

IF I DON'T HAVE IT, IS IT STILL ME? AN EXPLORATION INTO THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN ACCESS-BASED CONSUMPTION AND IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT

It has been well-recognized in Marketing literature that possessions serve as a visible representation of one's identity. Similarly, tastes in music, books, and movies are also an outward signal of one's identity. Both possessions and music taste serve as instruments of self-expression and group affiliation. The relationship between products, consumption, and identity has always been researched with the focus on material objects owned by the consumer. However, recent years have seen a marked change in consumption practices involving both the mode of consumption and the form in which products are consumed.

Access-based consumption, or consumption without ownership, is rapidly overtaking purchase as a popular mode of consumption. Additionally, technological developments in the 21st century have led to the existence of books, music, movies, even personal memorabilia, in a digital, dematerialized form. The availability of services provided by firms such as Spotify, Pandora, or Netflix, compounds the issue as they provide content which exists in a digital form and can only be consumed in an access-based format.

Set in the context of consumption of access-based music providing services such as Spotify or Pandora, this dissertation serves two main objectives. First, we explore the drivers of consumers' attitude towards non-ownership/access-based consumption of non-material/digital content by identifying consumer characteristics that lead to a positive attitude towards access-based consumption of digital music. Secondly, we aim to investigate the role of identity forming aspects of such consumption in the relationship between consumers' characteristics, their attitude

towards access-based consumption, and social and market implications of these relationships as evidenced by consumers' post-purchase reactions towards these services and their intent to continue using these services. Using social identity theory (SIT) as a background, we use both qualitative data and empirical analysis to conduct this research.

DEDICATION

To Amma and Sarmad. I hope I made you proud.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

α	Cronbach's index of internal consistency
β	Beta: standardized regression weight
B	Unstandardized regression weight
df	Degrees of freedom: number of values free to vary
SD	Standard deviation
N	Number of subjects
p	Probability of mistakenly rejecting a true null hypothesis
H	Hypothesis
Sig.	Level of significance
NS	Not significant
SEM	Structural equation modeling
CFA	Confirmatory factor analysis
RMSEA	Root mean square error of approximation
CFI	Comparative fit index
SRMR	Standardized root mean square residual
AVE	Average variance extracted
X^2	Chi-squared

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The turn of the twenty-first century has seen a marked change in both objects and modes of consumption. Dematerialization of previously tangible products and the ability to consume products through access rather than ownership has caused consumers, marketers, and researchers to rethink the role of such consumption in helping consumers' establish and express their identities. We have yet to fully grasp how something that we do not own, or which has no material existence, can still be an important instrument for us to express our identities.

Availability of access and dematerialization of tangible products make it necessary for us to explore the consumer-object relationship previously always set in the context of ownership and tangibility. One of the major goals of this study is to explore the relationship between access-based consumption of music in a digital format and its role in helping consumers form their identities. The study will be set in the context of consumption of services that provide access (as opposed to ownership) to digital music, for example, Pandora and Spotify. This context was chosen because consumption of music has been clearly linked with identity formation (Giles et al. 2009) and digitization has been adopted to the largest extent in the consumption of music. Services like Pandora and Spotify offer the added flexibility of being available for free with certain restrictions or for a fee with more freedom in usage.

It has long been known that our possessions serve as reflections of our identities both to ourselves and to people around us (Belk 1988). Individuals use possessions, especially those consumed visibly, to convey something about themselves. Possessions, attire, and other

consumption activities serve as indicators of a person's perceived or actual position within a social system. Such consumption activities may be associated with character traits, religious affiliations, wealth and social standing, or even good taste. Research has established that consumption of products such as music, art, literature, and cinematic content, is also associated with consumers' expression of identity (Giles et al. 2009; Hesmondalgh 2008). The identity forming and enhancing function of possessions has always been studied with the focus on material objects (Belk 1988; Richins 1994a), with the presumption that the user owns the object. Ownership has been an inherent component of the identity building aspect of possessions. For example, expensive objects that symbolize wealth essentially display the owner's financial ability to *buy* such an object, not just use it. Similarly, having good taste in books, music, or movies is usually manifested in *owning* said books, music and movies and taste preferences are made known to other people by displaying books, CDs and DVDs on shelves in one's home. As such, the ownership of objects may help reflect a person's individuality, can be reflective of the themes of a person's life story, can be indicative of a desire for affiliation vs. autonomy, and can aid in the desire to create a unique identity as well as establishing a sense of belonging and building interpersonal connections.

From another perspective, Mittal (2006) suggests individuals use possessions to bring their inner self to view for the outside world. In this case, self-identifying possessions help establish who one is as a unique individual and as connected to other individuals (Kleine, Kleine, and Allen 1995). While not all objects are seen as parts of our selves, with some simply serving functional purposes, any product can become part of "I" or "Me" if it helps the consumer define his or her self-concept. Material objects become a part of the material culture when they are imbued with meaning. It is this ability of objects to carry meaning and symbolism beyond their

functional properties that makes them instruments of imparting status, recognition, ontological security, self-identity, and solutions to problems (Lehdonvirta 2010). The meaning or symbolism is what gives possessions their value (Richins 1994b). It follows that the symbolism of a product is evaluated more positively when it aligns with or enhances the consumer's self-concept (Levy 1959).

So while products have been shown to be important carriers of self-identity to others, two distinct but intertwined changes, the rise of dematerialization of previously tangible products and a corresponding increase of consumption without ownership, have led to questions concerning the extent to which this may continue in the future. These changes have led to what has come to be termed access-based consumption, which can be defined as “transactions that can be market-mediated but where no transfer of ownership takes place” (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2012, p 881). While consumers can participate in access-based consumption in a variety of ways, including renting, leasing, sharing (of physical objects), or streaming (of digital content), it is the streaming of digital content that is the primary focus of this research. Firms such as Pandora, Spotify, Netflix, and several others allow consumers to gain access to the digital entertainment content they provide without ever acquiring ownership of this content. Most of these services are available for a monthly fee while some even allow free access. Netflix, a firm that started off with providing DVDs by mail and later moved onto streaming digital movies and TV shows, saw an increase in revenue from \$500 million in 2004 to \$5.5 billion in 2014 (Statista 2016). Similarly, e-books now make up 30% of all book sales (Bercovici, 2014). In the music industry streaming has taken over as the fastest growing revenue generator, accounting for 43% of digital revenue. An estimated 68 million people worldwide use some form of premium subscription from only 8 million in 2010 (IFPI 2016).

While this significant change has occurred in the consumption of certain products that have been shown to be important in terms of representing an individual's self-identity, research has yet to investigate the theoretical and practical implications of this shift in not only the modes but also the objects of consumption on how consumers are able to use this form of consumption to represent who they are to others. We are especially lacking in insights into the identity forming aspects of access-based consumption of products traditionally acquired through purchase. Similarly, we need to develop a better understanding of consumption of digital versions of objects that previously had a material form. In this study, we aim to explore consumers' views on access-based consumption. Specifically, we attempt to identify the drivers behind a positive attitude towards access-based consumption, the identity-forming role of such consumption, and the subsequent effect on consumer product relationship, as manifested through outcomes such as repurchase intentions, product attachment, and conspicuousness through social media. We specifically set this study in the context of streaming digital music.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

There is a paucity of research on consumers' attitude towards access-based consumption of goods traditionally consumed through ownership. Forgoing the choice to consume through ownership is an understudied area in marketing research (Lawson 2011). We still do not thoroughly understand how consumers make a choice when given the option to choose between multiple modes of acquisition and consumption. We also lack understanding of how, if at all, consumers change their behavior and value perceptions based on the mode of consumption (Chen 2009). Even fewer studies have explored access-based consumption of digital goods. We have yet to answer the question of whether the mode of consumption has an impact on the consumer-object relationship.

This study has two primary objectives. First, we explore the drivers of consumers' attitude towards non-ownership/access-based consumption of non-material/digital content by identifying consumer characteristics that lead to a positive attitude towards access-based consumption of digital music. We aim to advance the understanding of access-based consumption by exploring the consumption of market-mediated access to digital music, specifically as provided through services like Spotify and Pandora. Secondly, we aim to investigate the role of identity forming aspects of such consumption in the relationship between consumers' characteristics, their attitude towards access-based consumption, and social and market implications of these relationships as evidenced by consumers' post-purchase reactions towards these services and their intent to continue using these services. Using social identity theory (SIT) as a background, we use qualitative data and an empirical study to assess the factors affecting consumers' attitude towards music streaming services, the role of self-expressive value in this relationship, and the consumer's relationship with the product being accessed as manifested through intent to use it in the future, attachment to the product, and consuming it conspicuously by making the consumption public on social media platforms.

This research will be set specifically within the context of the use of services that provide digital music through an access-based format, for example, Pandora and Spotify. Evidence of the growth of access-based music can be found in the fact that in 2015 digital music sales became the primary source of revenue for the music industry, overtaking physical formats (IFPI 2016). This same year also saw a 45.2 percent increase in streaming revenue, effectively offsetting the downturn due to a reduction in downloads and physical sales. On the whole, the music industry saw an increase in revenue of 3.2%, translating to \$15 billion. Overall digital revenue was \$6.7 billion with an increase of 10.2% while revenue from physical formats was

down by 4.5%. Digital music accounts for more than half the revenue for recorded music in over 19 markets throughout the world. It is apparent that not only has the music industry successfully adapted to the digital age (IFPI 2016), but consumers have also accepted this mode of consumption and are displaying a positive attitude towards it.

1.2 Theoretical Foundation

Social identity theory proposes that individuals' social identities fulfill two key motivations, that of self-categorization and group identification (Tajfel 1974). Social identification is a perception of belonging with a certain group of people. Individuals have the inclination to be seen as members of socially desirable groups. In order to be seen as members of such groups, individuals engage in activities similar to those of other group members (Ashforth and Mael 1989; Tajfel 1974). Social identification also serves the purpose of maintaining distinctiveness from the out-group (Stets and Burke 2000). Hence, in accordance with social identity theory, possessions enable the owner to both integrate with a group and stand apart from others (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981). In the absence of other obvious cues, we use possessions, or visual evidence of consumption, to establish our own social identities as well as those of other individuals surrounding us (Ruvio and Belk 2013). These consumption practices may range from mundane everyday consumption (Kleine, Kleine, and Kernan 1993), to conspicuous consumption of luxury products to show wealth (Han, Nunes, and Dreze 2010), or the consumption of music and art to show certain taste affiliations (Giles et al. 2009).

The ownership and use of most physical products help their owners define and execute their identities (Lawson 2011; Levy 1959; Mittal 2006). Similarly, consumption of music and other cultural products carries symbolic meaning and is used by individuals to construct identities as well as form opinions of other's identities (Giles et al 2009; Larsen, Lawson, and

Todd 2010). Possessions that help define the self often reflect who one is as an individual or who they are as related to other individuals around them (Kleine, Kleine, and Allen 1995). Individuals have a perceived self-image related to their self-concept which they try to preserve, change, enhance, or extend through the purchase and use of products (Kastanakis and Balabanis 2012).

1.3 Ownership and Non-ownership

Ownership has been the preferred mode of consumption for over a hundred years (Baumeister 2014), Cultural values in the recent past presented ownership as not only the prestigious and secure option but also the more responsible and cost-efficient option (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2012; Baumeister 2014). So much so that in the credit economy consumers were urged to buy goods which were actually beyond their financial means (Baumeister 2014; Botsman and Rogers 2010).

However, ownership no longer seems to hold the cultural and social prestige it once did (Baumesiter 2014; Durgee and O'Connor 1995; Lawson 2011). Consumers living in contemporary society see access, or non-ownership based consumption, as a more economically feasible, socially responsible, and environmentally friendly option. Access allows consumers to enjoy the benefits of a product at a fraction of the cost of full ownership. Many consumers see this as preventing waste. Others see it as an opportunity to experience a wide range of products which may have otherwise been economically non-feasible for them (Trocchia 1997). The recent rapid growth of access-based modes of consumption also challenges the notion of consumers' desire for ownership (Bardhi, Eckardt, and Arnould 2012; Chen 2009; Young 2013)

In the past, goods were rented primarily for utilitarian purposes (Berry and Maricle 1973; Moeller and Wittkowski 2010). However, today's better informed and more sophisticated consumers are looking to maximize the experiences they can gain, and not just functional utility,

in the presence of limited resources. It is no surprise that access, instead of purchase, is becoming an increasingly popular mode of consumption. Consumers are becoming less possession oriented and more usage oriented (Moeller and Wittkowski 2010). Non-ownership lets consumers enjoy a wider variety of products without any of the burdens and responsibilities associated with ownership. It is also possible that consumers prefer non-ownership or temporary possession because of the lack of risk and commitment associated with complete ownership (Belk 2007; Lawson 2011).

Access is also a more viable option for residents of densely populated urban areas (Baumeister 2014), or nomadic consumers whose lifestyle requires them to be constantly on the move (Bardhi, Eckhardt, and Arnould 2012; Lawson 2011) where they can use a product without having to worry about long term storage or relocation. In fact, nomadic consumers (Bardhi, Eckhardt, and Arnould 2012) and “Transumers” (Lawson 2010) purposely avoid ownership and appropriation of material possessions. These consumers appreciate objects only for their use value and prefer either to have access to the benefits products provide, or own possessions in a liquid, dematerialized form (Bardhi, Eckhardt, and Arnould 2012; Young 2013). In an experimental study, Moore and Taylor (2009) found that the duration of use of a product had an impact on the user preferring to own or rent the product. According to their study people preferred to rent furniture items if they knew they would use those items for a short duration of time, even if it ended up costing more than purchasing. Chen (2009) proposes that access provides consumers with the option of forming different relationships with objects and may have reduced the need for ownership. The notion challenges the value associated with ownership.

Dynamic changes in the economic, social, and cultural landscape of the marketplace have been conducive to the growth of non-ownership modes of consumption. While it is becoming

apparent that ownership no longer holds the value it traditionally did (Berry and Maricle 1973; Lawson 2011), some studies show that ownership is still important in the case of digital, virtual goods. However, it gets manifested differently. Quite often digital and material consumption is inseparable for the consumer, especially in the case of music (Lehdonvirta 2010; Magaudda 2011; Young 2013).

In the context of consumption, things we own, have an attachment with, and think of as “ours” are referred to as possessions (Belk 1988; Chen 2009). Ownership represents a specific relationship between an object and a person (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2012). In contrast, when we obtain the right to use a product, in the long or short term, without purchasing it, it is referred to as experience (Chen 2009; Holbrook and Hirschman 1982; Pine and Gilmore 1999). In today’s contemporary society consumers can choose between multiple opportunities to engage in consumption experiences without actually making a purchase (Chen 2009). While ownership is a long term interaction with a product, access is temporary and circumstantial (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2012; Chen 2009). Access might imply differences in the person-object relationship and differences in the underlying mechanisms and rules of such a relationship (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2012).

1.4 Potential Theoretical and Managerial Implications

1.4.1 Theoretical Implications

It has long been recognized that purchases of products are made in part as a way for consumers to represent themselves to others. However, as we transition into an economy increasingly characterized by non-ownership research is required that will provide marketers with insights regarding how self-representation is impacted by not taking ownership. If it does come to pass that consumers will not own products that have been traditionally used to

communicate identity, research needs to investigate how other forms of “ownership” (e.g., access or digital purchases) can act to communicate identity or whether communicating identity will remain an important element of the relationship between consumers and products.

Marketing research has barely begun to focus on access as an alternative to ownership as a form of consumption (Baumeister 2014; Durgee and O’Connor 1995; Lawson 2011; Lovelock and Gummesson 2004). Some research has been conducted towards identifying factors which lead to the preference of one consumption mode over the other (Baumeister 2014; Lawson 2011; Moeller and Wittkowski 2010). However, we have yet to explore the relationship between access based consumption, such as digital consumption, and identity construction as well as the impact of this relationship on post-purchase outcomes. So far the relationship between the self and objects that help define the self has only been studied in the context of ownership. Findings from this study will help provide an understanding of how consumers perceive the role of access-based consumption in building or maintaining their identities and how the lack of ownership alters the consumer-product relationship.

1.4.2 Managerial Implications

Innovative short term access-based business models are disrupting the existing sale and purchase based business systems (Baumeister 2014; Belk 2013; Boesler 2013). Advances in technology are the biggest factor responsible for revolutionizing the way we now consume news, literature, music, and even cinematic content. Service providing firms like Spotify have been credited with being responsible for the demise of the CD industry (Walsh 2011). Consumers not only have the option to choose between consumption products but also between consumption methods (Baumeister 2014) and firms have the opportunity to offer alternatives to consumers to allow consumption on their own terms through increased customer involvement, co-production,

and access to information (Lawson 2011).

1.5 Research Design

The research design for this study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Such mixed method design is deemed appropriate in research of an exploratory nature where the researcher needs to identify variables suitable for subsequent quantitative research. In such cases, it is recommended to begin with qualitative research to help identify the variables, and even relationships between variables, before moving on to quantitative analysis (Corbin and Strauss 2008; Creswell and Plano Clark 2004). We began the qualitative phase of the study by conducting in-depth interviews to aid in identifying themes relevant to the consumption of music streaming services. Potential respondents were identified based on their interest in music and their usage of music streaming services. Results of the qualitative study were then used to help inform the theoretical basis of the study as well as the development of hypotheses to be tested quantitatively. Data for the quantitative study was collected using a survey prepared in Qualtrics software. Survey respondents were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Quantitative data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM) with the help of LISREL and SPSS software.

