Tune In: The Power of Sound in Shaping Trailer Engagement

An Experimental Study in Personalized Soundtracks and Viewer Engagement in Film Promotion

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Master's Thesis

June 2025

Word Count: 14 570

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ABSTRACT

Film trailers serve as crucial promotional tools, yet the function of music in shaping viewer engagement within trailers remains an under-explored area, particularly in the context of self-selected soundtracks. Whilst prior studies have demonstrated that music enhances mood and emotional resonance in visual media, there is a lack of research regarding the impact of different soundtrack conditions on psychological engagement and behavioral intentions. This thesis addresses this gap by examining if music fit, character identification, narrative immersion, and emotional responses are influenced by soundtrack conditions, and if these in turn predict behavioral intentions such as the intention to watch or recommend the film. Moreover, it explores the potential mediating role of nostalgia in the relationship between emotional responses and behavioral intentions, thus enhancing the comprehension of how emotion leads to action. The main research question is: To what extent do different soundtrack conditions influence audience engagement with film trailers? To explore this an experimental design was conducted in which 115 participants were randomly assigned one of the three music conditions: original soundtrack, no music, and self-selected music, while watching the trailer of Past Lives (2023). Participants then completed a questionnaire measuring music fit, character identification, narrative immersion, emotional responses, nostalgia and behavioral intentions, using validated and adapted self-report scales. The data were analyzed through t-tests, ANOVA analyses, multiple linear regression tests, and mediation PROCESS tests. Results revealed that the music condition significantly influenced character identification, narrative immersion, and emotional responses, with self-selected music outperforming the other no music condition, but not the original soundtrack. Nostalgia was found to partially mediate the relationship between emotional responses and behavioral intentions. Narrative immersion and emotional responses predicted behavioral intentions, while music fit and character identification didn't. These findings demonstrate how sound affects not only the audience engagement but downstream behavior.

KEYWORDS: *film trailers, music fit, character identification, narrative immersion, emotional responses, behavioral intentions, audience engagement, media studies*

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1. Introduction

In 2010, Christopher Nolan's film *Inception* caused a shift in the cinematic landscape, not only in terms of narrative structure of blockbusters, but also in the auditory aspects of film production. As Adrian Daub (2016) explores in his Longreads article, the now-infamous "BRAAAM" sound (echoing blasts of brass) became an iconic auditory shorthand for cinematic credibility, soon replicated in countless trailers across all film genres. This shift signified a paradigm change in the role and function of trailer music, which moved from a position of marginal significance to a central role in shaping the emotional experience of the viewer. Ten years later, a new development has come to the fore. According to Doherty (2021) in The Guardian, the practice of using popular music in advertisements has become increasingly prevalent, with well-known songs being slowed down, stripped back, or reorchestrated to induce a sense of emotional depth and nostalgia. Examples include Nirvana's "Something in the Way" in *The Batman* (2022) and Euryhmics' "Sweet Dreams" in *X-Men: Apocalypse* (2016). The combination of sound and image in this context functions not only as an aesthetic decision but as a calculated engagement strategy.

These evolving practices point to the centrality of music in trailer design and rise a timely question: To what extent does music influence the audience? How might this change when viewers choose their own music? The intersection of auditory stimuli, personal preference and narrative context has yet to be fully explored in an empirical setting. As has been demonstrated by various researchers (Cohen, 1993, p. 879; Boltz, 2004, p. 1194) music has a significant effect on emotions in cinematic contexts. However, the impact of the personalization of music and its presence or absence on engagement with promotional content such as film trailers has not been thoroughly researched. This question has emerged in the context of a more general cultural and technological shift in media consumption. In an era characterized by personalized streaming, algorithmic recommendations, and participatory media cultures, the connection between individual and content has become increasingly interactive. It is evident that young audiences are not merely passive consumers of cultural trends; they function as active curators of content, as demonstrated by the popularity of TikTok trends and the composition of Spotify playlists. Self-selection, particularly in the context of music, has evolved into a means of emotional regulation, identity expression, and narrative enhancement. Research in psychology and media studies has highlighted the role of music in personal storytelling and mood management (Krause et al., 2014, p. 315-320). Nevertheless, despite these developments, the selection of trailer music remains a largely top-down decision. Music in trailers is typically chosen by

marketers, editors, and directors, not by the viewers it hopes to affect. The objective of this thesis is to answer the following research question:

"To what extent does music influence audience engagement with film trailers?"

The research focuses on the trailer of Past Lives (2023), a critically acclaimed arthouse film by Celine Song. The introspective tone, quiet pacing, and emotional complexity of the film make it an ideal stimulus for examining the role of music in emotional and narrative engagement. In contrast to conventional cinematic practices, which often rely on dramatic plot twists, Past Lives employs a more reflexive approach, offering a contemplative exploration of love, memory and identity. In the present study, the participants were shown the trailer under three conditions: original soundtrack, no music, and self-selected background music. This configuration allows for an investigation into how soundtrack condition shapes emotional responses, nostalgia, music fit, character identification, narrative immersion and behavioral intentions.

1.1. Academic Relevance

This study contributes to the academic discourse across psychology, music cognition, and film studies by investigating how different soundtrack conditions, particularly self-selected music, shape audience engagement with film trailers. While previous research has established that significantly influences emotional responses (Cohen, 1993, p. 893; Vuoskoski et al., 2022, p. 9), character perception (Hoeckner et al., 2011, p. 149), and narrative immersion (Green & Broke, 2000, p. 707), the effect of music personalization in promotional film content remains unexplored. The thesis addresses this gap by integrating the Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 1987, p. 1024) and theories of interactivity in digital environments (Sundar et al., 2012) with established film music theory. Specifically, it draws on Grobman's (1988, p. 82-83) notion of music as "unheard" and Cohen's (1993) Congruence-Association Model, which emphasize the subtle but often unconscious ways in which music guides interpretation and emotional framing.

By connecting these frameworks with personalization trends in contemporary media use, the study expands the understanding of music fit not as a fixed property of a soundtrack, but as a subjective and context-sensitive experience shaped by agency and familiarity. In addition, the study contributes to the existing body of literature by offering a more nuanced perspective on the assumption that congruent, professionally scored music consistently enhances immersion and behavioral intentions. This prompts the question of whether personalization may offer alternative pathways to emotional resonance, thereby challenging

dominant paradigms in trailer design and media effects. This thesis makes a significant contribution to the field of trailer research through its empirical approach, a sub-field that frequently focuses on visual editing and genre cues (Kernan, 2004, p. 1 ; Hixson, 2005, p. 214) than on the psychological mechanisms underpinning auditory engagement. The experimental design and multimodal measures of engagement, such as music fit, character identification, narrative immersion, emotional responses, nostalgia and behavioral intentions, provide a complex model for evaluating how music conditions shape the viewers' experiences.

1.2. Societal Relevance

This study provides valuable insights into contemporary audiences' interactions with media in an increasingly personalized digital landscape. The rise of streaming platforms, social media, and algorithmic curation has led to a shift in media consumption, particularly among younger demographics, who have become accustomed to personalizing their media environments. Music, in particular, plays a significant role in emotional self-regulation, identity expression, and storytelling across various mediascapes such as TikTok, Instagram, and Spotify. The present study explores if self-selected music influences emotional responses and narrative engagement, shedding light on the affective dimensions of media personalization.

These findings have important implications for the film and entertainment industries, more specifically in the context of trailer design and promotional strategy. Trailers are no longer confined to passive consumption in theatres, they circulate widely on social media, where remixing, re-editing, and re-soundtracking became common practices in fan communities. Allowing for or even encouraging more personalized interactions with trailers, such as choosing your own music, could foster a higher emotional investment and increase the likelihood of sharing or watching the film. This is particularly relevant for arthouse and independent movies, which often lack the marketing power of influential studios and rely on emotional resonance to build their fan base.

1.3. Thesis Outline

This thesis is structured into 5 chapters. Following the introduction, Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework, reviewing relevant literature on music in film, emotional engagement, self-determination, and media interactivity, including key concepts such as music fit, character identification, narrative immersion, emotional responses, nostalgia, and

behavioral intentions. It also develops the hypotheses of this study. Chapter 3 details the research methodology, including the experimental design, participant selection, materials, and procedure. It also highlights the operationalization of the variables and provides justification for the chosen method and analytical tests. Furthermore, Chapter 4 presents the results of the study, reporting findings from statistical analyses used to test the proposed hypotheses. This includes descriptive statistics, assumption checks, and inferential tests such as ANOVAs, t-tests, linear regressions and mediation analyses. Chapter 5 offers a discussion on the results about the academic and societal implications, concluding with a section about limitations and future research.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Film Trailers and Music

Film trailers have long been a cornerstone of movie marketing. A movie trailer is a short film composed of selected scenes from a specific feature, designed to highlight the film's strengths and intended to be shown in theatres to promote its upcoming release (Kernan, 2004, p. 1). According to Hixson (2005, p. 214), trailers, along with television, are key tools for marketing, offering viewers a preview that helps them decide if a movie suits their taste. Beyond their promotional value, trailers also function as affective texts that interact with viewers' moods and influence their purchase intentions. Devlin et al. (2011, p. 592-593) found that mood significantly shaped how individuals responded to online trailers, particularly when gender was taken into account. Hixson (2005) suggests a different take on trailer marketing, emphasizing that genre familiarity is one of the most significant drivers of trailer effectiveness (p. 222). Rather than targeting audiences strictly by demographics, successful trailer strategies often center on highlighting genre conventions that resonate with fans.

In recent years, the marketing value of trailers has only grown. As more films compete for attention in both theatrical and streaming spaces, trailers are increasingly used not only to create excitement, but also to forecast a film's potential success. Karray and Debernitz (2017, p. 387) argue that trailers are used by stakeholders to anticipate box office performance, suggesting that the investors' influence extends to the content of the trailer as well, most of them including violent, sexual, or comic scenes, that might catch the viewer's eye. Alongside these visual tactics, music has emerged as a key marketing component. Deutsch (2007, p. 1) defines a soundtrack as an *"intentional sound which accompanies moving images in narrative film".* Damjanovic and Kawalec (2021, p. 1147) found that music induced emotions affected recognition memory of trailer content. When a comedic trailer was paired with sad music participants remembered visual effects more accurately than when then the music matched the trailer's tone. In contrast, Brownrigg (2003, p. 49-50) emphasizes that film music is closely tied to the film's genre, with specific musical styles and structures, such as the use of lush strings in melodrama or dissonant tones in horror, serving as immediate signals to the audience about what kind of story to expect. These conventions help trailers establish mood and genre with minimal exposition. Moreover, Cook (2007, p. 316-317) argues that major and minor harmonies carry deeply ingrained emotional meanings, mirroring vocal patterns in human speech and animal calls. Major chords tend to be associated with happiness or triumph, while minor chords evoke sadness

and tension, emotional cues that trailer creators use to guide viewer reactions in a short period of time.

Indeed, trailers are uniquely suited for experimental manipulation, because they are short, emotionally charged and easily modified in controlled conditions (Oh et al., 2014, p. 88). Prior work has demonstrated how small alterations in sound, genre framing, or pacing can significantly affect how viewers evaluate a film's quality or their likelihood of watching it (Jerrick, 2011, p. 4). This makes trailers ideal for testing how audio conditions, such as presence/absence or the personalization of background music might influence engagement. In the next section autonomy will be discussed, and how self-selected music influences individuals.

2.2. Self-Selection of Music

Autonomy is a fundamental tenet of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 1987) that signifies the sense of agency individuals experience when actively shaping their own actions (p. 1033). SDT differentiates between autonomous and controlled behaviors enhancing that autonomy entails an inner advocacy of one's actions, inducing greater intrinsic motivation, cognitive flexibility, and emotional well-being. This research extends to media consumption where user agency in content selection display deeper engagement and satisfaction (Krause et al., 2014, p. 315). The role of autonomy in music selection has been well documented in the psychological studies, underscoring positive and negative effects on individuals. Groarke & Hogan (2019), came out with research that indicates the positive side of self-chosen music in the daily life of an individual, enhancing that it elicits emotional regulation and cognitive engagement (p. 12), and provides effective feelings in stressful times (p. 14). Studies highlight that individuals who select their own music experience greater psychological benefits such as mood regulation and stress reduction, compared to those assigned to external selections (Krause et al., 2014, p. 320). In their study Sundar et al. (2012, Summary & Discussion section, para. 2) enhance the role of source interactivity in media engagement, wherein users that can control and customize their media experience feel a heightened sense of ownership and agency.

This aligns with broader findings that link interactive control over music, such as playlists or shuffle functions, to more active and positive listening (Krause et al., 2014, p. 320). However, while autonomy in selection can improve mood and engagement, it may also come with cognitive trade-offs. For instance, Que et al. (2023) discovered that participants who listened to their self-selected background music during a reading task didn't perform

worse in terms of comprehension, but did exhibit longer reading times, more fixations, and less efficient reading patterns overall (p. 13-14). This suggests that while self-chosen music enhances personal agency, it may also affect attentional processing depending on the task at hand.

