah downloads]

Yeah, people [Young people] use Youtube converters/downloaders [To access music]. Basically free downloads.

I guess iTunes, but not many people want to pay, when you can get it for free, you'll obviously get it for free – you can get [it] with the album covers and stuff.

It's [The means by which people access music] also social media like Facebook and Bebo and the rest.

People used to use Myspace but now they use Twitter [to access music]

A lot of the time people just listen to it [Music] on the radio or something 'cause I don't openly go out and say "oh I'm gonna go and download this song", if I wanna listen to a song I just type it into YouTube.

When discussing how young people first discover new music the Year 9 boys mention TV and radio in addition to the internet. I drew the following quotations to illustrate this.

That's probably TV and radio [The means by which young people discover music]. [Boy A, 13 – 14 years]

Yeah, usually TV and radio, I'd say friends as well. It's their parents in a way as well. [Boy B, 13 – 14 years]

When discussing television in particular, the year 9 boys stated the following:

It's a bit of both [Music television and everyday television].

Say if you listen to one of the adverts and you hear a song, you just type in the lyrics and try and find it.

Year 10 boys, who were perhaps now at the age when they were more likely to attend parties, also mentioned going out or hanging out with their friends.

Phones, iPods, TV, radio and social media [Are the means by which young people access music]

If people go to parties they'll hear new music or learn about it from their friends. Even if you're just hanging out at the park, you'll listen to music and exchange music and that with your phones.

Generally, people who post on social media and that, now they'll tweet the video link and then you can discover new music that way.

On Twitter, it's like, the artists who make new music promote, so it appears on everyone's time line, so then you can go through their official account.

When discussing television music channels such as MTV, the boys are unanimous in their rejection. I drew the following quotations from the year 10 boys' focus group.

No, not really, they're boring [Music television channels]. [Boy A, 14 – 15 years]

Yeah, they just play the same songs on loop, once you've seen it, you've seen it all. [Boy B, 14 – 15 years]

It's just the same as the charts, but with the videos. [Boy C, 14 – 15 years]

As I stated above, the girls in their focus groups reported using technology to access and listen to music. They clearly used technology to discover new music, whereas the boys mentioned doing this to a lesser extent. I note also that there was little difference by age between the girls' groups' use of technology, in contrast to the boys. I drew the following quotations from the girls' focus group discussion

Year 8 girls stated the following:

On YouTube, when you listen to music, say you listen to 'Ed Sheeran' it'll come up with related music and then you'll listen to that.

Spotify's good [For accessing music] 'cause you can get it on your TV and phone.

The 'Jools Holland' show, he introduces new people, they're not always new but it introduces you to new music and it's great, 'cause it's new artists.

On X-factor, when it's the finals and stuff, people who are already famous sing duets with the contestants, so you hear them there.

On Vivo, on telly, they show lots of music videos and on Sundays they always have the top forty on, like every radio station.

Compilation CDs [Compact discs] like 'Now 83' or whatever. It has loads of different artists on, some you might not have heard before.

Oh and adverts ['yeah' agreement in chorus] and 'Shazam', if you're in a shop and you hear a song you go 'Shazam' and get it.

The Year 9 girls stated how they felt young people access and discover music.

It's [The means of accessing music] YouTube, Spotify and TV and radio etc or when you go to concerts and you see the supporting acts.

For me it's more like the related or suggested videos on YouTube or friends recommendations on Facebook [That she finds a good way to access music].

The year 9 girls had a different opinion on the influence of television.

All the music on TV is like the top twenty, I don't really like the music on TV, it's more like the internet [She uses in terms of accessing music]. [Girl A, 13 – 14 years]

Yeah, but if you watch a TV programme and obviously they use a lot of music between scenes and stuff, if you hear a song you like, well I've liked a song and googled the lyrics. [Girl B, 13 – 14 years]

Yeah, I do the same [Google the lyrics] with musicals and you can also get the movie soundtracks. [Girl C, 13- 14 years]

The year 10 girls stated how they felt young people access and discover music.

It's [The means of accessing and discovering music] on YouTube and Twitter and stuff. [Girl A, 14 – 15 years]

Yeah and iTunes recommend stuff for you [Others express agreement saying "Yeah"]. [Girl B, 14 – 15 years]

Yeah and the 'free single of the week' [iTunes store offer] [Laughter]. [Girl C, 14 – 15 years]

When discussing television and radio the Year 10 girls said the following:

No, I don't listen to the charts on the radio. I used to but Capital [radio station] plays the same songs over and over. [Others agree, saying "Yeah"]

All the songs on the charts are basically the same and they're not good. [Laughter]

The year 10 girls did mention the use of mobile phone applications which the younger year 8 and 9 girls failed to mention.

If you're watching TV or a film or something, you'll hear a song playing in the background and you'll try and find that – Shazam it! [Girl A, 14 – 15 years]

I think you can even sing it and it'll [Shazam] find it for you. [Girl B, 14 – 15 years]

No, I think that's different – that's called 'Sound Hound'. [Girl C, 14 – 15 years]

Reviewing Theme E: My inclusion of the means by which young people access and discover music as a possible influence on music preference was innovative, although I concede that the focus group participants in my study focused much more on their use of technology to discover and enjoy music rather than how the use of technology could lead them or young people to develop particular music preferences.

Much of the easily available, relatively inexpensive and user-friendly technology the boys and girls referred to in the focus groups discussions could have been used in their bedrooms (in the focus group discussions the participants did not specify the context in which they accessed technology). I consider that the participants' use of technology to listen and explore music, and their reference to talking to a friend online as a way of exploring new music, could be interpreted as markers of an active technologically-oriented bedroom culture. Interpreting my findings in this way supports the views of Kearny (2007) and (Baker 2004) that girls are active and productive in their bedrooms and not passive consumers of pop magazines and records culture as argued by McRobbie and Garber (1976). Further, the fact that boys in the focus groups also reporting these activities supports Lincoln's (2007) view that both boys and girls take part in bedroom culture.

I also found, as we saw above, the girls in the focus group made more innovative use of the new technology than did the boys. My finding concur with those of a study by BECTA (2008), which found that boys were more interested in technology for its own sake, while girls preferred the social and creative uses of information and communication technology (ICT) and saw ICT as a means of pursuing their interests and furthering their learning. The

BECTA report suggests boys are encouraged by the gender stereotypical view that computers are a male domain and by the tendency for the content and design of software favouring boys' interests and preferences; in consequence, girls lacked confidence in their ICT abilities. However, the report found girls to enjoy using ICT and were, in fact, more proficient than boys in using ICT for learning and for creative and participatory activities.

Theme F: The influence of the music itself and the artists on young people's music preferences

The boys in the focus groups, but not the girls in theirs, made a number of references to young people wanting to be like their modern music idols; the boys argued that the music young people listened to affected how they presented themselves − their appearance and attitudes. I draw the following quotations from a boys' year 9 focus group: while most of these boys quoted agreed with this view, some did not.

No, not really [music does not play a large role in self-presentation]. Yeah, well maybe it can [Mixed responses]. Rastafarian people listen to reggae music. If other people listen to reggae, it might influence them to want to be a Rastafarian or dress like one [Mixed responses of 'Yeah' and 'Not necessarily']. [Boy A, 13 – 14 years]

I'd say more the clothes you wear and that and how you do in life affects the music you listen to. [Boy B, 13 – 14 years]

In the other year 9 boys' focus group discussion a boy stated the following:

People who sing rap and hip-hop and that, are smoking drugs and all that, thinking they're all well hard, so that the kids - they wanna, they're their idols, they wanna grow up to be like that – idolism! [Boy A, 13 – 14 years]

A second boy interjected, disagreeing with that statement and saying:

Idolism doesn't really mean, say if you listen to someone or say you like their music, it doesn't mean you're gonna turn out like them. [Boy B, 13 – 14 years]

The first boy then replied:

Oh I know, yeah but I'm saying for some. Some people want to. 'Cause you might go home and listen to 'Lil Wayne' and think he's like "yeah yeah" [Said in faux American gangster-rapper accent] but you don't wanna grow up to be like him, like dreadlocks and no shirt on, but some people do [laughter, followed by the inaudible chatter of several people talking at once]. [Boy A, 13 – 14 years]

Yet another boy said the following, slightly under his breath:

X listens to all that and wants to become black [Talking about another boy not present in the focus group, followed by raucous laughter]. [Boy C, 13 – 14 years]

It was not clear to me why the girls did not choose to discuss the influence of the music itself and of artists on young people's music preferences. I decided to consider carefully the answers to the open-ended questions at the end of the questionnaire to see if there were any differences between the opinions of the boys and the girls on want influenced their music preference,

Reviewing Theme F: The quotations I have set out above suggest a different type of influence on young people's music preferences, one that resonates with the thinking of the post-subculturalist theorists, such as Bennett (1999), Thornton (1995) and Muggleton (2000), that musical form and fashion are drivers for young people's musical tastes. My analysis of the findings from my focus group discussions support the view that the boys considered young people to be influenced in their musical tastes by the form of the music, by the artist and by what was popular in the media.

5.4 An overview of my study's findings from the focus group discussions, the relationship between my focus group findings and extant schools of thought on young people's musical preferences and suggestions from my focus group findings for my questionnaire survey

As suggested by my in-depth pilot interviews, the pupils were enthusiastic about participating in the focus group discussion, particularly the girls, and were interested in, and knowledgeable about, modern music.

Beginning with my aim of developing a taxonomy of modern music based on the pupil participants' collective views, I found that they were able to use their considerable knowledge of modern music to discuss how they perceived modern music to be divided into genres and subgenres and which songs represented which genres. I was able to devise an overall taxonomy, although I found that folk and country was identified as a music genre only by the girls. I encountered a number of other difficulties, the most important of which was that the

focus group participants disagreed with each other to a considerable extent about which songs signified which subgenres. Given that the participants' disagreements did not extend beyond the broad genres, I solved this difficulty by adopting a strategy of grouping together the pupils' suggestions for song-identifiers for each broad genre. My focus group findings were in line with my pilot in-depth findings where I found that, while my interviewees while capable of developing a reasonably detailed classification of broad musical genres and subgenres, they were less sure about linking specific songs to specific subgenres. Given my pilot findings I had taken care in my focus group discussions to give space for the participants to identify signifier songs for subgenres but it became clear that more space could not resolve their disagreements or produce more song signifiers for folk and country music.

The general enthusiasm and knowledge of the focus group participants suggested that pupils in the two schools selected to be respondents for the questionnaire survey would be likely to cooperate with the survey and to be capable of answering the questions. The taxonomy of modern music based on the data from my focus group discussions was robust enough to include in my questionnaire for the collection of quantitative data.

Turning to the focus group participants' views on the influences of different factors on theirs and other young people's musical preferences, I found that the discussions yielded valuable data.

In terms of the influence of *structural* factors on music preferences, the focus group participants discussed to a considerable extent the influence of family members, in particular that of parents, on young people's music preferences. This finding was in line with my pilot

in-depth interviewees' stress on the importance of parental influence. This emphasis on parent's influence provided some support for CCCS researchers' emphasis on the influence of community on youth subcultures and their choice of music (for example, Hall and Jefferson, 1975). My findings that the focus groups made only limited references to the influence of sex, race and age on young people's music preferences did not accord with CCCS researchers' views and those of the youth music survey researchers. Specifically for sex, my finding of this factor's limited importance as an influence in my focus group discussions did not accord with the position posited by McRobbie and Garber (1976), that girls' developed a preference for pop music. Nor are my focus group findings in accord with those of the youth music survey researchers such as Roe (1992), Christenson and Petersen (1998), Hargreaves et al. (1995) and Colley (2008) who found in their studies that sex played a central role in developing musical preferences. My focus group findings of the limited importance of sex as an influence are more in accord with those of Tanner et al. (2008). Further, my findings did not support the views of the youth music social surveyors, such as Tanner et al. (2008) that school success was a more important influence on young people music preferences than home. For my questionnaire design I note that the in-depth interviewees' suggestion that young people's musical preferences were linked to ethnic background was not supported in my focus group findings.

The focus group participants considered that friends' musical tastes were an important influence on young people's music preferences. CCCS researchers and the youth music survey researchers paid little attention to the effect of friends on youth culture and music preferences. However, my focus group discussions suggest that this is an important influence to consider in the development of young people's music preferences. My finding that the girl participants made less reference than the boys to peer pressure on what music they listened to

offered some support, however, to the bedroom culture theory (for example, McRobbie and Garber, 1976), suggesting that, if girls listened and discussed music with a small number of girlfriends in their bedrooms, they might have experienced less peer pressure to conform to what is 'cool' in musical taste.

The boys in the focus groups made a number of references to young people wanting to be like their modern music idols suggesting that the music young people listened to affected how they presented themselves. The girls did not refer to these influences in their discussions and the reasons for this need further investigation. This finding provides partial support to the view of the post-subculturalist theorists, such as Bennett (1999,) that musical form and fashion drive young people's musical tastes.

Two influences were mentioned by the focus group participants but were given less attention. First, the boys, more so than the girls, referred to the effect of playing a musical instrument on young people's music preferences but did not spend a much time in discussing this. My findings do not provide strong support for the findings by the youth music survey researchers such as Tanner et al. (2008) that possession of cultural capital was associated with identification with different musical styles or such as Colley (2008) who found musical training to be a significant predictor preference for the more musically complex styles of modern music. My focus group findings was not in accord my pilot study where the in-depth interviewees considered that being involved in music and learning a musical instrument were influences on young people's music preferences. The fact that my in-depth interviewees were my drum pupils and had a strong interest in learning a musical instrument could account for this difference. Second, the focus group participants discussed the technology by which

music today can be accessed with great enthusiasm but paid little attention to how it might affect young people's music preferences.

We also saw the focus group participants, particularly the boys, referred to *other* young people, who came from deprived social backgrounds or suffered from psychological problems, developed a preference for heavy rock or rap and hip-hop music. This opinion resembled to some extent that of the early (pre-CCCS) British theorists, such as Bowlby (1946) and Jephcott (1954), who relied on psychological and psychoanalytical techniques in their study of youth subculture. However, I decided that, for ethical reasons, I would not follow up the focus group view of the link between disadvantage and preference for these kinds of music. Thus, I did not include questions on the questionnaire respondents' own truancy, deviancy and drug-taking or their opinions on the music preferences of *other* young people taking part in these activities.

Overall, the data derived from my focus group discussions provided mixed support for the different schools of thought on what influences the development of young people's music preferences. It was clear that one school of thought did not better explain my focus group data than another and that more research is needed. Apart from the stereotypical view put forward particularly by the focus group boys above, my focus group data provided me with some strong suggestions for the design of my questionnaire, including innovative measures such as the influence of friends on young people's musical tastes. I also decided to include questions on structural factors, such as race/ethnicity, even though my focus group findings suggested that these were relatively unimportant influences on young people's music preferences. Since there has been a lack of research so far on the influence of structural/social factors on young people's music preferences (see Chapters 1 and 3), I thought it would be

prudent to include these.

Chapter 6: Findings from the questionnaire survey

Introduction

In this chapter, I analyse the findings from my questionnaire survey. First I analyse the quantitative data derived from the closed-answer questions in the questionnaire. I set out my findings for the pupils' preferences for the different song groupings, my dependent variables. Then, utilising the closed questions in my questionnaire, I set out how I organised my dependent and independent variables for undertaking my hierarchical multiple regressions, how I conducted my hierarchical multiple regressions and what relationship between my variables were suggested by my regressions. Second in this chapter, I analyse the qualitative data derived from the open-answer questions in the questionnaire that were located at the end of the questionnaire.

After reporting my findings, I compare them with those found by researchers from the extant schools of thought on young people's musical preferences. However, I point out that quantitative data is not of great use in determining the validity of a post-subcultural theory of young people's music preferences, given this theory's view that young people's musical preference was no longer a function of class/socio-economic status, gender, age, race/ethnicity, school/peer experiences and cultural capital but was, instead, a matter of personal choice: young people's music preferences were of the moment, fluid and ephemeral. Quantitative data can only be said to validate post-subculturalist explanation of young people's music preferences by demonstrating a lack of relationship between these preferences

and structural factors such as class/socio-economic status. For evaluating the post-cultural view of how young people developed their music preferences, I was able to rely on the qualitative data I obtained from the open-ended questions in the questionnaire as well as the focus group discussions that I discussed in the previous chapter.

At the end of this chapter, I add an over-view of the quantitative and qualitative findings from my questionnaire survey on the independent factors relationship to my dependent factors of song group preferences and how these findings compare with those of other researchers in the field.

6.1 Questionnaire data on pupils' musical preferences (the dependent variable)

It became clear from the pupil respondents' comments as I was inputting the data from my questionnaire that some of them wrote on their questionnaires that, when they did not know a song or a music subgenre, they had used rating used '1' 'Not at all to my taste'. In contrast, I noted that other respondents left a song or subgenre rating blank to indicate that they did not know a song. Originally, I had designated '99' as the code for no reply. I decided that it would be more valid to code the replies for all those not responding to a song or subgenre questions as '1'. I was aware that this recoding would lead to lower ratings for the songs and subgenres.

Table 6.1a sets out the means and standard deviations for the pupils' preferences for songs and song groups and Table 6.2a does the same for music subgenres and broad genres. In

order to make my data more accessible for the reader, I also set out the same material organised differently. Thus, Table 6.1b sets out the extent to which pupils prefer different songs and song groups organised by size of means and Table 6.2b sets out the extent to which pupils prefer musical subgenres and broad genres organised by size of means.

In order to make discussion of my findings clear, I refer to songs grouped together by genre as song groupings and subgenres grouped together by genre as subgenre groupings or broad genres.

The means for my data I report were, indeed, lower than I expected. However, I point out that other researchers have also reported low scores for young people's liking for different modern music. For example, Tanner et al. (2008: 129) reported that 55 percent of their high school students replied that they like Pop and Top 40 'A little bit', 'Not very much' or 'Not at all'. These researchers' corresponding scores for Heavy Metal (Hard Rock) and Techno Dance were 86.6 percent and 62.7 percent. Similarly, Colley (2008: 2048) reports that only four music styles had overall means greater than the scale midpoint.

