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24 **"The times they are-a-changin": The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on online music**
25 **sharing in India**

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33

1 **Abstract**

2 Music sharing trends have been shown to change during times of socio-economic crises. Studies
3 have also shown that music can act as a social surrogate, helping to significantly reduce loneliness
4 by acting as an empathetic friend. We explored these phenomena through a novel study of online
5 music sharing during the Covid-19 pandemic in India. We collected tweets from the popular social
6 media platform Twitter during India's first and second wave of the pandemic (n=1,364). We
7 examined the different ways in which music was able to accomplish the role of a social surrogate
8 via analyzing tweet text using Natural Language Processing techniques. Additionally, we analyzed
9 the emotional connotations of the music shared through the acoustic features and lyrical content and
10 compared the results between pandemic and pre-pandemic times. It was observed that the role of
11 music shifted to a more community focused function rather than tending to a more self-serving
12 utility. Results demonstrated that people shared music during the Covid-19 pandemic which had
13 lower valence and shared songs with topics that reflected turbulent times such as Hardship and
14 Exclusion when compared to songs shared during pre-Covid times. The results are further discussed
15 in the context of individualistic versus collectivistic cultures.

16

17 **Keywords** Musical emotions · Online Music Sharing · Covid Pandemic · Social Surrogacy · Lyrics

18

1. Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly impacted everyday life with multiple state and nation-wide lockdowns around the world. Long isolation periods, increasing rates of unemployment, and with hundreds of thousands catching the virus daily, the pandemic caused an unprecedented socio-economic crisis [30]. India in particular had one of the highest Covid-19 infection rates and is the second worst affected country (<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/countries-where-coronavirus-hasspread>) in terms of reported Covid-19 cases and deaths [11, 31]. These distressing times paired with months of isolation periods had people searching for coping mechanisms and proxies for physical social interactions.

Social media provides a constant means of communication with the outside world having a network reach much larger than any physical one. It enables users to keep in touch with their friends and family through posts and messages [5]. As the pandemic limited in-person interactions, social media use, enabling people to meet their social needs, was at an all time high [34]. Twitter affords a space to share thoughts and mood states, especially through music. Music that is shared on Twitter servers various functions, be it to either promote favorite artists or as a way to express feelings about the music shared, amongst others. From an evolutionary point of view sharing music has shown to help in social bonding, building a sense of community, and convey emotional states [23].

Music can play the role of an empathetic friend by acting as a social surrogate [29] and be used as a coping mechanism. It can elicit several emotions including feelings of being connected to others and being understood and can help boost mood when one is feeling down [18]. When users share music online along with how it made them feel and how it has helped them, comparisons can be made as to how music played the role of a social surrogate before and during the pandemic. It is possible that the kind of music one listens to or wants others to listen to during times of crisis can convey the coping mechanisms used by people to some extent. It has been seen that COVID-19 restrictions have led to lifestyle changes including change in trends in music consumption. People streamed songs from their balconies more during the initial lockdowns [15], exploring new styles and groups of music [3], and there was an increase observed in the listening time [4, 8]. Past work has looked at music sharing online [37] but as per our knowledge, work in this sphere has not been done during times of crisis. Furthermore, no studies have examined why music is shared online or what need it fulfills by sharing, especially in the Indian context.

Recent times witnessed a slow rise in studies investigating music trends during Covid-19 [16, 10, 33, 17, 12, 13]. While no study has looked into online music sharing, they do provide insight into music consumption trends. A study on German media consumption during the pandemic showed that media (including music, books, movies amongst others) induced nostalgia during Covid-19 functioned as a way to cope with social stress (fear of isolation) during lockdown periods [35]. Another study on European countries found that music consumption on Spotify changed in terms of nostalgia during the pandemic [36].

Another study on popular music in the UK and the US during the pandemic demonstrated a negative trend in valence of lyrics and higher reference of interpersonal dependence in lyrics [25]. However, there are differences in how countries consume and associate with music [27, 19]. Individualistic cultures such as UK and US use music as a tool for self expression. On the other hand, collectivistic cultures, which include Asian countries like Japan, India, and China, use music typically to add positivity to their lives [27]. Emotional connections to music and coping mechanisms are different for individualistic cultures where people are self-sufficient and achievement-oriented as compared to collectivistic cultures where people are interdependent and family-oriented [19].