The rest of the dissertation is organized as follows. Chapter I provides an introduction to the study, the research problem, the key conceptual foundations of the study, and an overview of the research process. Chapter 2 includes a brief review of literature encompassing consumption through non-ownership modes of acquisition, including consumption of digital products. Chapter 3 provides details and results of the exploratory qualitative study which helped identify the key themes relevant to consumption of music through streaming services. Chapter 4 lays out the theoretical perspective as informed by the qualitative study. Chapter 5 presents the development

of hypotheses. Chapter 6 discusses the quantitative analyses conducted for testing the hypotheses laid out in Chapter 5. Chapter 7 concludes the study with a discussion of the theoretical and managerial implications of the results of this study as well as limitations and opportunities for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chapter 1 served as an overview of this research including the purpose of the research, key conceptual foundations of the research and an overview of the research methods to be employed over the course of this study. In Chapter 2 we present a broad overview of access-based or non-ownership modes of consumption. First, we will present an overview of access-based modes of consumption as well as some factors leading to the increasing acceptance of such modes of consumption, followed by a discussion of digital consumption.

2.1 Access-based Modes of Consumption

Marketing research has been focused on material possessions and their role in extending the self into the world as well as providing links between the self, the material world, and the cultural context (Bardhi, Eckhardt, and Arnould 2012). Even though possessions are seen as instruments of establishing identity in both a personal and a social context (Belk 1988; McCracken 1986; Richins 1994b), more and more consumers are choosing alternative forms of economic exchange such as leasing, renting, market-mediated sharing, and electronic access (Lawson 2011). We are moving towards an economy that is focusing increasingly less on goods and more on services (Vargo and Lusch 2004) and experiences (Pine and Gilmore 1999). Consumers now have the option to choose between ownership, access, or a combination of both, depending on their specific consumption needs based on personal and situational circumstances (Baumeister 2014; Chen 2009). Possession and ownership no longer seem to be the ultimate manifestations of desire (Bardhi, Eckhardt, and Arnould 2012; Chen 2009) with the result that

ownership no longer holds the value it once did, both in an individual and a social context (Berry and Maricle 1973). The rapidly changing economic, social, cultural, and technological landscape of the marketplace has created conditions conducive to the growth of access-based modes of consumption (Lawson 2011). However, very little has been done in terms of scholarly research to study the relationships between consumers, their identity establishing consumption practices, and access-based modes of consumption.

Consumption takes place through ownership when the product to be consumed is legally and fully owned by the user or someone close to the user (for example family members or close friends). Usual instances of ownership take place through purchasing something, receiving it as a gift, inheriting it, or finding it. Ownership implies a legal, long-term, or permanent right to use the product. In the case of complete ownership, the owner also has the right to alter or modify the product (Chen 2009). Psychological ownership refers to a cognitive-affective state where a consumer has a sense of ownership towards an object regardless of legal ownership. The feeling of ownership is stronger towards a target which evokes a sense of efficacy or self-identity (Kirk, Swain, Gaskin 2015).

Lawson (2011) defines non-ownership as “marketing transactions that lack a transfer of ownership but instead involve the acquisition and consumption of goods through service providers by consumers who forgo reasonable ownership alternatives and instead pay for temporary possession, access, or usage without the responsibilities and burdens of ownership”. (p 3). Access-based consumption occurs when the good being consumed is not owned by the consumer or someone close to the consumer, but is instead owned by a third party who gets paid for allowing access to the use of the product (Baumeister 2014). Such a mode of consumption gives the consumer a temporary right to use a product through a contract between the owner of

the product and the user (Durgee and O'Connor 1995). In some cases, such a contract may involve obtaining a membership and paying a regular fee (Chen 2009). Non-ownership or access-based modes of consumption allow users to experience the value and utility offered by a wide variety of goods without taking on the burdens and responsibilities involved with owning these goods (Belk 2007).

Rental is the most common form of non-ownership consumption and extends from homes and vehicles to jewelry and artwork (Durgee and O'Connor 1995). More recently renting has also become available for clothing, shoes, and bags (Lawson 2011; Moeller and Wittkowski 2010). The increasing popularity of renting has been attributed to uncertain economic conditions, rapid technological changes, and an increasing demand for convenience. From a financial perspective renting allows consumers to live a lifestyle based on their monthly income, rather than their net worth, while allowing them to try on different identities without making any long term commitments or entailing any long term risks (Durgee and O'Connor 1995).

Leasing, which usually involves a more extended time frame than renting, is also common for homes and vehicles (Troccia 1997). Leasing is distinct from renting in that it involves a longer term contractual relationship with the provider and involves multiple payments over the length of the contract rather than a one-off transaction. Finally, with the emergence of service providers like Airbnb and Zipcar, sharing has been established as another form of non-ownership based consumption and economic exchange. Lamberton and Rose (2012) define commercial sharing as “market managed systems that provide customers with the opportunity to enjoy product benefits without ownership” (p 109).

2.1.1 Increasing Acceptance of Access-based Consumption

Renting a piece of equipment instead of investing in purchasing it is common practice. It makes sounder financial sense to pay for such equipment only when needed. The option to rent now extends to items such as clothing shoes and accessories. Most consumers who engage in renting these items feel that they should not pay for purchasing a product when they only need to use it for a short time. The product can be returned after use and the consumer does not have to worry about long-term storage and maintenance of the product (Lawson 2011; Moeller and Wittkowski 2010). When renting a product, the consumer does not need to worry about issues like depreciation of the product. He only derives the benefits of the consumption of a product, buying time with a product instead of the complete rights to it (Durgee and O'Connor 1995). In these situations, it makes practical and financial sense to pay for obtaining temporary access to such products and enjoy the benefits offered by them without having to deal with the risks and responsibilities.

Ownership, while giving more extended rights to the user, entails certain risks and responsibilities, also referred to as the “burdens of ownership” (Moeller and Wittkowski 2010). By committing to buying a product, the consumer runs the risk of making an incorrect choice and has to bear the consequences. With rapidly changing trends, both in fashion and technology, the consumer runs the risk of their chosen product becoming obsolete. Even in the absence of these risks, ownership of possessions entails effort towards storage, maintenance, repairs, and disposition (Berry and Maricle 1973; Moeller and Wittkowski 2010, Trocchia 1997).

Access-based offerings can alleviate these risks. As an example, in the case of automobiles, the consumer runs the risk of both the style and technological amenities available in a car being replaced by newer more attractive features. An automobile is also a considerably

costly item and the very cost involved in buying one increases the consumer's perceptions of the risk involved. Leasing a car allows the consumer to enjoy the current style and technology at a fraction of the cost. Even if the consumer feels an incorrect choice has been made, the decision only lasts for a limited time. Leasing also eliminates the problem of disposition (Berry and Maricle 1973; Troccia 1997).

The global financial crises, changing consumer attitudes, and increasing urbanization, all have contributed to the rising trend towards access-based consumption. Conditions of financial instability have led to reduced buying power, which has made big ticket items less accessible to consumers. In such situations, access is available as a shorter term but lower cost alternative. Similarly, with an increasing shift to urban cities more and more consumers are faced with limited availability of storage space, discouraging ownership (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2012).

Another important emerging trend among consumers is the desire to simplify their lives and leave a smaller "footprint" on the surrounding environment. In that regard, many consumers feel that using access-based modes of consumption puts fewer products into larger circulation, thereby reducing waste (Baumeister 2014; Lawson 2011; Moeller and Wittkowski 2010). In addition, an increasing number of consumers are living a more nomadic, transitory lifestyle. People who are constantly on the move see possessions as more of a burden. These consumers appreciate objects for the benefits and value they can provide but do not have the desire to actually own and consequently carry these objects with them (Bardhi, Eckhard, and Arnould 2012; Lawson 2011). A large number of consumers are also shunning conspicuous consumption and do not want to rely on possessions to grant them social status. Millennials are known to prefer collecting experiences rather than objects (Saiidi 2016).

In addition to practical and ideological considerations, increasing global nomadism has been conducive to the growth of access-based consumption. Global nomadism is characterized by “serial relocations, frequent short-term international travel, and deterritorialization” and is different from moving between only two cultures (Bardhi, Eckhardt, and Arnould 2012, p 511). Demand for skilled labor on a global level is the primary reason for the rise of global nomadism (Bardhi, Eckhardt, and Arnould 2012). We use our attachments with objects to provide a reference point within a culture, a time frame, and a place. Consumers in the context of continuous relocation may find that they are “weighed down” by such attachments. These consumers have “liquid relationships” with their possessions. Objects are only appreciated for the utility they offer while digital and “dematerialized” possessions are appreciated for their easy mobility. For nomadic consumers, the sense of self is not tied to a single location and, in fact, changes with their location (Bardhi, Eckhardt, and Arnould 2012).

Even when not engaged in global nomadism in the true sense, consumers today are living increasingly “liquid” lifestyles. Attachment to things because of their identity-defining purposes is not feasible because consumers’ identity projects are in a constant state of change and the same objects do not hold the same value over time. Hence users enjoy and appreciate the flexibility, mobility and the option to embrace change as frequently as desired (Bardhi, Eckhardt, and Arnould 2012).

Bardhi, Eckhardt, and Arnould (2012) identify three dimensions of objects that are appreciated by nomadic consumers: 1) situational value, 2) use value, and 3) immateriality. Situational value refers to the usage of an object while in a particular locale. Use value refers to the functional value of an object as opposed to any identity defining aspects of it. Immateriality is represented by the existence of “objects” such as books, music, and photographs in digital

form. The lack of physical presence of these objects makes them “light” and easily mobile. The owners are not burdened by their physical existence and also do not have to make the compromise of parting with these objects when relocating.

Most access offerings have only been made possible due to the easy availability of technology such as the internet, smartphones, and GPS, to name a few (Baumeister 2014; Lovelock and Gummesson 2004). These technologies have made it possible for both the provider and the consumer to engage in convenient, cost efficient service transactions previously not possible. Technological advances have also given rise to online social networks and consumer communities that have added a completely new dimension to the visibility of consumption (Belk 2013).

2.2 Digital Consumption

The above-mentioned forms of consumption involve access to and use of a physical, material object. However, as noted above, the digitization of content has created a major shift in the way intellectual, cultural, and entertainment content is consumed. Not only is the consumer faced with the possibility of not owning the content to be consumed, he also has to deal with the dematerialization of such content. We have seen the replacement of letters by emails, paperback books by electronic downloads and newspapers by their online versions. Even our memories, previously preserved through photographs, now exist in cyberspace. While some of the virtual objects we consume may follow traditional rules of ownership, they are still digital replacement of formerly tangible, physical objects (Siddiqui and Turley 2006).

Consumers have a tendency to associate tangible objects with intangible concepts. For example, the marital union of two people is symbolized with a ring (Baumeister 2014). However, with the availability of digital technology we are living our lives more and more in an online

context. Some digital “objects” never had a physical existence to begin with (Belk 2013).

Digitization has had a remarkable effect on the way consumers enact their identity projects. It is even possible that physical possession is simply a remnant of pre-digital thinking (Belk 2013).

The book industry was among the first to be impacted by digitization. E-books now generate an estimated \$8 billion in revenue (Review.org 2016), making up 30% of all book sales (Bercovici 2014). Similarly, Netflix, a firm that started out as a DVD by mail service before moving into streaming, now has over 70 million subscribers worldwide. It is projected that the number of Netflix subscribers will increase to 100 million only in the US by the year 2020 (Statista 2016).

The impact of digitization has probably been the most profound on the music market, where digitization of content has completely altered the users’ consumption behavior. Music became available in digital form for the first time in the mid-1980s with the introduction of compact discs (CDs). As opposed to the analog format of cassette tapes and vinyl records, CDs were read digitally. CDs were also lighter and required less storage, encouraging portability. The 1990s saw the arrival of MP3 players which operated by creating a compression mechanism that eliminated sounds that humans cannot hear, thus reducing the storage of sound data. The compressed format caused the first shift in the distribution of music by making it possible to be distributed through the internet leading to the rise of online peer to peer sharing networks in the early 2000s. With iTunes, Apple became the first provider of legal music through the internet. (Wagner and Hess 2013). Further advances in technology have led to the proliferation of streaming services provided by firms like Pandora, Spotify, and Netflix, to name a few. Availability of access-based digital music has greatly expanded the choices available to

consumers (Young 2013) and has completely changed their expectations and demands regarding the consumption of music.

Digital formats are replacing physical formats as the primary source of revenue for the music industry with digital sales surpassing physical in 2015. While the advent of streaming services had caused a dent in overall sales due to a reduction in downloads and physical sales, 2015 also saw a 45.2% increase in streaming revenue, effectively offsetting this downturn. Overall music industry revenues increased by 3.2%, translating to \$15 billion. Overall digital revenue was \$6.7 billion with an increase of 10.2% while revenue from physical was down by 4.5%. Digital music accounts for more than half the revenue for recorded music in over 19 markets. It is apparent that the music industry has successfully adapted to the digital age (IFPI 2016).

Streaming is the fastest growing revenue generator for the music industry. It accounts for 43% of digital revenue. An estimated 68 million people worldwide use some form of premium subscription. This number has risen from only 8 million in 2010 (IFPI 2016). It is interesting to note the high number of premium subscribers for services which are available for free in ad-supported formats.

To summarize, in Chapter 2 we presented a review of literature regarding access-based consumption as well as digital consumption. In Chapter 3 we will lay out the details of the exploratory qualitative study conducted in order to understand users' attitude towards the access-based consumption of music through streaming services and their views on the role of such consumption in identity expression. The qualitative study will help inform the theoretical perspective for this study as well as aid in developing hypotheses for quantitative analysis. The

theoretical perspective will be discussed in Chapter 4 while the hypotheses will be defined in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 3

EXPLORATORY QUALITATIVE STUDY

As noted previously, the primary purposes of this research are to investigate the drivers of attitude towards access-based consumption, the identity forming aspects of access-based consumption and the subsequent effect on the consumer-product relationship. However, to date, there is little research devoted to understanding access-based consumption. Especially little is known about access-based consumption of digital music and its relationship with identity formation and expression. Therefore, rather than grounding the constructs to be included in the study initially in the scant literature available, we have chosen to employ a mixed method design whereby the qualitative phase of the study is expected to help identify variables, and even relationships, to be subsequently tested quantitatively (Corbin and Strauss 2008; Creswell and Plano Clark 2004).

As recommended by Creswell and Plano Clark (2004), we are using both a qualitative and a quantitative approach for conducting this study. The use of both methods in the same study is a common approach to serving the purpose of “development” whereby results gleaned from one method inform the development, even measurement decisions, for the other (Bryman 2006, Greene, Caracelli, and Graham 1989). According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), it is appropriate to use a qualitative study for exploratory purposes and to generate hypotheses, but not test hypotheses. Qualitative studies are an excellent instrument for gaining an understanding of an otherwise lesser-known phenomenon (Corbin and Strauss 2008).

According to Bryman (2006), studies in the field of social sciences which employ both qualitative and quantitative methods most commonly employ cross-sectional in-depth interviews as the qualitative method and cross-sectional surveys as the quantitative method. We are also employing in-depth interviews to collect qualitative data and survey questionnaire to collect quantitative data.

In this chapter, we will document the details of the qualitative study and the key themes identified during the course of the study. The next chapter will lay out the theoretical perspective supporting this study. Chapter 5 will present the development of the hypotheses based on information identified from the qualitative study as well as extant literature. We will address issues of data collection, measurement, and analysis in the methods section.

3.1 Qualitative Methodology

In-depth interviews are an effective instrument for obtaining an understanding of otherwise less well-known phenomena (Corbin and Strauss 2008). For the purposes of this study, we set out to understand consumers' attitude towards access-based music services, their viewpoint towards not actually owning the material, and how it compared with more traditional ownership-based consumption of musical content.

We used semi-structured in-depth interviews for collecting data because the interview format was well-suited to the nature of our research. Semi-structured or unstructured interviews have been recognized as one of the richest sources of qualitative data. Allowing the interview to flow freely while providing some direction allows the interviewee to reveal insights which may not come up under more constrained circumstances (Corbin and Strauss 2008).

A combination of convenience and snowball sampling was used to recruit individuals who fit the context of our study, in this case, individuals who considered their music

consumption to be an important part of their lives and also used at least one music streaming service. Every attempt was made to make the interview experience comfortable for the respondents. All respondents were reassured of the confidentiality of their responses and of the fact that they did not have to answer any questions they did not want to. We asked the permission of all respondents to audio tape the conversations. Interviews were conducted at a time and location convenient for them. The respondents were not offered any monetary compensation or class credit for their participation. We conveyed to all the respondents that they were making important contributions to an area of study which was of personal interest to them. Interviewees were prompted to describe in detail their experience with access-based music providing services, as well as their specific emotions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions.

We interviewed 18 people over a period of 6 weeks. The interviews lasted between 20 to 70 minutes. Seven of the interviewees were female while the remaining eleven were male. The interviewees were on average 25 years old, with the majority (72%) in the targeted age group of 20-25 years (an overview of the demographics is provided in Table 1).