I set out the standard deviations in tables 6.1a, 6.1b, 6.2a and 6.2b. These were large, indicating that there were considerable differences in the respondent pupils' music preferences. This suggests that the pupils in my study strongly liked some songs/subgenres but strongly disliked others.

As we saw in Chapter 4, in question 18 of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to rate each song on a scale of 1 'Not at all to my taste' through to 7 'Very much to my taste'. Beginning with the most popular songs − all had mean scores over 3.5 − Table 6.1b shows

that the most popular song was 'A Team', Ed Sheeran (Indie) with a mean score of 4.1176, followed by 'Pompei', Bastille (Electronic Rock) (mean was 4.0321), 'La La La', Naughty Boy (Electronic Pop) (mean was 3.9465), I Will Wait, Mumford & Sons (Folk) (mean was 3.7860) and 'Mr. Brightside', The Killers (Indie) (mean was 3.5775). Turning to the least popular songs − all had mean scores under 2.5 − Table 6.1 shows that the least popular song was 'The Anthem', Good Charlotte (Emo) with a mean score of 1.8075, followed by 'Blind Faith', Chase & Status (Drum & Bass) (mean of 2.1123), 'Welcome to the Black Parade', My Chemical Romance (Emo) (mean of 2.3369) and 'Gold on the Ceiling', The Black Keys (Rock) (mean of 2.4706).

In terms of the most popular songs within each song grouping, I note that for the urban grouping, the most popular song was 'Waiting All Night', Rudimental (Drum & Bass) with a mean of 3.2567; for rock it was 'A Team', Ed Sheeran (Indie) (mean was 4.1176); for pop it was 'La La La', Naughty Boy (Electronic Pop) (mean was 3.9465; and for Folk it was 'I Will Wait', Mumford & Sons (Folk) (mean was 3.7860).

For the song groupings, Table 6.1a shows that little difference in popularity could be seen between those different types of songs. I list the popularity of each song group. The most popular song group was folk, with a mean score of 3.3297, followed by pop, rock and urban with mean scores of 3.1925, 3.0388 and 2.8173 respectively.

As we saw in Chapter 4, in question 19 of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to rate each subgenre on a scale of 1 'Not at all to my taste' through to 7 'Very much to my taste'. Table 6.2 shows that, of the eleven subgenres offered to the respondents, the most popular by a significant margin was pop, with a mean of 4.7914. The three next most popular

subgenres had means very close to one another: hip-hop/rap (mean was of 3.9733), followed by rock (mean was 3.9465) and R&B (mean was score of 3.8396). The least popular subgenre by a significant margin was emo, with a mean score of 1.8021. Two other subgenres were substantially less popular: these were folk and dubstep with means of 2.7807 and 3.0428 respectively. When the subgenres are grouped together into broad genres, Table 6.2a shows that urban, pop and rock had very similar means whilst that for folk was lower.

It is striking to compare and contrast the popularity of the song groupings with those of the subgenre groupings. For example, Table 6.1b shows the respondents considered that, out of the song groupings, folk was their favourite. In contrast, out of the subgenre groupings, Table 6.2b show that the pupils considered folk to be their least favourite. It was clear that there was substantial disjunction between the respondents' ratings of preferences for song groupings and subgenre groupings and that I needed to explore which dependent variable − song groupings or subgenres grouping − would be more efficacious to use in my hierarchical multiple regressions.

Table 6.1a Extent to which pupils prefer different songs organised by song groups

(Question 18) (N=187)

Grouping	Song	Mean	SD
Urban	Bangerang – Skrillex Ft. Sirah v30	2.6257	2.1045
	Blind Faith – Chase & Status Ft. Liam Bailey v31	2.1123	1.6406
	Gold Dust – DJ Fresh v34	2.5294	2.0519
	Lose Yourself – Eminem v38	3.2513	2.17766
	Run This Town – Jay Z Ft. Kanye v43	3.1283	2.0932
	Waiting All Night – Rudimental Ft. Ella Eyre v48	3.2567	2.4381
URBANSONGS		2.8173	1.4683
Rock	A Team – Ed Sheeran v29	4.1176	2.16449
	Owl City – Fireflies v33	3.3262	2.0519
	Gold On The Ceiling – The Black Keys v35	2.4706	1.95732
	Mr. Brightside – The Killers v40	3.5775	2.3642
	Pompei – Bastille v42	4.0321	2,5014
	Super Black Hole – Muse v46	2.6417	2.1986
	The Anthem – Good Charlotte v47	1.8075	1.4388
	Welcome To The Black Parade – My Chemical Romance v49	2.3369	1.8313
ROCKSONGS		3.0388	1.26277
Pop	La La La – Naughty Boy Ft. Sam Smith v37	3.9465	2.374
	Mirrors – Justin Timberlake v39	3.2406	2.1505
	OMG – Usher Ft. Will.I.Am v41	3.1444	2.1466
	Superbass – Nicki Minaj v45	3.0374	2.1487
	What Makes You Beautiful – One Direction v50	2.7701	2.2850
	What's My Name – Rihanna v51	3.0856	2.1460
	White Noise – Disclosure Ft. Aluna George v52	3.1239	2.3739
POPSONGS		3.1925	1.6496
Folk	22 – Taylor Swift v28	3.2727	2.17894
	Call Me Maybe – Carly Rae Jepsen32	2.9144	2.0223
	I Will Wait – Mumford & Sons v36	3.7860	2.4555
FOLKSONGS		3.3297	1.7203

Table 6.1b Extent to which pupils prefer different *songs* organised by size of means for songs (Question 18) (N=187)

Song grouping	Mean	SD
All Folk songs	3.3297	1.7203
All Pop songs	3.1925	1.6496
All Rock songs	3.0388	1.26277
All Urban songs	2.8173	1.4683

Songs	Mean	SD
A Team – Ed Sheeran	4.1176	2.16449
Pompei – Bastille v42	4.0321	2.5014
La La La – Naughty Boy Ft. Sam Smith v37	3.9465	2.374
I Will Wait – Mumford & Sons v36	3.7860	2.4555
Mr. Brightside – The Killers v40	3.5775	2.3642
Owl City – Fireflies v33	3.3262	2.0519
22 – Taylor Swift v28	3.2727	2.17894
Waiting All Night – Rudimental Ft. Ella Eyre v48	3.2567	2.4381
Lose Yourself – Eminem v38	3.2513	2.17766
Mirrors – Justin Timberlake v39	3.2406	2.1505
OMG – Usher Ft. Will.I.Am v41	3.1444	2.1466
Run This Town – Jay Z Ft. Kanye v43	3.1283	2.0932
White Noise – Disclosure Ft. Aluna George v52	3.1239	2.3739
What's My Name – Rihanna v51	3.0856	2.1460
Superbass – Nicki Minaj v45	3.0374	2.1487
Call Me Maybe – Carly Rae Jepsen v32	2.9144	2.0223
What Makes You Beautiful – One Direction v50	2.7701	2.2850
Super Black Hole – Muse v46	2.6417	2.1986
Bangerang – Skrillex Ft. Sirah v30	2.6257	2.1045
Gold Dust – DJ Fresh v34	2.5294	2.0519
Gold On The Ceiling – The Black Keys v35	2.4706	1.95732
Welcome To The Black Parade – My Chemical Romance v49	2.3369	1.8313
Blind Faith – Chase & Status Ft. Liam Bailey v31	2.1123	1.6406
The Anthem – Good Charlotte v47	1.8075	1.4388

SD = Standard deviation

Table 6.2a Extent to which pupils prefer musical *subgenres* organised by broad genre (Question 19)

Grouping	Subgenre	Mean	SD
Urban	Drum & Bass v54	3.3797	1.8752
	Dubstep v55	3.0428	2.0447
	Hip-Hop/Rap v59	3.9733	2.12874
Overall urban genre		3.4652	1.5777
Rock	Rock v63	3.9465	2.16952
	Electronic Rock v57	3.0535	1.8858
	Indie v60	3.3048	2.24761
	Emo v58	1.8021	1.4985
Overall rock genre		3.4349	1.5956
Pop	Pop v61	4.7914	2.13630
	Electronic Pop v56	3.4118	2.0204
	R&B v62	3.8396	2.10885
Overall pop genre		3.4612	1.3214
Folk	Country/folk v53	2.7807	1.9205

SD = Standard deviation

Table 6.2b Extent to which pupils prefer musical subgenres organised by size of means for genres (Question 19) (N=187)

Grouping/genre	Mean	SD
Urban genre	3.4652	1.5777
Pop genre	3.4612	1.3214
Rock genre	3.4349	1.5956
Folk genre	2.7807	1.9205

Subgenre	Mean	SD
Pop v61	4.7914	2.13630
Hip-Hop/Rap v59	3.9733	2.12874
Rock v63	3.9465	2.16952
R&B v62	3.8396	2.10885
Electronic Pop v56	3.4118	2.0204
Drum & Bass v54	3.3797	1.8752
Indie v60	3.3048	2.24761
Electronic Rock v57	3.0535	1.8858
Dubstep v55	3.0428	2.0447
Country/folk v53	2.7807	1.9205
Emo v58	1.8021	1.4985

SD = Standard deviation

6.2 Choosing whether the dependent variable for the hierarchical multiple regressions would be song groupings or subgenre groupings

As the findings for the popularity of song groupings and subgenre groupings were different, I decided to explore which type of grouping was best for conducting my hierarchical multiple regression analysis by examining and comparing the extent to which these different groupings scaled internally.

In SPSS I created variables for pupils' degree of like/dislike for the four groups of songs and I labelled these new variables URBANSONGS, ROCKSONGS, POPSONGS and FOLKSONGS (the calculations for these new variables − based on the data collected for question 18 − are set out in Table 6.3). I tested whether the songs in each broad grouping scaled or not using the Cronbach's alpha test. Table 6.4 shows that, using this test, the scores

for three of four song groupings (URBANSONGS, ROCKSONGS, POPSONGS) were above the minimum-acceptable score of .7. Table 6.4 shows the score for FOLKSONGS to be below .7. However, since the score was only a little below .7 and was probably affected by the focus group participants only identifying three songs for this song grouping, I considered it reasonable to accept FOLKSONGS as a valid variable.

In SPSS I also created variables for pupils' degree of like/dislike for the subgenre groupings and I labelled these new variables URBANGENRE, ROCKGENRE, POPGENRE and FOLKGENRE (the calculations for these new variables − based on the data collected for question 19 − are set out in Table 6.5). Table 6.6 shows that the Cronbach alpha scores I obtained for the subgenre groupings scales were less satisfactory that those I obtained for the song groupings scales. I therefore chose to utilise the four song scales for my hierarchical multiple regressions: URBANSONGS, ROCKSONGS, POPSONGS and FOLKSONGS.

Table 6.3 Calculation of the four song scales

Song groupings	Labels	Compute
Urban	URBANSONGS	(v30R+v31R+v34R+v38R+v43R+v48R)/6
Rock	ROCKSONGS	(v29R+v33R+v35R+v40R+v42R+v46R+v47R+v49R)/8
Pop	POPSONGS	(v37R+v39R+v41R+v45R+v50R+v51R+v52R)/7
Country/Folk	FOLKSONGS	(v28R+v32R+v36R)/3

Table 6.4 Songs scaling for each broad genre

Song grouping	Cronbach alpha score	Decision
URBANSONGS	.806	Accept
ROCKSONGS	.774	Accept
POPSONGS	.862	Accept
FOLKSONGS	.673	Accept − see text for justification

Table 6.5 Calculation of the four broad genres

Broad genre	Labels	Compute
Urban	URBANGENRE99is1	(v54+v55+v59)/3
Rock	ROCKGENRE99is1	(v63+v57+v60+v58)/4
Pop	POPGENRE99is1	(v61+v56+v62)/3
Country/Folk	FOLKGENRE99is1	-

Table 6.6 Subgenres scaling for each broad genre

Broad genre	Cronbach alpha score	Decision
URBANGENRE99is1	.683	Marginal
ROCKGENRE99is1	.638	Marginal
POPGENRE99is1	.579	Reject
FOLKGENRE99is1	-	-

6.3 The popularity of the song groupings amongst the pupil respondents in my study and a comparison of my findings with those of other researchers

The respondents' preferences in my study for the different song groupings did not show a close resemblance to those of other studies. Tanner et al.'s (2008) findings in their Canadian study for the popularity of their prescribed music genres found hip/hop and rap in their study to be the most popular types of modern music and they also found Pop and Top 40 to be popular. They found country and new country to be the least popular category in their study.

Colley (2008) in her British study split her findings for young men's and young women's liking of musical styles by sex. However, it is possible to estimate from her presentation of her findings that pop music was among the most popular musical styles in her study. She found similarly to Tanner et al. (2008) that both folk and country had low mean scores. Hargreaves et al. (1994) also split their ratings for affiliation of music style. However, as with Colley (2008) above, it is possible to estimate from their presentation of their findings. Contrary to Tanner et al. (2008) and Colley (2008) Hargreaves et al. (1994) found folk, together with country and western, to be the two most popular styles of music among their respondents (disregarding their findings for classical music), thus matching my finding of the popularity of folk songs. However, these authors, in contrast to my findings, found Chart Pop be one of the least popular style among their respondents

6.4 Social characteristics of pupils in the two schools

Table 6.7 sets out the social characteristics of the pupils in the two schools. In terms of race, the pupils in both schools were largely white. There were considerably more British White pupils than Irish White pupils. In terms of age, the pupils in the boys' school had a slightly larger range than those in the girls' school. In terms of employment, pupils in both schools largely reported their heads of households to be employed. In terms of the occupational status of pupils' head of households, pupils in both schools largely reported their heads of households to be B or C1 status; the pupils in the girls' school reported their heads of household to be a little more high status than did pupils in the boys' school. The large

majority of pupils' in both schools lived in more affluent areas, as they lived outside the Manchester ring road.

Table 6.7 Pupils' social characteristics by school

Ethnicity breakdown of pupils by school

Ethnicity	Boys' school % N= 90	Girls' school % N=92
Black African	0	1.1
Black Caribbean	2.2	0
South Asian	2.2	0
East Asian	4.4	0
White British	74.4	72.8
White Irish	14.4	14.1
White other	1.1	8.7
Other	1.1	

Age breakdown of pupils by school

Age	Boys' school % N= 93	Girls' school % N= 94
11	9.7	0
12	26.9	55.3
13	15.1	36.2
14	28.0	0
15	20.4	8.5

Head of Household's employment status breakdown by school

	Boys' school % N=90	Girls' school % N=94
Employed	94.4	96.8
Unemployed	3.3	21.0
Pensioner	2,2	1.1

Head of Household's occupation status breakdown by school

	Boys' school % N=79	Girls' school % N=88
A	6.3	4.5
B	45.6	52.3
C1	38.0	37.5
C2	8.9	6.0
D	1.3	1.8

Living in urban environment breakdown by school

	Boys' school %	Girls' school
Lives inside M62	23.7	20.2
Lives outside M62	76.3	79.8

Table 6.8 sets out the extent to which the pupils in both schools took part in musical activities. This table shows that pupils' in the girls' school were considerably more likely than those in the boys' school to play one or more musical instruments: the proportions were 66.0 percent and 39.8 percent respectively. Pupils in the girls' school were most likely to pay the piano (31.9 percent) followed by the guitar (19.1 percent). The pupils in the boys' school were most were most likely to play the guitar (24.5 percent), followed by the piano (11.8 percent). Singing was as popular as playing a musical instrument for the pupils in the girls' school. 69.9 percent reported that they sang either solo or in groups. The pupils from the boy's school were less likely to report singing: only 15.2 reported that they sang solo or in group. Dancing was a less popular form of musical activity than playing a musical instrument or singing. A third of pupil's from the girls' school reported dancing solo or in groups. None of the boys reported that they danced. Overall, it was clear that pupils from the girls' school took a greater part in musical activities than pupils from the boys' school.

Table 6.8 Pupils' taking part in musical activities by school

Plays one or more musical instrument by school

	Boys' school % N=93	Girls' school % N=94
Yes	39.8	66.0
No	60.2	34.0

Percentages playing different musical instruments by school

	Boys' school % N= 93	Girls' school % N=94
Piano	11.8	31.9
Guitar	21.5	19.1
Violin	0	7.4
Saxophone	0	.05
Clarinet or Oboe	3.2	9.6
Drums	5.4	2.1
Recorder	1.1	2.1
Tin Whistle	0	3.2
Ukulele	0	4.3
Flute	0	6.4
Bassoon	0	1.1
French Horn	1.1	1.1
Base Guitar	0	1.1

Sings solo or group breakdown by school

	Boys' school % N=92	Girls' school % N=93
Yes	15.2	69.9
No	84.4	30.1

Dances solo or group breakdown by school

	Boys' school % N=91	Girls' school N=93
Yes	0	33.3
No	100	66.7

6.5 Running my hierarchical multiple regressions

Before undertaking hierarchical multiple regression analysis I examined some specific aspects of my data.

For ETHNIC GROUP, I created a number of new variables:

- WHITE where White of British Origin, White of Irish origin or White of other origin = WHITE = '1' and all other categories = '0'
- IRISH where White of Irish origin = '1' and all other categories = '0'
- BRITISH WHITE where White of British origin = '1' and all other categories = '0'.

To determine which of these three new variables was the most effective for my analysis, I ran a Pearson correlation coefficient for different grouping against each song scale. I found the following:

- I found no significant relationships between WHITE and any of the four song scales
- I found small but significant correlations between IRISH and ROCKSONGS and IRISH and FOLKSONGS
- I found the best correlation coefficients to be between BRITISH WHITE and the four song scales.

Thus, I chose to use BRITISH WHITE in my hierarchical multiple regressions.

To determine whether AGE or YEAR was the better predictor of the song scales, I ran a Pearson correlation coefficient for these variables for each song scale. AGE was more highly correlated for POPSONGS and FOLKSONGS than was YEAR. For both URBANSONGS and ROCKSONGS there were no significant correlations with AGE or YEAR. Thus, I chose to use AGE in my hierarchical multiple regressions.