Nevertheless, in affective and emotionally loaded contexts, the benefits are evident. Cohrdes et al. (2017) demonstrated that music browsing and self-selection were effective tools for affect regulation across age groups, producing significant shifts in emotional states (p. 35). The researchers observed that the disparities in emotional conditions dissipated once users engaged in the selection of their own musical content, thereby underscoring the efficacy of autonomy in reversing negative affective states (p. 34). This improvement in mood through personal agency is consistent with real-life behavior and illustrates how users actively shape their media environments to suit their emotional needs. The emphasis on contextual appropriateness is echoed by North and Hargreaves (2000) who note that listeners respond more positively to music that fits the situation, for instance a heavy metal fan hearing classical music in a concert hall rather than over the radio (p. 64). The concept of appropriateness serves as a mediating factor in the relationship between preference and experience, thereby rendering the act of choosing not only personal but also situationally optimized. The provision of autonomy in media is demonstrated to foster emotional investment and increase engagement (Sundar et al., 2012, Conclusion section, para. 1). Within the paradigm of this research, the self-selected soundtrack condition, allows the audience to choose their own musical accompaniment, thereby transforming them from passive viewers into active participants. Moreover, by personalizing their soundtrack, participants establish a more emotional connection to the narrative, thus enhancing their sense of ownership.

2.3. Music Fit

As hinted in the previous paragraphs a key factor in how audiences emotionally engage is the degree to which the music aligns with the plot. Empirical research supports this, as Galan (2009, p. 17) discovered that musical congruency shapes both cognitive and emotional responses to audiovisual content, making it a relevant construct to measure through self-report. Music fit, or musical congruence, is defined as the extent to which a film's musical accompaniment is perceived as being emotionally and structurally aligned with the visual content. Gorbman's (1980; 1988) foundational work on film music has long argued that the effectiveness of music in narrative settings is contingent on its integration

with cinematic codes, including editing, point of view and emotional tone. As she states *"ultimately it is the narrative context, the interrelations between music and the rest of the film's system, that determine the effectiveness of film music"* (Gorbman, 1980, p. 184). In other words, music exerts its greatest impact when it is aligned with other narrative elements, thereby establishing a seamless auditory-visual experience. Gorbman's (1988) concept of music as "unheard" lends further support to this perspective. She proposes that music in narrative cinema frequently functions below the threshold of conscious perception, influencing how the audience interprets visual and emotional cues without direct attention being drawn to itself (p. 82-83). Furthermore, Cohen's (1993) Congruence-Association Model builds on this view by highlighting how music contributes to both the definition and emotional framing of visual content. According to her the film provides an object of the emotion induced by the music, thereby anchoring the emotional meaning and guiding interpretation (p. 880).

Narrative fit does not rely solely on obvious emotional signaling but often operates through subtle and implicit mechanisms that allow music to reinforce story structure without disrupting viewer immersion. As Vitouch (2001) asserts that the audience is able to interpret the mood and tone of a scene with greater ease when the soundtrack aligns with the visual narrative, even when the music itself is not consciously perceived (p. 80). This subconscious matching contributes to a sense of coherence between what is seen and what is heard. Cohen (1993) underlines that congruent music becomes integrated into memory alongside visual information, reinforcing emotional comprehension and improving narrative cohesion (p. 901). Moreover, Boltz (1991) built upon this framework by demonstrating that music played before a scene can influence viewers' emotional expectations, leading them to interpret upcoming neutral visuals through the lens of music's affective note (p. 600). The anticipatory process reveals that music fit includes not just emotional congruence in the moment, but also how musical cues prepare the viewers for narrative developments. In contrast, Damjanovic and Kawalec (2021) introduce a more nuanced perspective in music research. Their findings indicate that incongruent music has the potential to enhance cognitive outcomes, such as memory, in some cases (p. 1145). This suggests that dissonance created by a mismatch between music and the visual cues may heighten attention and analytical processing, thereby challenging the idea that music fit always enhances storytelling. Collectively, these contributions establish music fit as a flexible mechanism for guiding viewer interpretation through emotional and structural alignment. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H1: *Participants in the self-selected music condition will report higher perceived music fit compared to those in the original soundtrack condition.*

2.4. Character Identification

Identification, as Cohen (2001) defines it as a process in which audiences temporarily adopt a character's perspective, thereby merging emotionally and cognitively with their experiences (p. 261). For this process to occur, it is imperative that the audience is able to empathize with the character's emotions and thoughts. Music enhances emotional access to characters by clarifying their emotional states and shaping a coherent narrative around them. Hoeckner et al. (2011) support this argument by proving that the use of background music, particularly melodramatic scoring, made characters appear more likable and emotionally transparent than when the same scenes were paired with thriller music or presented without music (p. 149). This enhancement in perceived emotional clarity has been demonstrated to foster the viewer's capacity to empathize with the character, a key condition to identification (p. 150). Music essentially acts as a framing device, narrowing interpretive possibilities and encouraging specific emotional alignments that make engagement with the character more intense. Supporting this, Tan et al. (2007) demonstrated that the presentation of music before the appearance of a character on screen serves to prepare the audience to attribute the emotional tone of the music to the character, particularly in scenes that are ambiguous or neutral (p. 146). This pre-scene priming effect engages affective schemas that influence both perception and the viewer's emotional state to engage, thereby reinforcing the audience's cognitive and emotional connection to the character's experience.

Furthermore, the effects of music in film are not limited to influencing the audience's emotional perception, they also contribute to how viewers cognitively align with a character's perspective. Ansani et al. (2020) found out that the type of soundtrack influenced participants' assumptions about the character's mindset and intentions (p. 13). For instance, Evan's music led viewers to interpret the character as reflective and morally grounded, while Rachmaninov's composition prompted interpretations of calculated and morally ambiguous behavior. These findings suggest that music shapes how he audience mentally engages with a character, guiding their interpretation of the character's internal state. Rather than merely shaping emotional alignment music can shape character identification by inspiring viewers to adopt the perspective of the character throughout the plotline. This perspective is consistent with Igaruta's (2010) conception of identification as a multidimensional construct encompassing both emotional immersion and cognitive elaboration (p. 368). While he

doesn't research the effect of music on character identification, his insights are valuable. One of his most important results showed that participants who identified strongly with characters from *A Day Without a Mexican,* developed significant positive attitudes towards immigration, making him draw the conclusion that it was the emotional connection to the characters that influenced participants' view (p. 369). Nevertheless, it is hypothesized that:

> **H2:** *Participants in the self-selected music condition will report higher character identification than those in the original soundtrack and no music condition.*

2.5. Narrative Immersion

The concept of narrative immersion has been shown to expand lenses of how music deepens engagement by allowing the viewers to mentally and emotionally enter the story world. Immersion, otherwise known as narrative transportation, has been defined as a psychological state of "being here", whereby individuals experience a diminished sense of awareness in their surroundings and become emotionally aligned with a character or narrative (Green & Brock, 2000, p. 707). It has been proved that individuals with a high level of transportation tend to adopt beliefs that match the perspective of the story, even when the story is completely fictional. This suggests that the key to persuasive impact is not realism but rather immersion. The transformative effect is reinforced when sound and narrative are emotionally aligned. In their study, Hauck and Hecht (2022) demonstrated that the presence of congruent background music while reading emotionally toned texts led to an increase in immersion, as well as an enhancement in the perception of emotion (p. 13). When the emotional tone of the music corresponded with the mood of the text, participants reported a heightened sense of immersion, suggesting a connection between sound and narrative. The findings emphasize the potential of cross-modal storytelling techniques, where immersion is not driven by one sensory input alone, but through the integrated orchestration of music and narrative cues (p. 18).

The notion of immersion as a multidimensional and embodied process is echoed in Albert's (2012) analysis of cinematic and video art experiences. The author identifies two forms of immersion: a macro-level driven by sensory-emotional manipulation, and micro-level that encourages introspection and presence in the moment (p. 10). In both cases, the concept of immersion can be defined as the process of dissolving the cognitive boundary between viewer and text, drawing the body and mind into a unified perceptual experience. This is especially pertinent in the digital environments, where the deliberate construction of immersion is crucial. Chueng and Marsden's (2003) seminal study established that users'

sense of presence was most enhanced when soundscape corresponded with their expectations of place, showing that congruent auditory input significantly enhanced the immersive quality of the experience (p. 4). However, it is not solely the presence of sound that is pertinent, it is also the psychological and emotional congruence that is of significance. As Salselas and Penha (2019) explain, consistency across audio and visual elements is essential to prevent perceptual disruptions. The integration of auditory elements that align with the emotional tenor, spatial indicators, and semantic content of a visual narrative has been proved to engender high narrative immersion (p. 7). These lead to the following hypothesis:

> **H3:** *Participants in the self-selected music condition will report higher narrative immersion than those in the original soundtrack and no music condition.*

2.6. Emotional response

Emotional responses are short-lived, multicompetent, reactions to meaningful stimuli that involve cognitive appraisal, subjective experience, and psychological activation (King, 2020, p. 675-676). In the context of media, these responses are central to how audiences engage with stories, characters, and audio-visual elements. Music intensifies this emotional absorption by reforging the intended mood of a scene, triggering personal associations, and enhancing engagement (Cohen, 1993, p. 893). In addition, Vuoskoski et al. (2022, p. 9) developed a validated measurement framework for capturing moment-to-moment emotional responses to music, including constructs such as feeling moved, chills, warmth in the chest, and a sense of connection. These indicators collectively reflect deep emotional engagement, particularly when the music aligns with the narrative context. Their study found that these emotions often co-occur and are linked to both sad and joyful musical excerpts, suggesting that being emotionally moved is not limited to a single valence but represents an overarching intensity of experience (p. 19). Importantly, these feelings were associated with physiological changes and were more pronounced when the music matched the emotional tone of the visual material (p. 24).

Indeed, emotional responses elicited by music play a central role in triggering nostalgia. Rather than nostalgia arising directly from music, it is the affective experience, such as emotional intensity, that initiates the nostalgic process. Barrett et al. (2010) supports this affirmation by revealing the fact that individuals reported stronger emotional reactivity were more likely to experience nostalgia (p. 391). Moreover, Damjanovic and Kawalec (2021) found that emotional incongruence, such as sad music paired with a comedic trailer,

can heighten attention and improve memory for the content, suggesting that deviations from expected emotional tone may intensify viewer engagement through surprise or cognitive dissonance (p. 1147). Meanwhile, studies like Bente et al. (2022) show that music alone can induce suspense and emotional arousal, even without accompanying visuals (p. 10). These findings reinforce the notion that emotional responses in film are not purely narrative-driven, but are substantially shaped by musical cues and sound design.

The emotional power of music also extends into the physiological realm. Meinel and Bullerjahn (2022) demonstrated that music synchronized with jump-scares in horror films elicits stronger bodily responses, such as increased skin conductance, than visuals alone (p. 1849-1850). This synchronization effect shows how music can prepare the audience for an emotional high point, priming the body and mind to react more intensely. Similarly, Lundqvist et al. (2009) found that happy and sad music respectively induced measurable changes in facial expression, arousal, and self-reported mood, confirming the ability of music to generate emotion through both expressive cues and physiological activation (p. 73-75). The following hypothesis was proposed:

> **H4:** *Participants in the self-selected music condition will report higher emotional responses than those in the original soundtrack and no music condition.*

2.7. Nostalgia

Nostalgia is defined as a potent emotional response that combines yearning for the past with positive or negative memories, enhancing emotional engagement by connecting the audiences with their past experiences (Routledge et al., 2007, p. 137). According to Batcho (2007, p. 375), nostalgia serves two primary psychological elements: social connectedness and individuation. Whilst some individuals experience nostalgia as a means of reaffirming their ties to significant relationships and communal bonds, others perceive as a deeply personal experience that fosters introspection and self-reflection. Emotional responses, especially those triggered by media stimuli, can serve as a catalyst for nostalgic experiences. As Juslin et al. (2008) music-evoked emotional engagement often includes nostalgia, which frequently arises in the day-to-day life as a part of broader affective reactions (p. 678). This aligns with the findings of Sedikides et al. (2021) that suggests that nostalgia provides various psychological benefits, serving as a protective factor in challenging times (p. 2055). Moreover, in cinematic and narrative contexts, familiar soundtracks or symbolic visual content contribute to the affective groundwork from which nostalgia may emerge (Huelin, 2022, p. 67). Niemeyer (2014) underscores that nostalgia

functions as a cultural and emotional mechanism, enabling the viewers to reflect on their pasts while interacting with various storylines and objects (p. 1).