Table 1: Overview of interview respondents

Respondent	Gender	Age	Service used
Respondent 1	Female	20	Spotify and the internet
Respondent 2	Female	21	Spotify
Respondent 3	Male	32	Spotify
Respondent 4	Male	21	Spotify/Pandora
Respondent 5	Female	34	Pandora
Respondent 6	Male	21	Jango Radio/YouTube
Respondent 7	Female	21	Spotify
Respondent 8	Male	55	Spotify
Respondent 9	Male	20	Spotify
Respondent 10	Male	21	Spotify/Soundcloud
Respondent 11	Female	22	Spotify
Respondent 12	Male	21	Spotify/ Pandora
Respondent 13	Male	21	Spotify

Respondent 14	Male	21	Spotify
Respondent 15	Male	21	Spotify
Respondent 16	Female	24	Spotify
Respondent 17	Female	24	Spotify
Respondent 18	Male	26	Spotify/Tidal

The recorded conversations were transcribed yielding 85 pages of single spaced MS-Word documents. Open coding was used to analyze the interview transcripts. Open coding is encouraged when the conceptual content of the data is yet to be discovered (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p 160). The interview transcripts were read multiple times to develop a feel for the content of the conversations and to identify recurring themes. Subsequently, key quotes were highlighted. We then attempted to identify and categorize the underlying concepts/themes represented by the quotes. It is appropriate to analyze qualitative data based on the coherent meaning represented by chunks or bits of data rather than by any predefined units (Spiggle 1994). Themes identified for further analysis were those that were expressed by multiple respondents or even when expressed by few respondents, appeared to be of substantial importance to the study. Themes which did not gain coherence were excluded from the analysis. Subsequently, we established seven prominent categories: (1) Convenience, (2) Price/Value Consciousness, (3) Innovativeness, (4) Variety-seeking, (5) Attachment, (6) Self-expression, and (7) Conspicuousness through Social Media. In order to ensure quality, the interview transcripts with the identified themes were shared with one faculty member and two graduate students who were requested for their feedback on how far they agreed with the interpretation of the data (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p 299).

3.2 Themes Related to Access-based Consumption

3.2.1 Convenience

The convenience of using access-based music providing services was the most common theme that was apparent in all the interviews. For example, interviewees suggested that:

“In my opinion, it is the easiest and best way to listen to music because of the convenience factor.” (Respondent 16)

Berry, Seiders, and Grewal (2002) define service convenience as “consumers’ time and effort perceptions related to buying or using a service” (p 1). According to Brown and McEnally (1992), “convenience is a reduction in the amount of consumer time and/or energy required to acquire, use, and dispose of a product or service relative to the time and energy required by other offerings in the product/service class” (p 49). It is evident from the comments below that the respondents’ perception of streaming services is that they offer the acquisition and usage of desired musical content requiring lower levels of time, energy, and other resources:

“It’s way better that you don’t have to use any memory on your phone and you don’t have to have a disc to carry around.” (Respondent 9)

“I like them for their convenience and being able to make quick playlists of many different artists that I love. To be able to search, listen, and save pretty much whatever is a huge benefit to streaming, as well as how quickly you can listen to them after they’re released.” (Respondent 11)

According to Anderson (1971), “convenience-oriented consumption satisfies some immediate want or need and releases time or energy or both for alternative uses” (p 179). Hence the convenience-oriented customer seeks solutions that help him save time or energy by providing quicker access to the satisfaction of a need or want. The following comment

demonstrates a consumer choosing to use a streaming services because not only because the service is convenient to use but also because the consumer is seeking such convenience.

“I don’t really want to spend all that time to download music onto my phone because I have an android, I don’t have an i-phone. So I thought if I get Spotify premium I can create my own playlist of gym music and then I can choose my song and I can have unlimited skips or whatever if it’s not that song that I want.”
(Respondent 2)

The above examples establish convenience as a prominent theme in the study as being one of the reasons consumers have a positive attitude towards the use of music streaming services.

3.2.2 Price/value Consciousness

A vast majority of respondents mentioned the low cost for the amount of content accessible to them as one of the key advantages of using music streaming services as opposed to purchasing musical content in the form of CDs or LP records. Even respondents who appreciated the quality of LP records and still bought them recognized the convenience and cost effectiveness of streaming services, as demonstrated by the following quote:

“I really am feeling bitter-sweet about this. Because I do love collecting records but I also love the convenience of streaming music. I really like them and think it adds value because I only have to pay a flat rate.” (Respondent 9)

The idea that the consumers are getting great value for the price they have to pay for the use of streaming services came across in all the interviews. According to Lichtenstein,

Netemeyer, and Burton (1990) value consciousness is “a concern for paying low prices subject to some quality constraints” (p 56). Lichtenstein, Bloch, and Black (1988) describe price consciousness as “the degree to which a consumer views price in its negative role as a decision-making criterion” (p 245). The following quotes demonstrate the respondents’ unwillingness to pay a higher price for a product which a streaming service is providing to them for a considerably lower price:

“I don’t want to just have to pay for the whole album just to get that one song.” (Respondent 2)

“So you don’t have to go out and buy a hundred CDs now to change your mood, it’s at your fingertips.... then I don’t have to spend fifteen dollars on all hundred CDs.” (Respondent 4)

“I think they are better because it is cheaper and all online so it is easily accessible and you can listen to certain songs you want without having to buy a CD with a bunch of songs you never truly cared about to begin with.” (Respondent 16)

“I think that they are a bargain. I like how much cheaper they are than buying a CD.” (Respondent 10)

Value/price consciousness comes across as another key theme and an important driver of consumers’ positive attitude towards music streaming services.

3.2.3 Innovativeness

For some of the interviewees streaming was simply a matter of using a new option which was available to them. On the other hand, one respondent mentioned how his parents moved from CDs to digital music because of a desire to be able to use their new high-quality speakers, which were not compatible with their existing sound system. Moving from digital downloads to

streaming was a natural progression to them and part and parcel of keeping up with current technological developments.

“They didn’t like it (streaming) until my dad decided to buy a blue tooth speaker for the house, and once he did that, he said how do I get the CD to play on the Blue Tooth speaker and I said you have to have the music on your phone for it to work dad and he said Oh. Like he thought he could just connect and make the CD play on it. So now he uses the service, he uses Pandora all day at work and what he tells me is that he sits there and goes through and he likes and thumbs downs other songs on Pandora stations and when he gets home he gets to listen to them.” (Respondent 4)

Another comment from the same respondent demonstrates a need to accept new technology and alter consumption habits accordingly:

“Well, first of all, they can’t figure out how to make the old stereo work and they don’t want to go out and buy new CDs. They’re like okay, we’ll just move on.” (Respondent 4)

According to Steenkamp and Gielens (2003) innovativeness has a positive effect on the likelihood of a consumer trying new product or service offering. In the case of interviewees in their early twenties, the existence of services such as Spotify and Pandora is such an integral part of everyday life that they would find it unusual not to use them. This sentiment is demonstrated in the following comments:

“If you saw someone walking around with a CD, you think that they need to update, because that’s definitely not the thing right now.” (Respondent 2)

Innovativeness can be thought of as “the propensity of consumers to adopt novel products, whether they are ideas, goods, or services” (Hirschman 1980, p 283). The combination of modern day technological products, such as portable computers and smartphones, and the innovative mode of consumption offered by access-based services, has provided the consumer with not only a new method of consuming an old product, it has altered the state of existence of the product. It would be difficult for any consumer to have a positive attitude towards streaming services without being open to the novelty of both the form the music exists in and the method of acquiring that music. The following comments demonstrate the respondents’ acceptance of a new way of consuming music as well as recognition of the fact that not using these services would indicate being behind the times:

“It’s a new type of mixed tape. Well, first of all, it’s instant. It’s on your phone. And now that I have Premium, it has this thing called Connect. So I listen to it on my laptop and if I go from one room to the next without my laptop and with my phone, I can pause on my laptop and continue the song on my phone in the next room. I find that fascinating. I find it the coolest thing. It’s really like oh my gosh! But I’m a nerd when it comes to technology.” (Respondent 2)

*“I think CDs will be really irrelevant in the not so distant future.”
(Respondent 12)*

*“Streaming services are the future of listening/sharing music.”
(Respondent 13)*

Interviewees who mentioned a desire to purchase physical records talked about it in the context of a desire for “vintage”. This acceptance, or rather appreciation, of the novelty of

access-based services hints at consumers' innovativeness as being an important element in harboring a positive attitude towards access-based music streaming services.

3.2.4 Variety-seeking

In addition to the ready availability of music wherever and whenever wanted, respondents also mentioned the sheer variety and amount of the music available as one of the reasons for using music streaming services. This sentiment can be seen in the following comments:

“I prefer streaming services because it is like having a million CDs in the palm of your hand.” (Respondent 18)

“The part that I like about it is that it's not something that's the same thing every day because I would probably be driven crazy if I listened to the same exact music every day” (Respondent 4)

According to Steenkamp and Baumgartner (1995) variety-seeking, or change-seeking, is a characteristic of people who like to engage in exploratory behaviors. The following comment is an example of a consumer holding a positive attitude towards a music streaming service because the service lets them discover and explore new content:

“You can use those for discovery of those new music sources that you didn't know about before and then if you so decide, you can purchase those. So it's that discovery thing. You don't have to commit. It's very anti-committal.” (Respondent 5).

This desire to be able to access as much content as possible coincides with Kahn's (1995) proposition that consumers like to have a variety of options available, rather than just one, while

making the choice to acquire a product or use a service. Variety-seeking comes across as an important theme regarding consumers' attitude towards music streaming services.

3.2.5 Product Attachment

Attachment is an emotional bond that a consumer has with a product. A product to which the owner feels an attachment holds special meaning which goes beyond the functional utility that product might provide (Schifferstein and Zwartkruis-Pelgrim 2008). Attachment is also indicated when the loss of a product is likely to cause emotional distress (Belk 1988).

When asked how attached the respondents were with their streaming accounts and playlist, most of them indicated that they were highly attached to their accounts and would be very upset if they lost their playlists, as demonstrated by the following comment:

“I would be more upset if the digital content went away simply because there's more of it. There's significantly more, at least ten times more digital content than records.” (Respondent 5)

One of the concerns with access-based consumption is that when consumers do not own the product being used, they do not form an emotional attachment to it (Bardhi, Eckhardt, and Arnould 2012). Based on the interviews we conducted, we did not find this to be true, at least in the case of access-based consumption of music. Even though the respondents did not own the content, they expressed that because they had spent time and effort in building these playlists, they did feel an emotional attachment to them and were afraid they might miss something if they had to build them over again. The following quotes are examples of the respondents' attachment towards music consumed via streaming:

“I don’t need a physical disk to feel like I own the music. I don’t have really any feeling like I own the song. I may like a song but I don’t have to own it.”

(Respondent 8)

“Yes, I am attached to my music. I have grown up loving music and I don’t see that changing in any way. I can always find a certain song I want to listen to if I look for it hard enough.” (Respondent 9)

“I think I am attached to the music I listen to because I feel my life would be greatly affected if I no longer had access to it. I do not feel that I own the music, but I do feel I have the privilege to enjoy it and I appreciate that privilege.”

(Respondent 17)

When asked to compare how she would feel if she lost her CD collection with losing her playlist, one of the respondents made the following comment:

“I feel like a little bit more attached to Spotify. I feel like if I lost any of the CDs that I have, which are few, I would definitely be sad, but I would know I could replace it easily, either through iTunes or just getting another CD because they are all out there. If I ever lost my Spotify account, like if it wiped out.... And if it all got wiped out there will definitely be this panic mode of trying to get it all back because it took a long time.” (Respondent 2)

It is clear from the comments above that even though the respondents recognize they do not own streamed music in a true legal or physical sense, they still engage in claiming symbolic ownership of the content by spending time and energy into building playlists. The owners claim that they represent their identity and taste affiliations and that they will experience distress if the

playlists were somehow lost. Their relationship with these playlists fulfills the criteria of attachment.

3.2.6 *Self-expressive Value*

Consumers use value-expressive attitudes to convey their core values, self-perceptions, and unique preferences to the people around them (Grewal, Mehta, and Kardes 2004). Music choices also have the ability to convey distinct psychological characteristics of the individual. People usually choose music that reinforces and reflects particular aspects of their identities. For example, individuals who consider themselves to be creative prefer complex and sophisticated music (Rentfrow, McDonald, and Oldmeadow 2009). The following comments by interviewees demonstrate this point of view:

“I’m thinking like hipster crowd, so if you identify with that as a hipster, you’re going to listen to more music that is hipster identified. You’re not going to want to publicize the fact that you listen to pop music... ..even though there are no tangible CDs present, with digital musical consumption, whether we own it or not, it still very much represents who we are.” (Respondent 5)

“There’s definitely a time where you’re making sure that you’re listening to all the other songs the other people are listening to, especially in high school. Because in high school you see the same people every day, you see them in the same classes.” (Respondent 4)

According to social identity theory, individuals use their music choices as a representation of their membership in certain groups as well as differentiation from other groups (Abrams 2009; Giles et al. 2009). It is evident from the following comment that most consumers think of their choice of music as a particular expression of their own and other people’s

identities. The fact that the consumers are consuming the music via access instead of ownership does not detract from its self-expressive value, as represented by the following comment:

“It definitely fits in with your identity because if you look at someone’s music history you can learn even more about who they are. I mean that’s why you put your music preferences on Facebook, you want people to see what you listen to because it lets them see what kind of person you are. Even with Pandora and Spotify, when they see what kind of artists are on your profile and what songs you are listening to and what songs you skip, I feel like they’re still thinking of making sure you still seem relevant. (Respondent 2)

3.2.7 Conspicuousness through Social Media

As this research is concerned with the social element of music consumption and its role in helping consumers construct their social identities, some of the respondents were asked their opinion on the absence of a visible CD rack resulting from the arrival of digital music and compounded further by the introduction of streaming services. The idea behind this line of questioning was that our music consumption says something about our personalities. When we want to share this aspect of our self with others we do so in the form of conspicuous consumption, in this context manifested through the visibility of the music we consume via its presence on our shelves. To this, most interviewees responded that the CD rack had been replaced by Facebook and that the synchronization between streaming services and consumers’ Facebook accounts had actually made it easier to tailor a particular image and to have it shared with an even larger number of friends and acquaintances. This point of view is apparent in the following comments:

“I mean that’s why you put your music preferences on Facebook, you want people to see what you listen to because it lets them see what kind of person you are.” (Respondent 2)

“Even if you listen to things on Spotify or Pandora, you can post certain songs to your social media pages, Facebook or Twitter, all that. But you can also choose not to.” (Respondent 5)

As evident from the comments above, consumers recognize that streaming services provide them with the ability to publicize their music consumption through integration with social media platforms. This ability to share consumption with one’s “friends” appears to adequately compensate for the absence of visible CD racks forced due to the existence of music in a digital format.

Summary of Findings

In this chapter, we described the conclusions drawn from the qualitative data collected for this study. The six themes of convenience, price/value consciousness, innovativeness, variety-seeking, attachment, self-expression, and conspicuousness through social media emerge as important with respect to a positive attitude towards the use of music streaming services.

It can be inferred from the data that consumers have a positive attitude towards streaming because of the virtually unlimited variety of content they can access at very low financial cost. Streaming also comes across as a convenient mode of music consumption in that consumers are able to access content wherever they are and whenever they want. The majority of the sample belonged to the 20 to 25 year age group. It was easy to assume that since they have been exposed to such services from a young age, consumers belonging to this age group may not consider access-based streaming services as a major technological innovation. However, it became

apparent during the interviews that all consumers regarded streaming as the future of music consumption. While LP records were mentioned as a special medium providing nostalgia, all respondents agreed that using CDs and cassette tapes was obsolete. It follows that consumers who are convenience-oriented, seek variety, appreciate value for the price, and consider themselves to be innovative and up to date with the times have a more positive attitude towards the use of music streaming services. Therefore, convenience-orientation, variety-seeking, price/value consciousness, and innovativeness can be considered possible antecedents to a positive attitude towards the use of music streaming services.

All interview respondents not only indicated that they were attached to the music they listened to, they explicitly expressed that they would feel distressed if they were to lose their streaming accounts or the playlist associated with their accounts. Attachment can be considered one of the outcomes of a positive attitude towards streaming. We can also assume that a positive attitude towards the use of such services will lead to repurchase intent, in this case, the continued use of such services.

Availability of various social media platforms such as Facebook has served to increase manifold the consumers' exposure to "friends" and acquaintances. Due to these platforms, the conspicuousness of any form of consumption does not rely on the physical presence of the consumer, the object, or the observer. As indicated by many interviewees, the physical CD rack, which used to serve as an outward expression of one's musical tastes, has now been replaced by Facebook. We display the consumption of objects that we either feel are strong representatives of our identity or which will help us gain social approval. We can assume that a positive attitude towards streaming can lead to the conspicuous display of music consumption on social media.

It is also interesting to note that all the respondents interviewed claimed that they took their music consumption seriously and believed that one's music consumption was an expression of one's identity. More than one respondent elaborated that since music is such an important indicator of one's identity, a lot of times individuals will consume and display the consumption of music which is considered socially desirable or acceptable in order to show or gain affiliation with a desirable group of people. The self-expressive value of music consumption might moderate the relationship between the antecedents identified earlier and attitude towards consumption and the relationship between attitude and the outcomes of repurchase intentions, product attachment, and conspicuousness on social media.

The information discussed above leads to the inference that consumption of music, especially visible consumption of music, is an important instrument of not only identification but also group affiliation. One of the most influential theories that deal with issues of identification and group affiliation is social identity theory (SIT). Therefore, we believe that social identity theory provides an appropriate theoretical background for this study. Before providing a detailed discussion of the development of hypotheses in Chapter 5, we will provide a detailed discussion on social identity theory and how it related to issues of identity, consumption, and consumption of music.

CHAPTER 4

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

In the previous chapter, we offered details of the results of the exploratory qualitative study conducted to better understand consumers' attitude towards the use of music streaming services. Information obtained from the qualitative data revealed that all consumers consider music as an important expression of their identities. As recognized at the end of the previous chapter, social identity theory (SIT) is one of the most important theories that explains individuals' behavior as it relates to establishing identity and group affiliation. In this chapter, we will discuss social identity theory, how it relates to consumption in general, and to music consumption in particular.