Turning to my final set of independent variables, these are set out in Table 6.9. This table shows how I recoded, grouped and labelled my 15 independent variables for my hierarchical multiple regressions.

Table 6.9 also shows how, based on my discussion in Chapters 2 and 3, I divided my independent factors into seven groups: demographic factors, social background factors, school-related factors, desire for future musical career, cultural capital factors, peer group factors, and means of listening to music factors.

I ran my 15 independent variables four times in turn against URBANSONGS, ROCKSONGS, POPSONGS and FOLKSONGS. I input the groups of independent variables into the regression, one after the other. These seven groups of independent variables became the seven models in Table 6.9 below.

Table 6.9 Independent variables utilised in hierarchical multiple regressions

	Variable SPSS label	Variable description	Variable coding
Model 1 Demograph--ic variables	SEXR	Sex	Creation of dummy variable where '1' is a boy and '0' is not a boy
	BRITISHWHITE	Ethnicity	Creation of dummy variable where '1' is British White and '0' is not British White
	Q3v6Age	Age	Not recoded
Model 2 Social back-ground	EMPLOYEDR	Whether head of household is employed or not	Creation of dummy variable where '1' head of household is in employment and '0'is head of household not in employment
	Q7v10HHOccup	Head of household's occupation	A = 6 (Highest status) B = 5 C1 = 4 C2 = 3 D = 2 E = 1
	Q16v18ParentsSim Music	This refers to the extent to which respondents consider parents' musical tastes to be similar their own	Not recoded
	SOCDEPRIVATION	This refers to the social deprivation scores of the postcodes in which the pupils live. The higher the score the greater the extent of social depravation	1.00 to under 10.00 =1 10.00 to under 20.00 =2 20 to under 30.00 = 3 30.00 to under 40 =4 40.00 or more =5
	INSIDERINGROADR .	This refers to whether pupils lived inside the Manchester ring road or did not: this was designed as a measure of living in a more affluent or less affluent area.	Creation of dummy variable where '1' is living inside the Manchester ring road and '0' is not living indie the Manchester ring road
Model 3 School	Q13v15DegAmb	This refers to the extent to which the respondents are ambitious for their future careers	Not recoded
	Q13v16SpecCareer*	This refers to the specific occupations respondents give as their preferred future career	Not recoded
Model 4: Musical Career	Q15v1?CareerMusic	This refers to the extent to which respondents are considering a future career in music	Not recoded
Model 5 Cultural capital	ANYMUSICALACTI VITY	A score of '1' refers to a respondents who report playing one or more musical instrument or taking part in singing activities or taking part in dancing activities. A score	Creation of a new variable COMPUTE: If v11 = 2 or V13 = 2 or V14 = 2 , ANYMUSICALACTIVITY = 1 If v11 = 1 and v13 = 1 and v14 = 1, ANYMUSICALCTIVITY = 0

		of '0' refers to respondents who did not report taking part in any of these activities.	
Model 6 Peer group	Q16v19SibsSimMus	This refers to the extent to which respondents consider siblings' musical tastes were similar their own	Not recoded
	Q16v20FreindsSimMus	This refers to the extent to which respondents consider friends' musical tastes are similar their own	Not recoded
Model 7	INDEPLISTEN	This refers to the independence of the means whereby respondents listened to music: Listening to music by means of YouTube, Internet Media Players and Internet Streaming classified as *Independent listening*; listening to music by means of Radio, Television, MTV and games consoles classified as *Not independent listening*	REVERSE CODING for less independent means : for v21R, v22R, v23R and v27R: 7 = 1, 6=2, 5 =3, 4=4, 3=5, 2 = 6, 1=7

COMPUTE NEW VARIABLE INDEPLISTEN (v21R + v22R + v23R + v24 + v25 + v26 + v27R)/7 |

* Where young persons gave several career choices, I coded for the highest one

At this point, I discuss my regression findings for multicollinearity, Mahalanobis Distance and Casewise Diagnostics as these were the same for all the regressions I ran using my data set.

Multicollinearity: There were no .7 and over correlations between independent variables. Thus, I did not need to omit any variables.

Mahalanobis Distance (test specifically for outliers): I had 15 independent variables. According to chi square tables, an outlier for my data set is defined as one above the critical value of 37.7. I had one case with Mahalanobis distance score above 37.7 (respondent 127 with value of 42.30). As there was only one such value, and this was not dramatically above the critical value, I followed Pallant's (2013) advice and ignored this outlier.

Normal probability plot (P-P) of the Regression Standardised Residual: The distributions for pupils' scores for the song scales were negatively skewed but, given the robustness of the statistical methods I was using, these were acceptable. Thus, I note that in the hierarchical multiple regressions below, my song scales passed the tests of normality. In particular, I checked each scale's normal probability plots for the hierarchical multiple regressions and found reasonably straight lines.

6.6 My hierarchical multiple regression findings for my song scales

I report my findings for my regressions on POPSONGS and FOLKSONGS first as these were relatively easy to understand.

6.6.1 My findings for POPSONGS and FOLKSONGS

Both POPSONGS and FOLKSONGS had a relatively high level of explained variance: this means that the factors I included in my regression analysis explained a considerable amount of the differences in the pupils' preference for pop songs.

Table 6.12 shows that the total variance for POPSONGS explained by all seven models is relatively high at 35.9 percent. Model 1 (Demographic), Model 6 (Peer group) and Model 7 (Independent listening) have Sig. F Change scores less than .05. Table 6.14 sets out the satisfying finding that four independent variables are significantly related to preferring pop songs. Those pupils preferring pop songs were highly more likely to be girls (Beta = -.334)

and to be younger (Beta = -.217). Further, those pupils preferring pop songs were significantly more likely to have friends with similar musical tastes (Beta = -.253) and to listen to music through mainstream media (less independent) such as radio and television (Beta = -.234).

Table 6.13 shows that the total variance for FOLKSONGS explained by all seven models is relatively high, at 38.3 percent; this explained variance is the highest of the four song scale regressions. However, only one model, Model 1 (Demographic) has a Sig. F Change scores less than .05 (whereas, for POPSONGS, three models have Sig F scores). Table 6.14 sets out the satisfying finding that three independent variables are significantly related to preferring folk songs. Preferring folksongs is highly correlated with being a girl (Beta = -.375), and with having friends with similar musical tastes (Beta = .183). Thus, I note that my findings for the independent factors correlated with FOLKSONGS were similar to some extent to those I found important for POPSONGS.

6.6.2 My findings for URBANSONGS and ROCKSONGS

The models for URBANSONGS and ROCKSONGS provide less satisfactory explanations for pupils' musical preferences than do the POPSONGS and FOLKSONGS models. The variance explained for these two song scales, while high enough to be worthy of note, is less than half those of POPSONGS and FOLKSONGS.

Table 6.10 shows that the total variance for URBANSONGS explained by all seven models is 15.1 percent. Only Model 6 (Peer Group) has a Sig. F Change score less than .05. Table 6.14

shows that none of the independent factors are significantly correlated with identifying with urban songs.

Table 6.11 shows that the total variance for ROCKSONGS explained by all seven models is 16.1 percent. Only Model 1 (Demographic) has a Sig. F Change score less than .05. Table 6.14 demonstrates that none of the independent factors are significantly correlated with preferring rock songs.

6.10. Hierarchical multiple regression for URBANSONGS
Percentage of variance explained all models together = 15.1%

	R square	Sig. F Change
Model 1 (Demographic)	.027	.328
Model 2 (Social background)	.067	391
Model 3 (School)	.084	.332
Model 4 (Musical career)	.084	.807
Model 5(Musical activity	.089	..450
Model 6: (Peer group)	.144	.027
Model 7: (Independent listening)	.151	.326

Table 6.11 Hierarchical multiple regression for ROCKSONGS
Percentage of variance explained all models together = 16.1%

	R square	Sig. F Change
Model 1 (Demographic)	.073	.022
Model 2 (Social background)	.125	.215
Model 3 (School)	.130	.709
Model 4 (Musical career)	.133	.494
Model 5(Musical activity	.151	.118
Model 6: (Peer group)	.161	.116
Model 7: (Independent listening)	.161	.115

Table 6.12 Hierarchical multiple regression for POPSONGS
Percentage of variance explained all models together = 35.9%

	R square	Sig. F Change
Model 1 (Demographic)	.225	.000
Model 2 (Social background)	.245	.299
Model 3 (School)	.291	.541
Model 4 (Musical career)	.548	.542
Model 5 (Musical activity)	.306	.334
Model 6 (Peer group)	.386	.001
Model 7(Independent listening)	.359	.002

Table 6.13 Hierarchical multiple regression for FOLKSONGS
Percentage of variance explained all models together = 38.3%

	R square	Sig. F Change
Model 1 (Demographic)	.,283	.000
Model 2 (Social background)	.315	.336
Model 3 (School)	.332	.227
Model 4 Musical career	,334	.563
Model 5 (Musical activity)	.334	.830
Model 6 (Peer group)	.367	.054
Model 7(Independent listening)	.383	.085

Table 6.14 Evaluation of the independent variables for all four song scales (i.e. Model 7 for Beta scores)

FACTORS	URBAN SONGS	ROCK SONGS	POP SONGS	FOLK SONGS
Model 1: Demographical				
SEXR			-.334***	-.375***
BRITISHWHITE				
Q3v6Age			-.217**	
Model 2: Social background				
EMPLOYEDR				
Q7v10HHOccup				
Q16v18ParentsSimMusic				
SOCDEPRIVATION				
INSIDERINGROADR				
Model 3 School				
Q13v15DegAmb				
Q13v16SpecCareer				
Model 4: Musical career				
Q15v17Extent considering musical career				
Model 5 Cultural capital				
ANYMUSICALCTIVITY				
Model 6 Peer group				
Q16v19SibsSimMus				
Q16v20FriendsSimMus			.253**	.183*
Model 7 Means of listening to music				
INDEP LISTEN			-.234**	

Significance level: * = .05

6.7 Further analysis of the correlates of pupils' preferences for urban songs and rock songs: controlling by sex and social background

Given my unsatisfactory findings for the pupils' preferences for urban songs and rock songs above, I decided to undertake further statistical analysis for URBANSONGS and ROCKSONGS. My aim was to control for some characteristics of the pupils to explore whether there were different patterns of correlations for the different groups. Thus, I considered that the low level of explained variance I found for URBANSONGS and ROCKSONGS could mean that an independent factor was obscuring the relationships between other independent variables and URBANSONGS and ROCKSONGS. I decided to control for *sex* and *social background* and rerun the regressions again (see Chapter 4 for an explanation of controlling data by a selected variable).

I chose *sex* (SEXR) on account of the arguments made by Colley (2008) and others for the important effect of sex on the development of young people's musical tastes. I investigated the possibility that boys' and girls' musical preferences for urban songs and rock songs had different patterns of correlation with independent factors and that my undertaking a regression analysis for all boys and girls grouped together had obscured these correlations. I chose *social background* on account of the CCCS's strong emphasis on the importance of social background in the development of young people's musical taste. Of the five possible independent factors in my Social Background model, I chose pupils' head of household's occupation (Q7v10HHOccup) as the best fit with the arguments made for the importance of social background made by researchers such as Hall and Jefferson (1975). I investigated the possibility that preferences for urban songs and rock songs for those pupils coming from

higher social status homes and of those pupils coming from lower social status homes had different patterns of correlation with independent factors and that my undertaking a regression analysis for all the pupils grouped together obscured these correlations. Since splitting the data file means reducing the number of respondents in statistical calculations, I decided in my analysis to pay attention to suggestive differences i.e. differences between .05 and .10 as well as significant ones (that is .05 or smaller).

I begin by splitting my findings for URBANSONGS by sex. I split the data file into boys and girls using Se*lect Cases* SEXR. I also took SEXR out of regression analysis. As Table 6.15 demonstrates, when I split my data file by sex, I found for *boys* preferring urban songs only a small improvement in explained variance: 17.5 percent after the split by sex compared to 15.1 when all respondents were grouped together. However, none of the seven models has a Sig. F Change score less than .10 or .05. As Table 6.16 also demonstrates, I found for *girls* preferring urban songs a little more improvement in explained variance: 20.8 percent after the split compared to 15.1 when all respondents were grouped together. However, none of the seven models has a Sig. F Change score less than .10 or .05. However, I note that both of these new levels of explained variance are notably lower than those I found above for preferences for pop songs and folksongs (for all respondents). Table 6.19 demonstrates that there were no independent factors correlating significantly (or suggestively) with URBANSONGS for either boys or girls. I consider that splitting the data base by sex did *not* substantially improve my understanding of young people's preferences for urban songs.

Table 6.15 Hierarchical multiple regression URBANSONGS for Boys
Percentage variance explained all models together = 17.5%

	R square	Sig. F Change
Model 1 (Demographic) (not SEXR)	.008	.759
Model 2 (Social background)	.076	.549
Model 3 (School)	.096	.548
Model 4 (Musical career)	..097	.866
Model 5(Musical activity)	.110	.301
Model 6 (Peer group)	.170	.180
Model 7(Independent Listening)	.175	.591

Table 6.16 Hierarchical multiple regression URBANSONGS for Girls
Percentage variance explained all models together =20.8%

	R square	Sig. F Change
Model 1 (Demographic) (not SEXR)	.062	.124
Model 2 (Social background)	.120	.416
Model 3 (School)	.138	.534
Model 4 (Musical career)	.142	.592
Model 5(Musical activity)	.155	.359
Model 6 (Peer group)	.186	.357
Model 7(Independent Listening)	.208	.232

I turn to splitting my findings for ROCKSONGS by sex. As Table 6.17 demonstrates, when I split my data file by sex, I found a modest improvement in explained variance for *boys*. 22.2 percent after the split by sex compared to 16.1 percent for all respondents. However, none of the seven models has a Sig. F Change score less than .10 or .05. Table 6.19 demonstrates that for boys, while there were no independent factors correlating significantly with ROCKSONGS, there were two independent factors *suggestively* linked with this dependent variable: degree of ambition for future career and perception that siblings had similar musical tastes. As Table 6.18 demonstrates, when I split my data file by sex, I found for *girls* preferring rock songs only a small improvement in explained variance: 17.5 percent after the split by sex compared to 15.1 when all respondents were grouped together. None of the seven models has a Sig. F Change score less than .10 or .05. Table 6.19 demonstrates that there are no independent factors correlating significantly or suggestively with girls' preference for rock

songs. I consider that splitting the data base by sex did *not* substantially improve my

understanding of young people's preferences for rock songs.

Table 6.17 Hierarchical multiple regression ROCKSONGS for Boys
Percentage variance explained all models together = 22.2%

	R square	Sig. F Change
Model 1 (Demographic) (not SEXR)	.005	.864
Model 2 (Social background)	.085	.450
Model 3 (School)	.139	.200
Model 4 (Musical career)	.139	.901
Model 5(Musical activity)	.220	.386
Model 6 (Peer group)	.220	.126
Model 7(Independent Listening)	.222	.739

Table 6.18 Hierarchical multiple regression ROCKSONGS for Girls
Percentage variance explained all models together = 15.6%

	R square	Sig. F Change
Model 1 (Demographic) (not SEXR)	.033	.330
Model 2 (Social background)	.059	.796
Model 3 (School)	.074	.684
Model 4 (Musical career)	.087	.321
Model 5(Musical activity)	.115	.184
Model 6 (Peer group)	.153	.305
Model 7(Independent Listening)	.15.6	.649

Table 6.19 Evaluating the independent variables for urban songs and rock songs (i.e. Model 7 for Beta scores) controlling for sex

	URBANSONGS		ROCKSONGS	
	Boys NONE	**Girls** NONE	**Boys** NONE	**Girls** NONE
Model 1: Demographical				
BRITISHWHITE				
Q3v6Age				
Model 2: Social background				
EMPLOYEDR				
Q7v10HHOccup				
Q16v18ParentsSimMusic				
SOCDEPRIVATION				
INSIDERINGROADR				
Model 3 School				
Q13v15DegAmb			.274±	
Q13v16SpecCareer				
Model 4: Musical career				
Q15v17Extent considering musical career				
Model 4 Cultural capital				
ANYMUSICALCTIVITY				
Model 5 Peer group				
Q16v19SibsSimMus			.288±	
Q16v20FreindsSimMus				
Model 6 Means of listening to music				
INDEP LISTEN				

Significance level: ± = Larger than .05 but less than or equal to .10

I now turn to consider my findings for correlations between URBANSONGS and ROCKSONGS and my independent factors when I split my data file by social background. I put SEXR back into the regression. I created new variable from Q8v10HHOccup by reducing it to two categories. I called this new variable HHOccup2Cats. HHOccup2Cats = '1' (these were AB groups) and HHOccup2Cats = '0' (these were CDE groups). I chose the AB/CDE split after examining my data file and discovering that 54.5 percent of the respondents had fathers whose occupations are classified as A or B and 45.5 percent of the respondents had

fathers whose occupations are classified as CDE. I then removed Q8v10HHOccup from the regressions and reran them.

Tables 6.20 and 6.21 demonstrate that splitting my data file by occupation of head of pupil's household leads to a notable improvement in the level of explained variance for preference for URBANSONGS for both ABs and CDEs: 23.7 percent for ABs and 24.8 percent for CDEs. Two of the seven models have a Sig. F Change score less than .10 (but more than.05). These two levels of explained variance compare favourably with my finding of 15.1 percent explained variance for all respondents preferring urban songs. However, even these improved levels of explained variance for urban songs preference are still lower than those I found for pop songs and folk songs preferences (35.9 and 38.3 percent respectively). For the influence of independent factors, Table 6.24 shows that for ABs there is a significant correlation (Beta = .344) between preferring urban songs and having a higher level of career ambition. There is also a suggestive negative relationship for AB (Beta = -.282) between preferring urban songs and not taking part in a musical activity. I note that both these Beta scores were comparatively high; matching those I obtained for pop song preference and folk song preference.