Recent empirical research supports nostalgia's predictive role in shaping behavioral intentions. For instance, Nguyen and Duong (2025), in the context of tourism and sustainability, revealed that nostalgia positively affects behavioral intentions such as word-of-mouth (WOM) and pro-sustainable actions, even when not tied to re-experiencing (for example rewatching or revisiting), but rather via emotional resonance during a first-time engagement with a destination or narrative (p. 745-746). Similarly, Gonzalez-Cavazos et al. (2025) conducting research in a branding and marketing context, found that nostalgia significantly increased purchase intention and willingness to pay among both gen Z and Gen X participants exposed to nostalgic content, underlining that nostalgic affect plays a mediating role between emotional memory and consumer decision-making (p. 12). Although most of the research consists on nostalgia's role in repeat media consumption (for example rewatching a film or TV show) as studied by Zhang et al. (2023, p. 492), recent findings from Cho et al (2024) in the domain of sports tourism suggest that nostalgia can also inspire new behavioral intentions, including planning future travel or attending events for the first time, acting as a buffer for negative effects and enhancing psychological well-being (p. 7). Linking this to the present study, nostalgia does not solely reflect backward longing but can actively influence forward-oriented decisions, including the intention to engage with media that emotionally resonates with one's past. Hence, the next hypothesis proposed:

H5: *Nostalgia mediates the relationship between emotional responses and behavioral intentions.*

2.8. Behavioral Intentions

Behavioral intentions are commonly studied using frameworks such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), which posits that individuals are more likely to act if they hold a favorable attitude toward the behavior, perceive social approval (subjective norms), and believe in their capacity to perform the action (perceived behavioral control) (p. 181-182). While this model remains useful, its application to media consumption highlights the importance of emotional drivers. When it comes to films, emotions serve not only as fleeting reactions but also as predictors of future behavior. A growing body of research demonstrates that emotional responses during trailer viewing significantly influence viewer behavior. Wang and Tang (2021) found that emotional intensity during trailer watching, specifically the experience of pleasure and arousal, was positively correlated with the intention to spread

positive word-of-mouth (WOM) (p. 8). Their study demonstrated that emotional engagement mediated by music and narrative elements can lead viewers to recommend a film or share its trailer online. Similarly, Arriaga et al. (2019) identified that emotional gratifications such as thrill, contemplative, fun, and character engagement were strong predictors of rewatching and recommendation intentions (p. 7). Viewers who found a film emotionally rewarding were more likely to return to it or urge others to do the same. Moreover, nostalgia has also emerged as a key emotional driver of behavior. According to Sedikides and Wildschut (2017), nostalgic content fosters a sense of self-continuity and social connectedness, which in turn motivates prosocial and approach-oriented behaviors (p. 56). In the context of film, trailers that elicit nostalgia through music may prompt viewers to share the trailer with others, seek out the film for emotional comfort, or revisit similar content. Berger and Milkman (2011) showed that emotional arousal, regardless of valence, was a powerful predictor of content sharing (p. 201). Content that elicited awe, anger, or anxiety was more likely to be shared than low-arousal content. This finding suggests that trailers capable of provoking strong emotional responses may be more successful in generating online visibility and anticipation.

While existing literature rarely acknowledges the direct influence of music fit, character identification, and narrative immersion on behavioral intentions in film studies, their effect has been reported empirically in related domains such as advertising and digital media storytelling. For instance, Herget et al. (2020) proved that increasing levels of music–message fit in audiovisual advertising led to stronger purchase intentions, more favorable brand attitudes, and improved product evaluations (p. 16-17). Regarding character identification, Chen et al. (2022) found that digital characters with distinct personality traits, that align with costumers' values, significantly influence individuals' attitudes and purchase intentions (p. 216). The research argues that when the audience perceive characters as relatable, this recognition can motivate behavioral decisions, such as seeking out or supporting the associated content. Furthermore, narrative immersion has also been identified as a persuasive mean of marketing narratives. Xiao et al. (2023) revealed that narrative transportation mediated the relationship between storytelling and purchase intention, highlighting how immersion in a story can increase the likelihood of audience engagement (p. 216). Though these studies are situated in advertising contexts, they provide groundwork for including music fit, character identification, and narrative immersion as predictors of viewers' behavioral intentions after watching the trailer, which is also a form of advertising in the cinematic landscape. Thereby, the following hypotheses were put forward:

H6a: *Perceived music fit will positively predict behavioral intentions.*

H6b: *Character identification will positively predict behavioral intentions.*

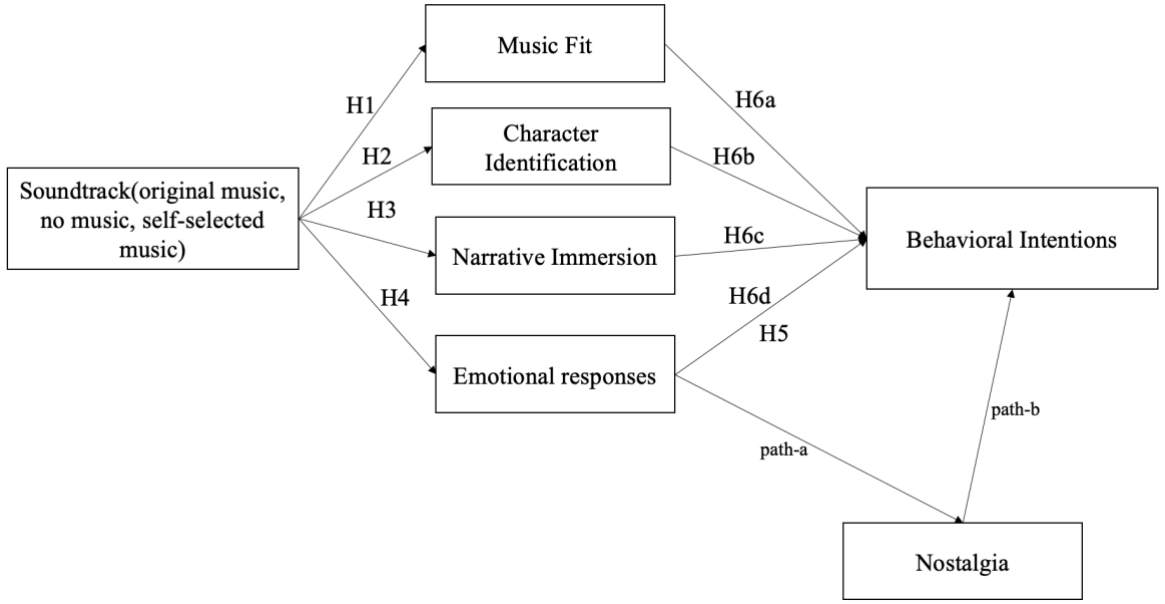
H6c: *Narrative immersion will positively predict behavioral intentions.*

H6d: *Emotional responses will positively predict behavioral intentions.*

2.9. Conceptual Model

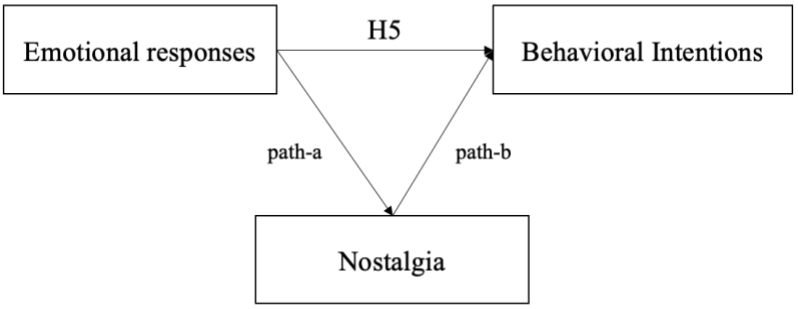
The conceptual model presented below represents the hypothesized relationships between soundtrack condition, engagement variables and behavioral intentions, grounded in theories of music fit, character identification, narrative immersion and emotional responses.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model



In addition, a mediation model was developed in order to observe whether nostalgia stands as a mediator in the relationship between emotional responses and behavioral intentions.

Figure 2. Mediation Model



3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research strategy, which entails the collection and analysis of numerical data to examine the relationships between variables (Bryman, 2012, p. 160). As he explains, quantitative research is closely associated with a deductive approach, whereby theory guides the formulation of hypotheses that are tested empirically (p. 35-36). It is grounded in a natural science model, favoring objectivity and standardization, which helps ensure comparability and control across conditions. This makes it especially suitable for assessing how different music conditions influence audience engagement with film trailers. Its focus on quantification enables clear comparisons between groups and the use of statistical tools to validate findings.

An experimental design was chosen over a survey-based method because it allows for manipulation of the independent variable, in this case original soundtrack, no music and self-selected music. According to Bryman (2012) the core strength of experiments lies in their ability to test whether changes in one variable produce changes in another, through deliberate control and manipulation (p. 50). This is especially useful when the research objective is to identify cause-and-effect dynamics, rather than merely assess correlations. While surveys (cross-sectional designs) are helpful to identify patterns of association, they do not permit researchers to manipulate variables and thus cannot offer robust explanations (p. 59). In contrast, experimental designs ensure internal validity and are considered a gold standard in social research for generating trustworthy causal findings (Shadish et al., 2001, p. 13). Given that this study aims to test if specific music conditions influence audience responses, an experimental design provides the most suitable framework. The experiment was conducted via the platform Qualtrics to examine if different soundtrack conditions (Original Soundtrack, No Music, Self-Selected Music) affect audience engagement with a film trailer. A between-subjects structure was chosen to eliminate carry-over effects and demand characteristics that could emerge in within-subjects designs, where participants are exposed to multiple conditions. Random assignment to one of the three conditions ensured comparability across groups and minimized bias, thus strengthening internal validity (Field, 2018).

Conducting the study online offered several advantages. First, it allowed for a broader and more diverse participant pool through digital recruitment, increasing internal validity. Secondly, the study enhanced the ecological validity of the experiment by allowing participants to view the trailer in environments with which they were familiar and which

they self-selected. This is similar to the way individuals consume media every day (Bojinov & Gupta, 2022). It is acknowledged that the online environment can induce variability in sound quality and ambient noise; however, participants were instructed to wear headphones or to complete the experiment in a quiet space to ensure an optimal audio quality. The utilization of standardized, pre-recorded stimuli, in conjunction with a consistent survey structure across all groups, facilitated the preservation of experimental control while maintaining naturalistic relevance.

3.2. Participants

Recruitment was conducted using a combination of convenience and snowball sampling. The survey was distributed via social media platforms, including Instagram and TikTok, as well as through university-affiliated groups. In addition, participants were encouraged to forward the survey link to their peers, broadening the reach of the study across diverse social circles. Although this non-probability sampling method limits generalizability, it enabled the collection of a sufficiently large and demographically varied sample within a limited timeframe.

Eligibility requirements were minimal: individuals had to be aged above 18 years old, as it was clearly indicated in the consent form at the start of the survey. Prior to participation, informed consent was obtained, clarifying that participation was voluntary, anonymous and that the participants could withdraw at any point (Appendix B). While the experiment explored the impact of music on emotional and cognitive responses to the film trailer, this aim was not disclosed upfront in order to avoid biasing participants' responses or including demand characteristics. Instead, participants were told the study was about how people respond to film trailers, which helped maintain the internal validity of the experiment. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the three experimental conditions (Original Soundtrack, No Music, Self-Selected Music) via Qualtrics' automated randomization tool (see Appendix D). After viewing the trailer, participants completed a self-report questionnaire, followed by a short debriefing that explained he true purpose of the experiment and the logic behind the soundtrack manipulation (see Appendix C). The final sample, after cleaning the data, consisted of 115 participants who successfully completed the online experiment.

3.3. Materials (Stimuli)

The audiovisual stimulus employed in this experiment was the official trailer for Past Lives (2023), a critically acclaimed drama directed by Celine Song. The trailer with a duration of approximately 2 minutes and 20 seconds, was selected on the basis of its emotionally evocative content and subtle pacing, rendering it an ideal candidate for the examination for how different musical contexts influence audience engagement. The thematic elements of memory, longing and connection, as presented in the trailer, provided a significant foundation for the examination of music's role in shaping emotional resonance and narrative processing.

Three variations of the trailer were created to represent different soundtrack conditions. In the Official Soundtrack condition, the trailer was presented with its official music and audio elements. In the No Music condition, all background music was removed while retaining dialogue, allowing the participants to view the trailer in a more stripped-down format. Finally, in the Self-Selected Music condition, participants were instructed to listen and choose a song from a predefined playlist, comprising the top six love songs recommended by the Cosmopolitan magazine (Allen, 2020) and an original song from the trailer (see Table 1). Love songs from the 2000s were chosen to align to the romantic theme and timeline of the movie Past Lives (2023) which centers around unresolved love and emotional intimacy (Li, 2023). The thematic match ensured emotional congruence between music and the film's narrative. Participants were not informed beforehand that the song they selected will play in the movie trailer, in order to avoid priming them with expectations regarding the task. All versions of the trailer were embedded directly within the Qualtrics survey platform using the same resolution and playback settings. This ensured consistency in visual presentation across all conditions, thereby enabling a controlled comparison of how differing soundtracks influenced the audience's emotional responses and engagement.

Table 1. Self-Selected Music Predefined Playlist

Song Title	Artists	Year	Ranking
She Will Be Loved	Maroon 5	2004	1
Hero	Enrique Iglesias	2001	2
Crazy in Love	Beyoncé ft. Jay-Z	2003	3
Bleeding Love	Leona Lewis	2007	4
Love Story	Taylor Swift	2008	5
Home	Edward Sharpe & The Magnetic Zeros	2010	6
Stay	Cat Power	2018	Original Soundtrack

3.4. Operationalization

In order to assess the influence of music on audience engagement with film trailers , several psychological and emotional constructs were measured using standardized self-report scales. The participants' emotional responses, experiences of nostalgia, perceived music fit between music and trailer (Original Soundtrack condition and Self-Selected Music condition), identification with characters, narrative immersion (transportation), and behavioral intentions were all considered. All scales were selected or adapted from instruments that were previously validated in peer-reviewed frameworks. The questions were presented in randomized blocks to reduce order effects. The "music-fit" construct was exclusively administered to participants in the original soundtrack and self-selected music conditions, as this construct is not applicable to the no music condition. For a detailed overview of the scales check Appendix E. The following section delineates the operationalization of each variable in detail.