4.1 Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory (SIT) is the most widely employed explanation of the dynamics of relationships between individuals and groups. Any individual who exists within a social network also exists within a network of relationships and is thus required to establish his place within these networks. The individual's definition of self plays a significant role in how he strives to fit into his social network. This definition of self also delineates the individual's in group and out group behaviors and attitudes (Tajfel 1974). Asforth and Mael (1989) have used social identity theory to explain the individual's identification with the organization. On the other hand, Kleine, Kleine, and Kernan (1993) suggest that social identity theory explains our consumption behaviors, even those regarding everyday mundane tasks, as these tasks help us establish our

identities within the world we exist in. Consumption is one of the most important ways in which humans interact with their social surroundings (McCracken 1986).

According to Hogg (2006) “social identity theory (SIT) is a social psychological analysis of the role of self-conception in the context of group membership, group processes, and intergroup relations” (p 111). From an SIT perspective, group membership is a cognitive phenomenon whereby three or more people who evaluate themselves on some shared characteristics which distinguish them from other individuals form a group in the psychological sense (Hogg 2006). SIT is relevant to various social phenomena such as prejudice, stereotyping, conformity, normative behavior, and group cohesiveness, to name a few. Since the early ‘90s, it has been considered one of the significant theories of the relationship between self and the group (Hogg 2006).

Social identity is defined as “the individual’s knowledge that he/she belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him/her of the group membership” (Tajfel 1974, p31) i.e. “social identity is self-conception as a group member” (Abrams 2009). It is different from personal identity in that social identity is made up of the aspects of the self, defined by the groups one is a member of or identifies with (for example gender, nationality) whereas personal identity is based on attributes that make us distinct from other group members (for example personality, intelligence) (Lonsdale and North 2009). Groups of individuals who share the same social identity strive to be distinct from other groups in positive ways and these attempts at distinctiveness lead to intergroup behaviors (Hogg 2006). According to SIT, in order to maintain positive social identity and self-esteem individuals are more likely to have favorable perceptions of groups to which they belong (Tajfel 1972).

Social identity theory deals with the self as a dynamic multi-faceted construct and mediates the relationship between society and individual social behavior (Hogg, Terry, and White 1995). One of the biggest issues faced by individuals, who exists within a network of social relationships, is to “find, create, and define” their place within this network and social identity helps them achieve that (Tajfel 1974, p 64)). Social identity refers to an individual’s knowledge that “he or she belongs to a social category or group” (Stets and Burke 2000, p 225). Thus, the social category to which one thinks he or she belongs provides a definition of the self in terms of the characteristics of the category, helping build a self-definition that forms a part of the self-concept (Hogg, Terry, and White 1995).

Social identity theory follows two underlying processes, categorization, and self-enhancement. Categorization clearly delineates inter-group boundaries by producing distinctive stereotypical and normative perceptions and actions relevant to the group and assigns people, including self, to contextually relevant categories (Hogg, Terry, and White 1995). Self-categorization refers to the ability of the self to categorize and classify itself in relation to other social categories and is a mechanism that enables identity formation. The result of self-categorization is an accentuation of perceived similarities between self and members of the ingroup and accentuation of perceived differences between self and members of the outgroup (Stets and Burke 2000).

Self-enhancement is the social categorization process through which in group norms and stereotypes favor the in group (Hogg, Terry, and White 1995). This evaluation is achieved through social comparison whereby people similar to oneself are categorized as the ingroup and those who are different are labeled as the outgroup (Stets and Burke 2000). Social comparison results in the application of accentuated similarities within the ingroup and differences from the

out group so that self-enhancement is achieved. People have a basic need to see themselves positively and self-enhancement helps achieve that (Hogg, Terry, and White 1995). This self-enhancement is achieved by evaluating one's ingroup positively and the outgroups more negatively (Stets and Burke 2000). Social identity is formed through self-categorization and social comparison (Stets and Burke 2000) and can only be established because social categorization segments the surrounding social environment into distinctively differentiated groups (Tajfel 1974)

Membership in objectively more distinctive social categories holds more salience for the self-concept. People can categorize themselves at many levels of abstraction, for example relating to all humankind as most abstract, relating to specific groups at an intermediate level and then possessing an individual identity distinct from other group members at the most subordinate level. Categorization is easier when within-group similarities and between group differences are strong enough to be easily identified (Abrams 2009). It is easy to see why young people may associate with certain musical styles because they serve to define the social differences and similarities among people with whom they interact socially (Abrams 2009).

SIT maintains that external social influences play a more important role than internal influences in establishing our identity (Kleine, Kleine, and Kernan 1993). Individuals only need to maintain an identity when their social identity is positive. However, if the social identity is not positive then identity management may be employed to make it positive. Different techniques may be employed. The first, "assimilation", is to leave the current ingroup and attempt to become a part of a more positively perceived group. Publicly engaging in consumption and appreciation of associated music is one way of achieving this goal. The second strategy, "social creativity", involves redefining the negative aspects to be more positive or creating new

dimensions of comparison, for example turning a previously derogatory symbol into a symbol of pride. The third “social competition” can be an active struggle for a more positive social identity (Giles et al 2009).

It should be noted that individuals have multiple personal and social identities depending on the number of personal relationships they are involved in and the social groups they belong to (Hogg 2006). It is possible that people make consumption choices to signal who they are as well as who they are not. Music choices serve a similar role; they are a signal of shared as well as differing identities (Abrams 2009).

4.2 Social Identity and Consumption

4.2.1 Objects, Meaning, and Identity

In accordance with SIT, possessions and activities, even mundane ones, serve the purpose of enabling individuals to enact their identities. Our consumption not only represents but also contributes to our sense of self. Individuals usually organize their activities and possessions around their social identities and value these activities and possessions in how they enable the enactment of these identities. These possibly multiple identities make up a person’s “Me” (Kleine, Kleine, and Kernan 1993). Extant research in consumer behavior has established that social identity theory posits a connection between consumers’ possessions and their sense of self (Belk 1988; Sirgy 1982).

Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) make an interesting point that man, in addition to being *homo-sapiens*, is also *homo-faber*, the “maker and user of objects” and his self is a reflection of the things he interacts with. In this regard the objects that man interacts with also end up making and using him (p 1). One of the views of the self is that the self is a multi-faceted social and psychological entity. This version of the self relies on a continued life

narrative and possessions serve as props for this narrative (Mittal 2006). Material objects are one of the most important instruments that help us relate with ourselves and with other individuals around us (Lehdonvirta 2010). Products and possessions facilitate us in living out our everyday lives. They also act as artifacts of facets of our identities which may be important to us (Kleine, Kleine, and Kernan 1993).

In addition to carrying private significance, products also serve as carriers of public meaning in a social context (Solomon 1983). Public meaning is the social significance associated with an object by members of the society in which a person exists (Richins 1994). From an SIT perspective possessions offer the owner the ability to both integrate with a social group as well as stand apart. However, the establishment of individuality still needs the interpretation of other individuals in a social system for it to be meaningful and successful. (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981). We live in a culture where our consumption practices are the biggest part of our identity. Clothing, vehicle, homes, food, all serve as media for the expression of meaning within a cultural context (McCracken 1986). While it would be rude to ask someone directly about their wealth or taste in objects, we constantly form impressions about people based on their visible possessions such as the homes they live in, their vehicles, their clothing, and other visible accessories. We use these visible, non-verbal signals as code to be conveyed and interpreted in a social context. The proliferation of social media sites and the ability to “post” photographs of our consumption has increased the visibility of our consumption. It is now not even necessary to be in the presence of a person to be able to see what they own. It would appear that we rely even more on consumption to tell us about a person simply because there are more opportunities to do so (Ruvio and Belk 2013).

Individuals who need to move across cultures often form attachments with possessions which serve as connections to their home country and the people left behind. These possessions also help the owners maintain their identity and adapt to their new social roles. In a way, these possessions serve as visual indicators of the owners' connections with their home country (Bardhi, Eckhardt, and Arnould 2012; Belk 1988). Nomadic consumers tend to form detached and temporary relationships with objects in order to remain flexible and adaptable to their unpredictable lifestyle (Bardhi, Eckhardt, and Arnould 2012).

Consumers derive value from a product through an interplay of social and self-conscious constructs (Kirk, Swain, and Gaskin 2015). Products can be valued for their utilitarian aspects, their ability to provide enjoyment, the fact that they represent interpersonal ties, or their role in expressing the owner's identity. The self-expressive value of an object may have to do with reinforcing the consumer's sense of self or expressing some aspect of his history, competence, values, or religious beliefs. It is quite possible for a single product to offer more than one aspect of value (Richins 1994b).

4.2.2 Self-expression and Product Attachment, "Me" or "Not Me"

Attachment to a material possession is a reflection of the relationship between a person and an object (Kleine, Kleine, and Allen 1995). The idea that possessions form a part of a person's extended self is well-entrenched in marketing literature (Belk 1988). People consider certain possessions as "me" or "not me" based on how much they are attached to these possessions. Strong attachment is shown towards possessions which help narrate the owner's life story. They either represent important episodes in a person's life or help establish and represent their individuality (Kleine, Kleine, and Allen 1995).

Individuals existing within a social system constantly strive to establish their autonomy by maintaining an identity distinct from others around them while still showing affiliation with desirable groups. Both these motives help individuals establish their position within society. Autonomy is established with possessions that serve as evidence of individuality, uniqueness, and independence. On the other hand, affiliation is established with possessions that show a strong connection with other individuals, with cultural heritage, or with special occasions spent with people significant in one's life. Possessions that represent identity then represent either autonomy or affiliation (Kleine, Kleine, and Allen 1995).

4.3 Music and Identity

Music plays an important role in helping individuals understand themselves, people around them, and surrounding social groups. Trends in music change continually to stay abreast of the demands of cultural and social change. As an instrument of identity or affiliation, music is manifested in contexts as divergent as religion, nationality, sports affiliation, or a simple expression of one's own identity. Music helps individuals establish expressions of personality and group identity and helps display these aspects of their identities (Giles et al. 2009). One of the applications of social identity theory is that individuals, while striving to belong to certain groups, also use their consumption practices to establish distinctiveness from other individuals (Tajfel and Turner 1986). Consumption of music serves a similar purpose.

Researchers recognize that there is a significant relationship between one's identity/self, music, and consumption (Giles et al. 2009). There are cognitive and communicative processes involved in the symbolic consumption of music. Consumers evaluate the level of congruency between the image of the music and their self-image. "Consumption rituals" are employed to express identity and "own" the meaning associated with the music, thereby proving that music is

an important avenue of symbolic consumption (Larsen, Lawson, and Todd 2010). Music acts as self-representative both when it is congruent with the self-concept and when it is incongruent and represents unacceptable content. (Larsen, Lawson, and Todd 2010).

Self-concept is seen as multi-dimensional and situational (Larsen, Lawson, and Todd 2010; Schenk and Holman 1980). Regarding representational consumption, people-based situational characteristics are more salient than other situational factors, especially when the people involved in the situation are not well-known to the consumer. In such situations, the image the consumer holds of these people affects their own symbolic consumption. Other people-based characteristics are the relationship with the people present, the role a person has within the group and the current or expected mood (for example “getting pumped” by playing fast music before going out) (Larsen, Lawson, and Todd 2010). According to Larsen, Lawson, and Todd (2010), “an appropriate fit between the presented self, musical preference, and others is of utmost importance in the symbolic consumption of music” (p 14), implying that self-brand image congruity is an important aspect. It helps with the identity of the “socially situated self” (Larsen, Lawson, and Todd 2010, p20) (Larsen, Lawson, and Todd 2010). From a social identity theory perspective, individuals compare in groups to out groups and have a positive bias towards the ingroup (Tajfel and Turner 1986, Giles et al. 2009). This is interestingly true in music where, in a study, participants were found to favor fans that shared their own music tastes (Lonsdale and North 2009).

Hargreaves and North (1999) state “symbolic representation”, “emotional expression” and “aesthetic enjoyment and entertainment” as some of the reasons for listening to music. These reasons coincide with Holbrook and Hirschman’s (1982) elements of experiential consumption. In a social situation, consumers focus on the fact that the music being played should be liked by

all the people present. It represents knowledge and taste shared within a group or community and serves the purpose of identity construction. Social norms also appear to play a part in the selection of music for consumption (Lawson, Larsen, and Todd 2010).

As consumers we do not just buy a product for its utility, we buy it for the symbolism it represents. The significance of consumer goods goes beyond their utilitarian and commercial value. It lies in their ability to convey meaning (McCracken 1986). Consumption rituals help transfer meaning from the object to the consumer (McCracken 1986). Consumption of music involves cognitive and communicative processes that help individuals construct and present their identities in social situations. Internet and “piracy” has given everyone access to a wide range of music. Individuals are able to choose exactly what they want to listen to. This element of choice adds to music’s instrumentality in creating an identification of self and others. The “mixed tape” has been instrumental in conveying specific emotions or providing an appropriate musical backdrop for occasions (for example party music) (Giles et al. 2009).

According to Merriam and Merriam (1964), music serves ten social functions: emotional expression, aesthetic enjoyment, entertainment, communication, symbolic representation, physical response, enforcing conformity to social norms, validating social institutions and religious rituals, continuity and stability of culture, and the integration of society. These functions can be served on both individual and social levels, for example helping an individual relax, or helping with group formation and conformity. “Music is unquestionably tied to individual and group identification” (Giles et al 2009, p 292).

Rentfrow and Gosling (2003) find that music is chosen in two ways: on the basis of how well it reflects the self, and second, on the basis of sending a desired message (for example listening to jazz to appear intellectual). So music preferences work on the individual level as to

how one sees oneself and on a social level by sending a message to surrounding individuals. This is especially true in the case of adolescents (Giles et al 2009).

Music is also connected to national and cultural identity. There is a connection between music as a group process and social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner 1986). SIT explains why and how individuals associate and identify with a group and ingroup and outgroup interactions. Music preferences play a role in individuals categorizing themselves and others are also categorized based on their preferences. There may even be stereotypes of groups or social policies associated with certain types of music. These stereotypes could be positive or negative (Giles et al. 2009).

Music is an important element of mass culture. It is imperative to study the role of music in youth identity as young people are well aware of the expectations and social consequences of associating with particular music styles. They also recognize that music preferences are usually linked with lifestyle choices, even political or ideological ones. Similar music preferences also serve as a foundation for forming friendships. Thus music serves a social function of providing a basis for shared identities and musical subcultures provide a visible platform for presenting oneself to others and to oneself (Abrams 2009). Musical taste is a visible “badge” of affiliation with a certain social group. In this manner, it helps build an individual’s sense of social identity. From a social identity perspective, it is expected that individuals with similar musical tastes are perceived more favorably than those who do not have similar tastes (Lonsdale and North 2009).

A wide range of social activities are centered around music. While it is the focal activity at a concert, many a social situation would be incomplete without the presence of music, even as a backdrop. Beyond social activities, music helps individuals shape and define their environment in accordance with their personalities and self-concept. Music provides a means not only of

identity expression but also of identity reinforcement. It is proposed that personality traits directly affect an individual's music preferences (Rentfrow and Gosling 2003).

In this chapter, we outline social identity theory and how it relates to identity formation, to consumption in general, and to music consumption in particular. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 have served to lay the groundwork for the issues to be explored in this research. Chapter 2 provided information on extant research regarding access-based consumption as well as digital consumption. Chapter 3 covered the details of the exploratory qualitative study conducted to identify variables and relationships relevant to our research. Chapter 4 contained a detailed discussion of social identity theory and how it relates to consumption. Information from these chapters has helped in developing the hypotheses to be tested quantitatively. In the next chapter, we present a detailed discussion of the development of these hypotheses.

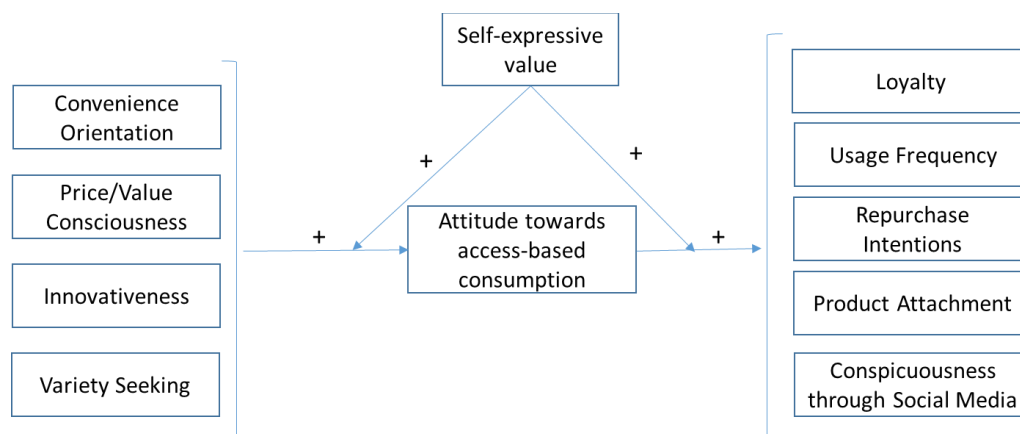
CHAPTER 5

DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESES

We spent the previous three chapters laying the groundwork for the development of the hypotheses presented in this chapter. We now discuss the hypotheses as informed by themes identified in the qualitative study and information obtained from existing research as supported by social identity theory. The proposed hypotheses are graphically represented in Figure 1.