Tables 6.22 and 6.23 demonstrate that splitting my data file by occupation of head of pupil's household also leads to a substantial improvement in the level of explained variance for preference for ROCKSONGS for CDEs and a smaller improvement for ABs: 23.7 percent for CDEs and 20.3 percent for ABs (compared to my finding of 16.1 percent explained variance for all respondents preferring rock songs). For the CDEs, one of the seven models has a Sig. F Change score less than .05 and, for the ABs, two of seven models have Sig. F Change score less than .10. This improvement in explained variance is a little lower than the improvement I

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found when splitting my data file by occupation of pupil's head of household for URBANSONGS. For the influence of independent factors, Table 6.24 shows that for CDEs, there was a suggestive negative correlation between being British White and preferring rock songs (Beta = -.269) and a suggestive relationship between taking part in a musical activity and preferring rock songs (Beta = .317). Again, these Beta scores were comparatively high, matching those I obtained for pop song preference and folk song preference. For ABs Table 6.24 shows that there were no independent factors significantly or suggestively correlated with preference for rock songs.

Table 6.20 Hierarchical multiple regression URBANSONGS for ABs head of household
Percentage variance explained all models together = 23.7%

	R square	Sig. F Change
Model 1 (Demographic)	.031	.571
Model 2 (Social background)	.057	.793
Model 3 (School)	.147	.054
Model 4 (Musical career)	.149	.714
Model 5(Musical activity)	.193	.088
Model 6 (Peer group)	.230	.279
Model 7(Independent Listening)	.237	.456

Table 6.21 Hierarchical multiple regression URBANSONGS for CDEs head of household
Percentage variance explained all models together = 24.8%

	R square	Sig. F Change
Model 1 (Demographic)	.046	.476
Model 2 (Social background)	.103	.561
Model 3 (School)	.124	.580
Model 4 (Musical career)	.130	.564
Model 5(Musical activity)	.131	.877
Model 6 (Peer group)	.237	.064
Model 7(Independent Listening)	.248	.574

Table 6.22 Hierarchical multiple regression ROCKSONGS for ABs head of household
Percentage variance explained all models together = 20.3%

	R square	Sig. F Change
Model 1 (Demographic)	.098	.085
Model 2 (Social background)	.131	.684
Model 3 (School)	.134	.912
Model 4 (Musical career)	.176	.092
Model 5(Musical activity)	.179	.656

Model 6 (Peer group)	.200	.503
Model 7(Independent Listening)	.203	.717

Table 6.23 Hierarchical multiple regression ROCKSONGS for CDEs head of household
Percentage variance explained all models together = 23.7%

	R square	Sig. F Change
Model 1 (Demographic)	.060	.357
Model 2 (Social background)	.130	.432
Model 3 (School)	.153	.548
Model 4 (Musical career)	.154	.782
Model 5(Musical activity)	.230	.043
Model 6 (Peer group)	.236	.845
Model 7(Independent Listening)	.237	.810

Table 6.24 Evaluation of the independent variables for urban songs and rock songs (i.e. Model 7 for Beta scores) controlling for occupation of head of household

	URBANSONGS		ROCKSONGS	
	AB	**CDE**	**AB** **NONE**	**CDE**
Model 1: Demographical				
SEXR		.312±		
BRITISHWHITE				-.269±
Q3v6Age				
Model 2: Social background				
EMPLOYEDR				
Q16v18ParentsSimMusic				
SOCDEPRIVATION				
INSIDERINGROADR		-.355±		
Model 3 School				
Q13v15DegAmb	.334*			
Q13v16SpecCareer				
Model 4: Musical career				
Q15v17Extent considering musical career				
Model 4 Cultural capital				
ANYMUSICALCTIVITY	-.282±			.317±
Model 5 Peer group				
Q16v19SibsSimMus				
Q16v20FreindsSimMus				
Model 6 Means of listening to music				
INDEP LISTEN				

Significance levels

*= .05

± = Larger than .05 but less than or equal to .10

6.8 Comparing the findings of my quantitative data with the different schools of thought on the factors affecting young people's music preferences

The data on the factors affecting young people's music preferences collected by the closed-answer questions in my questionnaire survey can be compared to the factors proposed as influential by the CCCS researchers and by the youth music survey researchers. However, this quantitative data is not suitable for comparing with the post-subculturalist researchers views on how young people develop music preferences.

6.8.1 Comparing the factors highlighted in my quantitative data as influencing young people's music preferences with those proposed by CCCS researchers

As I set out in Chapter 2, the CCCS researchers proposed a number of community and structural factors as influences on the development of young people's music preferences: class/socio-economic status, parents and sex with specific reference to bedroom culture theory: see, for example, Hall and Jefferson (1975) and Willis (1978).

Influence of class/socio-economic status and parents and mainstream subcultural theory

My quantitative data did not, on the whole, support CCCS researchers' argument for the importance of class/socio-economic status. I note that in terms of a preference for *pop* songs, *folk* songs and *rock* songs, I did not find in my study any correlations between preferring these songs and the socio/economic and community factors that I included − head of

household's employment situation, status of head of household's occupation, living in an area of higher/lower social deprivation, living inside/outside the Manchester ring road and musical tastes of parents. In terms of a preference for *urban* songs I did not initially find a direct correlation between a preference for these songs and head of household's employment situation, status of head of household's occupation, living in an area of higher/lower social deprivation and living inside/outside the Manchester ring road. I did find, when I split my data file by head of household occupational status, a suggestive relationship, for those respondents coming from CDE homes, between preferring urban songs and living outside the Manchester ring road. This finding was contradictory to what might be expected from CCCS theory, that liking for anti-establishment songs would be inner-city rather than outer-city.

Influence of sex and subculturalist bedroom culture theory

As I set out in Chapter 2, CCCS researchers seriously neglected the musical preferences of girls and young women: for, example, see the criticism made by Shildrick and MacDonald (2006). A number of writers sought to remedy this deficiency whilst holding to the subculturalist traditions (McRobbie and Garber (1976), Frith (1978), Griffiths (1988)) describe how girls sought refuge in bedrooms as protection against being sexually labelled when out on the streets, listening to teeny-bop music and fantasising about romance with pop stars and Frith (1978) describes younger girls, who have their leisure time strongly controlled by their parents and are likely to listen to music in their private bedroom space rather than in pubic arenas such as the dance floor.

As we saw above, I found in my study significant correlations between, on the one hand, preferring pop music and, on the other, being a girl, being younger, having friends with

similar music tastes and using less independent means such as TV and radio to listen to music. I suggest that linking these four factors together leads to a significant development of subculturalist bedroom theory. My questionnaire findings suggest that younger girls in my study might be gathering together with their similarly-minded friends in their homes to listen to pop music using mainstream media.

Previous researchers have not considered the means of listening to music as an important influence on young people's music tastes. Boyle et al. (1981) did address this but only in a limited way. My addition of the means of listening to music as a factor proved valuable although it was only correlated with one preference, that for pop music. I suggest how younger girls using less independent means of listening to music can be linked to their age. Thus, there is evidence that younger children use computers and the internet less than do older ones for listening to and downloading music: see Comber and Colley (2003) and Kent and Facer (2004). There is also evidence that younger children have fewer financial resources and would therefore be less able to pay for downloading music from the internet: see the Halifax survey of pocket money (Halifax, 2012) and the ChildWise Monitor Report (ChildWise, 2009).

6.8.2 Comparing the factors highlighted in my quantitative data as factors influencing young people's music preferences with those proposed by youth music survey researchers

The youth music survey researchers proposed a number of factors as influences on the development of young people's different music preferences: the influence of demographical factors, the influence of school and career ambitions, the influence of peer groups and the

influence of cultural capital including taking part in musical activities. I compare my quantitative findings with those of the youth music survey researchers.

Influence of demographical factors

The demographical factors that were highlighted in the youth music survey researchers' studies as significant influences on young people's music preferences were sex, age, and race/ethnicity: these researchers' argued that the influence of these factors generated different types of music preferences. The relationships youth music survey researchers posit between these demographic factors and particular music preferences are less noteworthy than those of their discussion of the school as opposed to home influences, of the influence of peer groups and of the influence of cultural capital.

Influence of sex: Colley (2008) found chart pop to be popular among young women, but not young men, and she linked this to a liking for lyrics focusing on emotions and relationships with others, which she saw as young women's concerns. Hargreaves et al. (1995), Roe (1992), and Christenson and Petersen (1998), also found that girls and young women were more likely than boys and young men to prefer pop style music. Unfortunately, Tanner et al.'s (2008) classification of musical styles prevented me from specifically comparing my findings for preferring pop songs with theirs, as their grouping of 'musical tastes' into their 'musical styles' does not correspond well with my subjects' classification of musical preferences. These authors found, however, that musical tastes were more differentiated by race and ethnicity than sex/gender. As we saw above, my quantitative data showed that being a girl was strongly correlated to a preference for *pop* songs. My data here strongly supported those of Colley (2008), Hargreaves et al. (1995) and Roe (1992).

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In terms of a preference for *folk* songs, my quantitative finding that being a girl was strongly related to this preferences contradicts Hargreaves et al.'s (1995) finding that both younger and older boys liked folk more than their counterparts and Colley's (2008) finding that young men like folk more than young women. Thus, my finding that folk was an important musical category for girls, but not for boys, appears to be out-of-line with those of youth music survey researchers.

I did not find strong support between sex and preferences for *urban* and *rock* songs; I found a suggestive relationship between being a boy and preferring urban songs but only for those pupils who came from lower status homes. My finding, albeit a small-scale one, does not support Colley's (2008) more general finding of no differences by sex in liking rap.

In terms of a preference for *rock* songs, my quantitative finding that sex did *not* play a role in understanding a preference for these songs is considerably at odds with Colley's (2008) finding that young men had a greater liking of heavy metal and rock. Thus my findings did not support her contention that young men seek out music associated with aggression, dominance and rebellion that are linked to both antisocial behaviour and physical regression. Further, my findings also do not support those of Christenson and Petersen (1998), who found young men more than young women to like 'harder' forms of music, such as 1970s rock, southern rock and psychedelic rock. My findings also do not support those of Hargreaves et al. (1995), who found boys to give a higher rating of liking to heavy metal than did girls; this suggested in his view that boys were attracted to rock music by its stereotype of masculinity.

Influence of age: In terms of a preference for *pop* songs, I note that the quantitative findings from my questionnaire survey showed being younger played an important role in understanding a preference for these songs. My finding here did not support Hargreaves et al. (1995)'s finding that there were no differences by age in liking chart pop. Further, for *folk* songs, *urban* songs and *rock* songs, my study findings did not show age to play a role in this preference. My findings for urban and rock songs preference does not support that of Hargreaves et al. (1995), who found country and western, reggae, heavy metal and rock to be liked by older children and rap to be liked by younger children.

Influence of race/ethnicity: The music youth survey researchers undertook little statistical analysis of the correlation between ethnicity and musical preference. The only group to collect information about ethnicity were Tanner et al. (2008) in their Canadian study. However, as I stated above, it is hard to compare their musical categories to those set out by the pupils in my study. Their Black Stylist category was largely, though not exclusively, black (there was some South Asian representation) and those adhering to this style had a preference for soul, rhythm and blues, country and new country, heavy metal and ethnic music. In my study, my only finding for the influence of race/ethnicity was a suggestive relationship between *not* being British White (a category as we saw in Chapter 4 to include Irish White as well as those of African Caribbean and Asian ethnicity) but this was only for those pupils who came from lower status homes. Clearly, the influence of race/ethnicity on young people's music preferences needs more research in the UK.

School and career ambitions versus home influences

Tanner et al. (2008) and Roe (1992) proposed a home versus school influences debate. They concluded from their studies' findings that the school environment and students' degree of success at school were considerably more important than home influences.

In my study I found no relationships between preferences for *pop* songs, *folk* songs and *rock* songs and the measures of school success that I adopted: degree of ambition for future career (as I explained in Chapter 4, I was limited by ethical considerations from including a number of Tanner et al.'s (2008) measures of school success). I note that my finding of a lack of a relationship between a preference for *rock* songs and degree of career ambition does not correspond with that of Roe (1992), who found a taste for heavy metal rock to be characteristic of very discontented low-achieving students.

For a preference for *urban* songs, I found, when I split my data file by occupation of head of pupils' household, that there was a significant relationship between a preference for urban songs and a greater degree of ambition for their future careers for those coming from higher status homes. My findings for a limited relationship between preference for urban songs and career ambition do not correspond with that of Tanner et al. (2008). These authors found, for their Hard Rockers (who, in fact, were the category most likely to like hip/hop and rap), that while they were advanced stream students, they did *not* report particularly good grades. These authors argued that, when school students develop this musical allegiance, it is in *opposition* to the culture they perceive school to represent.

My findings did agree, however, with Tanner et al.'s (2008) and Roe's (1992) view that home factors had little influence in the development of young people's music preferences. For my quantitative data, I found little correlation between the respondents' music preferences and

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factors such as parental socio-economic status. We saw in Chapter 3, that only Boyle et al. (1981) collected information on the influence of music interest and preferences of respondents' families, although, as we saw, their study was limited in that they related such influences only to the importance of pop music in their respondents' lives. My innovative inclusion of the factor of similarity in parental and children's musical tastes did not lead to any interesting findings. Similarly, my innovative inclusion of the extent to which a pupil was considering a musical career did not lead to interesting findings.

Influence of peer groups

As I set out in Chapter 3, I included both siblings' musical tastes as well as those of their friends in my understanding of peer group influence, on the grounds that, while siblings' musical tastes were part of both family and peer groups, I preferred to include siblings as peer associates along with friends, given that siblings are nearer pupils' ages than are their parents.

To my knowledge, no previous researcher has systematically investigated the link between friends' musical tastes and research subjects' own tastes. While Tanner et al. (2008) refer in their study to peer groups, they were concerned with the influence of taking part in peer group *activities*, such as hanging out in coffee shops, *not* with peers' musical tastes. Boyle et al. (1981) to my knowledge is the only researcher to consider the influence of siblings' interest and preference in music and these authors included only pop music in their study; they found no relationship between sibling interest and preferences in music and young people's liking for pop.

As we saw above, I found having friends with similar musical tastes was significantly correlated with a preference for both *pop* songs and *folk* songs. We saw that, while there was a significant relationship between a preference for pop songs and age, there was no such relationship for folk songs. This shows that, while it was the younger girls who liked pop songs, both younger and older girls liked folk songs. Both those liking pop and those liking folk were significantly likely to have friends with similar musical tastes. I discussed above the strong possibility that the younger girls liking pop could be part of a bedroom culture. However, given the wider age range for those liking folk, it seems less likely that girls preferring folk songs are part of a bedroom culture. Clearly, the influence of friends with similar musical tastes needs more research in the UK and elsewhere.

Influence of cultural capital including taking part in musical activities

As we saw in Chapter 3, Tanner et al. (2008) devised an index of cultural capital that measured participation in a number of activities, including playing a musical instrument as well as others, such as attending cultural events, going to the library and reading a book for pleasure. Tanner et al. (2008) found cultural capital to be related to several of his musical styles; however, these authors presented their findings only for their index of cultural capital as a whole. As we saw in Chapter 3, Colley (2008) in her study included a measure of musical training but focused narrowly on passing music examinations.

In my study I focused on taking part in a number of musical activities; playing an instrument, singing and dancing (both group and solo). Despite the respondents in my questionnaire survey, especially the girls, having a relatively high level of taking part in musical activities, my findings did not show a direct correlation between taking part in musical activities and

preference for different song groups. However, when I split my data by home status, I found two interesting − although they were only suggestive − relationships. For *urban* songs, those preferring these songs and coming from higher status homes were likely *not* to take part in any musical activity. For rock songs, those preferring these songs and coming from CDE households *were* likely to take part in musical activities. What these relationships means needs to be established by further research.

6.9 Analysis of pupils' response to the questionnaire's open-ended answers for the factors affecting young people's music preferences and comparison with those proposed by the post-subcultural researchers

6.9.1 Analysis of pupils' response to the open-ended questions in my questionnaire study concerning what factors affect young people's music preferences

My questionnaire's open-answer questions yielded qualitative data on the pupil respondent's opinions on what factors affected young people's music preferences. I included these two open-answer questions as I sought to capture data that would help me evaluate the theories set out by post-subculturalists of how young people come to identify with modern music. For these questions I focused on allowing the respondents to answer in their own terms.

When analysing the open questions, located at the end of my questionnaire, I combined the pupils' answers for 'Why do you like the modern music you prefer?' and 'What factors do you think influence your taste in modern music?'. I did so on the grounds that a number of

them gave similar answers to both questions or referred to 'factors' in their answers to Q20 and left Q21 blank (or *vice versa*).

In order to devise an *overall* classification of pupils 'answers to these two open questions, I listed all the answers and then began to devise preliminary categories for them. I moved backwards and forwards between my categories and the list of answers developing the categories until I had a final set with which I was satisfied comprehensively and succinctly covered the range of answers in my list. I identified five major separate categories: *Influence of the music itself, Influence of media and popular culture, Independent taste, Influence of family* and *Influence of friends.*

Using SPSS, I calculated the percentages of the pupils referring to each category. The overall proportion of the pupils referring to each category is set out in Table 6.25 (the percentages do not add up to 100 percent as a pupil's answer could contain elements that be coded in several categories).

Table 6.25 Coding of open answers for pupils' views on what influenced their musical preferences

Category	Percentage of pupils' mentioning category (N= 187)
Influence of the music itself	54.8
Influence of the media and popular culture	40.4
Independent taste	25.5
Influence of friends	22.9
Influence of family	21.8

As Table 6.25 shows, easily the most popular answer category for the pupils was *Influence of the music itself* where the pupils' answers referred to aspects of modern music that attracted them. I found that 54.8 percent of the pupils' answers that could be coded in this category

refer to the beat, the lyrics and danceability. Pupils often stated that they cared greatly whether or not the performer/artist had written the song themselves and they also stated that they disliked the practice of auto-tuning vocals, whether during live performances or for recorded music.

Given my finding in the focus group discussions that reference to the influence of the music itself and of artists on young people's music tastes (Theme F) was made by boys and not by girls, I checked to see if there was a difference by sex in the questionnaire respondents giving the answer *Influence of the music itself.* I found no significant differences between the likelihood of boys and girls to refer to features the influence of the music itself as a factor influencing their music preferences.

