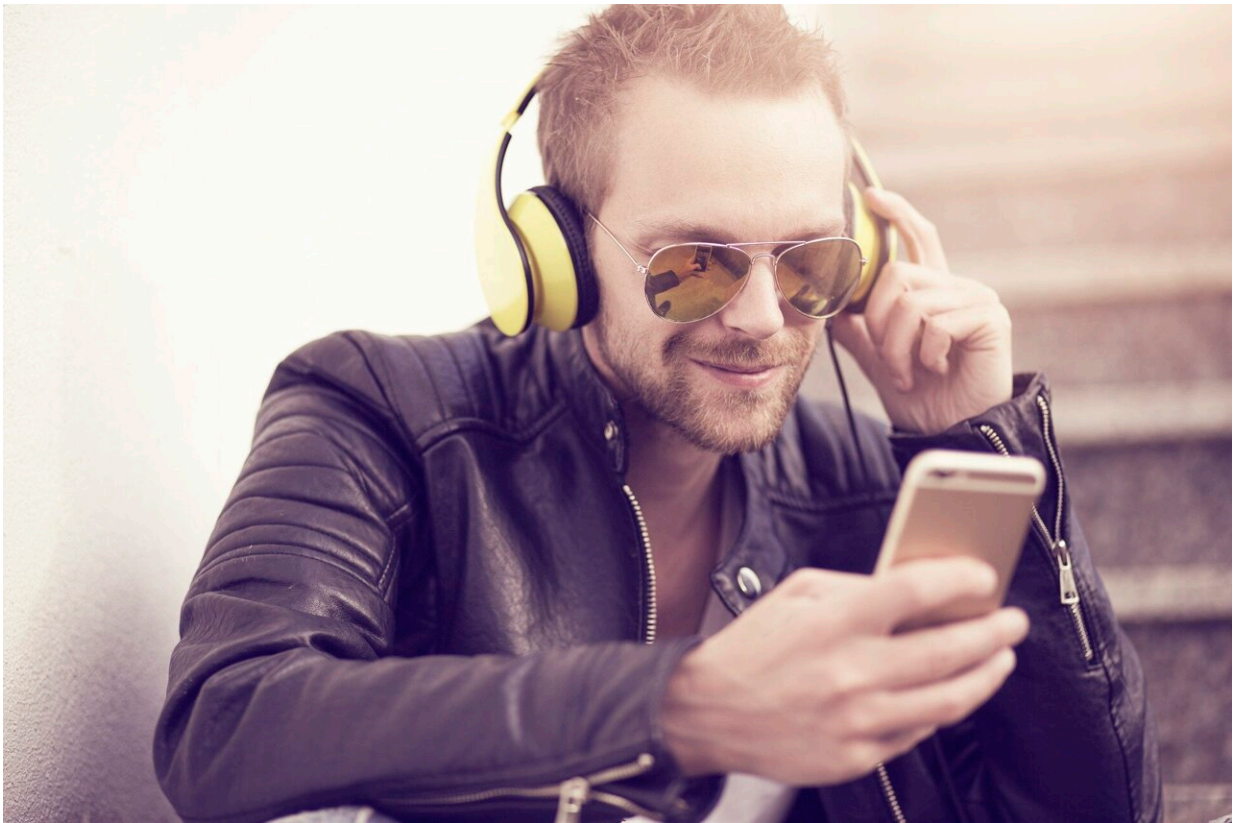


Study explores relationship between music collecting and listening enjoyment

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A series of three studies led by Prof. Ofer Bergman from Bar-Ilan University in Israel has uncovered a fascinating relationship between music collection and listening enjoyment in the era of streaming music.

The studies shed light on the impact of streaming applications on the subjective evaluation of music and suggest that rediscovering the act of music collecting can significantly enhance the overall listening experience.

Since Thomas Edison's invention of the gramophone over a century ago, people had to collect their favorite [music](#) in order to listen to it. Streaming music applications allow users to collect any amount of music at no additional cost (e.g., by "liking" songs and adding them to playlists). On the other hand, streaming apps also allow users to listen to music they like without first collecting it—by searching for it or using the app's recommendation algorithm—making music collecting optional for the first time in music consumption history.

In the first paper of the series, Bar-Ilan researchers conducted a [qualitative study](#) that revealed that interviewees expressed a sense of diminished excitement towards music in the current landscape. The abundance of songs available at little to no cost was perceived as having "cheapened" their subjective evaluation of music.

The results of a subsequent [questionnaire study](#) indicated a drastic reduction in collection size as individuals transitioned to streaming apps. However, the study also uncovered compelling evidence highlighting the advantages of streaming collections. Notably, a positive correlation was identified between collection size and listening enjoyment. This led to a discussion of psychological theories which may explain this intriguing contradiction.

To delve deeper into the connection between music collection and listening enjoyment, the researchers conducted a controlled experiment. Participants were asked to rate their listening enjoyment in real-time using a chat-bot interface, both before and after collecting music.

The results, recently published in the journal *Personal and Ubiquitous Computing*, demonstrated that current listening enjoyment levels were relatively low. Additionally, participants reported that the act of collecting music was pleasant rather than burdensome. Most importantly, results indicated that listening to the collected music significantly elevated participants' listening enjoyment.

For over a century, people avidly collected music. However, with the rise of streaming apps, users have increasingly relied on algorithms to choose songs for them, often disregarding the option to build personal collections. The culmination of these three studies strongly suggests that a reevaluation is in order. By encouraging users to embrace music collection within streaming applications, their listening enjoyment can be substantially enhanced.

Prof. Ofer Bergman, from the Department of Information Science at Bar-Ilan University, expressed optimism about the implications of these findings. "Our studies underscore the vital role of music collection in shaping the subjective experience of music consumption. By actively engaging in the act of collecting within streaming platforms, users can elevate their enjoyment levels and possibly reignite their passion for music."

This research opens up exciting new avenues for streaming app developers and music listeners alike. By recognizing the significance of [music collection](#) within the streaming era, a harmonious balance between algorithmic recommendations and personal curation can be achieved, leading to a reinvigorated and enriching musical journey.

More information: Ofer Bergman et al, Collecting streaming music increases listening enjoyment, *Personal and Ubiquitous Computing* (2023). [DOI: 10.1007/s00779-023-01729-w](https://doi.org/10.1007/s00779-023-01729-w)

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