To assess perceptions of the congruence between the music and visual content, a six-item scale was adapted from Galan (2009) who explored music fit in advertising. For instance, participants evaluated on a 5-point agreement scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree) items such as "The music felt like a natural part of the trailer" or "The music matched the mood of the scenes". The Cronbach's alpha was not reported in the original article; however, the scale has been frequently used in applied contexts for assessing audio-visual congruence (Ausín et al., 2021).

In addition, the extent to which the participants identified themselves with the character was assessed using six items adapted from Cohen's (2001) conceptualization of audience-character identification. This scale measured empathic alignment and perspective-

taking, including items such as “I could understand the character’s feelings” and “The trailer helped me understand the character’s emotional journey”. The responses were captured on a 5-point agreement scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree). Cohen (2001) does not report Cronbach’s alpha for the original scale, but subsequent studies using this instrument have found internal consistency values ranging from $\alpha = .89$ to $\alpha = .91$ (Huang & Fung, 2024, p. 24844).

Narrative immersion (transportation) was operationalized using the transportation scale created by Green and Brock (2000) which defines transportation as a mental state of focused attention, emotional involvement, and vivid imagery. The degree to which the participants were absorbed into the story world was measured using items such as “I was mentally involved in the trailer”, that were evaluated on a 5-point agreement scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree). The original scale demonstrated acceptable internal consistency with Cronbach’s $\alpha = .76$ (Green & Brock, 2000, p. 704)

In order to capture profound emotional responses, items were adapted from Vouskoski et al. (2022), who conceptualize the experience of being “moved” by music and media. Items such as “I felt moved or emotionally touched” or “I experienced chills or goosebumps” were evaluated using a comparable 5-point Likers scale (1 = Not at all, 5 = Very much). This scale has been developed for the purpose of capturing social-relational emotional responses, such as warmth, connectedness and emotional arousal. It is argued that such responses are essential for understanding engagement beyond categorical emotions. The Cronbach’s alpha was not reported in the article.

The measurement of nostalgic effect was undertaken using a four-item scale that had been adapted from Newman et al. (2019), who conceptualized nostalgia as a sentimental longing for the past that can enhance meaning. The PINE (Personal Inventory of Nostalgic Experiences) scale he developed is originally phrased as questions such as “How nostalgic do you feel?” and further adapted to the present study in affirmations such as “I felt nostalgic”. The items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Not at all, 5 = Very much). This scale has been designed to capture the multidimensional nature of nostalgia, that is comprised into three components: cognitive, emotional and temporal. The original scale demonstrated high internal consistency, with Cronbach’s $\alpha = .87$ (Newman et al., 2019, p. 12).

Behavioral intentions were measured using items adapted from Ulker-Demriel et al. (2018), focusing on participants likelihood of seeking out or engaging with the film. Items included statements such as “I would like to watch this film” and “I would share this trailer

online or with friends". Responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Extremely unlikely 5 = Extremely likely). This construct serves as a key outcome variable, reflecting the downstream of emotional and cognitive engagement. The original scale reported high reliability, with a Cronbach's $\alpha = .841$ (Ulker-Demriel et al., 2018, p. 90).

3.5. Experiment Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to one of the three experimental groups: (1) the original soundtrack condition where the trailer was shown with the original music score (Past Lives, 2023); (2) the silent trailer condition, where the same trailer was displayed without any background music; (3) the self-selected music condition, in which the participants were able to choose one of the seven songs from the predefined playlist (Table 1). This design made it possible to asses not only presence or absence of music, but also the role of user agency in selecting emotionally resonant content. By comparing these three soundtracks the experiment also tested how congruence and personalization interact with audience engagement.

Upon accessing the survey link, participants were first presented with an informed consent form. This page outlined the general aim of the experiment, confirmed that the participation was voluntary and anonymous, and required participants to confirm that they are at least 18 years old before proceeding. Once consent was obtained, participants answered a brief demographic questionnaire that included their age, gender and country of residence (see Appendix A). This was followed by two screening questions about favorite music and film genre and a filtering question asking whether they previously watched the movie Past Lives. Participants who indicated that they already watched the movie were automatically excluded from the survey, as prior exposure could have influenced heir emotional responses or interpretation of the trailer. Their session ended immediately with a thank-you message, and no data beyond the screening questions were recorded.

Furthermore, participants who had not seen the movie were then shown the trailer embedded directly within the survey platform. In the self-selected condition the music selection task appeared before the trailer began. To preserve experimental integrity and minimize expectation effects, participants in that condition were not informed that the selected song will be part of the trailer they will watch. All participants were required to watch the full trailer before proceeding to fill in the post-questionnaire. After viewing the trailer participants completed a series of self-report questions. All participants responded to measures assessing emotional response, nostalgia and behavioral intentions. Individuals that

watched the official soundtrack condition or self-selected the music had to respond to and additional set of questions about the narrative fit. The last question before the debriefing screen was the manipulation check that verified whether the participants understood their condition. The debriefing message included the true purpose of the study and it explained what condition each individual had, followed by a thank-you message that also invited participants to contact the researcher if they had follow-up questions.

3.6. Reliability and Validity

To assess construct validity, exploratory factor analysis was conducted, preceded by two diagnostic tests to determine suitability: the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The constructs used in this study were adapted from previously validated measurement scales to ensure conceptual clarity and comparability with prior research.

A KMO value above 0.6 is generally considered acceptable, indicating that patterns of correlations are compact enough to yield reliable factors (Kaiser, 1974, p. 36). Bartlett's test examines whether the correlation matrix significantly differs from an identity matrix, a significant p-value ($p < 0.5$) suggests that the data are factorable (Odoi et al., 2022, p. 2). For this study, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure verified the adequacy of the sampling for the factor analysis, with all KMO values exceeding the minimum acceptable threshold of .60: music fit (.823), character identification (.847), narrative immersion (.905), emotional responses (.899), nostalgia (.814), and behavioral intentions (.851). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant at $p < .001$ for all constructs, indicating that correlations between items were sufficient for factor analysis.

For reliability, Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of each construct. Alpha values above .70 are regarded as acceptable, while those above .80 and .90 suggest good to excellent reliability (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011, p. 54). In this case, all constructs indicated good to excellent reliability: music fit ($\alpha = .891$), character identification ($\alpha = .893$), narrative immersion ($\alpha = .919$), emotional responses ($\alpha = .934$), nostalgia ($\alpha = .881$), and behavioral intentions ($\alpha = .932$). These results confirm that each scale consistently measures its intended construct.

3.7. Manipulation Check

Following data cleaning and the removal of incomplete responses, a manipulation check (see Table 2) was conducted to assess whether participants correctly identified their

assigned soundtrack condition. Only participants who completed the manipulation check question and were successfully assigned to a condition (N = 115) were included in the analysis.

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relationship between participants' actual condition assignment (Original Soundtrack, Self-Selected Music, No Music) and their responses to the manipulation check question (What best describes the audio experience of the trailer you just watched?). Participants could choose one of the four options: (1) "I chose the music myself," (2) "The music was already part of the trailer," (3) "The trailer had no sound," and (4) "I don't know." The cross-tabulation revealed that participants accurately identified their condition. Those in the Self-Selected Music condition selected "I chose the music myself" (n = 37), those in the Original Soundtrack condition selected "The music was already part of the trailer" (n = 40), and those in the No Music condition selected "The trailer had no sound" (n = 38) (Table 2). Notably, none of the participants selected the "I don't know" option. The chi-square test was statistically significant, $\chi^2(4) = 230.0$, $p < .001$, indicating a strong association between participants actual condition and their manipulation check responses. This supports the effectiveness of the experimental manipulation and suggests that participants were clearly aware of the soundtrack condition they experienced.

Table 2. Chi-Square Test of Independence for Manipulation Check

Condition	I chose the music myself	The music was already part of the trailer	The trailer had no sound	Total
Original Soundtrack	0	40	0	40
No Music	0	0	38	38
Self-Selected Music	37	0	0	37
Total	37	40	38	115

$\chi^2(4) = 230.0$, $p < .001$

3.8. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics. The analysis proceeded in several steps, aligned with the study's hypotheses and conceptual model.

To test Hypothesis 1, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to examine whether participants in the self-selected music condition reported significantly higher music fit than those in the original soundtrack condition. The no music condition was excluded from this analysis, as the concept of music fit was applicable only when music was present. According to Field (2018), the t-test is appropriate for comparing the means of two independent groups when the dependent variable is continuous and approximately normally distributed. Assumptions of normality were checked through Levene's test. A significant p-value ($p < .05$) would indicate that the difference in perceived music fit between the two groups is statistically meaningful and not likely due to chance.

To assess Hypotheses 2 through 4, a series of one-way ANOVA tests were conducted to determine the effect of the soundtrack condition (Original Soundtrack, No Music, Self-Selected Music) on three key variables: character identification, narrative immersion, and emotional responses. The ANOVA test is suitable for examining whether there are statistically significant mean differences between three or more independent groups on a continuous dependent variable (Pallant, 2001, p. 186). When the overall F-test was significant, Tukey's HSD was used for post hoc comparisons to identify which specific conditions differed from one another. A significant F-ratio ($p < .05$) indicates that at least one group mean differs from the others, post hoc results further specifying the direction and nature of these differences.

Hypothesis 5 was tested using Hayes' PROCESS Macro (Model 4), which examines the indirect effect of an independent variable through a mediator (Field, 2018). In this case nostalgia was hypothesized to mediate the relationship between emotional responses and behavioral intentions. Interpretation of the results followed the logic of mediation: if the indirect effect (path a and b) is significant, meaning that the confidence interval does not include zero, it indicates that the mediator (nostalgia) significantly explains part of the relationship between the independent (emotional responses) and dependent (behavioral intentions) variables. The direct path (in this case H5) represents the relationship between emotional responses and behavioral intentions after controlling for nostalgia while the total effect (H6d) reflects the overall relationship without controlling for the mediator (Hayes, 2018). According to Preacher and Hayes (2008, p. 880), this approach is preferable to traditional methods like the Sobel test, as it does not assume a normal sampling distribution and is more robust with smaller sample sizes.

Finally, hypotheses 6a through 6d were testes using multiple linear regression analysis to examine the extent to which perceived music fit, character identification,

narrative immersion and emotional responses predicted behavioral intentions. Multiple regression allows for the evaluation of the unique contribution of each predictor while controlling the others (Pallant, 2001, p. 135). Standardized beta coefficients (β), significance levels (p-level), and the model's R^2 were used to interpret the strength and direction of each relationship. According to Cohen (1988, p. 413), beta values above .10 are considered small, .30 medium, and .50 and higher as large effects. A significant beta coefficient ($p < .05$) would indicate that the predictor variable has a meaningful influence on participants' likelihood to engage with the film.

3.9. Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Research Integrity established by the Netherlands Association of Universities (VSNU) and complied with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). As the study poised minimum risk and did not involve sensitive personal data, formal institutional ethics approval was not required under local guidelines. The study design and materials were reviewed and approved informally by the thesis supervisor.

Participants were presented with a written information and consent form at the beginning of the online experiment. The form clearly outlined the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of participation, and the absence of any foreseeable risks. Participants were required to confirm that they were at least 18 years old and agreed to participate before proceeding. This ensured that informed consent was obtained prior to any data collection.

The study involved viewing a short movie trailer and completing a questionnaire. Participants were encouraged to wear headphones and engage with the material in a quiet environment to ensure proper exposure to the soundtrack conditions. At the end of the survey participants were fully debriefed regarding the aims of the research and the experimental manipulation.

All data were collected anonymously and stored on secure, password protected servers accessible only to the researcher and the supervisor. In compliance to the GDPR, all data will be deleted upon completion of the research project.

4. Results

In this chapter the results of the research will be interpreted. It will include the results of the ANOVA analyses, two-sample t-test, mediation, and multiple linear regression analysis.