I set out the quotes below as illustrations of respondents referring in their open answers to *The influence of the music itself* in explaining why they liked the modern music they preferred.

They are more jazzy and have a good steady beat. [Girl, 12 years]

Because it [the music] is well written, written by the performer, catchy and meaningful. [Girl, 12 years]

The beat and the rhythm [Girl 13, years]

Because in my opinion indie bands express themselves and create better, more thoughtful music [Girl, 13 years]

Easy to listen to, it makes me relaxed and distract me from anything else going on. [Girl, 15 years]

Has good beats to it, is catchy and enjoyable. [Girl, 15 years]

Because of the meaningful lyrics and also because of the music itself. [Boy, 12]

Because being a singer/songwriter, it is hard for me to listen to a song that somebody hasn't written themselves and sings without honesty. [Boy, 13 years]

It has an upbeat fast tempo that intrigues me. [Boy, 14 years]

Good to dance to. [Boy, 14 years]

I like rap because quite often there is an influential message in the music. [Boy, 14 years]

Because it is complex and not repetitive as some other types of music. [Boy, 14 years].

I like dubstep and metal because they are energetic and they are heavy enough for you to rave/mosh to. I like rap because of the catchy beats and catchy word rhymes. [Boy, 15 years]

Example specifically of quotes where respondents expressed a dislike of auto-tuning.

I prefer my music as it is not auto-tuned, as the music sounds real. [Boy, 14 years]

The next most popular answer category was *Influence of the media and popular culture*, where the pupils referred to the influence on their musical tastes of what they heard on the radio and television and what was popular on social media and online. I found 40.4 percent of the pupils' answers could be coded in this category. A considerable number of those giving this type of answer referred to what music was playing on the radio and what music was listed in the Charts.

I set out the quotes below as illustrations of respondents referring in their open answers to *Influence of the media and popular culture* in explaining why they liked the modern music they preferred. The respondents who referred to what was in the charts influencing them usually simply wrote 'Songs in the charts' or just 'Charts'.

Music played on the radio Key 103/Captial. [Girl, 13 years]

I like it because it is played on the radio station which I listen to a lot so I like it and learn the lyrics [Girl, 13 years]

The other three answer categories were less popular. I created the answer category *Independent taste* as a number of pupils in their answers appeared to take considerable pride in stating that their taste in modern music was not influenced by anybody or anything: I found 25.5 percent of the pupils' answers could be coded in this category. Some of the pupils' answers were strongly worded, denying that their musical tastes were influenced by mainstream culture or their friends. They appeared to consider that it was 'cool' to have independent taste and not to be influenced by others at all. I set out the quotes below as illustrations.

None [i.e. no factors influence his taste]. I listen to what I like rather than to what other people like. [Boy 13 years]

Because it's good music and it is different to what other people like. It's also better than pop. [Girl 12 years]

Nothing (no other factors influence my decisions). Just what I like. [Boy, 14 years]

I found that 22.9 percent of the pupils' answers could be coded in the *Influence of family* category. The pupils referred to a wide variety of family members as influencing their musical tastes, including parents, siblings and cousins.

I found that 21.8 percent of the pupils' answers could be coded in the *Influence of friends.* The pupils tended to write just 'Friends' in their answers, without amplification.

One theme that occurred only infrequently was the influence of ethnic background. The questionnaire respondents' limited referral to the influence of ethnic background surprised me. I concede that ethnic background was of limited relevance when I analysed the questionnaire data, but I did find in the focus groups that participants discussed to a considerable extent the influence on young people's musical taste of ethnic background, with many referring particularly to the influence of an Irish background. However, I consider that this discrepancy may be due to pupil respondents, when referring to family influence in their answers, including implicitly their families' ethnic background. I note that the questionnaire respondents who mentioned ethnic influence were all *not* 'White British'.

Having considered the overall findings for the pupils' open answers to Question 20 and Question 21, I then classified pupils' open answers by their positive preference for each of the four song groupings. I calculated the mean score for the extent to which pupils' preferred each of the four song groupings. I then calculated how often pupils who liked a particular genre to the same extent as, or more than, the overall, mean, referred in their open answers to each of the five categories. Table 6.26 sets out my findings for this exercise.

Table 6.26 Pupils open answers classified by preferences for the four song groupings (respondents' score were included when their scores for liking URBANSONGS, ROCKSONGS, POPSONGS or FOLKSONGS were equal to the mean for that song grouping or above)

Influence of the music itself	Included %
URBANSONGS	55.7 N=61
ROCKSONGS	58.4 N=89
POPSONGS	58.4 N=89
FOLKSONGS	55.6 N=90

Influence of the media and popular culture	Included %
URBANSONGS	41.0 N=61
ROCKSONGS	40.4 N=89
POPSONGS	40.4 N=89
FOLKSONGS	44.4 N=90

Independent taste	Included %
URBANSONGS	32.8 N=61
ROCKSONGS	27.0 N=89
POPSONGS	29.2 N=89
FOLKSONGS	26.7 N=90

Influence of friends	Included %
URBANSONGS	29.5 N=61
ROCKSONGS	25.8 N=89
POPSONGS	23.6 N=89
FOLKSONGS	24.4 N=90

Influence of family	Included %
URBANSONGS	31.9 N=61
ROCKSONGS	25.8 N=89
POPSONGS	27.0 N=89
FOLKSONGS	22.2 N=90

Table 6.26 shows clearly that the extent to which pupils' referred to matters falling into my five open-answer categories did *not* vary by their preference for particular song groupings. For example, when pupils were divided by their liking for urban, rock, pop and folk songs, the percentage of pupils referring in their open answers to a feature of the music itself were similar: the percentage mentioning this influence ranged narrowly from 58.4 percent for pop-song-likers to 55.6 percent for folk-song-likers.

6.9.2 Comparison of the pupils' view of the factors affecting young people's music preferences drawn from the open-ended questions in my questionnaire study with those proposed by the post-subcultural researchers

As we saw in Chapter 2, the post-subculturalists emphasised the influence of musical form and fashion on young people's musical tastes. My qualitative findings drawn from the respondents' responses to the open-answer questions in the questionnaire strongly support the view that the pupils were influenced in their musical preferences by features of the music itself − the beat, danceability and lyrics of songs − and by what was popular in the media. The emphasis in the pupils' response to these questions on musical form and musical fashion lends support to the post-subculturalists' argument that tastes, aesthetics and affectivity are the primary driver for participation in collective youth cultural activity; see, for example, the arguments made by Bennett (1999) in his study of the dance music scene, by Thornton (1995) in her study of rave and club cultures and by Muggleton (2000) in his study of those of 'unconventional appearance'.

6.10 An overview of my study's findings from the questionnaire survey, the relationship between my questionnaire survey findings and extant schools of thought on young people's musical preferences

6.10.1 My quantitative findings from my questionnaire survey

Overview of my Analysis of my questionnaire survey findings showed that song groupings were the best measure for the dependent variable for my hierarchical multiple regressions. For the pupil respondents, the most popular songs grouping was folk songs, followed by the pop, rock and urban song groupings. The pupils' preferences for song groups differed from those found to be popular by other researchers but I pointed out that music fashions change rapidly among young people. The most striking demographic characteristics of the pupils in the two schools were their coming from British White background. Also striking was the high level of musical activities that the girls engaged in, much higher than that for the boys.

My hierarchical multiple regression analysis showed that my independent variables explained a relatively high percentage of the pupils' preferences for pop and folk songs. For pop songs, important influences for preferring these songs were highly more likely to be girls, and to be younger, to have friends with similar musical tastes and to listen to music through mainstream media such as radio and television. For folk songs, important influences for preferring the songs were being a girl and with having friends with similar musical tastes.

My hierarchical multiple regression analysis did not provide satisfactory explanations for preferring urban and rock songs. Thus, I undertook further statistical analysis for these song preferences controlling for sex and occupational status of pupils; head of households. Controlling by home status, more so than controlling for sex, led to some understanding of pupil's preferences for these two types of songs. I found that splitting the data base by home status *improved* the understanding of the pupils' preferences for these songs, *both* for those pupils whose heads of household were classified as AB and for those whose heads of household were classified CDE.

When I divided my pupils into those coming from higher and lower status homes, I found different patterns of correlations with the independent factors. For preferring urban songs, I found after splitting my data file by home status two interesting patterns that increased my understanding of the preference for urban songs. The first pattern suggested that pupils who preferred urban songs and came from *higher* status homes were likely to have high expectations for their careers and not to take part in a musical activity. The second pattern in my findings suggests that pupils who preferred urban songs and came from *lower* status homes were likely to be boys and to live outside the Manchester M60 ring road. However, I found that for preferring rock songs, splitting my data by home status led to a *smaller* level of improvement for my understanding of this preference. For those coming from lower status homes, I found that those pupils who preferred urban songs and came were likely to take part in a musical activity and not likely to be British white. However, for those coming from higher status homes, there were no independent factors linked significantly or suggestively with a preference for rock music.

My quantitative findings for the independent factors linked with preferences for pop, folk, urban and rock songs do not provide strong support for the views of mainstream CCCS researchers, such as Hall and Jefferson (1975) and Willis (1978), that subculturalist and structuralist factors of class/socio-economic status and parental musical tastes had a strong influence on young people's musical tastes. However, my finding of a constellation of influences were related to preferring pop songs could be interpreted as support for, and development of, the bedroom culture as proposed by McRobbie and Garber (1976).

Neither do my quantitative findings for the independent factors linked with preferences for pop, folk, urban and rock songs provide strong support for the views of the youth music

survey researchers such as Colley (2008) and Tanner et al. (2008). My findings for the influence of the demographic factors of age, and race/ethnicity did not support those of the youth music survey researchers, although I did find a strong relationship between a preference for pop songs and being a girl: a finding which supported Colley (2008) but not Tanner et al. (2008). Contrary to the views of these researchers, I did not find school factors to be more influential than home factors for music preferences. For taking part in musical activities, suggested to some extent as important in Tanner et al. (2008) and Colley (2008), my findings were minimal and inconsistent.

6.10.1 My qualitative findings from my questionnaire survey

My questionnaire's open-answer questions yielded valuable qualitative data on the pupil respondent's opinions on what factors affected their own and other young people's music preferences. I identified five major separate categories: *Influence of the music itself*, *Influence of media and popular culture*, *Independent taste*, *Influence of family* and *Influence of friends*. The most frequently-given answer category was *Influence of the music itself*: the pupils particularly referred to the beat, the lyrics and danceability of the music they liked. The next most frequently-given answer was *Influence of media and popular culture*: in particular, the pupils referred to the influences of listening to the radio and what was in the charts. The other answer categories were much less popular. Interestingly there was no relationship between giving pupils giving answers that fell into particular categories and liking for particular song groupings: these influences applied across all song grouping preferences.

My finding of an emphasis on the features of the music itself − the beat, danceability and lyrics of songs − and of musical fashion resonate well with the arguments of post-

subculturalists, such as Bennett (1999), Thornton (1995) and Muggleton (2000), that modern music is no longer class/community - or structurally-bound but is now free-floating and a matter of personal choice; thus, young people's music preferences are of the moment, fluid and ephemeral. However, I found that my quantitative data provided evidence, especially for pop and folk song groupings, that structural factors also played a role in influencing the pupils' song group preferences. Thus, my study does *not* show, in contrast to the post-subculturalists' argument, that it is only free-floating factors that influence young people's musical preferences today. In Chapter 7, I attempt to formulate a theoretical understanding of the factors influencing young people's music preferences that combines elements of both structural and free-floating elements.

Chapter 7: Conclusions, suggestions for a new understanding of young people's music preferences, limitations of study's research and suggestions for further research

Introduction

In Chapter 1, I pointed out a significant research gap: the lack of research that considers both the influence of social factors and of musical form and practices on the development of young people's musical preferences. I asked three research questions. (1) How do young people perceive modern music? (2) How can we understand the development of young people's musical identity? (3) What social factors, and musical forms and practices, correlate with young people's musical preferences? I analyse my study findings in this chapter and provide answers for these research questions.

I begin this chapter by comparing my study findings by method of data collection - summarising the consistencies and differences by my means of data collection for the factors influencing the music preferences of my study participants. I then justify my use of a mixed methods approach in my study of the factors influencing the music preferences of the study participants. I then demonstrate how my study findings contribute to the development of a new understanding of young people's music preferences. I close by identifying the limitations of my study, acknowledging any issues that have arisen as a consequence and discussing how they could have been avoided. I also include suggestions for further research based on the findings of my study.

7.1 The consistencies and differences by means of data collection for the factors influencing the development of the music preferences of the young people in my study

I summarise in Table 7.1 my findings from my focus groups discussions and from the closed-answer and open-answer questions in my questionnaire survey.

Table 7.1 Comparison of study findings by method of data collection

Source of data /Influences on young people's music preferences	Focus group discussions (qualitative)	Questionnaire closed-answer questions (qualitative)	Questionnaire open-answer questions (quantitative)
Social background/ socio-economic status	For younger boys, disadvantaged/deprived backgrounds and for older boys, psychological problems led to a preference for heavy rock and/or urban music. Girls agreed to some extent but less so than the boys.	No overall correlations for social background factors such as head of household occupation status. When controlling for home status, for those coming from lower status homes, suggestive correlation between preferences for *urban* songs and living outside the Manchester M60 ring road.	Not mentioned
Parents' musical tastes	Considerable discussion of influence of family members, particularly parents. The influence of siblings was referred to but was not seen as important as that of friends or parents.	No overall correlations for similarity of parents' musical tastes with subjects' own tastes and subject's song preferences. No correlation between song preferences and having siblings having similar musical tastes.	Moderately popular theme was influence of a wide variety of family members including parents, siblings and cousins.
Demographic: sex, age and race/ethnicity	Little or no discussion of the influence of sex and race/ethnicity and a limited number of references to age.	**Sex:** Preference for *pop* and *folk* songs significantly correlated with being a girl, not other preferences. When controlling for home status, for those coming from lower status homes, suggestive correlation between preferences for *urban* songs and being a boy. **Age:** preference for *pop* songs: significantly correlated with being younger, not other preferences. **Race/ethnicity:** No overall correlations for song preferences with race/ethnicity. When controlling for home status, for those coming from lower status homes, suggestive correlation between preference for *rock* songs and not being British White.	Not mentioned

Source of data /Influences on young people's music preferences	Focus group discussions (qualitative)	Questionnaire closed-answer questions (qualitative)	Questionnaire open-answer questions (quantitative)
School success/career ambitions and home versus school debate	Not mentioned	No overall correlations for song preferences with school success measures such as ambition for career. When controlling for home status, for those coming from higher status homes, significant relationship between having a preference for urban songs high degree of career ambition.	Not mentioned
Desire for musical career	Not mentioned	No correlations for song preferences with desire for a musical career.	Not mentioned
Musical activities/cultural capital	Limited reference to effect of playing a musical instrument	No overall correlations for song preferences with social background and taking part in musical activities. When controlling for home status, for those coming from higher status homes, suggestive negative correlation between preferences for *urban* songs and taking part in musical activities. When controlling for home status, for those coming from lower status homes, suggestive positive correlation between preferences for *rock* songs and taking part in musical activities.	Not mentioned
Friends' and siblings' musical tastes and influence of peer group	Influence of friends seen to play an important role in developing song preferences but girls did not refer to a listening to music with girlfriends in the bedroom. For influence of peer pressure, reference to importance of being seen to be 'cool' by one's peers, particularly by boys. The girls placed less emphasis on the effect of peer pressure on young people's song preferences.	Preference for *pop* songs and for *folk* songs significantly correlated with having friends with similar musical tastes.	Moderately popular theme was influence of friends.

Source of data /Influences on young people's music preferences	Focus group discussions (qualitative)	Questionnaire closed-answer questions (qualitative)	Questionnaire open-answer questions (quantitative)
Means of listening to music	Little reference to how means of listening to music affected music preferences but participants very vocal on the technical means used to access music. Boys used technology to access familiar music but girls to discover new music/artists. Younger boys relied more on social media/internet music listening services, while girls and older boys made more use of TV/radio. Talking to friends online was an important way of discovering new music for girls and older boys.	Significant negative relationship between preference for *pop* songs and listening to music by independent means.	Not mentioned
Musical form − influence of the music itself	Not a strong theme. Boys referred to young people wanting to be like their music idols. Boys argued that music young people listened to affected how they presented themselves − their appearance and attitudes.	Not applicable	A very popular theme was the influence of the music itself, such as the beat, danceability and the lyrics. .
Musical fashion – influence of social media.	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	The next most popular theme was the influence of the media and popular culture, with reference to music heard on radio and television and to what was popular on social media.
Other	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	A moderately popular theme for boys was independent taste - considerable pride taken in taste not influenced by anybody or anything; denial that musical tastes were influenced by mainstream culture or friends.

7.1.1 My findings consistent by method of data collection

There were three consistent findings in my study of relationships between factors and my subjects' music preferences that can contribute to the development of theoretical explanations of the music preferences of young people.

(i) The most important and consistent finding in Table 7.1 is that the musical tastes of *friends* were an important influence on the music preferences of the young people in my study, whatever the method of data collection. Table 7.1 shows that the closed-answer questions in the questionnaire showed that the influence of friends' musical tastes was significantly related to preferences for pop and folk songs but not for preferences for urban and rock songs. While the qualitative data for the focus group discussions and the open-answer questions in the questionnaire did not differentiate by type of song preference, there was support from my qualitative data − particularly strong for the focus group discussions − that friends were an important influence on respondents' music preferences. I make a further point: when I began the analysis of my data, I considered that the influence of the musical tastes of friends and siblings should be grouped together. I was mistaken: the musical influence of friends was much more important in my study than that of siblings.

(ii) Table 7.1 shows that, while there were some differences between my qualitative findings for *musical form* − the influence of the music itself − *and musical fashion* − the influence of social and other online media and of the music charts, these factors appeared to have substantial influence on young people's musical tastes: the support for these factors was stronger for the open-answer questions in the questionnaire. However, I consider the similarities between the two types of qualitative data were sufficiently consistent to justify

stating that, in my study, musical form and fashion were noteworthy influences on the music preferences of the young people. I point out that musical form and fashion were referred to equally by my study's subjects whatever their preference for genres and songs. (The closed-answer questions in the questionnaire were not a suitable format for collecting data for the 'of the moment', fluid and ephemeral influences on young people's musical preferences.)