We will first discuss the key consumer characteristics that act as antecedents of a positive attitude towards access-based consumption of digital music. Next, we will discuss the dependent variables of repurchase intention, attachment, and conspicuousness through social media, which, we propose, are preceded by a positive attitude towards access-based consumption of music. After that, we will discuss the possible moderating role of the self-expressive value of access-based music consumption in the relationships between the consumer characteristics that act as antecedents and attitude towards consumption, as well as attitude and the three dependent variables mentioned earlier.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model



5.1 Antecedents of Attitude towards Access-based Consumption

5.1.1 Convenience-orientation

Results of the qualitative exploratory study reveal convenience to be an important criterion for determining the consumers' attitude towards access-based consumption of digital music. In the context of consumption, convenience entails a consideration of time cost and effort cost (Seiders et al. 2007). Brown and McEnally (1992) define convenience as “a reduction in the amount of consumer's time and/or energy required to acquire, use, and dispose of a product or service relative to the time and energy required by other offerings in the product/service class” (p49). The time dimension can refer to saving time due to less time required to perform the task, as well as the availability of a product or service at a time convenient to the consumer. The energy dimension deals with both physical and mental energy. Brown and McEnally (1992) suggest it is a mistake to confine convenience to only time and energy. Convenience is something to be determined by the consumer in terms of the product's characteristics. The consumer might consider a product convenient even when acquiring it requires high cost because of low effort in usage or disposition. The authors also recognize that different market segments may see convenience differently based on their values.

Morganosky (1986) defines the convenience-oriented consumer as someone who “seeks to accomplish a task in the shortest time with the least expenditure of human energy” (p 37). Seiders et al. (2007) present convenience as a multi-stage process involving decision-making, access, consumption/experience, transaction, and post-use contact with the firm (p 145). The ease with which a product or service can be used provides motivation to the consumer to use that product or service (Ko, Cho, and Roberts 2005). Hence, both the consumers' preference for convenience, and the fact that a product is inherently convenient to acquire, use, and/or dispose

of, are important considerations in determining consumers' attitude towards access-based consumption.

Based on the exploratory study, access-based music providing services offer convenience along all the dimensions proposed by Brown and McEnally (1992) and Seiders et al. (2007). The use of these services minimizes the effort and time required in procurement and consumption of the material. It makes the material available to the consumer when and where they want it. Even more importantly, it removes the need for storage and disposition of the musical content, an important consideration for consumers who have limited or temporary availability of storage space (Bardhi, Eckhardt, and Arnould 2012).

Based on this information, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1: Convenience orientation will be positively related to attitude towards access-based consumption

5.1.2 Price/value Consciousness

Lichtenstein, Netemeyer, and Burton (1990) define value consciousness as “a concern for paying low prices subject to some quality constraints” (p 56). Lichtenstein, Bloch, and Black (1988) describe price consciousness as “the degree to which a consumer views price in its negative role as a decision-making criterion” (p 245). Price-conscious consumers tend to prefer the lower priced option when the distinguishing features of the higher-priced option are not enough to justify paying more (Lichtenstein, Bloch, and Black 1988). Value-conscious consumers are concerned with the trade-off between the price they pay and the benefits they get from a product or service. While providers like iTunes enable the consumer to pay for individual songs instead of having to invest in entire albums, access-based providers such as Pandora and Spotify allow the consumer free access to a virtually unlimited variety of musical content. The

only cost to be borne is to tolerate advertisements and forgo a certain amount of control over the exact content. A low monthly fee (usually less than \$10.00) permits the user to avoid advertisements and exert a greater degree of control over the content. During the exploratory study, many interviewees reported that they were willing to tolerate advertisements in order to be able to enjoy free access to music. Those who were paid subscribers also said they don't mind paying \$10.00 a month for unlimited access to music because it was still much more cost-efficient than paying the same amount for a single CD. Based on this information, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2: Price/value consciousness will be positively related to attitude towards access-based consumption.

5.1.3 Innovativeness

It was evident from the results of the qualitative study that for most consumers using access-based music streaming services in combination with technological products, such as laptop computers and smartphones, was essential to staying up to date with current modes of consumption. In some cases, it appeared that not using such services and relying on CDs instead would be an indicator of being outdated. Steenkamp and Gielens (2003) define dispositional innovativeness as “the predisposition to purchase new products and brands rather than remain with previous choices and consumption patterns” (p 369). Generally, innovativeness can be seen as an individual's propensity to consume novel products, ideas, and/or services (Hirschman 1980). With the rapid progression of music consumption from cassettes to CDs to MP3 devices to digital downloads to streaming, novelty of form and method of consumption is an inherent characteristic of services providing access-based digital music. It is expected that innovative

individuals will be more open to accepting this novel mode of consumption as well as having more appreciation for it. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3: Innovativeness will be positively related to attitude towards access-based consumption.

5.1.4 Variety-seeking

One of the most prominent themes that emerged from the qualitative study was the positive relationship between the variety of content available through music-streaming services and the consumers' positive attitude towards such services. Variety-seeking represents the desire to be able to try new and different things (Donthu and Gilliland 1996). While choosing consumer goods or services, consumers prefer to have a variety of options available to them rather than having to use just one (Kahn 1995). McAlister and Pessemier (1982) refer to variety-seeking behavior as consumers' engagement in switching among various available alternatives for products, services, or activities and propose that such behavior can stem from internal or external causes or variety can simply be a motivation in itself. Variety-seeking, or change-seeking, is a characteristic of people who like to engage in exploratory behaviors (Steenkamp and Baumgartner 1995). It follows that consumers who like to explore as many options as possible have a positive attitude towards access-based services as these services give the consumer the opportunity to experience a virtually limitless array of content options at minimal cost in terms of both time and money. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

H4: Variety-seeking will be positively related to attitude towards access-based consumption.

5.2 Dependent Variables

So far we have discussed hypotheses related to some consumer characteristics which may be antecedents of consumers' attitude towards access-based consumption of digital music. These hypotheses were drawn based on the themes that emerged from the qualitative study conducted

earlier as well as extant literature. However, some of the themes revealed in the exploratory qualitative study appeared to occur as a result of the consumers' positive attitude towards access-based consumption and may be suitable dependent variables of attitude towards access-based consumption of digital music. We discuss the hypotheses derived from these observations in the following section.

5.2.1 Loyalty, Usage Frequency, and Repurchase Intentions

The success of any business relies on a satisfied, if not loyal, customer base. Usage frequency and repurchase intentions are some of the ways in which customer loyalty gets manifested (Kumar and Shah 2004, Zhang et al. 2011). In the absence of high switching barriers, customer satisfaction has a positive relationship with repurchase intent (Jones, Mothersbaugh, and Beatty 2000). Research indicates that customer loyalty can be difficult to measure as purchase frequency does not necessarily indicate intent and intent does not necessarily translate into purchase (Yang and Peterson 2004). By measuring purchase frequency and repurchase intentions in addition to attitudinal loyalty, we hope to capture a better picture of customer loyalty in the context of access-based consumption. Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

H5: Attitude towards access-based consumption will be positively related to customer loyalty.

H6: Attitude towards access-based consumption will be positively related to usage frequency.

H7: Attitude towards access-based consumption will be positively related to repurchase intentions.

5.2.2 Product Attachment

Attachment to a possession is reflective of the degree to which the owner thinks a possession is “me” or not. It is quite possible for a consumer to own and use a product but not

form any attachments to it. In such situations the consumer does not symbolically “own” the product, that is, the product does not hold any meaning or emotional significance for the owner even though the owner has legal possession of the product (McCracken 1986). It would follow that consumers form an attachment with products towards which they have a more positive attitude.

Possessions which elicit attachment usually reflect the owners’ life story and help establish their identity. Not only do such possessions help define who the owner is, they also help define who he is in relation to other individuals. In that regard, these possessions help assert both identity and affiliation (Kleine, Kleine, and Allen 1995). The owner clearly assigns meaning to such possessions. Cleaning, comparing, and showing off a possession is considered the owner’s way of claiming the symbolic ownership of a possession (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981; Durgee and O’Connor 1995). These and other consumption rituals aid in transferring meaning from the object to the owner (McCracken 1986) and can also act as a representation of attachment.

As evident from the qualitative study, respondents who claimed to have an emotional attachment with the content of their accessed music were the ones who spent a considerable amount of time in organizing the content, building playlists, sometimes to reflect their different moods. These respondents clearly indicated that the fact that they did not own the music, while creating a sense of fear for not being able to control the potential loss of content, did not take away from the emotional attachment they felt towards it. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H8: Attitude towards access-based consumption will be positively related to attachment to the product.

5.2.3 Conspicuousness through Social Media

Social media platforms allow consumers to continuously share their consumption within their online social networks. Seamless sharing of individuals' consumption within social media has been made possible due to technology similar to Facebook's Open Graph technology. Providers like Spotify and Netflix are among prominent examples of firms using Open Graph to help consumers' post their media consumption on social networking sites (Kunst and Vatrappu 2014).

Possessions only hold meaning within a relevant social context. The visibility or conspicuousness of possessions helps the owners establish themselves within their social network. The dematerialization of content such as music through digitization has transferred the mechanism of meaning transfer from the physical to the digital realm. Consumers now seek validation of their social standing and assert their identities through managing content on online social networking sites (Belk 2013).

Music is one of the most extensively used mediums of expression employed by people, especially younger ones (Larsen, Lawson, and Todd 2010). Individuals engage in public displays of their musical preferences through t-shirts and posters of their favorite bands and now through "sharing" their musical choices on social media platforms such as Facebook. Music is helping individuals make "identity claims about who they are and who they want to be, and how they want others to perceive them" (Rentfrow, McDonald, and Oldmeadow 2009, p 329).

Research has found that people often consider music to be an even better representative of their values, opinions, and lifestyle than clothing or other hobbies (Giles et al. 2009). This fits well with a social identity theory (Tajfel 1974; Tajfel and Turner 1979) perspective because explicit information about music preferences puts individuals in particular social categories or

groups. Publicly sharing one's music preferences sends the message that the attitudes, ideas, values, and beliefs of the user are congruent with those of members of a certain social group. One reason why people like to make their music preferences public is because they believe it imparts meaningful information about who they are (Rentfrow, McDonald, and Oldmeadow 2009).

During the course of the qualitative study, we asked several respondents about their thoughts on the absence of a visible CD rack taking away from being able to give a visual conspicuous representation of the music people listened to. To this, the participants responded that Facebook had replaced the CD rack and the conspicuousness now took place in the digital world instead of the physical. The respondents added that the ability to share one's music consumption via social media platforms not only allowed people to reach more individuals in their social networks, it also allowed them to tailor the exact image they wanted to portray by sharing some music consumption while keeping some private. We would expect consumers to share their music consumption on social media platforms only if they have a positive attitude towards it. Hence, we propose the following hypothesis:

H9: Attitude towards access-based consumption will be positively related to conspicuousness of that consumption through social media.

5.3 The Moderating Effect of Self-expressive Value

According to social identity theory, there is a distinct link between our possessions and our sense of self. Even the mundane products that we use in our everyday lives serve as expressions of ourselves and help us build, maintain, and convey our sense of identity (Kleine, Kleine, and Kernan 1993; Mittal 2006). Consumers use value-expressive attitudes to convey their core values, self-perceptions, and unique preferences to the people around them (Grewal,

Mehta, and Kardes 2004). Products and services used by consumers can serve as instruments of self-expression when they are used visibly, when they allow for variability in usage, and when they can be personalized to a certain degree (Sirgy 1982).

Tastes in music have been recognized as expressions of one's identity (Larsen, Lawson, and Todd, 2010). Music preferences can be a source of information about the user and can convey to which social group the individual belongs. According to social identity theory, individuals use their music choices as a representation of their membership in certain groups as well as differentiation from other groups (Abrams 2009; Giles et al. 2009). Music choices also have the ability to convey distinct psychological characteristics of the individual such that people usually choose music that reinforces and reflects particular aspects of their identities. For example, individuals who consider themselves creative prefer complex and sophisticated music (Rentfrow, McDonald, and Oldmeadow 2009).

We propose that consumers who believe that the use of streaming services serves as an instrument of self-expression for them have a more positive attitude towards such access-based services. In addition, we believe that the positive relationship between attitude toward access-based consumption and the dependent variables of attachment, conspicuousness on social media, and repurchase intent will also be moderated by the self-expressive value of access-based consumption. Thus, we propose hypotheses H8a to H8d as well as hypotheses H9a to H9c: *H10a – H10d: The Self-expressive value of streaming music will positively moderate the relationship between (a) convenience-orientation, (b) price/value consciousness, (c) innovativeness, and (d) variety-seeking and attitude towards access-based consumption.*

H11a to H11ec: Self-expressive value will positively moderate the relationship between attitude towards access-based consumption and (a) customer loyalty, (b) usage frequency (c) repurchase intentions, (d) attachment to the product, and (e) conspicuousness through social media.

Chapter 4 provided details of the development of the proposed hypotheses based on results of the qualitative exploratory study as well as extant literature. In Chapter 5 we will discuss the methodological approach adopted for quantitatively analyzing the proposed hypotheses.

CHAPTER 6

METHODS

In Chapter 4 we explained the development of the proposed hypotheses to be tested quantitatively. In this chapter, we will discuss the details of the quantitative study including data collection, description of scales, measures purification, and analysis.

6.1 Data Collection and Sample Characteristics

Respondents for the study were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) online panel. Mechanical Turk is a service provided by Amazon.com that acts as a coordinating mechanism between those needing tasks to be completed and humans willing to complete those tasks for a fee. This service is available to both businesses and academics. It is possible to request a respondent pool with specific characteristics. In our case, we requested respondents who were over 18 years of age, resided in the United States, and used an access-based music providing service. In order to collect data through MTurk, we were required to provide a brief description of the nature of the survey as well as the survey itself. It is possible to either build a survey within the Mechanical Turk interface or provide a link to a survey built using other software such as Qualtrics.

We used Qualtrics software to build the survey instrument to be used for data collection and provided a web link to the survey to Mechanical Turk respondents. A link to the survey was provided while submitting the survey task in the MTurk interface. We used the "skip logic" option available in Qualtrics to embed multiple attention filters in the survey so as to ensure the quality of the responses collected. Respondents who failed at any of the filters were

automatically removed from the survey. We inserted three questions within the survey where the question statement instructed the respondent to choose a particular answer choice. For example, one of the questions stated “Please choose “Disagree” as your answer”. Respondents who did not choose “Disagree” were automatically prevented from completing the survey. One of these questions was inserted at an early point in the survey, one in the middle, and one closer to the end. In addition, we tried to ensure that the respondents were not progressing through the survey too speedily. To that end, a time filter was embedded in the survey at two points whereby any respondents who spent less than three seconds on that page were removed from the survey.

A total of 442 respondents started the survey. Twenty-seven of these were automatically removed from the survey due to failing an attention filter, resulting in 415 usable responses. Other than answering the survey questions, respondents were asked to provide demographic information, specifically, on gender, age bracket, income bracket, and education. Details of the distribution of demographic characteristics within the sample are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of Sample

Characteristic	Percentage
Gender	
Male	44.30%
Female	55.70%
Age Range	
18 - 24	18.10%
25 - 34	45.50%
35 - 44	21.70%
45 - 54	9.20%
55 - 64	4.80%
65 - 74	0.70%
Annual Income	
Less than \$10,000	5.30%
\$10,000 - \$ 19,999	8.70%

\$20,000 - \$ 29,999	16.60%
\$30,000 - \$ 39,999	13.00%
\$40,000 - \$49,999	8.70%
\$50,000 - \$59,999	11.10%
\$60,000 - \$69,999	7.50%
\$70,000 - \$79,999	6.50%
\$80,000 - \$89,999	4.80%
\$90,000 - \$99,999	4.10%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	9.90%
\$150,000 or greater	3.90%

Education

Less than high school	1. 0%
High school graduate	10.80%
Some college	28.90%
2-year degree	12.80%
4-year degree	34.20%
Professional degree	3.90%
Graduate degree	8.40%

N = 415

The respondents were also asked which device they used to listen to music while using a music providing service. The options were personal computers, tablets, smartphones, and other devices. Respondents were requested to check all options that applied so that one respondent using multiple devices was able to report that. They were also asked to provide additional information if “others” was chosen. 70.4% of the respondents indicated using personal computers for listening to music through a music streaming service, 27.7% reported using a tablet, 78.1% reported using smartphones, and 5.8% indicated using other devices. As reported by the respondents, these other devices included Amazon’s Alexa, Roku, Kindle, Smart TV, PlayStation 3 and 4, Android Mbox, Echo, DirectTV, TV, and car.

The respondents were requested to provide information on which service provider they used for listening to music. Once again, the respondents had the option to name as many service

providers as they used. Pandora and Spotify were mentioned by the majority with 52.29% of the users indicating they used Pandora and 34.46% indicating they used Spotify. Other service providers mentioned by the respondents included Amazon Prime (2.9%), Apple Music (0.48%), iTunes (0.48%), iHeartRadio (1.9%), Google Play (1.2%), Groove music (0.48%), SiriusXM (0.48%), Soundcloud (0.2%), Accuradio (0.2%), YouTube (0.96%), Rhapsody (0.2%), and Napster (0.2%). The overall percentage may not add up to 100% as respondents were encouraged to report all services they used and several respondents reported using more than one music providing service. Respondents were also asked if they posted their music consumption on social media such as Facebook with no and yes as response options. To this, 73.7% responded with no and the remaining 26.3% responded with yes.

6.2 Construct Operationalization

All measures used in the study were adapted from existing scales and were measured on seven-point scales anchored by 1 (Strongly Disagree) and 7 (Strongly Agree). The only exceptions were usage frequency and repurchase intention. Usage frequency was measured by using a seven-point scale anchored by 1 (less than once a week) and seven (multiple times in a day). Repurchase intention was measured using a seven-point scale anchored by 1(Low) and 7 (High). All items making up the scales are provided in Appendix B.