Descriptive statistics (see Appendix F1.1) were calculated for all key variables in the study to provide an overview of participants' responses (see Table 3). Perceived music fit (MF), measured only in the self-selected music and original soundtrack conditions (n = 77) was relatively high (*M* = 4.18, *SD* = 0.78). Participants also reported high levels of character identification (CI) (*M* = 3.64, *SD* = 0.93) and narrative immersion (NI) (*M* = 3.87, *SD* = 0.98). Emotional responses (ER) to the trailer were moderate overall (*M* = 3.03, *SD* = 1.23), while nostalgia (NST) was slightly higher (*M* = 3.47, *SD* = 1.06). Finally, behavioral intentions (BI), reflecting participants' likelihood to further engage with the movie, were also relatively strong (*M* = 3.83, *SD* = 1.10). Descriptive statistics were also calculated for the three music conditions (see Table 4). The sample was relatively evenly distributed across groups, with 40 participants in the original soundtrack condition, 38 in the no music condition, and 37 in the self-selected music condition. These groupings were used in comparative analyses (t-test and AVOVA) to assess their impact on music fit, character identification, narrative immersion, and emotional responses.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Key Variables

	n	M	SD
MF	77	4.18	0.78
CI	115	3.64	0.93
NI	115	3.87	0.98
ER	115	3.03	1.23
NST	115	3.47	1.06
BI	115	3.83	1.10

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for Music Conditions

	n
Original soundtrack	40
No Music	38
Self-Selected Music	37

4.1. Independent-Samples t-test

Exploring the role of self-selected music in enhancing audience engagement, this section examines whether perceived music fit (MF) differs across music conditions. The hypothesis guiding this analysis is: *H1: Participants in the self-selected music condition will report higher perceived music fit compared to those in the original soundtrack condition.* An independent-samples t-test (see Table 5) was conducted to compare perceived music fit between the self-selected music condition (n = 37, M = 4.00, SD = .84) and the original soundtrack condition (n = 40, M = 4.34, SD = .70) (Table 5). The assumption of equal variances was met, so the first row was used for interpretation. The analysis indicated that the difference in perceived music fit between the two groups was not statistically significant, $t(75) = 1.900$, $p = .061$. The mean difference was 0.33, with a 95% confidence interval ranging from -0.02 to 0.88. Although the results approached significance, the confidence interval includes zero, and thus the result is interpreted as non-significant. The effect size was moderate (Cohen's d = .77), indicating a meaningful difference despite the lack of statistical significance. Thus, the independent-samples t-test revealed no statistically significant difference in the music fit between participants in the self-selected music condition and those in the original soundtrack condition, therefore H1 is not supported.

Table 5. Independent-Samples T-Test

	n	M	SD	t(df)	p
Original Soundtrack	40	4.34	0.70	1.90	.061
Self-Selected Music	37	4.00	0.84		

4.2. One-Way ANOVA Analysis

An ANOVA analysis was conducted to explore whether the condition also influenced how participants identified with the main character. The independent variable was the condition (original soundtrack, no music, self-selected music) and the dependent one was character identification (CI). This led to the following hypothesis: *H2: Participants in the self-selected music condition will report higher character identification than those in the original soundtrack and no music condition*. In the sample, the mean for character identification was highest in the self-selected music condition (M = 3.99, SD = 0.79), followed by the original soundtrack condition (M = 3.62. SD = 0.88), and lowest in the no music condition (M = 3.32, SD = 1.01) (see Appendix F1.2). The analysis revealed a significant main effect of music condition on character identification F(2, 112) = 5.24, p =

.007, $\eta^2 = .806$ (see Table 6). Post hoc comparisons using Tukey's HSD test showed that participants in the self-selected music condition reported significantly higher character identification than those in the no music condition, with a mean difference of .67 ($p = .005$). However, the difference between the self-selected music condition and the original soundtrack condition was not significant ($p = .167$) (see Appendix F4.1). Thereby, H2 is partially supported. The self-selection music condition appears to foster a stronger sense of identification with the main character than the absence of music.

Table 6. ANOVA Summary

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.465	2	4.233	5.250	.007
Within Groups	90.289	112	.806		
Total	98.755	114			

Note. $\eta^2 = .806$

A second ANOVA analysis was conducted, utilizing the same independent variable, but a different dependent one: narrative immersion (NI). This led to the following hypothesis: *H3: Participants in the self-selected music condition will report higher narrative immersion than those in the original soundtrack and no music condition.* In the sample, the mean for narrative immersion was highest again in the self-selected music condition (M = 4.07, SD = .86), closely followed by the original soundtrack condition ($M = 4.03$, $SD = .86$), and lowest for the no music condition ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 1.12$) (see Appendix F1.3). The analysis revealed, once again, a significant main effect of music condition on narrative immersion, $F(2, 112) = 4.15$, $p = .018$, $\eta^2 = .069$ (see Table 7). Post hoc comparison using Tukey's HSD test indicated that participants in the self-selected music condition reported significantly higher narrative immersion compared to the participants in the no music condition with a mean difference of 0.57, $p = .031$. On the other hand, no significant difference was found between the self-selected music condition and the original soundtrack condition with a mean difference of 0.04, $p = .979$ (see Appendix F4.2). Therefore, H3 is partially supported. Participants in the self-selected music condition reported significantly higher narrative immersion that those in the no music condition, but not significantly more than the individuals from the original soundtrack condition.

Table 7. ANOVA Summary

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7.605	2	3.802	4.146	.018
Within Groups	102.723	112	.917		
Total	110.328	114			

Note. $\eta^2 = .069$

A last ANOVA analysis was conducted with the independent variable condition (original soundtrack, no music, self-selected music) and the dependent variable emotional response (ER) to test the following hypothesis: *H4: Participants in the self-selected music condition will report higher emotional responses to the trailer compared to the participants in the original soundtrack and no music conditions*. In the sample, the mean for emotional response was highest for the self-selected music condition ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 1.22$), followed by the original soundtrack condition ($M = 2.98$, $SD = 1.15$), and lowest for the no music condition ($M = 2.56$, $SD = 1.13$) (see Appendix F1). The analysis revealed a significant main effect of music condition on emotional response $F(2, 112) = 7.16$, $p = .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .113$, indicating a moderate size effect (see Table 8). Post hoc comparisons using Tukey's HSD test showed that participants in the self-selected music condition reported significantly higher emotional responses than those in the no music condition with a mean difference of 1.02, $p < .001$. The difference between the self-selected music and original soundtrack condition was not statistically significant ($p = .068$) although the direction of the difference aligns with the hypothesis (see Appendix F4.3). Thus, H4 is partially supported: participants in the self-selected music condition reported significantly higher emotional responses than those in the no music condition, but not significantly higher than those in the original soundtrack condition.

Table 8. ANOVA Summary

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	19.506	2	9.753	7.16	.001
Within Groups	152.675	112	1.363		
Total	172.181	114			

Note. $\eta^2 = .113$

4.3. Mediation Analysis

A mediation analysis was conducted using Hayes' PROCESS macro (Model 4) to test whether nostalgia (NST) mediates the relationship between emotional responses (ER) and behavioral intentions (BI). The results (see Table 9) showed that emotional responses significantly predicted nostalgia (a-path: $\beta = .53$, $SE = .0639$, $t = 8.24$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.3997, .6530]) confirming that participants who reported higher emotional responses also experienced stronger nostalgic feelings. Furthermore, both emotional responses and nostalgia significantly predicted behavioral intentions (b-path: nostalgia $\rightarrow \beta = .21$, $SE = .0794$, $t = 2.53$, $p = .0098$, 95% CI [.0512, .3657]; c'-path: emotional responses $\rightarrow \beta = .56$, $SE = .0682$, $t = 8.27$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.4292, .6996]) suggesting that both variables contributed uniquely to participants' intent to engage with the film. Importantly, the indirect effect (see Table 10) of emotional responses on behavioral intentions through nostalgia was also approved ($\beta = .11$, BootSE = .0492, 95% CI [.0196, .2115]), as the confidence interval did not include zero (see Table 10). These results indicate that nostalgia partially mediates the relationship between emotional responses and behavioral intentions, supporting H5.

Table 9. Summary of Direct Effects in the PROCESS Analysis

	β	SE	t	p	95% CI
a-path (ER →NST)	.53	.0639	8.24	< .001	[.3997, .6530]
b-path (NST → BI)	.21	.0794	2.53	.0098	[.0512, .3657]
c'-path (ER → BI)	.56	.0682	8.27	< .001	[.4292, .6996]

Table 10. Indirect Effects

	β	SE	95% CI
ER on BI via NST	.11	.0492	[.0196, .2115]

4.4. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

To explore the combined influence of emotional response, music fit, character identification, and narrative immersion, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted (see Table 11). The independent variables were emotional responses (ER), music fit (MF), character identification (CI), and narrative immersion (NI), while the dependent variable was behavioral intentions (BI). The following hypotheses were proposed for this analysis:

H6a: Perceived music fit will positively predict behavioral intentions.

H6b: Character identification will positively predict behavioral intentions.

H6c: Narrative immersion will positively predict behavioral intentions

H6d: Emotional responses to the trailer will positively predict behavioral intentions.

The regression model was statistically significant, F(4, 72) = 31.06, p <.001 and explained approximately 63.3% of the variance in behavioral intentions (R^2 = .633, adjusted R^2 = .613), suggesting that the model has good predicting power. Examining the individual predictors, emotional response (β = .509, t = 5.14, p < .001) and narrative immersion (β = .407, t = 2.93, p = .005) emerged as significant and positive predictors of behavioral intention. These results support the notion that both emotional engagement with the trailer and feeling immersed in the narrative are strongly associated with participants' intention to engage with or further explore the media. In contrast, music fit (β = -.027, t = -.318, p = .751) and character identification (β = -.039, t = -.315, p = .754) did not significantly predict behavioral intention in the model. Therefore, the results support the hypotheses that narrative immersion and emotional responses positively influence behavioral intentions (H6c and H6d), while the hypotheses regarding music fit and character identification (H6a and H6b) as predictors were not supported.

Table 11. Multiple Linear Regression: Predictors of Behavior Intentions

	β	t	p
MF	-.027	-.318	.751
CI	-.039	-.315	.754
NI	.407	2.93	.005
ER	.509	5.14	< .001

Note. F(4, 72) = 31.06, p <.001

4.5. Results Summary

This study explored the effects of different music conditions on audience engagement with a film trailer, focusing on music fit, character identification, narrative immersion, emotional responses, nostalgia, and behavioral intentions.

The first hypothesis (H1) is rejected, as the self-selected music condition did not lead to significantly higher music fit than the original soundtrack.

The second hypothesis (H2) is partially accepted, since self-selected music increased character identification compared to no music, but not compared to the original soundtrack.

The third hypothesis (H3) is partially accepted, with narrative immersion higher in the self-selected music condition than the no music one, but not significantly higher than the original soundtrack condition.

The fourth hypothesis (H4) is partially accepted, as emotional responses were stronger in the self-selected music condition than the no music one, but not significantly stronger than the original soundtrack condition.

The fifth hypothesis (H5) is accepted, confirming that nostalgia partially mediates the link between emotional responses and behavioral intentions.

At last, in the multiple regression analysis, H6a that perceived music fit will positively predict behavior intentions, is rejected, as music fit is not a significant predictor. Similarly, H6b which proposed character identification as a positive predictor of behavioral intentions, is also rejected. In contrast H6c and H6d, that proposed that narrative immersion and emotional responses are positive predictors of behavioral intentions, are accepted, confirming their significant predictive power.

Table 12. Hypotheses Overview

Hypothesis	Outcome
H1: Participants in the self-selected music condition will report higher perceived music fit compared to those in the original soundtrack condition.	Rejected
H2: Participants in the self-selected music condition will report higher character identification than those in the original soundtrack and no music condition.	Partially accepted
H3: Participants in the self-selected music condition will report higher narrative immersion than those in the original soundtrack and no music condition.	Partially accepted
H4: Participants in the self-selected music condition will report higher emotional responses than those in the original soundtrack and no music condition.	Partially accepted
H5: Nostalgia mediates the relationship between emotional responses and behavioral intentions.	Accepted
H6a: Perceived music fit will positively predict behavioral intentions.	Rejected

Hypothesis	Outcome
H6b: Character identification will positively predict behavioral intentions.	Rejected
H6c: Narrative immersion will positively predict behavioral intentions.	Accepted
H6d: Emotional responses will positively predict behavioral intentions.	Accepted

5. Discussion

This study set out to explore how music influences audience engagement with film trailers, addressing the central research question: "To what extent does music influence audience engagement with film trailers?" As it has been previously documented, music has the capacity to influence narrative meaning, elicit emotional reactions, and enhance immersion. However, few studies systematically compared different soundtrack conditions within the same narrative context. To this end, the study tested three music conditions: original soundtrack, no music, and self-selected music. This following section delineates the main findings and engages in discourse regarding their implications in relationship with existing theoretical frameworks on film music, media psychology, and audience behavior.

5.1. Main Findings and Theoretical Implications

The research demonstrates that the soundtrack in a trailer exerts a significant influence on how the viewers engage with this type of content. In terms of musical fit, participants evaluated the original soundtrack as marginally more suitable than self-selected music, though, not statistically significant. The finding suggests that, while professionally composed scores may offer a more clearly delineated sense of music and narrative alignment, self-selected music still provides a comparable sense of cohesion. The rejection of H1 introduces a complex set of implications for the established theoretical frameworks, particularly that personal relevance enhances perceived congruence. Gorbman (1989) posits that the potency of music in a film is contingent on its integration with narrative codes such as editing and emotional tone, arguing that the narrative context is what delineates the efficacy of film music (p. 184). While self-selected music may appear more emotionally resonant, the present finding suggest that structural and contextual alignment, as seen in the original soundtrack, may hold greater significance. This finding aligns with Gorbman's (1988) proposition that music can function "unheard" subtly reinforcing emotional cues without deliberate attention (p. 82-83). Furthermore, Cohen's (1993) Congruence-Association Model underlines the importance of music's emotional and structural alignment with visuals in guiding interpretation, a characteristic that self-selected tracks may lack if they fail to synchronize with the scene (p. 880). The result aligns with Vitouch's (2001) perspective that congruent music enhances mood recognition even unconsciously (p. 80), implying that professionally selected soundtracks may provide a smoother interpretive experience than personally chosen ones. While the hypothesis assumed that subjective familiarity would heighten fit, the outcome reveals that perceived congruence may rely more

on narrative structure than personal preference. This finding lends support from Damjanovic and Kawalec (2021) which suggest that incongruent music can promote deeper cognitive engagement (p. 1145). This suggests that mismatched music may offer benefits beyond mere perception of "fittingness" thereby highlighting the potential enhancing the potential for musical experiences to have broader implications for cognitive function.