(iii) Table 7.1 shows that for the means of listening to music there was support for a preference for *pop* songs being influenced by the *means of listening to music*. In the focus group discussions there was considerable discussion about the means of listening to music; however, the participants, while enthusiastic in their discussions, tended to focus more on discussing the technology itself rather than technology's influence on young people's music preferences. Further, there was little or no reference to the means of listening to music or its impact on the respondents' musical preferences in the data from the open-answer questions in the questionnaire. This data set could be classified as either consistent or inconsistent. However, given that my use of this factor was experimental − previously only Boyle et al. (1981) had included a means of accessing music as a factor and they included only listening to the radio − I decided to classify this data set as consistent, given its potential: today there are considerably more ways of listening to music available for young people than the radio alone.

7.1.2 My findings _in_consistent by method of data collection

There were a number of factors in my study for which the data collected by my quantitative and qualitative methods produced inconsistent findings. As I stated in Chapter 4, the social world is not like the physical world and not finding convergence between the data sets

collected by different methods is commonplace. When setting out these inconsistent findings below, I attempt to provide explanations for them.

(i) Table 7.1 shows that there were noteworthy divergences in the data collected by different methods for the relationship between my subjects' music preferences and their *social background*. For the closed-answer, quantitative data, I found little relationship between social background factors such as head of household's occupation status and music preferences. However, I did find, although only for those coming from lower status homes, a correlation between a preference for *urban* songs and *living outside the Manchester M60 ring road*, that is, in more affluent areas: the correlation was only suggestive but the beta score was relatively high (when a data file is split the total 'N' decreases, thereby reducing the likelihood of finding significant correlations). There was no reference to the influence of social background factors on subjects' music preferences in data collected by the qualitative open-answer questions in the questionnaire ('Why do you like the modern music you prefer?' and 'What factors do you think influence your taste in modern music?').

In sharp contrast, there was considerable discussion in the focus groups about the link between social background and music preferences. The younger boys linked deprived social backgrounds with a preference for urban and heavy rock and the older boys linked psychological problems to these music preferences. The girls agreed with these opinions though to a lesser extent than did the boys. As an explanation of this divergence, I suggest, as I did in Chapter 5, that the focus group participants were referring to *other* young people in setting out this view, not to themselves. This is corroborated by the questionnaire findings showing that the respondents as a whole preferred folk/country and pop to urban and rock music; the focus group participants were saying in effect that, while they themselves were not

from difficult backgrounds they could understand how *other* young people, who were, could have developed a musical taste for more anti-establishment (heavy rock and rap/hip-hop) music. In contrast, the quantitative data from the closed-answer and open-answer questions in the questionnaire focused on the respondents' opinions about their *own* music preferences. These differences in foci for my study's subjects can explain why I found differences for the influence of social background on young people's music preferences in the different types of data collection.

(ii) Table 7.1 shows that there were noteworthy divergences in the data collected by different methods for the relationship between my subjects' music preferences and *families' musical tastes*, particularly those of parents. For the focus groups and open-ended questions in questionnaire, my study's subjects referred to the influence of their parents (and, but to a much lesser extent, their siblings) on their music preferences; the reference to parental musical tastes as an influence on their own was particularly prominent in the focus group discussions. However, for the questionnaire findings I did not find any significant (or suggestive) relationship between the similarity between the subjects' parental musical tastes and their own. I offer the following explanation for this divergence. When the participants in the focus groups discussed the influence of the music tastes of parents and wider families, they very much referred to themselves and their families. When they came to talk about themselves they became concerned to emphasise the characteristics of the families from which they came. In fact, the participants in the focus groups came from a wide variety of family backgrounds (as we saw, the two schools in my study had wide catchments areas) and when the participants came together for the discussions, they became aware of, and found it interesting to discuss, the differences between their families. In contrast, the respondents

answered the closed-answer and open-answer questions in an individual setting and the interest in comparing and contrasting their family with those of the others did not play a role.

(iii) Table 7.1 shows that there were noteworthy divergences in the data collected by different methods for the relationship between my subjects' music preferences and *sex*. In the data from the closed-answer questions in the questionnaire, being a girl was significantly correlated with preferences for *pop* and *folk* songs but not with *urban* and *rock* songs, apart from a finding that, but only for those coming from lower status homes, there was a relationship between a preference for *urban* songs and being a *boy*; this relationship was only suggestive but the beta score was relatively high. However, there was little or no reference to the influence of being a boy or a girl on a young person's taste for particular music preferences in the focus group discussions. The open-answer questions in the questionnaire were not framed in a way permitting the collection data on the influence of demographic factors on musical preference. I suggest that the reason why there was little reference to the influence of sex on musical preferences in the focus group discussions was part of a general problem I encountered: when the participants discussed what they considered influenced musical taste, they tended to do so in general terms: they rarely linked specific influences to specific music preferences − the only time they made a substantial specific link was, as we saw above, when they linked having a deprived social background or psychological problems with a liking for heavy rock and rap/hip-hop music for other young people. I realised, when I monitored the focus groups, that apart from their stereotypical views on the music preferences of disadvantaged young people, the participants had a tendency to discuss the influences on the musical tastes of young people and themselves in an undifferentiated way: I found it hard to steer them into discussion of differing influences on *specific types* of music without over-steering the groups' discussion. At the end of the day, I was conscious to allow

the focus group respondents the freedom to frame their discussions of music in their own terms.

(iv) Table 7.1 shows that there were noteworthy divergences in the data collected by different methods for the relationship between my subjects' music preferences and *age*. In the closed-answer questions in the questionnaire, being younger was significantly correlated with preferences for *pop* songs but not with preference for *folk*, *urban* and *rock* songs. However, in the focus group discussions, there was little or no reference to the influence of being younger or older on a young person's taste for *particular* music preferences. I suggest that the reason why there was little reference to the influence of age on musical preferences in the focus group discussions was part of the general problem I referred to in the subsection above. The focus groups' tendency to discuss the factors influencing the musical tastes of *other* young people crowded out discussion of the differing influences of specific types of music on themselves. Again, the open-answer questions in the questionnaire were not framed in a way permitting the collection data on the influence of demographic factors on musical preference.

(v) Table 7.1 shows that there were noteworthy divergences in the data collected by different methods for the relationship between my subjects' music preferences and *school success*. For the data from my closed-answer questions in the questionnaire, I found, for those from higher status homes, a strong and significant relationship between the respondents' high level of career ambition and a preference for *urban* songs. In contrast, in the focus groups we saw how the boys, and to a lesser extent the girls, perceived those liking urban music to be from disadvantaged not privileged backgrounds − not from higher status homes − or as having psychological problems − and, presumably, not successful at school. An explanation for this divergence could lie in the relative unpopularity of urban songs with the pupils in my study:

in fact, as we saw, urban songs were the least popular. It is possible that the voices of those focus group participants who did like urban music and who came from higher status homes and were ambitious for their careers, were muffled by the majority in the focus groups who disliked urban music. There was no evidence for the data from the open-answer questions of the relationship between music preference and school success.

(vi) Table 7.1 shows that there were noteworthy divergences in the data collected by different methods for the relationship between my subjects' music preferences and *taking part in musical activities.*   There was evidence from the data derived from the closed-answer questions in the questionnaire on the relationship between taking part in musical activities and preferences for *urban* and *rock* songs. This evidence from this type of data collection was contradictory and I discuss possible reasons for this contradiction below when I develop my own ideas on the theory of young people's music preferences. The contrast I draw here is between finding evidence linking taking part in music activities with song preferences for the closed-answer questions and finding little evidence from the qualitative methods. There were a number of limited references to playing a musical instrument in the focus group discussions and no reference to the effect of playing of a musical instrument in the data from the open-answer questions. While it was not surprising that there was little evidence from data derived from the open-answer questions, given the way they were framed, it was surprising to find so little data from the focus groups. Possibly, I could have guided the focus group participants into discussing more fully the influence of taking part in musical activities on young people's and their own music preferences.

(vii) Table 7.1 shows that only in the closed-answer questions in the questionnaire did I get the response from a number of boys that the respondent considered that their musical tastes

were not influenced by any factors; these respondents took pride in the *independence* of their musical taste. I did not expect this response: it did not appear in the focus group discussions or the pilot interviews. I found it hard to fit in with rest of my findings from my study. I suggest that further in-depth interview research is needed to explore this view and understand the boys' point of view.

(viii) Table 7.1 shows a small difference for the influence of race/ethnicity on music preference. For the data from the closed-answer questions in the question, I found, but only for those coming from lower status homes, that there was a suggestive correlation between preference for *rock* songs and not being British White. Race/ethnicity was not mentioned by the focus group participants in their discussions. Ethnicity was discussed in the focus group discussion but in the context of family tastes in music along the lines of 'My family is Irish, so I like Irish music'. The participants did not discuss in a more general way why ethnic membership might be linked to preferences of particular types of music. As above, the open-answer questions in the questionnaire were not framed in a way permitting the collection data on the influence of demographic factors on musical preference

7.2 Justification of my use of mixed methods in my study of the factors influencing young people's music preferences

Considering the extent of convergence and divergence between the data collected using different methods in my study, I need to address the question of whether my use in my study of mixed methods was justified.

Using a mixture of methods for collecting data in my study yielded me a number of advantages. The most important of these was the ability it gave me to explore different aspects of young people's music preferences: collecting quantitative data enabled me to explore the influence of structural factors and qualitative data collection enabled me to explore 'of the moment', fluid and ephemeral influences. Further, my use of qualitative methods enabled me to investigate my subjects' general perspectives in an unstructured manner and also to investigate specific research issues in a structured way.

In my study, I suffered the disadvantage of having different findings from the different methods for the same factors. I was not surprised to find these divergences as they are commonplace. I was able to suggest plausible reasons why I found these differences in my data on the influence of these factors on young people's musical preferences. I regarded these differences between my data sets as an *opportunity* to generate more complex explanations and to build these disparate pieces into a coherent whole. Further, these divergences in my findings suggested to me ideas for future research.

7.3 Developing a new understanding of young people's music preferences from my study findings

I came to a number of conclusions about how my study findings could be explained theoretically. In this subsection, I try to develop my own ideas, using my judgement as a researcher.

7.3.1 Explanations for young people's musical tastes should be seen as complimentary and not as competitive

We saw in Chapters 2 and 3 that there have been a number of different ways of understanding young people's music tastes. Further, we saw how the explanations adopted by the early British theorists who relied on psychology and psychoanalysis, the CCCS researchers, the post-subculturalists and the youth music survey researchers were seen as mutually exclusive. Hesmondhalgh (2005) suggested the theoretical position that researchers should emphasise flexibility and recognise the influence of social background factors, such as social class and race, as well as musical forms and practices. Hesmondhalgh (2005) did not himself undertake any empirical research to validate his approach. However, as we saw in chapter 2, two studies have adopted an approach that begins to approach Hesmondhalgh's (2005) position. Thus, Boyle et al. (1981), in a study of pop music, sought to capture in their self-report survey elements of structure, such as demographics and home influences, as well as aspects of musical form such as lyrics, melody and rhythm. And Urquía (2005,) in a study of salsa dancing, held the view that this subcultural activity was a display in a marginal social field intended to establish a hierarchy of those in the know and also a subcultural activity that was susceptible to the values of the dominant sections of society. When I began my study, it was clear that more empirical work adopting a theoretical perspective that took both structural/social factors and musical form and fashion factors into account in understanding young people's music preferences is needed.

I consider that Hesmondhalgh's theoretical perspective produces the best understanding of my data: combining different perspectives led to a valuable understanding of how the young

people in my study developed their musical preferences. My study suggests that a flexible approach and recognition of the influence of social background factors, such as social class, sex, gender and race, *as well as* the influences of 'of the moment', fluid and ephemeral musical forms and music fashion can develop existing theory, adding new insights.

I argue that the influences of the features of the songs themselves and what is popular in the media should be seen as *additional* and *complementary* influences on young people's musical taste: I do not consider that researchers must choose as explanations for young people's music preferences *either* the structural and psychological factors advocated by the early British theorists who relied on psychology and psychoanalysis, the CCCS researchers and youth music social survey researchers *or* the musical form and fashion factors advocated by the post-subculturalists.

7.3.2 Developing a *new understanding* of young people's perception of modern music and the factors related to their preferences for specific types that combines different perspectives

The enthusiasm for, and knowledge of, modern music of the young people in my study enabled me to make a substantial contribution to understanding of how young people perceive modern music and what factors affect young people's music preferences.

Beginning with the perception of modern music, my focus group data demonstrated that the pupil participants in my study had strong views on how modern music could be classified. My study demonstrated that it was possible to construct a taxonomy based on the young people's own views of how modern music is constructed and divided, although I faced some

difficulties; in particular, only the girls identified folk and country as a genre and the participants disagreed with each other to a considerable extent about which songs signified which subgenres. For my analysis of my questionnaire quantitative data I found that classification by song groupings rather than by subgenre groupings had more internal validity. The success of my song groupings taxonomy was shown by the quantitative data from my questionnaire survey yielding a number of interesting and sometimes very strong relationships between preferences for specific types of songs and a number of independent structural factors. The qualitative data from my questionnaire survey did not show any variations in music form and fashion to be related to specific preference for song groupings; instead, I found music form and fashion to influence all music preferences. It appears that the pupils selected from the wider music form and fashion available, those parts that chimed with their particular music tastes.

Turning to consideration of the influence of independent factors on music preferences, by the different types of song group − pop, folk, urban and rock − I demonstrate how my study's findings develop theoretical understanding of the development of young people's music preferences.

My study's findings develop the bedroom culture theory that has been proposed both by the CCCS subculturalists such as McRobbie and Garber (1976) and by the post-subculturalists Lincoln (2005) and Kearney (2007) in their more productive and active interpretation of this theory. In my study, *pop songs* were the second most popular type. I found in the quantitative data gathered by my questionnaire survey that there were strong relationships between, on the one hand, preferring pop songs and, on the other, not only with being a girl, but also with being younger, having friends with similar music tastes and using less independent means

such as TV and radio to listen to music. My findings for my qualitative data from my questionnaire suggest that these younger girls were attracted by the beat, danceability and lyrics of pop music. I did not gather any data specifically about *where* the younger girls gathered together with their similarly-minded friends to listen to pop music using these mainstream media, but their bedrooms were likely places given their age. Contrary to Lincoln (2005) I found that this constellation of influences was experienced only by the girls: the boys in my study did not appear to take part in a bedroom culture.

The finding in my study that friends' musical tastes played an important role in pupils' preference for pop music is possibly the most valuable part of my contribution to the development of bedroom culture. Previous researchers have tended not to give friends' influence a significant role in the development of young people's music preferences. For example, Tanner et al. (2008) did not include the influence of friends in their study despite their inclusion of a wide range of other factors. The influence of friends is different from that of family and social background as friends are not necessarily drawn from the young people's local communities and can be drawn from school and from social, sporting and musical activities outside the community. I point out that the two schools in my study drew in pupils from a wide area including areas of affluence (e.g. Altrincham) and of deprivation (e.g. Moss Side), suggesting that the subjects' friends made at school could be drawn from a wide range of communities. Discussing pop songs music with friends is clearly a channel by which features of the music itself − the beat, danceability and lyrics of songs − and music fashion can impact upon young girls' music tastes.

Clearly, there is a need for further research on the location where younger girls gather to listen to pop music with their friends − in-depth interviews in their bedrooms could work

well, as Lincoln (2005) suggests, as bedrooms are places where young girls would be in control of the situation and that, as a result, would feel relaxed and speak with fluency and confidence. However, one could argue that the presence of any unfamiliar adult in a teenager's bedroom could significantly affect any data collected. It is certainly unlikely that it would be considered ethical for me, as a young man, to interview younger girls in their bedrooms. I would have to find another way: possibly by asking younger girls to keep diaries of their activities in their bedrooms. However, it is possible that data obtained by diary-keeping might be too self-conscious for research purposes.

My innovative use of the means of listening to music as an influence on young people's music preferences demonstrated its worth for those pupils liking pop: there was a relatively strong relationship between liking pop and using less independent means of listening to music. Watching television and listening to the radio, possibly with girlfriends in their bedrooms, are means by which young girls' music preferences can be influenced. I suggest that this innovative factor has considerable potential to be developed in later studies, in particular if, in qualitative research, pupils' views could be focused more on the link between their use of different means of listening to music and their musical tastes rather than be diverted into discussion of the technology involved, which clearly fascinated them. Alternatively, the possibility could be explored of including a quantitative question in a questionnaire survey to look at the relationship between accessing and sharing music on young people's music preferences.

My study's finding of a strong relationship between liking pop songs and being a girl also fits with the perspective of the youth music survey researchers Christenson and Petersen (1998), Hargreaves et al. (1995) and, particularly, Colley (2008) (although not that of Tanner et al.

(2008) who considered race and ethnicity to be more important determinants of musical style than sex). Colley's (2008) study was of young men and women rather than younger boys and girls. She interpreted the link between sex and music preferences in terms of traditional gender-role-related attributes and young men's and young women's development. Thus, the preference for young women was lighter mainstream music since its lyrics that focused on emotions and relationships with others, while the preference for young men was for heavy music associated with aggression, dominance and rebellion. An emphasis on lyrics that are focused on emotions and relationships with others could be seen as fitting with young girls' bedroom culture.

Folk songs were clearly the most popular song type in my study. In the analysis of the data from my closed-answer questions in my questionnaire, I found fewer influences on liking folk songs than I found for liking pop songs. For the closed-answer questions in my questionnaire, preference for folk songs was significantly related to being a girl and this relationship was stronger than that I found for pop songs. I suggest that the bedroom culture theory may have less relevance for understanding a preference for folk music than it was for understanding preference for pop music, as girls of all ages liked folk music a great deal. Further research is needed to explore what contexts were most relevant for those interested in folk music: listening to folk music in bedrooms as compared to doing so at folk concerts or folk clubs.