6.2.1 Independent Variables

Convenience-orientation was measured by adapting Anderson and Srinivasan's (2003) convenience motivation scale who used it in the context of internet shopping. In the context of their study, Anderson and Srinivasan (2003) mention that convenience is one of the biggest factors why consumers prefer to shop on the internet and while some consumers are motivated by the need to gather information and save money, others are motivated by a need for

convenience. While both Anderson and Srinivasan (2003) and Morganosky (1986) imply a tradeoff between cost and convenience, it is possible for a consumer to be both price conscious and convenience-oriented (Brown and McEnally 1992). Since the items in the scale do not allude to the component of price and only address convenience, the scale is suitable for measuring convenience-orientation in the context of this study.

Price/value consciousness was measured using Lichtenstein, Netemeyer, and Burton's (1990) value consciousness scale. For the purposes of their study, Lichtenstein, Netemeyer, and Burton (1990) define value consciousness as "a concern for paying low prices, subject to some quality constraint" (p 56). It is evident from the qualitative data that users of streaming services, while appreciative of the low price of the service, probably would not have engaged in the consumption of such services had the quality of the music not been up to a minimum level. A slightly modified version of this scale fits our purpose of measuring consumers' desire to pay a low price while still acquiring product of a certain quality.

Innovativeness in the context of music consumption was measured by adapting four items of Steenkamp and Gielens' (2003) dispositional innovativeness scale. For the purposes of their study, Steenkamp and Gielens (2003) define dispositional innovativeness as the consumer's predisposition to buy new products and brands rather than stay with old ones (p 369). We believe the scale fulfills our requirement for measuring consumer's innovativeness in the context of our study.

Variety-seeking was measured using Steenkamp and Baumgartner's (1995) seven item change seeking scale used to measure an individual's tendency for exploratory behavior. Steenkamp and Baumgartner (1995) developed this scale as a shorter, more practical version of the 95 item Change Seeking Index (Garlington and Shimota 1964) used to measure "the need for

variation in none's stimulus input in order to maintain optimal functioning" (Garlington and Shimota 1964, p 919). Steenkamp and Buamgartner (1995) identify variety-seeking as an exploratory consumer behavior. The items in the scale fit the purposes of this study.

6.2.2 Moderator

Self-expressive value was measured using Grewal, Mehta, and Kardes' (2004) six item value expressive scale. According to the authors, "consumers who possess attitudes that perform the value-expressive function make consumption decisions based on their self-identity and their expectation of how others will react to their purchase decision" (p 104). Grewal, Mehta, and Kardes (2004) use the scale to measure the degree to which a durable product purchased by the consumer reflects their self-image, self-identity, and self-concept, which makes it a suitable measure of self-expressive value for the purposes of our study.

6.2.3 Dependent Variables

Attitude towards access-based consumption was measured using an adapted form of Teo's (2002) nine-item deal evaluation scale. Teo (2002) has used the scale for measuring consumers' evaluation of online purchasing experience and consist of items like "my attitude towards purchasing online is favorable". We believe this scale to adequately serve the purpose of measuring consumers' attitude towards the use of music streaming services.

Loyalty was measured by adapting Brady et al.'s (2005) brand loyalty scale. *Usage frequency* was measured by adapting Hamilton, Ratner, and Thompson's (2011) frequency scale. While this is a single item scale, it is a direct measure of the construct in question, making it acceptable in this situation (Drolet and Morrison 2001). *Repurchase intentions* was measured using an adapted version of Zhang et al.'s (2011) three item repurchase intention scale. Zhang et

al. (2011) employ this scale to measure consumers' intention to repurchase from an online vendor.

Product attachment was measured by adapting Schifferstein and Zwartkruui-Pelgrim's (2008) consumer product attachment scale. The authors define product attachment as an emotional bond that a consumer experiences towards a product. Schifferstein and Zwartkruui-Pelgrim (2008) propose that an object to which a person is attached holds special meaning for them and the owner is likely to experience emotional loss upon losing such an object. The qualitative data shows that even though consumers understand they do not own the material provided by streaming services, they still expect to experience emotional distress upon losing this content. In the light of this. This finding coincides with at least one of the aspects of attachment mentioned by Schifferstein and Zwartkruui-Pelgrim (2008). The authors' definition of attachment, as well as the wording of the items included in the scale (for example "I am very attached to this product") make it a suitable scale for measuring attachment in the context of our study.

Conspicuousness through social media was measured using an adapted version of Shukla's (2008) psychological antecedents of conspicuous consumption scale. Most researchers, including Shukla (2008), have looked at conspicuous consumption as instrumental to a display of wealth and affluence. However, conspicuous consumption is distinct from status consumption in that status consumption is solely concerned with displaying wealth and social status while conspicuous consumption has more to do with displaying aspects of oneself to others based on a shared public meaning associated with possessions (Richins 1994a; Shukla 2008). Both the review of extant literature and qualitative data collected earlier in this study have helped establish the role of choice of music in establishing and displaying one's identity. It follows that

individuals will conspicuously consume the kind of musical content that they see as representative of their identity as well as possessing the potential to grant them social acceptance, or even prestige. Therefore, modified versions of Shukla's (2008) items used to measure the psychological aspects of conspicuous consumption are suitable for measuring conspicuous consumption of streamed music as manifested by voluntary sharing of such music on social media platforms such as Facebook. Shukla (2008) has used the items as antecedents to conspicuous consumption. However, when modified to complete sentences we believe the scale will adequately measure the underlying motivations for sharing one's music consumption on social media.

6.2.4 Control Variables

Control variables which were not focal to the study but could possibly have an influence on the dependent variables were also included in the analysis.

Product involvement, with music as the focal product, was measured by adapting Coulter, Price, and Feick's (2003) product involvement scale. While involvement with music was not explicitly discussed during the in-depth interviews, the very first question upon recruiting interviewees was if they took their music consumption seriously and if they considered it an important part of their daily lives. The interviews continued based on an affirmative response to this statement. It is implicit that all the respondents considered themselves to be highly involved with music consumption and considered it an important part of not only their everyday lives but also their identities. Coulter, Price, and Feick (2003) define product involvement as "the personal relevance or involvement of a product category" (p 152). Therefore, we included music involvement as a control variable in the analysis.

Impression management was measured by using items from Paulhus's (1984) Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR) scale. Impression management was included as a control variable to rule out the possibility of intentionally desirable responses by the survey respondents.

Information on *demographic characteristics* of the sample was collected by asking the respondents about their gender, age, income, and education level. The respondents were asked to indicate whether they were male or female. Within the survey, this question was coded as "0" for male and "1" for female. Data on age was collected by presenting age ranges of 18 – 24, 25 – 34, 35 – 44, 45 – 54, 55 – 64, and 65 – 74. The age group 75 – 84 was also presented as an option but none of the respondents indicated belonging to this age group.

Data on annual income was collected by presenting income ranges beginning with less than \$ 10,000, and going up in increments of \$9,999, for example \$10,000 - \$19,999, \$20,000 - \$29,999. The highest income range offered was more than \$150,000.

Respondents were asked about their education by offering the options less than high school, high school graduate, some college, 2-year degree, 4-year degree, professional degree, and graduate degree.

6.3 Data Preparation

Before conducting any analyses, all incomplete responses were removed. A visual examination of the variables of interest was conducted via scatterplots with one of the independent variables on the x-axis and a dependent variable on the y-axis. No curvilinear relationships were revealed. We then proceeded with analysis.

6.4 Measure Purification

6.4.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Before testing the hypotheses, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed using AMOS software via maximum likelihood estimation. Keeping with recommendations made by Hu and Bentler (1999), we used multiple fit indices to assess model fit. Hu and Bentler (1999) suggest using SRMR as an absolute fit index, IFI as a measure of relative fit and RMSEA as a non-centrality measure. Fit values of $<.08$, $>.95$ and $<.06$, respectively, indicate acceptable model fit. The measurement model had an SRMR of .0589, IFI of 0.89, and RMSEA of 0.063. The model had a X^2/df ratio of 2.637. The fit indices were close enough to the desired thresholds indicating that the model fit the data. Results of the confirmatory factor analysis with standardized path loadings are given in Table 3. Constructs were tested for convergent and discriminant validity.

6.4.2 Convergent validity

Convergent validity is concerned with the extent to which the items designed to measure a construct do so. It is evidenced by a high degree of shared variance among the items (Hair et al. 2006; Kline 2011). Convergent validity was assessed using structural equation modeling and confirming that indicator variables loaded significantly on their respective construct and that their path loadings exceeded twice their standard error (Gerbing and Anderson 1988). Further evidence of convergent validity is given by the average variance extracted (AVE) exceeding 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker 1981; Hair et al. 2006). As can be seen in Table 3, all item loadings are significant at $p<.001$. In addition, the average variance extracted for each scale is .5 or higher. (Gerbing and Anderson 1988).

Table 3. Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Scale	Items	Standardized Path Loading	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Cronbach's α
<i>Convenience Orientation (Anderson and Srinivasan 2003)</i>				
1	I want the convenience that a music streaming service offers.	0.773	0.600	0.853
2	I enjoy the flexibility of music streaming services.	0.809		
3	I am interested in taking advantage of the ease offered by music streaming services.	0.820		
4	I would like to enjoy music at my own pace while using a music streaming service.	0.675		
<i>Price/value Consciousness (Lichtenstein, Netemeyer, and Burton 1990)</i>				
2	When shopping, I compare the prices of different brands to be sure I get the best value for the money.	0.727	0.56	0.861
3	When purchasing a product, I always try to maximize the quality I get for the money I spend.	0.794		
4	When I buy products, I like to be sure that I am getting my money's worth.	0.846		
5	I generally shop around for lower prices on products, but they still must meet certain quality requirements before I buy them.	0.650		
7	I always check prices at the store to be sure I get the best value for the money I spend.	0.716		
<i>Innovativeness (Steenkamp and Gielens 2003)</i>				
	While answering these questions, please think of the various new products and services that become available for listening to music and sometimes also change how we can listen to music. Some examples are moving from CDs to I-pods and MP3 players, using i-tunes when it became available, or using streaming services when they became available.			
1	In general, I am among the first to buy or use new products for listening to music when they appear on the market.	0.880	0.78	0.935
2	I buy new products for listening to music even when I am uncertain how they will perform.	0.858		
3	I enjoy taking chances in buying new products for listening to music.	0.907		
4	I like to buy a new product for experiencing music before other people do.	0.892		
<i>Variety-seeking (Steenkamp and Baumgartner 1995)</i>				
1	I like to experience novelty and change in my daily routine.	0.774	0.63	0.872
2	I am continually seeking new ideas and experiences.	0.818		
3	I like continually changing activities.	0.816		

4	When things get boring, I like to find some new and unfamiliar experience.	0.774		
<i>Attitude towards Access-based Consumption (Teo 2002)</i>				
1	My attitude about streaming music is favorable	0.745	0.53	0.896
2	Considering everything, I think streaming music is an excellent deal	0.762		
3	Streaming music is desirable	0.695		
4	Music streaming's product features are very attractive	0.780		
5	Streaming music is definitely worth the money	0.726		
6	Considering the price, streamed music is of excellent quality for the price	0.758		
7	The prices of music streaming services are very acceptable	0.724		
8	I am confident that streaming music is a good decision	0.820		
9	If I stream music, I will be saving a significant amount of money	0.498		
<i>Self-expressive Value (Grewal, Mehta, and Kardes 2004)</i>				
	Please think of the music that you access through a streaming service while answering the following questions			
1	The music I stream reflects the kind of person I see myself to be.	0.716	0.71	0.937
2	The music I stream helps ascertain my self-identity.	0.887		
3	The music I stream makes me feel good about myself.	0.800		
4	The music I stream is an instrument of my self-expression.	0.820		
5	The music I stream plays a critical role in defining my self-concept.	0.911		
6	The music I stream helps me to establish the kind of person I see myself to be.	0.915		
<i>Loyalty (Brady et al. 2005)</i>				
	Please think of the music streaming service you use while answering the following questions.			
1	I would consider myself a loyal customer of this service.	0.745	0.72	0.854
2	If asked, I would say good things about the service I use.	0.896		
3	I would recommend this service to a friend.	0.893		
<i>Usage Frequency (Hamilton, Ratner, and Thompson 2011)</i>				
	How frequently do you use a music streaming service? (please check one box)	0.894	0.80	
<i>Repurchase Intent (Zhang et al. 2011)</i>				
	Please indicate the likelihood/probability that you will use the same music provider.			
1	In the medium term	0.726	0.49	0.699
2	In the long term	0.806		
3	I will never purchase from the same music provider again ®	0.550		

<i>Product Attachment (Schifferstein and Zwartkruis-Pelgrim 2008)</i>				
	Please think of your account with your favorite music streaming service and your collection of music or playlists associated with that account while answering the following questions.			
1	I feel emotionally connected to my playlists	0.843	0.76	0.94
2	I have a bond with my playlists	0.894		
3	I am very attached to my playlists	0.891		
4	My playlists have a special place in my life	0.858		
5	My playlists mean a lot to me	0.871		
<i>Conspicuousness through Social Media (Shukla 2008)</i>				
	I share the music I stream on social media:			
	· to gain popularity	0.942	0.83	0.964
	· to get noticed by others	0.928		
	· to show who I am	0.763		
	· to enhance my image	0.947		
	· to indicate achievement	0.955		
	· because it's a symbol of prestige	0.930		

6.4.3 Discriminant Validity

In order to assess the discriminant validity of the scales used we followed the procedure recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), discriminant validity exists between any two constructs if the AVE estimate for each construct is greater than the shared variance (i.e., square of the correlation) between those constructs. Instead of calculating the square of each correlation and comparing it with the corresponding AVE, we calculated the square root of the AVE of each construct and compared it with the correlations between corresponding pairs of constructs. Control variables were also included in order to detect any possibility of lack of discriminant validity between the independent variables of interest and the control variables. Table 4 contains the descriptive statistics for each variable and also gives the correlations between pairs of variables. The values for the square root of the AVE for each construct of interest are presented on the diagonal in Table 4. In order to demonstrate discriminant validity, each of these values should exceed the corresponding variable correlations in the same row and column. Since the square roots of AVEs exceed the corresponding

correlations for all pairs of variables, including control variables, we have evidence of discriminant validity.

In addition to convergent and discriminant validity, we calculated Cronbach's alpha for each scale in order to assess the reliability of these scales. Cronbach's alpha for all scales exceeds 0.7, indicating that the scales are reliable (Hair et al. 2006). Cronbach's alpha for each scale is reported in Table 3.

Table 4. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations

Variable	Mean	Std Dev	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
1 Convenience Orientation	6.22	0.65	0.77																
2 Price/Value Consciousness	6.09	0.76	0.43***	0.75															
3 Innovativeness	3.57	1.52	0.06	-0.20***	0.88														
4 Variety Seeking	4.79	1.16	0.13**	0.07	0.38***	0.80													
5 Self-expressive Value	4.63	1.35	0.26***	0.01	0.44***	0.31***	0.84												
6 Attitude towards Access-based Consumption	5.89	0.77	0.62***	0.33***	0.23***	0.20***	0.42***	0.73											
7 Loyalty	5.88	0.94	0.55***	0.25***	0.14**	0.11*	0.38***	0.67***	0.85										
8 Usage Frequency	4.91	1.90	0.31***	0.02	0.22***	0.17***	0.21***	0.29***	0.35***	0.89									
9 Repurchase Intentions	4.72	0.55	0.15**	-0.03	0.13**	0.13**	0.09	0.23***	0.31***	0.15**	0.70								
10 Product Attachment	5.47	1.16	0.37***	0.24***	0.27***	0.24***	0.56***	0.40***	0.44***	0.17***	0.14**	0.87							
11 Conspicuousness on Social Media	2.83	1.60	-0.07	-0.13**	0.40***	0.20***	0.32***	0.03	0.01	0.04	0.14**	0.27***	0.91						
12 Product Involvement	5.61	0.93	0.31***	0.19***	0.35***	0.28***	0.59***	0.38***	0.38***	0.16***	0.11*	0.64***	0.30***						
13 Impression Management	4.09	0.89	0.08	0.07	0.10*	0.09	0.07	0.09	0.08	0.00	0.02	0.07	0.00	-0.01					
14 Gender			0.06	0.04	-0.14**	-0.16***	0.05	0.09	0.09	-0.07	-0.08	0.08	-0.03	0.06	0.17***				
15 Age			-0.04	0.08	-0.16***	-0.17***	-0.21***	-0.01	0.01	-0.17***	-0.01	-0.03	-0.15**	-0.15**	0.08	0.07			
16 Income			0.05	0.05	-0.06	-0.12*	-0.16***	0.05	0.03	0.02	-0.05	-0.10*	-0.07	-0.10*	-0.09	0.06	0.16***		
17 Education			-0.05	-0.01	0.02	-0.05	-0.05	0.03	-0.06	-0.12*	-0.00	-0.08	0.04	-0.03	-0.09	0.05	0.14**	0.35***	

Notes: 1) N = 415 2) *(p<.05); **(p<.01); ***(p<.001)

Sqaure root of AVE for each variable is represented on the diagonal in bold

6.4.4 Collinearity

In order to detect if multicollinearity was an issue in the data, we calculated the variance inflation factors (VIF) for all independent variables as well as the control variables. Any variable which has a VIF greater than 10 may be considered problematic. All VIF values were well below this threshold. Table 5 presents results of the collinearity test.