Furthermore, the influence of music on viewer-character relationship was observed, with participants in the self-selected music condition. Though not of a dramatic nature, this finding indicates the potential of music to facilitate a connection between the audience and the character. The partial confirmation of H2 supports the theoretical claim that music enhances identification with a character, but also highlights the importance of congruence and emotional clarity. According to Cohen (2001) identification occurs when audiences adopt a character's perspective, which requires both cognitive understanding and emotional resonance (p. 261). The finding that self-selected music significantly increases identification compared to no music aligns with prior evidence suggesting that music serves as a framing device, clarifying a character's emotional state and fostering empathy. Hoeckner et al. (2011) demonstrated that background music can make characters more emotionally transparent and likable, particularly when contrasted with silence or incongruent scoring (p. 149). The enhanced identification in the self-selected condition suggests that familiar or emotionally meaningful music may have amplified this emotional clarity. On the other hand, the lack of significant difference compared to the original soundtrack condition implies that narrative fit may be equally or more important than personal preferences. As Tan et al. (2007) observed, music presented before a character's appearance on screen can stimulate viewers' emotional schemes, guiding them towards alignment with the character's experience (p. 146). A congruent soundtrack may achieve this as effectively as self-selected tracks, which reinforces the idea that music's ability to reduce emotional ambiguity is not only dependent on subjective relevance. Furthermore, Brown et al. (2020) found that emotionally congruent music enhances affective alignment between the audience and the characters, reducing emotional distance (p. 8-9). This helps to explain why both music conditions outperformed the no music scenario. Although Igaruta (2010) does not focus on music, his finding that emotional immersion can shape attitudes (p. 369) supports the broader implication that identification is a powerful mechanism shaped by emotional framing. Therefore, the results confirm that music, self-selected or professionally curated, plays a crucial role in engaging with characters.

Narrative immersion revealed a clear pattern, with viewers in music conditions reporting heightened sense of involvement in the narrative compared to those who watched in silence. The partial support for H3 suggests that self-selected music can enhance narrative immersion over silent conditions, but does not necessarily outperform an original soundtrack. The observation serves to underline the pivotal function of emotional and structural congruence in the context of immersive storytelling. According to Green and Brock (2000) the concept of immersion, otherwise referred to as narrative transportation, involves a psychological state in which viewers become absorbed in the fictional narrative world, often leading to attitudinal shifts, regardless of the realism of the story (p. 707). The fact that self-selected music enhanced viewer immersion, relative to the no music condition, lends further support to the idea that auditory stimuli play a crucial role in enabling the audience to engage with the narrative. Nevertheless, the absence of substantial discrepancy between self-selected music and the original soundtrack indicates that immersion is not exclusively determined by individual musical preference, but rather by the extent to which the music fits the plot. Hauck and Hecht (2022) demonstrated that the experience of immersion is amplified when music and narrative are emotionally congruent (p. 13). They further discovered that this alignment serves to intensify both affective experience and the depth of the engagement (p. 18). This may provide an explanation to why the original soundtrack proved equally effective, likely offering a more precise emotional and temporal synchronization with the trailer. The findings are also consistent with Salselas and Penha's (2019) statement that congruence across audio-visual elements is significant in avoiding perceptual disruption and maintain immersion (p. 7). Furthermore, Albert (2012) defines immersion as a sensory-emotional and introspective experience that serves to diminish the boundaries between viewer and text (p. 10), a process that is likely enabled by cohesive musical framing.

Moreover, emotional responses were found to be similarly influenced, with the strongest reactions reported by those who viewed the trailer with self-selected music, followed by those who listened to the original soundtrack. The condition that proposed the silent trailer consistently showed less emotional responses across the affective measures. The partial support for H4 underscores the importance of music in eliciting emotional responses, while also reinforcing the role of narrative congruence over personal preference. As King (2020) defines, emotional responses involve cognitive appraisal, subjective experience, and psychological activation (p. 675-676), therefore rendering central to the manner in which viewers engage with media. The heightened emotional responses observed

in the self-selected condition, in comparison to the silent one, align with Cohen's (1993) assertion that music amplifies emotional absorption by influencing mood and instigating personal associations (p. 893). However, the lack of a significant difference from the original soundtrack condition indicates that congruence between music and narrative may be equally effective, if not more so, in promoting emotional intensity. Vouskoski et al. (2022) discovered that emotions such as chills and feeling moved are most pronounced when music aligns with the visual context, regardless of whether the emotion is sad or joyful (p. 9, 19, 24). This lends further support to the notion that the emotional impact of music is not solely derived from the music itself, but is also influenced by the relationship with the narrative. Boltz (2004) further explores this notion, arguing that congruent music and visuals collectively form an integrated perceptual unit, thereby influencing both emotional salience and memory (p. 1202). Consequently, while self-selection may enhance emotional resonance through personal meaning, the original soundtrack's alignment likely offered more cohesive emotional signaling. Damjanovic and Kawalec (2021) proved that emotional incongruence can, on occasion, enhance attention (p. 1147), which may provide a rationale for the self-selected tracks, despite their imperfect congruence, still outperforming silence. The potency of music is further reinforced by psychological findings, as evidenced by Meniel and Bullerjahn (2022) who observed heightened emotional responses when the music was synchronized with the visual cues (p. 1849-1850).

One of the most notable findings concerned nostalgia: rather than being a by-passing product of emotional responses, nostalgia played an active role in linking emotional engagement to action. Participants who reported feeling emotionally affected by the trailer were more likely to experience nostalgic feelings, which in turn increased the intention to engage with the film after contributing to the experiment. The confirmation of H5 indicates that nostalgia plays an important mediating role in the transformation of emotional responses into behavioral intentions. This finding lends support to the notion that emotional reactions to audiovisual content do not operate in isolation, but can initiate a reflective emotional process that deepens engagement and motivates action. According to Barrett et al. (2010) individuals experiencing high emotional intensity are more likely to report nostalgia, positioning it as a secondary emotional outcome rooted in affective depth (p. 391). In a similar vein, Juslin et al. (2008) identified nostalgia as a prevalent occurring emotion during music experiences characterized by emotional complexity, particularly when participants are resented with stimuli that evoke personal or emotionally charged memories (p. 678). The present results align with this model, confirming that the stronger emotional reaction to the

trailer , the more likely it is to activate nostalgic feelings. This affective trajectory is further supported by Routledge et al. (2007), who define nostalgia as a potent emotional experience that fosters continuity between past and present, often deepening emotional engagement (p. 137). It is important to note that nostalgia also serves as a motivational function. Sedikides et al. (2021) argue that nostalgic affect has the capacity to enhance psychological well-being and encourage approach behaviors, especially when the viewers recognize something of their past in the content (p. 2055). In this study, the participants who experienced nostalgia were more inclined to engage with the film, thereby underscoring its role as a predictor for behavioral intention. This aligns with the conclusions of Nguyen and Duong (2025) who revealed that nostalgia can influence forward-looking decisions, even in initial encounters with a narrative (p. 745).

Indeed, examining the factors that influence behavioral intentions such as the desire to want to watch the film or recommend it, reveals two significant predictors: emotional responses and narrative immersion. Viewers who were emotionally affected or felt drawn to the story were more likely to express interest beyond the film trailer. It is interesting to note that music fit and character identification, although influenced by the music condition did not influence the participants' behavioral intentions. The results of H6a to H6d indicate a differentiated influence of the measured predictors on behavioral intentions, underscoring that not all components of engagement exert an equal effect in shaping audience behavior. Specifically emotional responses and narrative immersion emerged as significant predictors, while music fit and character identification did not. This pattern suggests that internal psychological states, such as emotional responses and narrative immersion, play a more central role in guiding audience behavior than structural coherence or identification with on-screen figures. Whilst the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991, p. 181-182) outlines behavioral interaction as a function of attitudes, perceived social pressure, and perceived control, the current findings highlight how emotional and experiential engagement may serve as precursors of these processes, particularly in media contexts where immediate decision-making is emotionally charged. The predictive strength of emotional responses confirms previous media studies, including the one by Wang and Tang (2021), who demonstrated that affective arousal during trailer viewing can directly influence recommendation behavior (p. 8). Likewise, the concept of narrative immersion echoes the research in persuasive storytelling by Xiao et al. (2023), who demonstrated that transportation into narrative worlds can increase intention to act (p. 216). In contrast the lack of significance for music fit and character identification challenges prior arguments that

audiovisual congruence (Herget et al., 2020, p. 16) and empathic alignment (Chen et al., 2022, p. 216) are linked to behavioral outcomes. These elements may enhance enjoyment or appreciation without necessarily translating into action.

In response to the research question – "To what extent does music influence audience engagement with film trailers? – this study found out that music significantly enhances engagement, particularly through its effects on emotional responses and narrative immersion. While not all aspects of engagement were equally influenced by music, the presence of a soundtrack, whether self-selected or professionally composed, consistently underscored audience involvement in comparison with silence. The findings of this study suggest that music fulfills an integral role in shaping audience connections with a narrative, the processing of emotions, and the formation of intentions. The study thereby confirms that music can act as a powerful narrative and emotional cue, reinforcing its central role in audiovisual storytelling.

5.2. Societal Implications

This study provides significant insights into the manner in which contemporary audiences interact with promotional media in an era characterized by personalization and interactivity. The findings indicate that music selection, particularly when self-selected, has the capacity to enhance specific dimensions such as character identification, narrative immersion and emotional responses. In an era defined by the dominance of streaming platforms and social media in content distribution, these insights possess practical value for the development of film marketing strategies. Furthermore, the introduction of user autonomy, such as selecting their own soundtrack, has the potential to enhance emotional engagement and increase the probability of watching and sharing a film. This is particularly salient in the context of independent and arthouse films, such as *Past Lives* (2023), which prioritize emotional resonance over mass-market appeal. By integrating personalization features into trailers has the potential to facilitate a more effective connection between content creators and audiences, thereby ensuring that movies are not overlooked.

The cultural relevance of such personalization becomes even clearer when situated within the wider participatory media landscape. As demonstrated by Burgess and Green (2009, p. 57) digital platforms such as YouTube do not merely treat content creators as passive recipients, but rather as active participants whose interactions, including commenting, sharing, and remixing, have the capacity to influence the evolution of the media environment. When applied to the context of film marketing, this perspective allows

for personalization or remixing of trailers by users, thus increasing their sense of involvement and co-ownership, ultimately reinforcing engagement and cultural relevance.

In addition, the results of the present study contribute to a broader societal understanding of how music influences mood regulation, identity formation, and storytelling. In social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram, users have been known to remix and re-soundtrack visual content in order to align it with their personal preferences. Jenkins et al. (2013, p. 86) promotional content such as film trailers is usually repurposed by users to establish emotional and social connections. The findings in this study suggest that the integration of such participatory practices within official promotional campaigns could not only align with current cultural habits, but also promote more inclusive, affective, and democratic forms of media engagement.

5.3. Limitations & Future Research

Notwithstanding the valuable contributions of the study, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. Firstly, the utilization of a convenience sample, predominantly drawn from social media and university networks, may compromise the generalizability of the findings. Participants in this study were likely to be more media-literate and emotionally attuned than the average population. This echoes the concern raised by Vouskoski et al. (2022, p. 23) who found that relying on online MTurk samples limited the cultural diversity and representativeness of their participant tool. Ulker-Demirel et al. (2018, p. 18) revealed that they encountered the same problem, including participants from Istanbul. While this study's sample did include a range of age groups and cultural backgrounds, its is still confined to a relatively narrow digital-savvy demographic. In hindsight, the recruitment strategies could have been broadened to reach less media-literate participants or consider stratified sampling to better capture demographic variance. Future research should prioritize cross-cultural samples and explore whether emotional and immersive effects of music personalization vary across cultural or generational lines.

Secondly, while the experiment encompassed three music conditions, it did not permit participants to upload their own music. The predefined playlist, though carefully chosen to align the movie narrative line and pace, may have constrained the authenticity of the self-selected music condition. Vouskoski et al. (2022, p. 23) similarly underscored that using only seven pre-selected music stimuli limited emotional and autobiographical resonance of music for participants. In this study, participants were able to select from seven curated tracks that were designed to align with the trailers' mood and tempo. However, this

level of control may have affected the full potential of autonomy. The opportunity for the participants to select tracks that are more personally significant, whether through uploads or open libraries, might have generated experiences that were more emotionally impactful or nostalgically resonant. In retrospect, incorporating a more flexible self-selecting mechanism would have better aligned with the real-world personalization process. It is therefore recommended that future studies implement a more extensive and less constrained personalization process in order to capture more nuanced effects of music autonomy.