I point out that my finding for the link between being girls and liking folk songs could be a function of the way the focus group participants, and this was mainly the girls, perceived folk songs. The girls' choice of specific folk/country songs was, as we saw, limited and contradicted, to some extent, the findings in current literature that boys liked folk/country

more than girls. See, for example, Colley (2008) who found male under-graduates to be significantly more likely to like blues and folk (though not country) than female ones. I also refer here to Tanner et al. (2008) who, although they found the influence of sex to be less important than that of race/ethnicity, found that boys were significantly more likely to be Hard Rockers (with a liking for country and new country music). However, Tanner et al. (2008) did not find a significant relationship between sex and being a Black Stylist (a musical style that also favoured country and new country). I gave my opinion when discussing my findings from the focus group discussions that the two of three songs identified by the focus group girls as folk/country could be classified commercially as pop rather than folk/country. The question is whether having in my study, as song signifiers for folk music, songs that were close to pop songs − and the lines between these two types of music are easily blurred − skewed the findings from my closed-answer questions in my questionnaire. In my study, I had the advantage of having more than one data set and I could use the findings from one kind of data to shed light on the other. As we saw in Chapter 5, the girls in the focus group discussions were clearly enthusiastic and knowledgeable about folk/country as a music genre while the boys were not. The girls in the focus groups discussed a range of folk songs: they did not discuss solely those sung by Taylor Swift; they also discussed the songs of folk artists who in commercial terms were clearly not pop artists, such as Mumford & Sons. Thus, I do *not* think the girls were confused about the distinction they made between pop and folk music or that the inclusion of a song by Taylor Swift as a folk song signifier might have led in my statistical analysis to my finding an erroneous relationship between liking folk songs and being a being a girl.

From analysing my closed-answer questions in my questionnaire, I found that a preference for folk songs was also significantly related to having friends with similar musical tastes,

although this relationship was weaker than that I found for pop songs. As I pointed out above, for the influence of friends in preference for pop songs, the influence of friends is different from that of family and social background as they are drawn from a wider context. I suggest that the qualitative data from my questionnaire suggests that those girls liking folk were attracted by features of the music itself, particularly the lyrics and the tune − in contrast the more salient attraction for pop songs would be the beat and danceability. As there was no clear link in my statistical analysis between means of listening to music and preference for folk songs, further research is needed on how those preferring folk songs accessed them. As both older and younger girls had a liking for pop, the means they used could encompass both less and more independent means of listening: internet as well as television and radio.

While my study explained to a considerable extent what factors influenced young people's liking for pop songs and folk songs, the picture for what influenced *rock* and *urban* songs was much less clear, particularly, for urban songs. I did find in the focus groups a strong view, particularly put forward by the boys, that young people who were from deprived social backgrounds or had with psychological problems liked hard rock and rap/hip-hop music. However, I considered that the participants when doing this were essentially talking about other young people, not themselves. This aspect of my findings echoes the relationships posited by the early British theories such as Jephcott (1954) and Bowlby (1946) who relied on psychology and psychoanalysis to explain youth subculture. In contrast, when talking about the influences on their *own* musical tastes of musical form and fashion in their answers to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire, the respondents did not suggest that a disadvantaged background was a factor in influencing their music preferences.

My analysis of the data from the closed-answer questions in my questionnaire clearly did not support the view often put forward in the literature that those who like heavy metal and rock are likely to be boys on the grounds that boys are attracted by such music's aggression, dominance and rebellion − supposedly the concerns of young men: see, for example, the views of Christenson and Petersen (1998) Hargreaves et al. (1995) and Colley (2008). My study's findings suggest that a more nuanced approach to investigating young people's preferences for urban and rock songs needs to be taken. I argue that it was not the younger age of my study subjects that led me to fail to find a relationship between heavy rock and rap/hip-hop (anti –establishment) songs and being a boy. There is a considerable body of research (this was a popular topic in the 1980s and 1990s) demonstrating that aggression in boys does not increase in the later teens. In an American study, Moffitt (1990) in a study of nearly delinquent and non-delinquent boys found that the delinquent boys' antisocial behavior began before school age, escalated at school entry, and persisted into adolescence. Broidy (2003) drawing upon data from three countries (Canada, New Zealand, USA) concluded that, among boys (but not among girls) there was continuity in problem behavior from childhood to adolescence and such continuity was especially acute when early problem behavior takes the form of physical aggression. A little differently, research by Björkqvist et al. (1992), together with research by Lagerspetz et al. (1988), found that in Finland, aggression in boys (and girls) peaked at age 11. Björkqvist et al. (1992) state that a possible interpretation of this finding was that, during puberty, the interest of adolescents turned away from concerns with social structure and hierarchy and towards other matters such as dating.

I made some progress with understanding at a deeper level what influenced the young people in my study who liked *urban and rock songs* when, in the analysis of the closed-answer questions in my questionnaire, I controlled for status of head of respondents' household (as

we saw in Chapter 6). When I controlled the data in this manner, my data produced some interesting findings. My data showed that, for those from *higher status* homes, a liking for urban songs correlated with having a higher degree of career ambition. This relationship is noteworthy because it was significant − and achieving a significance level of .05 or over becomes much harder when controlling for a factor in the analysis of one's data, given the reduction in the total number of cases − and for having a relatively high beta score. My finding is the opposite of the stereotypical view that those liking urban songs have rejected school and its values: these young people are keen to succeed in today's society. I speculate that this preference for urban music for those coming from high status homes was an indication of minor rebellion. These pupils from high status home had accepted what was likely to be their parents' wish for them − to have high career aspirations − but rebelled in terms of their musical tastes, preferring anti-establishment urban songs.

When I controlled by home status, I also found for those from *lower status* homes correlations between, on the one hand, liking urban songs and, on the other, being a boy and living outside the Manchester ring road. My finding, that those from lower status homes who lived outside the ring road − supposedly in more affluent areas − were suggestively more likely to prefer urban music, was unexpected. It would have been a better fit for the argument that those liking anti-establishment music were from less affluent areas if I had found that those living *inside* the ring − supposedly in less affluent areas − had preferred urban music. On reflection, I suggest that this difficulty could be a reflection on the validity of my measure of the affluence of the areas where the pupils in my study lived. I consider the fact that Wythenshawe, a very large council estate (indeed one of the largest council estates in the UK) lies just *outside* the ring road, on the south side of Manchester, on the same side of Manchester as the two schools in my study, may have compromised my findings. I also note

that Didsbury, a smaller affluent area was located just inside the ring road on the south side of Manchester.

I speculate that what I found in my study for the relationship, for those coming from low status homes, between preferring urban music, living outside the ring road and being a boy, could be understood as a reflection of living on the Wythenshawe estate. Thus, I speculate that boys in my study, who came from low-status homes situated in the generally more affluent areas of south Manchester outside the ring road, were aware of the more affluent homes of those nearby and reacted by preferring urban music which they perceived to be anti-social. I speculate that boys were more likely to be aware of this disparity given that they were likely to have more freedom to roam than girls − for boys greater freedom on the streets and ability to roam, see Frith (1978) and, more recently, Barnes et al. (2006). My speculative reference to the effect of living Wythenshawe estate echoes the findings those of the CCCS researchers in their studies of working class subcultures, such as teddy boys and skinheads, described in *Resistance through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-war Britain*, *(*Hall and Jefferson, 1975).

When I controlled by home status, I also found for those from *lower status* homes correlations between liking rock songs with *not* being British White. For the link I found between liking rock songs and not being British White for those respondents coming from lower status home, I point out, as I explained in Chapter 6, that I chose the measure British White versus other ethnic groups (which included Irish White as well as black ethnic groupings) as this measure had the best correlation coefficients with the four song scales. My finding suggests that there is a complex relationship between ethnic groups and music preferences that needs unpacking with a more detailed analysis where a distinction can be

made between Irish White and black ethnic groups. In my study, there were not enough pupils from black ethnic groups to do this.

The findings from my statistical analysis of data from my closed-answer questions for the relationship between *taking part in musical activities* and preferences for urban and rock songs while controlling for home status were difficult to interpret. For those coming from *higher status* homes my findings showed a *negative* suggestive correlation between liking *urban* songs and taking part in musical activities while for those coming from *lower status* homes there was a *positive* suggestive relationship between liking *rock* songs and taking part in musical activities. This variation in the findings for the influence of taking part in musical activities by home status is difficult to explain and clearly requires further research. The link, for those from lower status homes, between taking part in musical activities and liking rock songs could be explained by knowledge of music leading to appreciation of rock songs' musical complexity and instrument-led form; however, it is not clear why, for those from lower status homes, taking part in musical activities was *negatively* related to liking urban songs (unless one were to cast aspersions, undoubtedly unjustifiable, on the musical quality of urban songs). My analysis of my study's findings for the role of taking part in musical activities was further complicated by my finding of divergence, as we saw above, between my statistical findings for the closed-answer questions from the questionnaire and those from the qualitative focus group discussions, for the latter there were a limited number of references to playing musical instruments (there was also little evidence in the data from the open-answer questions in the questionnaire about taking part in musical activities but this not surprising, given the way they were framed).

For the influence of musical form and musical fashion in a general way on the study's subjects' preference for rock, a finding from the open-ended questions in the questionnaire is interesting. Noting for a preference for rock music, the focus group participants referred to something that highlighted the influence of aspects of the music itself on this preference. As we saw in Chapter 5, a number of participants, particularly boys, referred to their dislike of auto-tuning and their preference for music where this did not take place. The bands cited by the boys as examples of auto tune-free music were largely rock ones such as Joy Division, Stone Roses and Inspiral Carpets: thus, a feature of the music itself influenced a preference for rock.

7.4 The limitations of my study

The first limitation of my study is that the two schools involved were selective and single-sex Roman Catholic schools and that these schools drew pupils to a noteworthy extent from Irish backgrounds. Also the number of African/Caribbean black and Asian pupils in the two schools was limited and the two schools were located in affluent areas of Manchester. However, the popularity of the songs groups my study subjects preferred was not unreasonably out-of-line with those of other studies such as those by Tanner et al. (2008), Colley (2008) and Hargreaves et al. (1995), and, as we saw in Chapter 6, being White Irish did not turn out to be a significant factor in my statistical analysis of my pupils' preferences.

It is extremely difficult for a Masters' student to obtain access to study children given the emphasis in our society on protecting the welfare of children. I was fortunate that I was a peripatetic teacher in the boys' school and was able to get access not only to the boys' school

but also to use the relationship between the two schools to get access to the sister girls' school. If I were an established university-employed and supported researcher, it might have been possible for me to secure access to a mixed sex school but I was not. In the event, I consider that for the questionnaire survey, with its individual focus, might not have been affected to a great extent by its single-sex school context. For the focus groups, I consider that the single-sex school context did affect the discussions. However, I consider that the effect was, overall, positive: I felt that the girls were able to discuss their opinions on modern music freely without being dominated by boys, who might have disparaged them, for example, for liking Taylor Swift.

Indeed, the girls being educated in an all-girls school might have had the opportunity to develop their music preferences with less restraint than would have been the case had they been educated in a mixed school where the boys may have dominated the discussion of opinions about modern music. Thus, the presence of boys might have led them to be less enthusiastic about folk and pop, and not to have had such extended discussions about artists such as Taylor Swift. I do not consider that there would have been a significant effect on the boys' tastes if educated in a mixed school, given the evidence showing how boys tendency to dominate girls in mixed schools (Baxter, 2002a; Baxter, 2002b). More research is needed here and a comparison drawn between the music preferences of girls in single-sex schools and the music preferences of girls in mixed schools.

A second limitation of my study is that, for those findings where I controlled for another variable, I found for the most part only suggestive relationships between song groupings and independent factors. Where I failed to find significant differences, I would probably have had a good chance of finding significant ones had I had the resource to increase number of

students in my questionnaire survey. However, my resources as a Master's student, particularly in terms of time, were limited.

A third limitation of my study is my decision to base the pupils' preferences for modern music on their own taxonomy of modern music − their perception of how modern music is divided into different genres and how these are labelled. For me, this decision to ask the pupils themselves how they classified music was crucial for providing a meaningful way of understanding young people's musical tastes, even if the young people's taxonomy does not agree with the researcher's own opinion or what is common in commercial use. I considered that this understanding could not be obtained if a researcher imposed his/her own taxonomy of modern music on the young people in his/her study or utilised a commercial taxonomy. My adopting my subjects' own taxonomy of modern music limits the comparability of my study's findings with those of other studies and also the generalisability of my study's findings to wider society. However, a researcher in the field of modern music needs to take into account the way in which it rapidly changes (Tanner et al., 2008). Thus, a researcher utilising a taxonomy from a previous study might well find that, by the time he/she comes to conduct his/her study, this taxonomy is out-of-date.

A fourth limitation of my study is that I did not collect enough information on pupils' participation in musical activities in order to understand my contradictory findings for this factor's influence for pupils who came from differing status homes and who had preferences for urban and rock songs. On refection I consider that I should have collected information on:

- Where more than one is musical instrument is played, the most important for the pupil

- Specific singing activities, whether singing is in a choir, whether choir singing inside or outside the school environment

- Playing in a band, whether band playing is inside or outside the school environment

- Having musical lessons, the cost of these and whether these are held inside or outside the school environment

- Musical examinations passed

A fifth limitation of my study is that my measure of living in an area more affluent/outside the Manchester ring road *versus* living in a less affluent area/inside the ring road was misguided given the presence of a very large and deprived council estate being located just outside the ring road.

A final limitation of my study, again due my restricted time resources, was the lack of a set of in-depth interviews at the end of my study, where I could have explored interesting issues raised by my quantitative and other qualitative findings in more detail. However, to conduct this additional fieldwork could not reasonably be expected of a Masters' Dissertation researcher. Had I had the time to undertake in-depth interviews − possible only for a student with PhD-level resources, particularly considering the time needed for transcribing and coding of in-depth interviews − I would have undertaken further research to investigate the following.

(i) For those pupils preferring *pop* songs, I would have liked to interview one or more younger girls in order to explore in detail how and where they listened to music and the role in the development of their music preferences of their friends. I consider that these data

would add to the understanding the bedroom culture theory. As I explained above, I would not for ethical reasons be able as Lincoln (2005) did to undertake these in-depth interviews in young girls' bedrooms. I would have had to find another location in which to interview them or use another method, such as diary-keeping.

(ii) For those pupils preferring *folk* songs, I would have liked to interview one or more girls in order to explore in detail the role in the development of their music preferences of the musical tastes of their friends and also to discover whether any other factors affected their preference.

(iii) For those pupils preferring *urban* songs, where my questionnaire and qualitative data did not provide as clear picture of the correlates of this preference compared to those I found for pop and folk songs preferences, I would have liked to explore the relationship between liking urban songs, coming from higher status homes and having a higher degree of ambition for their future careers.

(iv) For those pupils preferring *rock* songs, where my questionnaire and qualitative data did not provide as clear picture of the correlates of this preference compared to those I found for pop and folk songs preferences, I would have liked to explore the relationship between liking rock songs, coming from a lower status home and not being White British. As well as conducting in-depth interviews I would like to have undertaken further hierarchal multiple regressions in order to discover which Non-White-British groups were more likely to come from lower status homes and to like urban songs.

(v) For those pupils preferring *urban and rock* songs, I would have liked to explore the contrary relationships I found in taking part in musical activities: as we have seen, those preferring urban songs and coming from higher status homes were likely to take part in musical activities whereas those preferring rock songs and coming from lower status homes were not likely to take part in musical activities. As well as conducting in-depth interviews I would like to have undertaken further hierarchal multiple regressions in order to discover how the types of musical activity undertaken − playing an instrument, singing and dancing − affected these relationships.

 (vi) For those pupils who argued that *no* factors influenced their music preferences, I would have liked to conduct in-depth interview with them in order to explore what they meant by their statements.

7.5 My suggestions for further research

In terms of a *theoretical approach* for further research that would increase our understanding of the development of young people's music preferences, I suggest that researchers adopt Hesmondhalgh's (2005) approach that emphasises flexibility and recognises the influence of social background factors, such as social class, gender and race, as well as musical forms and musical fashion: these two types of factors should be seen as complementary and not as competitive influences. Although I found the young people in my study to refer to musical form and musical fashion on their music preferences in an undifferentiated way, with little or no reference to specific music genres, I consider these factors are important for future studies. I suggest that researchers allow their subjects to set out their own taxonomies of modern music: these will be both meaningful to the pupils and up-to-date.

In terms of a methodological approach for further research that would increase researchers' understanding of young people's music preferences, I suggest that researchers adopt a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach. I suggest the use of more resources so that large samples can be collected; the larger size would permit effective statistical analysis of the correlates of rock songs and urban songs so that, when researchers need to control for factors in their analysis, sufficient numbers are available to find significant correlations between independent factors and these preferences. I also suggest that researchers undertake in-depth interviews in order to explore interesting issues thrown up by their quantitative data; in particular, data from in-depth interviews could provide additional understanding of boys' and girls' liking of urban and rock songs and, for girls liking pop and folk songs, where they listen to music and discuss music with their friends. In terms of study sites I suggest that future researcher should include mixed-sex schools, schools with a substantial proportion of

black and Asian ethnic pupils and schools located in less affluent areas.

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Appendix 1

FOCUS GROUP EXERCISE FOR UNDERSTANDING YOUNG PEOPLE'S MUSICAL TASTE PROJECT

1. How many types of modern music can you identify? What names would you give each type?

2. Please can you make a list of songs that represent each type?

3. What factors do you think influence what types of modern music young people like?

(i) The young person's background
(ii) How the young person listens to music

Thank you for taking part!

Appendix 2

Dear Pupil,

Thank you for volunteering to take part in a survey of young people's music tastes for my research masters degree. The survey is entirely voluntary and any information provided will be completely confidential; no record has been taken of your name.

In my thesis – and in any future publications – I shall only use summaries of my findings with no reference to individual opinion.

Your assistance is greatly valued in helping me to understand the degree of relation between music and identity among young people today.