Table 5. Collinearity Test

	Variable	Tolerance	VIF
1	Convenience Orientation	.728	1.373
2	Price/Value Consciousness	.714	1.401
3	Music Innovativeness	.646	1.549
4	Variety Seeking	.779	1.284
5	Self-expressive Value	.550	1.819
6	Product Involvement	.578	1.732
7	Impression Management	.901	1.110
8	Gender	.893	1.120
9	Age	.898	1.113
10	Income	.833	1.201
11	Education	.860	1.163

After measures purification, we proceeded to test the hypotheses. Structural equation modeling (SEM) using AMOS software was employed to test the linear relationships between variables. Moderated relationships were then tested using the PROCESS macro (Hayes 2012) in IBM SPSS Statistics 23 were included in the analysis as control variables. In Chapter 6 we laid out the details of the quantitative study including data collection and measures purification. In Chapter 7 we will present the results of hypothesis testing.

CHAPTER 7

RESULTS

In this chapter, we present the results of hypothesis testing. The linear relationships proposed in Hypotheses 1 to 9 were tested by carrying out structural equation modeling (SEM) using AMOS software. Moderated relationships were tested using PROCESS Model 1 (Hayes 2012) in SPSS Statistics 23.

7.1 Main Effects

Main effects of the independent variables on dependent variables, as proposed in Hypotheses 1 to 9, were tested using AMOS software. The moderator, self-expressive value, was also included in the analysis, as well as control variables music involvement, impression management, and demographics. The resulting structural model had SRMR of 0.0761, IFI of 0.818, and RMSEA of 0.060. The model had a X^2/df ratio of 2.495. According to recommendations made by Hu and Bentler (1999), fit values of $<.08$ for SRMR, $>.95$ for IFI and $<.06$ for RMSEA indicate acceptable model fit. The fit indices were close enough to the desired thresholds indicating that the model fit the data.

Hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported. Convenience orientation and price/value consciousness were found to have a significant positive relationship with attitude towards access-based consumption ($\beta = 0.663$, $p < 0.001$, ($\beta = 0.096$, $p 0.06$ respectively). The relationship between music innovativeness and attitude proposed in H3 was not significant with a coefficient of 0.087 at $p 0.076$. The relationship between variety seeking and attitude towards access-based consumption proposed in H4 was not found to be significant ($\beta = 0.027$). We found a positive

and significant relationship between the moderator, self-expressive value, and attitude towards access-based consumption with $\beta = 0.215$, $p < 0.001$.

Hypotheses 5 to 8, which proposed a positive relationship between attitude towards access-based consumption and the dependent variables loyalty, usage frequency, repurchase intentions, and attachment to product were supported ($\beta = 0.751$ $p < 0.001$, $\beta = 0.381$ $p < 0.001$, $\beta = 0.735$ $p < 0.001$, and $\beta = 0.208$ $p < 0.001$ respectively). The result for Hypothesis 9, which proposed a positive relationship between attitude towards access-based consumption and conspicuousness on social media, though significant at $p < 0.001$, was in the direction opposite to what was proposed with coefficient -0.214 .

The relationships between the moderator self-expressive value and the dependent variables loyalty and usage frequency were not significant ($\beta = -0.057$ and $\beta = 0.057$). However, there was a significant relationship between self-expressive value and the dependent variables attachment to product and conspicuousness on social media ($\beta = 0.222$, $p < 0.001$ and $\beta = 0.246$, $p < 0.001$ respectively). The relationship between self-expressive value and repurchase intentions was found to be negative and significant ($\beta = -0.401$, $p < 0.001$).

None of the control variables had a significant relationship with attitude towards access-based consumption. Music involvement had a significant relationship with loyalty, repurchase intentions, attachment to product, and conspicuousness on social media. Gender was found to be significantly related to usage frequency. Age had a significant relationship with usage frequency and attachment to product. Education had a significant relationship with loyalty, usage frequency, and conspicuousness through social media. The results for the test of hypotheses 1 to 9 as well as main effects of the moderator and control variables are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Main Effects

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables					
	Attitude towards access-based consumption	Loyalty	Usage frequency	Repurchase intentions	Product attachment	Conspicuousness through social media
Hypothesized Path	β	β	β	β	β	β
H1 Convenience orientation	0.663***					
H2 Price/Value Consciousness	0.096					
H3 Innovativeness	0.087					
H4 Variety seeking	0.027					
H5-H9 Attitude towards access-based consumption		0.751***	0.381***	0.735***	0.208***	-0.214***
Main Effect of Moderator						
Self expressive value	0.215***	-0.059	0.057	-0.401***	0.222***	0.246***
Control Variables						
Music Involvement	-0.003	0.113*	-0.029	0.144*	0.438***	0.244***
Impression management	-0.011	-0.016	-0.018	-0.103	0.039	0.053
Gender	0.054	0.013	-0.101*	-0.031	0.032	-0.051
Age	0.067	0.038	-0.161**	0.037	0.106**	-0.062
Income	0.028	0.012	0.08	-0.048	-0.022	0.001
Education	0.063	-0.098**	-0.145**	-0.094	-0.075	0.095*

Notes: 1) N = 415 2) *(p<.05); **(p<.01); ***(p<.001)

7.2 Moderation Analysis

We used PROCESS in SPSS Statistics 23 to test whether self-expressive value moderated the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. The control variables mentioned earlier were included in the analysis. Hypotheses 10c and 10d, which proposed that self-expressive value moderated the relationship between independent variables innovativeness and variety seeking with the dependent variable attitude towards access-based consumption, were supported. The remaining moderation hypotheses were not supported. Results of moderation analysis are reported in Table 7. Figure 2 and 3 are graphic representations of the two supported moderation relationships.

Table 7. Results of Moderation Analysis

Relationships moderated by self-expressive value	R-Sq	Constant	Coefficient	p-value
H10a - Convenience orientation → Attitude	0.472	5.075	0.007	0.829
H10b - Price/value consciousness → Attitude	0.309	4.863	-0.007	0.827
H10c - Innovativeness → Attitude	0.238	4.382	0.033	0.039
H10d - Variety seeking → Attitude	0.249	4.351	0.052	0.006
H11a - Attitude → Loyalty	0.478	5.116	-0.037	0.241
H11b - Attitude → Usage Frequency	0.143	6.4753	0.083	0.312
H11c - Attitude → Repurchase intentions	0.066	4.628	0	0.997
H11d - Attitude → Product attachment	0.49	1.948	-0.002	0.967
H11e - Attitude → Conspicuousness through social media	0.155	0.753	-0.077	0.262

Figure 2. Interaction Plot, Self-expressive Value and Innovativeness

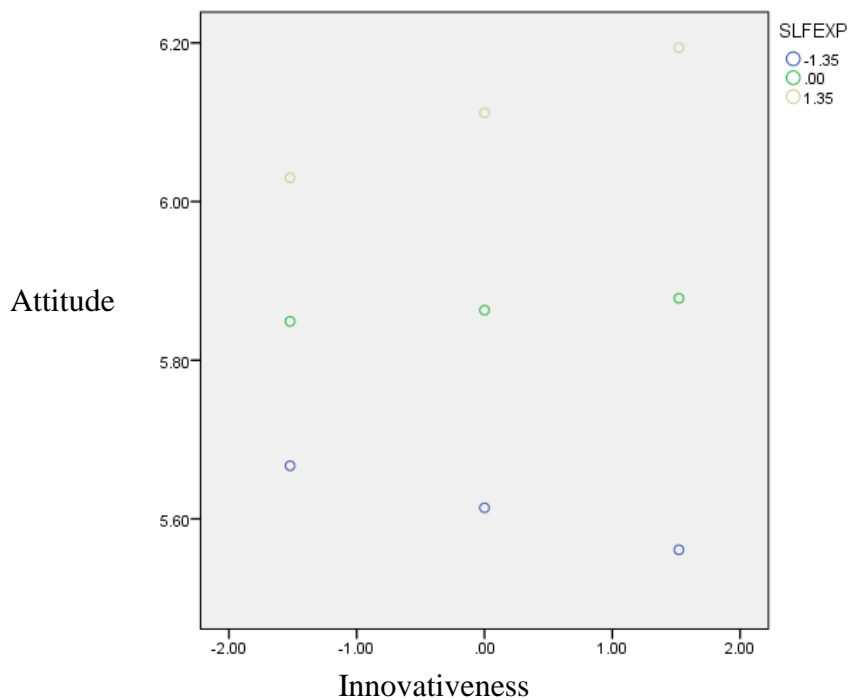
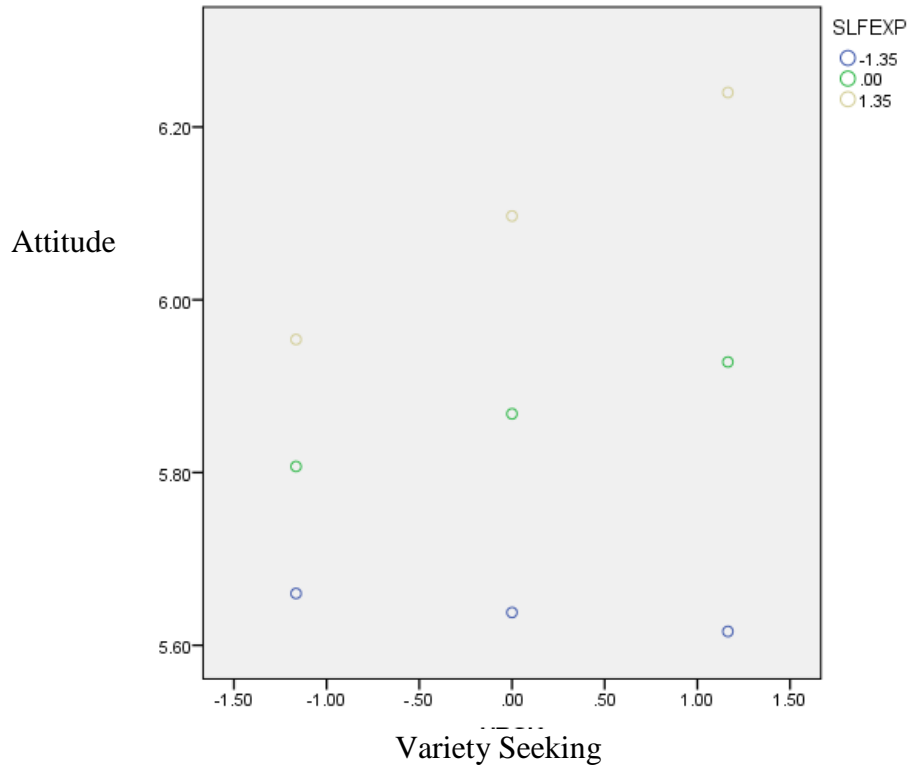


Figure 3. Interaction Plot, Self-expressive Value and Variety Seeking



7.3 Post Hoc Analysis

In light of the fact that that the variable repurchase intentions had an AVE of 0.49 which is less than the desired threshold of 0.50 or higher, we decided to run a modified analysis after removing the dependent variable repurchase intentions. Additionally, results of the earlier analysis revealed that the control variables impression management and income did not have a significant relationship with any of the dependent variables. Running the analysis without repurchase intentions as a DV showed that impression management, income, and gender did not have a significant relationship with any of the dependent variables. Therefore, these three control variables were removed while conducting the analysis. The resulting model had SRMR of 0.0767, IFI of 0.846, and RMSEA of 0.070 and a X^2/df ratio of 3.03, indicating that the model fit the data.

Results of the analysis also revealed a significant positive relationship between price/value consciousness and attitude towards access-based consumption ($\beta = 0.1$, $p < 0.05$), as well as innovativeness and attitude towards access-based consumption ($\beta = 0.097$, $p < 0.05$). Results of the analysis are reported in Table 8.

Table 8. Results of Post Hoc Analysis

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables				
	Attitude towards access-based consumption	Loyalty	Usage frequency	Product attachment	Conspicuousness through social media
<u>Hypothesized Path</u>	β	β	β	β	β
H1 Convenience orientation	0.664***				
H2 Price/Value Consciousness	0.1*				
H3 Innovativeness	0.097*				
H4 Variety seeking	0.011				
H5-H9 Attitude towards access-based consumption		0.726***	0.371***	0.208***	-0.204***
<u>Main Effect of Moderator</u>					
Self-expressive value	0.208***	-0.036	0.052	0.24***	0.243***
<u>Control Variables</u>					
Music Involvement	0.001	0.103	-0.036	0.428***	0.24***
Age	0.07	0.042	-0.163**	0.113**	-0.061
Education	0.075*	-0.09*	-0.12*	-0.086*	0.086

Notes: 1) N = 415 2) *($p < .05$); **($p < .01$); ***($p < .001$)

We also tested the moderated relationships in the absence of the aforementioned control variables. Removing the control variables did not result in any additional relationships being supported.

In Chapter 7 we presented the results of hypothesis testing. We go on to discuss these findings in Chapter 8.

CHAPTER 8

DISCUSSION

8.1 Discussion of Findings

In this dissertation, we attempted to identify drivers of a positive attitude towards access-based consumption and the subsequent relationship of attitude with behavioral outcomes. This particular study was set in the context of using access-based music providing services. Based on the results of the initial qualitative study, as well as a review of existing literature, we identified consumer characteristics of convenience orientation, price/value consciousness, innovativeness, and variety seeking as appropriate predictors of a positive attitude towards access-based consumption. Loyalty, usage frequency, repurchase intentions, product attachment, and conspicuousness on social media were identified as outcomes of a positive attitude towards access-based consumption. Chapter 7 detailed the results of the quantitative study employed for testing the hypotheses proposed earlier in this dissertation. In this chapter, we present a discussion of these results. Table 8 presents a brief summary of the findings.

Table 9. Summary of Research Findings

Hypotheses	Results
Linear Relationships	
H1 - Convenience orientation → Attitude	Supported
H2 - Price/value consciousness → Attitude	Not supported
H3 - Music Innovativeness → Attitude	Not supported
H4 - Variety seeking → Attitude	Not supported
H5 - Attitude → Loyalty	Supported
H6 - Attitude → Usage Frequency	Supported

H7 - Attitude → Repurchase intentions	Supported
H8 - Attitude → Attachment	Supported
H9 - Attitude → Conspicuousness through social media	Not supported

Relationships moderated by Self-expressive value

H10a - Convenience orientation x Self-expressive value → Attitude	Not supported
H10b - Price/value consciousness x Self-expressive value → Attitude	Not supported
H10c - Music Innovativeness x Self-expressive value → Attitude	Supported
H10d - Variety seeking x Self-expressive value → Attitude	Supported
H11a - Attitude x Self-expressive value → Loyalty	Not supported
H11b - Attitude x Self-expressive value → Usage Frequency	Not supported
H11c - Attitude x Self-expressive value → Repurchase intentions	Not supported
H11d - Attitude x Self-expressive value → Product attachment	Not supported
H11e - Attitude x Self-expressive value → Conspicuousness through social media	Not supported

8.1.1 Linear Relationships

Results of the empirical study support the proposed hypothesis that convenience orientation has a positive relationship with attitude towards access-based consumption (H1). This finding is in line with the view that the ease with which a consumer is able to use a product or service provides motivation for use of that product or service (Ko, Cho, and Roberts 2005). This result is also in conjunction with the qualitative study preceding empirical analysis. The ease and convenience that the consumer experiences while acquiring and using a music streaming service is an important antecedent to a positive attitude towards using access as opposed to ownership for music consumption.

At p 0.06, the relationship between price/value consciousness attitude towards access-based consumption of music was only marginally significant. Hypothesis 2 was not supported. The empirical finding contradicts results of the qualitative study that consumers appreciate the availability of an enormous amount of content at the price a single CD, if not completely free of

financial cost. According to Lichtenstein, Bloch, and Black (1988), price conscious consumers tend to prefer the lower priced option when the higher priced option does not offer sufficient distinguishing features to justify the higher price. Similarly, value-conscious consumers concern themselves with the tradeoff between the price paid and benefit acquired from a product or service (Lichtenstein, Bloch, and Black 1988). With this information in mind, we expected to find a positive relationship between price/value consciousness and attitude towards access-based consumption. The finding merits further investigation. A possible explanation is that while consumers appreciate the availability of large quantities of music for little or no cost, they may not think of themselves as price-conscious consumers in other areas of consumption. In addition, even though the qualitative data revealed a preference for using streaming on economic grounds, using a streaming service does not preclude spending money on physical records and CDs. It is possible that consumers use streaming services regardless of being price/value-conscious or not.

Contrary to expectation, H3, which proposed a positive relationship between innovativeness and attitude towards access-based consumption, was not supported. Even though keeping up with technological developments emerged as a theme in the qualitative study in relation to consuming music through access-based services, results of the quantitative study did not support this assumption. Innovativeness can be seen as an individual's tendency to adopt novel products, ideas or services (Hirschman 1980) rather than continue using previous choices (Steenkemp and Gielens 2003). One possible explanation for this finding is the age distribution of the sample of respondents. Even though age, when included as a control variable in the analysis, did not have a statistically significant relationship with attitude, a majority of the respondents (84.30%) were 44 years of age or younger. It is possible that individuals belonging

to this age group are well accustomed to the availability of services facilitated by the internet and do not perceive the use of streaming services to be innovative.

Hypothesis 4, which proposed a positive relationship between variety seeking and access-based consumption, was also not supported by results of the empirical study. Variety seeking is represented by a desire to be able to try new and different things (Donthu and Gilliland 1996). This result is in contrast to the findings of the qualitative study. The declaration by multiple interviewees that the sheer variety and amount of content available through streaming services was one of the biggest attractions of using such services led us to propose a positive relationship between variety seeking and attitude towards access-based consumption. It is possible that this information was compounded by the price/value consciousness construct within the empirical study, though we found proof of discriminant validity between the constructs.