Furthermore, Galan (2009, p. 18) emphasized several limitations that bear relevance to this study. For instance, his study lacked a spoken or visual message beyond brand cues, which may have led respondents to overemphasize the music's role. In contrast, the trailer used in this study featured subtitled dialogue and a clear visual narrative, which provided additional contextual cues. However, the absence of a narrator or explicit voiceover might have still positioned music as a primary emotional guide. In addition, Galan (2009) worked exclusively with standard consumer goods, recommending future exploration of durable goods or services. The film from this research can count as a commercial product, and the focus on a single film genre and trailer could be viewed as analogous to this constraint. Expanding future research across multiple genres or trailers with different narrative styles could deepen understanding of how music interacts with varied plot structures. Lastly, Galan (2009) underscored that his research is missing mediating and moderating variables. While this study has one mediation relationship, nostalgia mediating the relationship between emotional responses and behavioral intentions, several potentially relevant psychological constructs, such as mood congruence or film and music preference, were not included. In hindsight, including these could have offered a deeper insight into how personal, emotional, and contextual factors interact with music conditions.

Finally, while the present study relied exclusively on self-report questionnaires to capture emotional and narrative engagement, this method is inherently limited by social desirability bias and participants' introspective accuracy. As Ansani et al. (2020) has demonstrated, integrating biometric tools such as eye-tracking can offer more objective insights into visual attention and emotional arousal in response to music or audiovisual media. Future research should consider combining self-report scales with such psychological techniques to obtain the bigger picture of how personalization affects engagement. In retrospect, including at least a basic psychological measure or attentional cue-tracking would have strengthened the validity of this study's conclusions. Incorporating these tools could

refine the understanding of moment-to-moment viewers' reactions and illuminate the mechanisms through which music influences perception and memory in trailer contexts.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Age: What is your age? (write in numbers, eg: 23)

Gender: What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary / third gender
- Prefer not to say
- Other:

Country: Where are you from?

Music: What is your favorite music genre?

- Alternative
- Blues
- Classical
- Country
- Electronica/Dance
- Folk
- Heavy metal
- Rap/hip-hop
- Jazz
- Pop
- Religious
- Rock
- Soul/Funk
- Sound tracks

Film: What is your favorite film genre?

- Action
- Adventure
- Animation
- Comedy
- Crime

- Drama
- Erotic
- Fantasy
- Heimat
- History
- Horror
- Mystery
- Romance
- Science-fiction
- Thriller
- Western

Control: Did you watch the movie Past Lives?

- Yes
- No

ER1: Please indicate the extent to which you experienced the following emotions while watching the trailer. Scale: 1 = Not at all 5 = Very much

- Happiness
- Sadness
- Anger
- Fear
- Disgust
- Neutrality
- Surprise

ER2: Please indicate the extent the trailer contributed to the following emotional experiences. Scale: 1 = Not at all 5 = Very much

- I felt moved or emotionally touched.
- I experienced chills or goosebumps.
- I felt a warm feeling in my chest.
- I felt emotionally connected to the trailer.
- I felt emotionally overwhelmed in a good way.

NST: Please reflect on how the trailer made you feel. Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about nostalgic feelings. Scale: 1 = Strongly disagree 5 = Strongly agree

- I felt nostalgic.
- I felt sentimental feelings about the past.
- The trailer reminded me of meaningful personal memories.
- The trailer made me long for a previous time in my life.

MF: Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements about how the music fit with the trailer. Scale: 1 = Strongly disagree 5 = Strongly agree (Only for original soundtrack and self-selected music conditions)

- The music felt like a natural part of the trailer.
- The music matched the mood of the scenes.
- The trailer's emotional tone was reinforced by the music.
- The music enhanced the meaning of the visual narrative.
- The transitions between music and scenes felt smooth and coherent.
- The music was well-integrated into the overall trailer structure.

CI: Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements about the character in the trailer. Scale: 1 = Strongly disagree 5 = Strongly agree

- I could understand the character's feelings.
- The trailer made me feel like I was experiencing the events with the character.
- I felt a connection to the character.
- I felt like I could put myself in the character's shoes.
- The trailer helped me understand the character's emotional journey.
- I imagined what it would be like to be the character in the trailer.

NI: Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements about your experience
watching the trailer. Scale: 1 = Strongly disagree 5 = Strongly agree

- I was mentally involved in the trailer.
- The trailer helped me feel immersed in the story.
- While watching the trailer, I wanted to see how the story would unfold.

- The trailer made it easy to get absorbed into the storyline.
- My thoughts were strongly focused on the trailer.
- I felt like I was inside the world of the trailer.

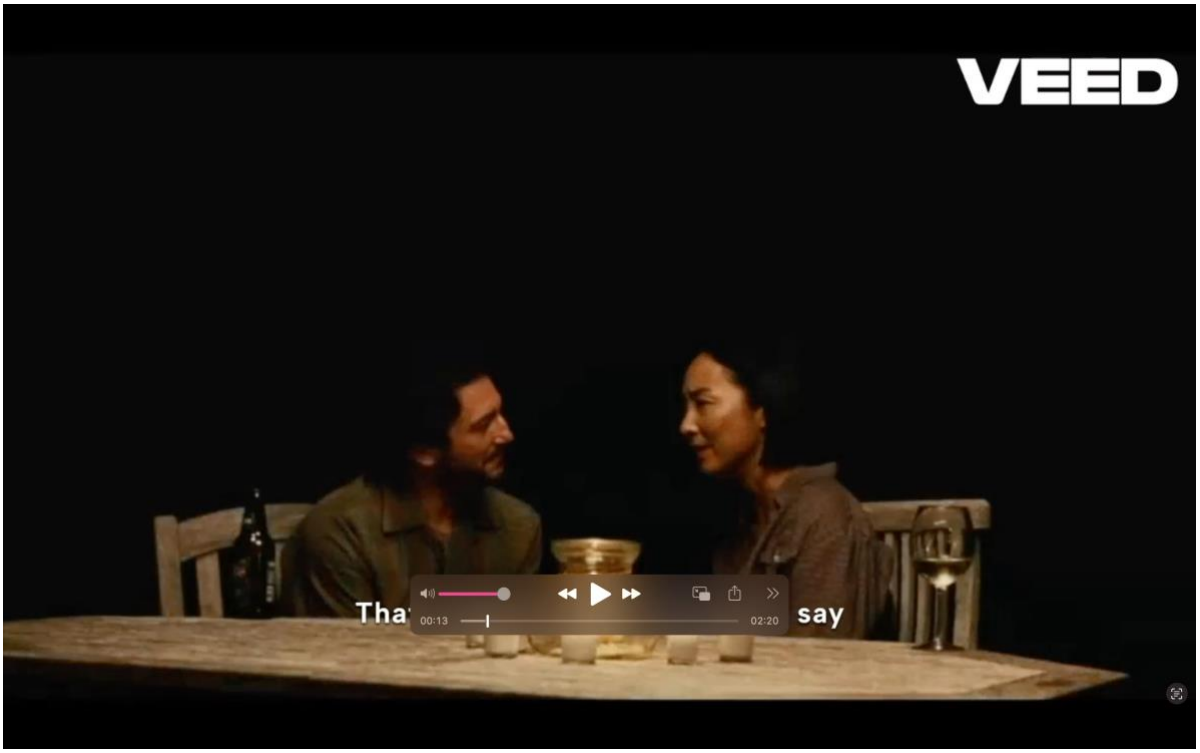
BI: Please indicate how likely you are to do the following after watching this trailer. Scale: Extremely unlikely 5 = Extremely likely

- I would like to watch this film.
- I would recommend this film to others.
- I would share this trailer online or with friends.
- I would talk about this film with someone.
- I would look up more information about the film.

Manipulation: What best describes the audio experience of the trailer you just watched?

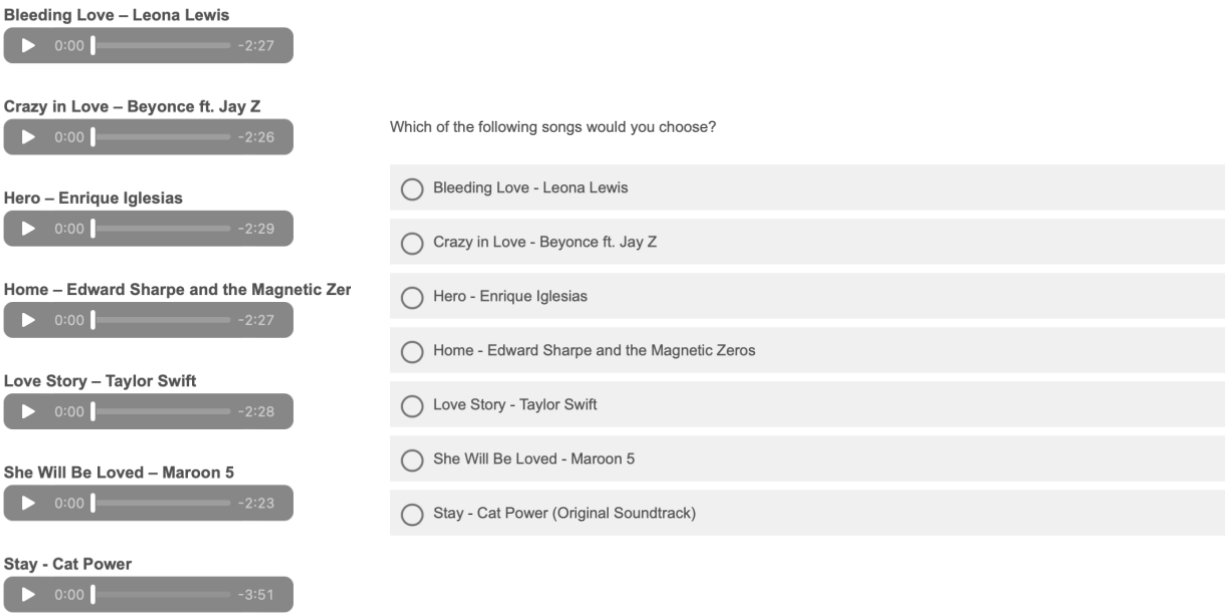
- I chose the music myself.
- The music was already part of the trailer.
- The trailer had no sound.
- I don't know.

Appendix B: Stimuli Overview



Participants in this study were randomly assigned to one of the conditions:

1. Original Soundtrack: participants viewed the trailer with its original, professionally composed soundtrack.
2. No Music: Participants watched the same trailer with the music track removed. The other audio elements were preserved to maintain narrative coherence.
3. Self-Selected Music: Participants in this condition were asked to choose a song from a pre-curated playlist.



All versions of the trailer were 2 minutes and 20 seconds long and embedded in the Qualtrics survey platform to ensure consistent delivery and viewing conditions.

Appendix C: Consent

Dear participant,

My name is Raluca Grigore, and I'm conducting this study as part of my Master's thesis in Media and Creative Industries at Erasmus University Rotterdam.

You are invited to take part in a short research study exploring how people experience film trailers. Participation involves watching a brief video clip (2 minutes and 30 seconds) and answering a few questions about your impressions. The full study will take around 10 minutes to complete.

Please note the following:

- You must be at least 18 years old to participate.
- Participation is entirely voluntary—you may stop at any time, for any reason, without penalty.
- All responses will be kept anonymous and used solely for academic research.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at: **699408rg@eur.nl**

By continuing, you confirm that:

- You are 18 years or older.
- You have read and understood the information above.
- You consent to participate.

Thank you for your time and support!

Appendix D: Debrief Messages

(1) Original Soundtrack:
Thank you for participating!
You have just watched a film trailer from the movie Past Lives with its original soundtrack. The purpose of this condition was for me to explore how the music that was originally composed for the film influences emotional responses and engagement with the content. By presenting the original soundtrack, I aimed to understand how music specifically created for the trailer affects how you feel while watching it and how it shapes your connection to the narrative and characters.
The findings from this condition will be compared with other conditions to examine the impact of different types of music (or the lack thereof) on viewer engagement. All data is anonymized and will be used strictly for research purposes. If you wish to withdraw your data or have any questions, please contact: Raluca Grigore – 699408rg@eur.nl.

(2) No Music
Thank you for participating!
You have just watched a film trailer from the movie Past Lives without any accompanying music. In this condition, I wanted to assess the effect of a silent trailer on emotional engagement and how the absence of music influences your experience. The purpose of this condition was to explore how viewers react when only the visuals and narrative of the trailer are presented without the emotional cues typically provided by music.
By comparing your responses to those of other participants, I aim to better understand the role music plays in shaping emotional responses, engagement, and memory when watching trailers. All data is anonymized and will be used strictly for research purposes. If you wish to withdraw your data or have any questions, please contact: Raluca Grigore – 699408rg@eur.nl.