Yours gratefully,

Daniel Lucien Bachelard

Appendix 3

UNDERSTANDING YOUNG PEOPLE'S MUSICAL TASTES

Daniel Lucien Bachelard

School (v1):	Year group (v2)	Code number (v3):

Most questions can be answered by simply ticking boxes or circling numbers.

About yourself

Q1 What is your gender? (v4)

1 ☐ Male
2 ☐ Female

Q2 What is your ethnic group? (v5) Classification based on *British Social Attitudes Survey.*

1 ☐ Black: of African origin
2 ☐ Black: of Caribbean origin
3 ☐ East Asian: for example... China/Japan/Korea
4 ☐ South Asian: India/Pakistan/Bangladesh/Sri-Lanka
5 ☐ White: of British origin
6 ☐ White: of Irish origin
7 ☐ White: of other origin (please specify...........................)
8 ☐ other: (please specify...........................)
9 ☐ do not know

Q3 How old are you? (v6)

1 ☐ 12
2 ☐ 13
3 ☐ 14
4 ☐ 15

Q4 What school year are you in? (v7)

1 ☐ Year 8
2 ☐ Year 9
3 ☐ Year 10

Q5 Where do you live? (v8)

1 ☐ Altrincham
2 ☐ Bowdon
3 ☐ Cheadle
4 ☐ Cheadle Hulme
5 ☐ Flixton
6 ☐ Hale
7 ☐ Halebarns
8 ☐ Handforth
9 ☐ Hazel Grove
10 ☐ Sale
11 ☐ Stockport
12 ☐ Stretford
13 ☐ Timperley
14 ☐ Urmston
15 ☐ Wilmslow
16 ☐ Other: (please specify..............................)

Q6 What is your full post code e.g. M32 8BR

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┌─────────────────────────────┐
│                             │
│                             │
└─────────────────────────────┘
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Q7 Is the head of your household employed, unemployed or a pensioner? (v9)

1 ☐ Employed
2 ☐ Unemployed
3 ☐ A Pensioner

Q8 If your head of household is employed, what is his/her occupation. Please give as much detail as possible. e (v10)

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┌─────────────────────────────┐
│                             │
│                             │
└─────────────────────────────┘
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Q9 Do you play a musical instrument? (v11)

1 ☐ No
2 ☐ Yes

Q10 What musical instrument do you play? (v12)

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┌─────────────────────────────┐
│                             │
│                             │
└─────────────────────────────┘
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Q11 Do you take part in singing activities, group or solo? (v13)

1 ☐ No
2 ☐ Yes

Q12 Do you take part in dancing activities, group or solo? (v14)

1 ☐ No
2 ☐ Yes

Q13 How ambitious are you in terms of your future career?

		Not at all ambitious ↓					Very ambitious ↓	
v15		1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q14 What career would you like to have in the future? (v16)

Please give as much detail as possible.

Q15 To what extent have you considered a career involving music?

		Not at all ↓					A great deal ↓	
v17		1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q16 Do you have similar musical tastes to your parent/s, your sibling/s and your friends?
(N/A means not applicable if you have no siblings)

		Very different tastes ↓					Very similar tastes ↓	
v18	Parent/s or guardian/s	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v19	Sibling/s	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v20	Friends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q17 To what extent do you listen to music using the following mediums?

		Not at all					A great deal	
v21	Radio	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v22	Television	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v23	MTV/other music television channels	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v24	YouTube	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v25	Internet Media Players e.g. Itunes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v26	Internet Streaming Services e.g. Spotify	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v27	Games Consoles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q18 Please could you indicate how much to your musical taste are the following songs.

		Not at all to my taste					Very much to my taste	
v28	22 - Taylor Swift	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v29	A Team - Ed Sheeran	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v30	Bangarang - Skrillex Ft. Sirah	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v31	Blind Faith - Chase & Status Ft. Liam Bailey	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v32	Call Me Maybe - Carly Rae Jepsen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v33	Owl City – Fireflies	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v34	Gold Dust - DJ Fresh	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v35	Gold On The Ceiling - The Black Keys	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v36	I Will Wait - Mumford & Sons	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v37	La La La - Naughty Boy Ft. Sam Smith	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v38	Lose Yourself – Eminem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v39	Mirrors - Justin Timberlake	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v40	Mr. Brightside - The Killers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v41	OMG - Usher Ft. Will.I.Am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v42	Pompei – Bastille	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v43	Run This Town - Jay Z Ft Kanye West/Rihanna	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v45	Super Bass - Nicki Minaj	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v46	Super Black Hole – Muse	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v47	The Anthem - Good Charlotte	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v48	Waiting All Night - Rudimental Ft. Ella Eyre	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v49	Welcome To The Black Parade - My Chemical Romance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v50	What Makes You Beautiful – One Direction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v51	What's My Name – Rihanna	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v52	White Noise – Disclosure Ft. Aluna George	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q19 Please could you indicate how much to your musical taste are the following genres.

		Not at all to my taste						Very much to my taste
v53	Country/Folk	↓	2	3	4	5	6	7
v54	Drum & Bass	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v55	Dubstep	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v56	Electronic Pop	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v57	Electronic Rock	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v58	Emo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v59	Hip-Hop/Rap	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v60	Indie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v61	Pop	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v62	R & B	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v63	Rock	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q20 Why do you like the modern music you prefer? **(v64)**

Q21 What factors do you think influence your taste in modern music? **(v65)**

Thank you!

APPENDIX 4: THE USE OF SAMPLING IN MY STUDY

My sources for this appendix are Bryman (2012), Bryman and Bell (2013), Grover et al. (2000) and Pallant (2103).

Drawing a sample of respondents

Due to the large numbers involved in quantitative research, researchers nearly always find it necessary to draw a *sample* of respondents for study out of a *population*, for example, drawing a sample of 100 pupils out of the population consisting of the total number of 1,000 pupils in a school. Thus, the population is the universe of units/people and the sample is a segment of that population that the researcher selects for investigation. A *census* is an enumeration of the total population.

Respondents for investigation can be selected from a population using a probability or non-probability approach. A *probability sample* is where the survey subjects are randomly selected and all members of the population have a known and non-zero chance of being selected (in simple random sampling all members of the population have an equal chance of selection; in stratified and cluster sampling, some have a higher probability of being chosen than others but their chances of selection are known, see below). In *non-probability sample* random sampling is not used and the probability of an individual member of the population being selected is unknown.

The *sampling frame* is a listing of all the units in the population from which the researcher's sample will be drawn, for example, in school-based research a researcher could use the School Register of pupils' names.

I distinguish between a *respondent*, a person who has responded to a questionnaire by filling it in and returning it and a *survey subject* who has been sent a questionnaire but may or may not have filled one in and returned it.

Types of probability sampling

A *representative sample* is a sample that for specific characteristics reflects accurately the population from which it is drawn, for example, a sample representing accurately the proportions of boys and girls in a school.

Simple random sampling is where the researcher draws a sample of respondents directly from the sampling frame. Simple random sampling does not, in most cases, lead to a representative sample. For example, by chance, a researcher drawing a simple random sample of pupils in a mixed school could draw a sample disproportionately of boys. Simple random sampling is also costly: for example, in the UK, the researcher could draw respondents who lived in towns and cities scattered across the UK. Researchers have therefore adopted a number of techniques to improve the representativeness of their samples or to reduce their administrative costs.

Stratified random sampling improves the representativeness of a sample. It is possible for a researcher to adopt this sampling technique where he/she has information about some key

characteristics of the population. For example, the researcher has access to an organisation's listing of employees with information about each person's sex and organisation position. The researcher can then divide this population into separate groups or *mutually exclusive strata.* The researcher can then select from each *stratum* (for example, by simple random sampling) a proportionate number of respondents and the total sample consist of those selected from each stratum.

Stratified random sampling ensures that where the researcher has information about some key characteristics of survey subjects, he/she can ensure that these characteristics are proportionally reflected in his/her sample. For example, in a business organization with 1,000 employees, a researcher may be provided with a list of employees including information on the employment status of each employee and he/she may consider that employment status has an important influence on attitudes to work. Say the business organisation has 950 employees who are non-managerial and 50 employees who are managerial, the researcher can divide the population of employees into two strata and, using simple random sampling twice, select 80 employees out of the non-managerial stratum and 20 out of the managerial stratum. When the researcher calculates the overall proportion of his/her sample agreeing/disagreeing with statements about attitude to work, he/she can be confident that the potentially different attitudes towards work of non-managerial and managerial employees are represented in the overall statistics he/she calculates.

Alternatively, where in research in a business organisation the researcher is concerned to compare the attitudes of two groups within the organisation, such as non-managerial and managerial employees, he/she can, by means of simple random sampling, draw *equal* numbers of respondents from the two employment status strata, say 50 non-managerial and

50 managerial employees. The researcher then has a considerable advantage in conducting tests, such as the t-test (see below), designed to explore differences between groups since both of his/her groups are of a reasonable size. The researcher can then calculate *overall* measures, such as central tendency, by weighting his/her sample. In weighting the researcher assigns an adjustment weight to each survey respondent. Persons under-represented groups get a weight larger than 1, and those in over-represented groups get a weight smaller than 1. In the computation of means and other measures, the researcher uses the weighted values.

In *cluster sampling* the researcher selects groups/clusters of some kind as a first step in selecting his/her sample; the researcher, of course, needs prior information about each group cluster before he/she proceeds. The researcher then conducts a simple random sample of each group/cluster. The clusters a researcher selects are often geographical in order to concentrate his/her questionnaire distribution and collection to a small number of geographical locations, as this reduces survey costs. With a large population, the researcher may adopt a multi-cluster approach. For example, a researcher wishing to distribute questionnaires to school staff in the UK could select four counties out of the total number of British counties and then select a number of schools by simple random sampling from the schools in that county. The researcher could then seek access for distributing of self-completion questionnaires to staff from the heads of these schools. Having obtained access, the researcher can then select a number of staff to receive self-completion questionnaires by simple random sampling from the school's list of staff.

Cluster sampling can significantly reduce research costs. For example, contacting schools to secure access in a small number of counties is cheaper than contacting schools in counties scattered across the UK. The geographical spread of selected schools is an important cost

consideration as the researcher would undoubtedly have to make personal visits to each selected school to secure access from the heads for his study.

Cluster sampling can be combined with stratified sampling: for example the researcher who considered that sex could have an impact on his/her findings, could using the school's list of staff divide the staff in each school into male and female and then, using simple random sampling, select proportionate (or equal numbers) of men and women staff in each school for combining in his/her final sample.

Sample size

The researcher should be aware that *relative* size of sample to the population is not a key issue; instead, *absolute* sample size is. The absolute size of the sample is an important factor when the researcher comes to undertake statistical calculations on his/her data. Most social science researchers use 95 percent confidence limits for statistical tests such as t-tests and multiple regressions (see below for discussion of the meaning of significant differences and confidence levels). The larger the absolute size of the sample, the more likely that the researcher is to find that differences between groups in his/her sample are significant and thereby worthy of consideration. Time and expense are also important considerations for a researcher deciding the size for his/her sample.

Types of non-probability sampling

The main types of non-probability sampling are as follows – in none of these does the researcher use a sampling frame.

In *Convenience* or *Availability sampling*, the researcher simply selects respondents according to their availability.

In *Snowball sampling*, the researcher makes an initial contact with a small group of people relevant to the research and them obtains further contacts from them and so forth.

In *Quota sampling*, often used in commercial research, the researcher seeks to produce a sample that reflects a population in terms of different groups, for example, sex groups or race groups. The researcher employs a team whose members select people (for example, stopping people in a town centre) to fit these categories. For example, the team members are required to select 100 white men, 100 white women, 10 black men and 10 black women. When the team member has selected the requisite number in a category, he/she no longer selects members of that group.

APPENDIX 5: THE STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED IN MY STUDY

My sources for this appendix are Bryman (2012), Bryman and Bell (2013), Grover et al. (2000) and Pallant (2103).

A6.1 VARIOUS STATISTICAL MEASURES

Measure of central tendency

I used the mean (arithmetic average) score.

Measure of dispersion

I used the standard deviation which measures the amount of variation or dispersion from the average. A low standard deviation indicates that the data are clustered close to the mean while a high standard deviation indicates that the data are spread out over a large range of values.

Measures of association

Measures of association (correlation) describe the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables e.g. How does a person's sex relate to their musical

identification? Correlations accepted as meaningful in social science are considerably less high than those considered respectable in science.

Measures of significance and confidence levels

Measures of significance refer to the question of whether the difference between two variables is big enough to pay serious attention to. The likelihood of a researcher finding differences between his/her groups to be significant both on how big the difference is between the two groups (e.g. 90% for boys and 10% for girls compared to 55% for boys and 45% for girls) and the size of the total sample (e.g. a sample of 10 boys and girls versus a sample of 1,000 boys and girls).

The researcher starts by setting up a *null hypothesis*, the default position: "There is no relationship between the two measured phenomena". If the researcher's analysis of the data leads to a rejection of the null hypothesis, he/she concludes that there are grounds for believing that there is a relationship between the two phenomena.

How certain does the researcher want to be that he/she can reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the relationship he/she has found between two variables in his/her data is not pure chance? In social science it is accepted that 95% confidence and above is acceptable.

95% confidence is expressed as .05 (or * in tables)

99% confidence is expressed as .01 (or ** in tables)

99.9 confidence is expressed as .001 (or *** in tables)

The researcher only pays attention to a correlation between two factors when the significance level is .05 or lower. If he/she finds the confidence level in his analysis to be .05 or lower, he/she can reject the null hypothesis and be confident that his/her findings of a correlation between two factors were not by chance (i.e. he/she was unlikely to have drawn a freak sample out of the total population).

A *suggestive* difference is where the confidence level is .10 or less, but more .05. In a small study, a researcher might reasonably, with caution, pay attention to suggestive differences between groups.

A6.2 MULTIPLE REGRESSION

A6.2.1 Definition of multiple regression and different types

Multiple regression is a family of techniques that can be used to explore the relationship between one continuous variable (the dependent variable) and number of independent variables (IVs) (Pallant 2013: 154). Multiple regression requires dependent and independent variables to be continuous/interval scales. However, some dichotomous variables often used in surveys are not interval scales e.g. sex. However, for these variables researchers can create *dummy* interval variables e.g. "Man" = 1 and "Not man" = 0.

In strict statistical terms a scale, for example a scale of 'Not at all satisfied' to 'Very satisfied' is not an interval scale. Such scales differ from scales such as money and age where there is arithmetic relationship between points on the scale. However it is widely accepted in social

sciences that such scales can be treated as interval scales, for example, for use in t-tests and multiple regression.

Multiple regression gives the researcher an excellent overview of which independent factors have the greatest impact on the dependent variables.

In a *standard regression*, the researcher runs a number of independent variables against one dependent variable all at the same time.

In a *hierarchical multiple regression*, the researcher enters his/her independent variables in a predetermined order based on theoretical grounds (for example, he/she may begin with demographic factors and then proceed to attitudes). He/she enters groups of independent variables in steps, with each group being assessed in terms of what it adds to the prediction of the dependent variable after the previous group of independent variables has been *controlled* for. Once all the groups of IVs have been entered, the overall model is assessed in terms of its ability to predict the dependent measure. Controlling for a variable means looking at a relationship between two variables, while removing the influence of a control variable.

A6.2.2 Tests used in multiple regression

Test for multicollinearity

Multicollinearity refers to the relationship between independent variables. In correlations table produced by SPSS, the researcher needs to ensure that the correlation between the independent variables is not too high − the researcher does not want a correlation between two independent variables of .7 or more. The researcher needs either to remove one of the two independent variables which are too highly correlated or he/she needs to combine two factors that correlate, making a new variable.

Outliers, normality, linearity and homoscedasticity

Outliers are extreme scores – there should not be too many of these in a researcher's data set as they have disproportionate effects on statistical calculations.

Residuals are the differences between the observed values and values as predicted by the regression equation for the dependent viable.

- Normality: the residuals should be normally distributed about the predicted dependent variable
- Linearity: the residuals should have a straight line relationship with the predicted dependent variable scores; the scatter plot produced by SPSS should show roughly a straight line.

- Homoscedasticity: the variance of the *residuals* about predicted scores should be the same for all predicted scores; the scatter plot produced by SPSS should be a fairly even cigar shape

Specific tests for outliers, normality, linearity and homoscedasticity:

- *Normal probability plot (P-P) of the Regression Standardised Residual*
- *Mahalanobis distance* (specifically for outliers)
- *Casewise Diagnostics* (specifically for outliers)

Using the *Normal Probability Plot of the Regression Standardised Residual*

In a Normal P-P the points will line in a reasonably straight line from bottom left to top right. Such a result suggests that there are no major deviations from normality.

Using *Mahalanobis distances* (specifically for outliers)

Mahalanobis distances do not appear in the multiple regression output. These are presented in the data file as an extra variable at the end of the output, labelled "Mah.1". In order to identify the outliers the researcher needs to establish what is called the *critical value*. Various critical values are set out in statistical textbooks (for example, see the table set out in Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), Table C.4, extracts from which are set out in Pallant 2013:166).

To use such a table the researcher needs

- To select a confidence limit (Tabachnick and Fidell 2013 suggest .001)

- To determine how many independent variables he/she wants to use

Using a critical values table, the researcher locates the critical value for his/her data given his/her choices above.

The researcher looks through the Mah.1 column in his data set to see if any cases have scores that exceed the critical value. If the researcher finds cases with much larger values than the critical value, he/she should consider removing those cases from the data set for the multiple regression analysis.

Using *Casewise Diagnostics* (specifically for outliers)

Casewise diagnostics presents information about cases that have residual values above 3.0 and below -3.0. In a normal distribution only 1 percent of cases would be expected to fall outside this range. The researcher should consider what percentage of cases has residual values not in the 3.0 to -3.0 range.

To check whether any residual cases have an undue influence on results, the researcher can check the value for *Cook's Distance* (which is given towards the bottom of the *Residual Statistics* table). Tabachnick and Fidell (2013: 75) hold that cases with values larger than 1 are a potential problem. Again, if the researcher finds cases with much larger values than the

critical value, he/she should consider removing those cases with values more than 1 from the data set for the multiple regression analysis.