As evident from the results presented in Table 8, attitude towards access-based consumption was found to have a significant positive relationship with the proposed outcomes of loyalty, usage frequency, repurchase intentions, and product attachment. Most research in the context of access-based consumption has focused on predictors of preference for access-based or non-ownership modes of consumption (Lawson 2011; Moeller and Wittkowski 2010). Our study extends beyond existing research and identifies the relationship between access-based consumption and behavioral outcomes of loyalty, usage frequency, repurchase intentions and product attachment.

A surprising result was the significant but negative relationship between attitude and conspicuousness on social media. Results of the qualitative study clearly indicated that the ability to post one's music consumption, especially through streaming services, was one of the factors that allowed consumers to reconcile with the lack of a physical tangible display of their music

consumption. Even though this result is in contrast to the findings of the qualitative study, it does coincide with the fact that 73.7% of the respondents reported not posting their music consumption on social media. With this research, we wanted to understand the impact of the identity forming aspect of consuming music through streaming. Past research has shown that people with a high need for status (Han, Nunez, and Drez 2010) or a high concern for appearances (Basil and Weber 2006) make an effort to make their possessions and other consumption more visible. It may be that the respondents in our pool do not feel the need to make their music consumption public.

8.1.2 Moderated Relationships

It is interesting to note that while innovativeness and variety seeking did not have a significant linear relationship with attitude towards access-based consumption, when moderated by self-expressive value, these were the only two relationships found to be significant. Thus, H10c and H10d were supported. In both instances, the positive relationship was stronger at high levels of the moderator and weaker at low levels of the moderator. None of the remaining moderation hypotheses were supported. However, self-expressive value did have a significant positive relationship with attitude towards access-based consumption, product attachment, and conspicuousness on social media. The significant linear relationships between self-expressive value and the dependent variables indicate that even though self-expressive value did not play a moderating role in the relationship between access-based consumption, its antecedents, and its consequences, self-expressive value still plays an important role in the behavioral outcomes of access-based consumption. This finding makes it important to include self-expressive value of access-based consumption in future studies in this topic area. The linear relationship between self-expressive value and repurchase intentions was significant and negative, making it a

perplexing finding. Intuitively, one would expect the relationship between these two constructs to be positive. Even though we worded the corresponding survey question appropriately (see Appendix B), the nature of the product itself may have caused this unexpected results.

8.1.3 Results of Post Hoc Analysis

Analyzing the linear relationships without including the DV repurchase intentions and the control variables impression management, gender, and income resulted in significant relationships between the IVs price/value consciousness and innovativeness and the DV attitude towards access-based consumption. Earlier analysis did not lend support to these relationships. These findings lead us to infer that repurchase intentions may not be a suitable construct to include in the analysis. As mentioned earlier, even though the nature of the product was taken into account while formulating the relevant survey questions, the discrepancy may still have existed due to the fact that the consumer might think of getting a subscription to a streaming service as either a one-off purchase or an automatically recurring transaction, rather than having to make a conscious effort to engage in repurchasing the product.

8.2 Theoretical Implications

So far marketing literature has focused on identifying drivers of access-based consumption (Lawson 2011; Moeller and Wittkowski 2010). There is little empirical research in the field. Even fewer studies have explored the dynamics of access-based consumption beyond adoption. We extend upon existing literature by identifying the relationship between attitude towards access-based consumption and behavioral outcomes of loyalty, usage frequency, repurchase intentions, product attachment and conspicuousness on social media. Our study proves that in addition to a positive attitude, consumers display behaviors such as loyalty, repurchase intention, and even more importantly, product attachment to the consumption of an

intangible non-material product that they do not own. This is a departure from earlier beliefs that a tangible possession was needed in order to be the object of these behaviors (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981; Durgee and O'Connor 1995). Research has indicated that using access may reduce consumers' appropriation activities associated with ownership, for example customizing or modifying an object to put their personal stamp on it. Consumers are also expected to form a weaker attachment to products consumed via access and feel less distressed on losing them (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2012). However, our qualitative data indicated that in the case of streaming of music, consumers tried to perform appropriation rituals by building customized playlists. Some of the respondents also indicated they would experience more distress on losing their accounts and playlist and less if they lost their CDs. This finding was strengthened by a positive relationship between attitude towards access-based consumption and product attachment revealed through quantitative analysis.

The changing reality of the modes of consumption available is forcing us to view not only consumption but the product person relations in an entirely new light. Non-ownership has usually been studied in the context of altruism, environmentalism, and experience orientation (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2012; Belk 2007; Chen 2009). However, our results indicate that consumers are drawn to access-based consumption of music because of a high degree of convenience. It is our observation that consumers belonging to the millennial generation expect to have access to their music wherever they are and streaming services, in combination with smart mobile devices, are the best and easiest way to do that.

8.3 Managerial Implications

As pointed out earlier, the extent to which consumers valued access-based consumption of music was found in the qualitative data regarding reactions to the loss of a Spotify account.

Our data showed a range of opinions on losing one's Spotify account. Some respondents indicated that they would be able to find the content from another source. Others expected to experience a certain degree of distress on losing their accounts because they had put time and effort into compiling the content. Service provider firms need to recognize that consumers want to exert ownership rituals even when they know they do not own the content. In this regard facilitating the experience of ownership by allowing more customizability may enhance the consumers' experience and increase repurchase intent. Firms engaged in access-based consumption also need to recognize that while most consumers engage with them due to convenience or variety of the available material, the consumption of music through service providers still plays an important role in helping establish the consumers' identities. Presenting these services as instruments of identity construction rather than just warehouses of musical content will also potentially enhance the consumers' experience and lead to a more favorable attitude towards the firm. The variety of the music available and the ability to access it without being restricted by location enhances the identity firming aspect for some users. Consumers can present different personas through different playlists.

Digital music is an important part of many consumer's everyday life. The music industry has been among the first to adopt the digital revolution which probably explains why digital penetration and subsequent revenues have been higher in music than magazines, books, and films (IFPI 2016). Largely, findings indicate that consumers prefer access-based music services. The music industry has to adapt to serve the demands of the consumer. The increasing use of access-based consumption of music leads us to believe that this is not a passing fad.

In the context of rental or sharing (for example car sharing) contagion, the fact that other people have used the same product has come across as a cause for concern for some consumers.

Contagion is suspected to reduce satisfaction and to inhibit self-extension to the product being used (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2012). However, digital products do not suffer from contagion. Digital products can be replicated limitlessly. It is almost as if every consumer has their own copy. Self-extension through access-based digital products may be far easier as compared to access-based physical products. Marketers of these services need to highlight the identity enhancing ability of their services and downplay the lack of ownership.

The availability of streaming is forcing music producers to think in more continuous terms. Streaming consumers, especially digital natives, expect a constant flow of new product. Music producing firms used to think in terms of releasing completed compilations or albums. Now they have to think in terms of releasing individual songs as they are produced. Access-based production of music has had deep implications. Both consumers and industry members have still not reached a point where they have been able to make sense of this new model of the marketplace. Marketers need to recognize the fact that even in the absence of ownership, digital products do serve an important role in identity formation.

While the rise of streaming has brought a virtually unlimited supply of music to the consumers' fingertips at minimal cost, it has already had serious implications for the music industry. The value gap regarding music streaming formats is the biggest concern for the music industry where consumers and streaming service providers are benefiting but not artists and music producers (IFPI 2016). What does this mean for the manufacturing aspect of the industry?

8.4 Limitations and Future Research Directions

No study is without limitations. Some aspects of research were beyond the original scope of this study. Others emerged as after an inspection of the results and findings of the current study. This particular study is set specifically within the context of consumption of music via

streaming services. Regarding the overall nature of access-based consumption as spanning streaming, renting, borrowing, or leasing, our study is limited in scope. In order to understand the phenomenon of access-based consumption more clearly further research is needed in other specific areas of access-based consumption, for example renting of articles previously only consumed through ownership.

The possible moderating effect of self-expressive value on the relationship between identified antecedents, attitude towards access-based consumption, and behavioral outcomes was an important aspect of our study. It would be beneficial to study other modes of access-based consumption in the light of their self-expressive value.

Our study revealed two results which were significant but in a direction opposite to what was expected. The significant negative relationship between attitude towards access-based consumption and conspicuousness on social media merits further investigation. Similarly, the negative relationship between self-expressive value and repurchase intentions proved to be counter intuitive. Based on the results of the post hoc analysis, we also found that removing repurchase intentions as a dependent variable from the model resulted in better fit statistics as well as support for two relationships previously not found to be significant. These findings lead us to believe that repurchase intention may not be a suitable construct to measure given the context of the product in question. Further investigation into identifying possible dependent variables would be beneficial.

Based on the results of our qualitative study and review of existing literature, we were able to identify four possible antecedents of attitude towards access-based consumption only two of the four were found to have a significant relationship with attitude. Further research is needed

to identify other possible antecedents as well as other possible outcomes of access-based consumption.

8.5 Conclusion

With this study, we set out to develop an understanding of the drivers of consumers' attitude toward access-based consumption, explore the identity forming aspects of access-based consumption, and understand the impact of these relationships on the consumer-object relationship as manifested in outcomes such as repurchase intentions, product attachment, and conspicuousness through social media. For the purposes of this particular study, we focused on the use of services such as Spotify and Pandora, which provide access to digital content and relied on both qualitative and quantitative data to build and test our hypotheses.

While we have been able to answer certain questions, other remain unanswered and still others have raised new questions. Our study confirms a positive relationship between consumer characteristics of convenience orientation and price consciousness and a positive attitude towards access-based consumption. Our results also confirmed a positive relationship between attitude and behavioral outcomes of loyalty, usage frequency, repurchase intentions, and product attachment. These findings tell us that not only do consumers have a positive attitude towards access-based consumption in the context of music streaming, they also display behaviors formerly associated with tangible possessions. The negative relationship between attitude and conspicuousness on social media is a matter to be researched further. It is, however, apparent that access-based consumption is an important and yet quite young area of research and we will continue to see progress made in this direction.

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APPENDIX A

Introduction to Survey (presented at the beginning of the survey)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. This is a survey regarding your opinions about and uses of music streaming services and some other consumption practices. The survey is being conducted by Ayesha Tariq, a doctoral student at the University of Alabama. It should take you approximately 15 to 20 minutes to finish it.

Please **read each question carefully** and choose the answer that best reflects how you feel. Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers. All surveys will be kept completely confidential and your name will not be associated with any responses.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Ayesha Tariq in the Marketing Department, the University of Alabama, at atariq@crimson.ua.edu, or Dr. Tom Baker at tbaker@cba.ua.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as participants in this study, you may contact the University of Alabama, Office of Research Compliance at (205) 348-8461.

By continuing to take the survey you are indicating that you are over 18 years of age and are willingly consenting to take part in this study.

You will be given a validation code after successfully completing the survey. Please save the code and submit it in order to receive payment from MTurk.

Note: The survey contains attention filters to ensure that each participant is reading the questions carefully before answering them. Failing at these filters will stop you from continuing with the survey and receiving payment from Amazon MTurk.

APPENDIX B

SCALES

Usage

Do you use a music streaming service such as Pandora or Spotify?

- Yes
- No

Brand

Please tell us the name of the music streaming service you use. If you use more than one, then please tell us which one you use the most.

Equipment

Please tell us which device you use for streaming music (for example smartphone or personal computer). If you use more than one device, please list all of them.

When you use a music streaming service such as Pandora or Spotify, do you post on social media such as Facebook about your music consumption?

Usage Frequency (Adapted from Hamilton, Ratner, and Thompson 2011)

How frequently do you use a music streaming service? (please check one box)

1. Less than once a week
2. Less than once every five days but at least once a week

3. Less than once every three days but at least every five days
4. Less than once every two days but at least once every three days
5. Less than once a day but at least once every two days
6. At least once a day
7. Multiple times in one day

Convenience Orientation (Anderson and Srinivasan 2003)

1. I want the convenience that a music streaming service offers.
2. I enjoy the flexibility of music streaming services.
3. I am interested in taking advantage of the ease offered by music streaming services.
4. I would like to enjoy music at my own pace while using a music streaming service.

Innovativeness (Steenkamp and Gielens 2003)

While answering these questions, please think of the various new products and services that become available for listening to music and sometimes also change how we can listen to music. Some examples are moving from CDs to I-pods and MP3 players, using i-tunes when it became available, or using streaming services when they became available.

1. In general, I am among the first to buy or use new products for listening to music when they appear on the market.
2. I buy new products for listening to music even when I am uncertain how they will perform.
3. I enjoy taking chances in buying new products for listening to music.
4. I like to buy a new product for experiencing music before other people do.

Price/value Consciousness (Lichtenstein, Netemeyer, and Burton 1990)

1. When shopping, I compare the prices of different brands to be sure I get the best value for the money.
2. When purchasing a product, I always try to maximize the quality I get for the money I spend.
3. When I buy products, I like to be sure that I am getting my money's worth.
4. I generally shop around for lower prices on products, but they still must meet certain quality requirements before I buy them.
5. I always check prices at the store to be sure I get the best value for the money I spend.

Variety-seeking (Steenkamp and Baumgartner 1995)

1. I like to experience novelty and change in my daily routine.
2. I am continually seeking new ideas and experiences.
3. I like continually changing activities.
4. When things get boring, I like to find some new and unfamiliar experience.

Attitude towards Access-based Consumption (Teo 2002)

1. My attitude about streaming music is favorable
2. Considering everything, I think streaming music is an excellent deal
3. Streaming music is desirable
4. Music streaming's product features are very attractive
5. Streaming music is definitely worth the money
6. Considering the price, streamed music is of excellent quality for the price

7. The prices of music streaming services are very acceptable
8. I am confident that streaming music is a good decision
9. If I stream music, I will be saving a significant amount of money

Self-expressive Value (Grewal, Mehta, and Kardes 2004)

Please think of the music that you access through a streaming service while answering the following questions

1. The music I stream reflects the kind of person I see myself to be.
2. The music I stream helps ascertain my self-identity.
3. The music I stream makes me feel good about myself.
4. The music I stream is an instrument of my self-expression.
5. The music I stream plays a critical role in defining my self-concept.
6. The music I stream helps me to establish the kind of person I see myself to be.

Loyalty (Adapted from Brady et al. 2005)

Please think of the music streaming service you use while answering the following questions.

1. I would consider myself a loyal customer of this service.
2. If asked, I would say good things about the service I use.
3. I would recommend this service to a friend.

Repurchase Intentions (Zhang et al. 2011)

Please indicate the likelihood/probability that you will use the same music provider.

1. In the medium term
2. In the long term
3. I will never purchase from the same music provider again ®

Product Attachment (Schifferstein and Zwartkruis-Pelgrim 2008)

Please think of your account with your favorite music streaming service and your collection of music or playlists associated with that account while answering the following questions.

1. I feel emotionally connected to my playlists
2. I have a bond with my playlists
3. I am very attached to my playlists
4. My playlists have a special place in my life
5. My playlists mean a lot to me

Conspicuousness through Social Media (Shukla 2008)

I share the music I stream on social media:

- to gain popularity
- to get noticed by others
- to show who I am
- to enhance my image
- to indicate achievement
- because it's a symbol of prestige

Involvement (Adapted from Coulter, Price, and Feick 2003)

1. The music that I listen to is a part of my self-image
2. The music that I listen to portrays an image of me to others
3. Music is fun to me
4. Music is fascinating to me
5. Music is important to me
6. Music is exciting to me
7. The music that I listen to tells others something about me
8. The music that people listen to tells me something about them

Impression Management (Adapted from Paulhus 1984, the Impression Management component of BIDR)

1. I sometimes tell lies if I have to. (r)
2. I never cover up my mistakes.
3. I have never taken advantage of anyone.
4. I never swear or use bad language.
5. I always obey laws, even if I'm unlikely to get caught.
6. I have said something bad about a friend behind his or her back. (r)
7. When I hear people talking privately, I avoid listening.
8. When I was young I sometimes stole things. (r)
9. I have never dropped litter on the street.
10. I sometimes drive faster than the speed limit. (r)
11. I never take things that don't belong to me.

12. I have never damaged a library book or store merchandise without reporting it.

13. I have some pretty awful habits. (r)

14. I don't gossip about other's people's business.

Demographics

Age

What is your age?

- 18 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 - 64
- 65 - 74
- 75 - 84
- 85 or older

Gender

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

Income

What is your annual household income? This may be your personal income or the total income available to your family. For example, if you are financially dependent on your parents, then think of your parents' income while answering this question.

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 - \$19,999
- \$20,000 - \$29,999
- \$30,000 - \$39,999
- \$40,000 - \$49,999
- \$50,000 - \$59,999
- \$60,000 - \$69,999
- \$70,000 - \$79,999
- \$80,000 - \$89,999
- \$90,000 - \$99,999
- \$100,000 - \$149,999
- More than \$150,000

Education

What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- Less than high school
- High school graduate
- Some college
- 2-year degree
- 4-year degree
- Professional degree
- Graduate degree

APPENDIX C

Human Subject Research Approval

Office for Research
Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Subjects



January 12, 2016

Ayesha Tariq
Dept. of Management
CCBA
Box 870225

Re: IRB#: 16-OR-013 "If I don't have it, is it still mine" An Exploration into the Relationship between Access-based Consumption and Identity"

Dear Ms. Tariq:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your proposed research.

Your application has been given expedited approval according to 45 CFR part 46. You have also been granted the requested waiver of written documentation of informed consent. Approval has been given under expedited review category 7 as outlined below:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies

Your application will expire on January 11, 2017. If your research will continue beyond this date, complete the relevant portions of the IRB Renewal Application. If you wish to modify the application, complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol Form. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. When the study closes, complete the appropriate portions of the IRB Request for Study Closure Form.

Please use reproductions of the IRB approved stamped consent forms to provide to your participants.


Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the above application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,



Stuart Usdan, PhD
Chair, Non-Medical Institutional Review Board


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