(3) Self-Selected Music
Thank you for participating!
You have just watched a film trailer from the movie Past Lives, but with a song that you selected yourself from the options provided. This condition was designed for me to explore the role of autonomy in media consumption. I wanted to see how choosing your own soundtrack to accompany the trailer impacts your emotional response and engagement with the content. The idea behind this condition is that when viewers are given the option to self-select the music, it may create a stronger emotional connection to the trailer, as they are able to personalize their experience.
By comparing this condition with the others, I can better understand how different types of music—both chosen by the viewer and pre-determined by the filmmakers—affect emotional engagement with film trailers. All data is anonymized and will be used strictly for research

purposes. If you wish to withdraw your data or have any questions, please contact: Raluca Grigore – 699408rg@eur.nl.

Appendix E: Operationalization Table

Variable	Items	Scale Range	Source
Music Fit	"The music felt like a natural part of the trailer." "The music matched the mood of the scenes." "The trailer's emotional tone was reinforced by the music." "The music enhanced the meaning of the visual narrative." "The transitions between music and scenes felt smooth and coherent." "The music was well-integrated into the overall trailer structure."	1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree	Adapted from Galan (2009)

Character Identification	"I could understand the character's feelings." "The trailer made me feel like I was experiencing the events with the character." "I felt a connection to the character." "I felt like I could put myself in the character's shoes." "The trailer helped me understand the character's emotional journey." "I imagined what it would be like to be the character in the trailer."	1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree	Adapted from Cohen (2001)

Narrative Immersion	"I was mentally involved in the trailer." "The trailer helped me feel immersed in the story." "While watching the trailer, I wanted to see how the story would unfold." "The trailer made it easy to get absorbed into the storyline." "My thoughts were strongly focused on the trailer." "I felt like I was inside the world of the trailer."	1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree	Green and Brock (2000)
Emotional Responses	"I felt moved or emotionally touched." "I experienced chills or goosebumps." "I felt a warm feeling in my chest." "I felt emotionally connected to the trailer." "I felt emotionally overwhelmed in a good way."	1 = Not at all 5 = Very much	Adapted from Vuoskoski et al. (2022)
Nostalgia	"I felt nostalgic." "I felt sentimental feelings about the past." "The trailer reminded me of meaningful personal memories."		Adapted from Newman et al. (2019)

	"The trailer made me long for a previous time in my life."		
Behavioral Intentions	"I would like to watch this film." "I would recommend this film to others." "I would share this trailer online or with friends." "I would talk about this film with someone." "I would look up more information about the film."	1 = Extremely unlikely 5 = Extremely likely	Adapted from Ulker-Demriel et al. (2018)

Appendix F: SPSS Outputs

Appendix F1: Descriptive statistics

F1.1. General Descriptives

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
emo2	115	1.00	5.00	3.0348	1.22897
nostalgi	115	1.00	5.00	3.4674	1.05627
music_fit	77	1.00	5.00	4.1775	.78143
character_identification	115	1.00	5.00	3.6406	.93152
immersion	115	1.00	5.00	3.8652	.98376
beh	115	1.00	5.00	3.8313	1.09947
Valid N (listwise)	77				

F1.2. CI Descriptives

Descriptives					
	cdt			Statistic	Std. Error
character_identification	Original Soundtrack	Mean		3.6208	.13970
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.3383	
			Upper Bound	3.9034	
		5% Trimmed Mean		3.6343	
		Median		3.8333	
		Variance		.781	
		Std. Deviation		.88352	
		Minimum		1.83	
		Maximum		5.00	
		Range		3.17	
		Interquartile Range		1.46	
		Skewness		-.422	.374
		Kurtosis		-.976	.733
	No Music	Mean		3.3202	.16360

		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	2.9887
			Upper Bound	3.6517
		5% Trimmed Mean		3.3606
		Median		3.5833
		Variance		1.017
		Std. Deviation		1.00851
		Minimum		1.00
		Maximum		4.83
		Range		3.83
		Interquartile Range		1.29
		Skewness		-.863
		Kurtosis		-.220
	Self-Selected Music	Mean		3.9910
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.7281
			Upper Bound	4.2539
		5% Trimmed Mean		4.0513
		Median		4.0000
		Variance		.622
		Std. Deviation		.78856
		Minimum		1.67
		Maximum		5.00
		Range		3.33
		Interquartile Range		1.17
		Skewness		-.966
		Kurtosis		1.025

				.12964
				.388
				.759

F1.3. NI Descriptives

Descriptives					
	cdt			Statistic	Std. Error
immersion	Original Soundtrack	Mean		4.0250	.13668
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.7485	
			Upper Bound	4.3015	
		5% Trimmed Mean		4.0926	
		Median		4.2500	
		Variance		.747	
		Std. Deviation		.86442	
		Minimum		1.67	
		Maximum		5.00	
		Range		3.33	
		Interquartile Range		1.13	
		Skewness		-1.036	.374
		Kurtosis		.571	.733
	No Music	Mean		3.5000	.18218
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.1309	
			Upper Bound	3.8691	
		5% Trimmed Mean		3.5599	
		Median		3.8333	
		Variance		1.261	
		Std. Deviation		1.12306	
		Minimum		1.00	
		Maximum		5.00	
		Range		4.00	
		Interquartile Range		1.38	
		Skewness		-.913	.383
		Kurtosis		-.026	.750
	Self-Selected Music	Mean		4.0676	.14215
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.7793	
			Upper Bound	4.3559	
		5% Trimmed Mean		4.1406	
		Median		4.3333	
		Variance		.748	
		Std. Deviation		.86465	
		Minimum		1.67	
		Maximum		5.00	
		Range		3.33	
		Interquartile Range		1.17	
		Skewness		-1.295	.388

		Kurtosis		1.292	.759

F1.4. ER Descriptives

Descriptives					
	cdt			Statistic	Std. Error
emo2	Original Soundtrack	Mean		2.9800	.18128
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	2.6133	
			Upper Bound	3.3467	
		5% Trimmed Mean		2.9833	
		Median		3.3000	
		Variance		1.314	
		Std. Deviation		1.14650	
		Minimum		1.00	
		Maximum		5.00	
		Range		4.00	
		Interquartile Range		1.95	
		Skewness		-.178	.374
		Kurtosis		-1.339	.733
	No Music	Mean		2.5632	.18367
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	2.1910	
			Upper Bound	2.9353	
		5% Trimmed Mean		2.5532	
		Median		2.5000	
		Variance		1.282	
		Std. Deviation		1.13219	
		Minimum		1.00	
		Maximum		4.40	
		Range		3.40	
		Interquartile Range		2.05	
		Skewness		.103	.383
		Kurtosis		-1.513	.750
	Self-Selected Music	Mean		3.5784	.20131
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.1701	
			Upper Bound	3.9867	
		5% Trimmed Mean		3.6375	
		Median		3.8000	
		Variance		1.500	
		Std. Deviation		1.22455	
		Minimum		1.00	
		Maximum		5.00	

	Range	4.00	
	Interquartile Range	1.60	
	Skewness	-.853	.388
	Kurtosis	-.355	.759

Appendix F2: Reliability Analyses

F2.1. Music Fit

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	77	67.0
	Excluded[a]	38	33.0
	Total	115	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.891	.892	6

F2.2. Character Identification

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	115	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	115	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items

.893	.893	6

F2.3. Narrative Immersion

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	115	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	115	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.919	.920	6

F2.4. Emotional Responses

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	115	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	115	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based	N of Items

	on Standardized Items	
.934	.935	5

F2.5. Nostalgia

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	115	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	115	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.881	.882	4

F2.6. Behavioral Intentions

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	115	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	115	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.932	.933	5

Appendix F3: Independent samples t-test

Independent Samples t-Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Significance		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						One-Sided p	Two-Sided p			Lower	Upper
music_fit	Equal variances assumed	.976	.326	1.900	75	.031	.061	.33300	.17525	-.01613	.68212
	Equal variances not assumed			1.887	70.512	.032	.063	.33300	.17647	-.01891	.68490

Group Statistics

	cdt	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
music_fit	Original Soundtrack	40	4.3375	.70052	.11076
	Self-Selected Music	37	4.0045	.83563	.13738

Independent Samples Effect Sizes

		Standardizer[a]	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
	Cohen's d	.76834	.433	-.020	.884

music_fit	Hedges' correction	.77613	.429	-.020	.875
	Glass's delta	.83563	.398	-.061	.852

a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.

Cohen's d uses the pooled standard deviation.

Hedges' correction uses the pooled standard deviation, plus a correction factor.

Glass's delta uses the sample standard deviation of the control (i.e., the second) group.

Appendix F4: ANOVA Analyses

F4.1. Character Identification

ANOVA					
character_identification					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.465	2	4.233	5.250	.007
Within Groups	90.289	112	.806		
Total	98.755	114			

ANOVA Effect Sizes[a,b]				
		Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper
character_identification	Eta-squared	.086	.008	.185
	Epsilon-squared	.069	-.010	.171
	Omega-squared Fixed-effect	.069	-.010	.170
	Omega-squared Random-effect	.036	-.005	.093
a. Eta-squared and Epsilon-squared are estimated based on the fixed-effect model.				
b. Negative but less biased estimates are retained, not rounded to zero.				

Multiple Comparisons						
Dependent Variable: character_identification						
Tukey HSD						
(I) cdt	(J) cdt	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
	No Music	.29732	.20339	.313	-.1858	.7804

Original Soundtrack	Self-Selected Music	-.37349	.20480	.167	-.8599	.1130
No Music	Original Soundtrack	-.29732	.20339	.313	-.7804	.1858
	Self-Selected Music	-.67082*	.20737	.005	-1.1634	-.1783
Self-Selected Music	Original Soundtrack	.37349	.20480	.167	-.1130	.8599
	No Music	.67082*	.20737	.005	.1783	1.1634

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

F4.2. Narrative Immersion

ANOVA					
immersion					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7.605	2	3.802	4.146	.018
Within Groups	102.723	112	.917		
Total	110.328	114			

ANOVA Effect Sizes[a,b]				
		Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper
immersion	Eta-squared	.069	.002	.163
	Epsilon-squared	.052	-.016	.148
	Omega-squared Fixed-effect	.052	-.016	.147
	Omega-squared Random-effect	.027	-.008	.079

a. Eta-squared and Epsilon-squared are estimated based on the fixed-effect model.

b. Negative but less biased estimates are retained, not rounded to zero.

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: immersion

Tukey HSD

(I) cdt	(J) cdt	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Original Soundtrack	No Music	.52500*	.21695	.045	.0097	1.0403
	Self-Selected Music	-.04257	.21844	.979	-.5614	.4763
No Music	Original Soundtrack	-.52500*	.21695	.045	-1.0403	-.0097
	Self-Selected Music	-.56757*	.22119	.031	-1.0930	-.0422
Self-Selected Music	Original Soundtrack	.04257	.21844	.979	-.4763	.5614
	No Music	.56757*	.22119	.031	.0422	1.0930

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

F4.3. Emotional response

ANOVA

emo2

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	19.506	2	9.753	7.155	.001
Within Groups	152.675	112	1.363		
Total	172.181	114			

ANOVA Effect Sizes[a]				
		Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper
emo2	Eta-squared	.113	.020	.220
	Epsilon-squared	.097	.003	.206
	Omega-squared Fixed-effect	.097	.003	.204
	Omega-squared Random-effect	.051	.001	.114

a. Eta-squared and Epsilon-squared are estimated based on the fixed-effect model.

Multiple Comparisons						
Dependent Variable: emo2						
Tukey HSD						
(I) cdt	(J) cdt	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Original Soundtrack	No Music	.41684	.26448	.260	-.2114	1.0451
	Self-Selected Music	-.59838	.26631	.068	-1.2309	.0342
No Music	Original Soundtrack	-.41684	.26448	.260	-1.0451	.2114
	Self-Selected Music	-1.01522*	.26966	<.001	-1.6557	-.3747
Self-Selected Music	Original Soundtrack	.59838	.26631	.068	-.0342	1.2309
	No Music	1.01522*	.26966	<.001	.3747	1.6557

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Appendix F5: Mediation PROCESS

********** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.2 **********

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

****
Model : 4
Y : beh
X : emo2
M : nostalgi

Sample
Size: 115

****
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
nostalgi

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.6124	.3751	.7034	67.8196	1.0000	113.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	1.8700	.2091	8.9411	.0000	1.4556	2.2843
emo2	.5264	.0639	8.2353	.0000	.3997	.6530

****
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
beh

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.7700	.5929	.5009	81.5565	2.0000	112.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	1.3956	.2306	6.0515	.0000	.9387	1.8526
emo2	.5644	.0682	8.2724	.0000	.4292	.6996
nostalgi	.2085	.0794	2.6259	.0098	.0512	.3657

****************** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y
****

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.5644	.0682	8.2724	.0000	.4292	.6996

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
nostalgi	.1097	.0492	.0196	.2115

********************** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS
****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
5000

Appendix F6: Multiple Regression Analysis

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.013	.446		2.271	.026
	emo2	.419	.082	.509	5.135	<.001
	music_fit	-.034	.107	-.027	-.318	.751
	character_identification	-.046	.145	-.039	-.315	.754
	immersion	.474	.162	.407	2.927	.005

a. Dependent Variable: beh