1 In this study we focus on India, a culturally rich country and that has a deep relation to music. A
2 study of 3,000 Internet users showed that 80 per cent of Internet users called themselves as ‘music-
3 lovers’ [14] in India. Despite being one of the largest countries in terms of population, music
4 sharing trends have not been studied. Work has been done on the evolving Indian music industry [1,
5 7, 20] but a focus on the trends of the overall population is lacking. Moreover, on average, an
6 Indian spends 19.1 hours a week listening to music which is higher than the global average of 18
7 hours [14]. Thus, it is important to consider how and why users share music online in India. A large
8 Twitter user base of 23 million Indians provides opportunities for a large scale study. A study on
9 India could further enhance the comparison of the function of music between collectivistic and
10 individualistic cultures.

11
12 This paper aims to analyse online music sharing of Indians during the pandemic. To this end, we
13 take a two-pronged approach to analyzing tweets posted during this time (see Figure 1). We first
14 analyze tweet text to understand the role music plays as a social surrogate via NLP techniques.
15 Subsequently we analyze the musical content being shared by examining emotional connotations
16 derived via acoustic features and lyrics. Additionally, we examine lyrical themes shared during the
17 pandemic. We compare all of the above with pre-pandemic times to identify changes/trends.

18 19 **2 Methodology**

20 **2.1 Dataset**

21 Using the Twitter API (<https://developer.twitter.com/en/docs/twitter-api>), we collected tweets that
22 were geo-tagged as India that contained a Spotify URL for tracks during the first and second wave
23 of the pandemic (see Figure 2). As per the WHO (<https://covid19.who.int/region/searo/country/in>)
24 dashboard of Covid-19 cases, the peak of Wave-1 and Wave-2 in India was recorded on September
25 14, 2020 and May 3, 2021 respectively. Judging by the steepness of both the peaks, we considered a
26 period of two months around the Wave-1 peak and one month around the Wave-2 peak as our Wave-
27 1 and Wave-2 time periods respectively. To compare this with a control group, we collected similar
28 tweets during the same period of months as Wave-1 (referred to as Control-1) and Wave-2 (referred
29 to as Control-2) in 2019. The same period of months was taken in order to avoid temporal music
30 sharing differences that can occur as a result of seasonal trends. We collected a total of 1,364 tweets
31 that were posted during both waves of the pandemic. One tweet can have multiple track URLs
32 shared in them, but each song of the tweet is added separately to the dataset. We limited our
33 analysis to tweets in English. A total of 54.3% of the tweets collected during Wave-1 and 48.2% of
34 tweets collected during Wave-2 had English tweet text. Detailed statistics about the dataset are
35 given in Table 1. From the Spotify URL, the name and artist of the song was retrieved using the
36 Spotify ID. With this information, we collected lyrics for each track, using the LyricsGenius and
37 azlyrics API (<https://lyricsgenius.readthedocs.io/en/master/>).

38 39 **2.2 Tweet Analysis**

40 From each tweet, we examined the context and the content of the music associated with it. Context
41 of the music shared refers to the tweet text accompanying it. It gives a glimpse into why a user
42 shared that particular track. We used this text to consider if the music may have played a role of a
43 social surrogate. On the other hand content refers to both the musical and lyrical features of the
44 song. We looked at the emotional connotations of the content by extracting the acoustic features
45 from the music and sentiment and themes from the lyrics.

46
47 *Context Analysis* In order to capture the functions played by music, we used a set of 30 statements
48 formulated in past work [29] as demonstrations of music functioning as a social surrogate (refer to
49 Appendix 1). These include statements such as “It reminds of certain periods of my life or past
50 experiences” or “I can identify with the musicians or bands”. These 30 statements were originally
51 collected as a result of a survey where participants described how media plays a role of a social
52 surrogate in their lives and was then adapted to music [29]. These statements belong to 7

1 overarching categories – Company, Reminiscence, Shared Experiences, Isolation, Understanding
2 Others, Culture, and Group Identity. The category Company describes the role of music in helping
3 to feel less lonely and providing comfort. Reminiscence is when music elicits feeling of nostalgia
4 through a person or experience. Shared Experiences covers how music helps people to feel
5 understood and identify with the music/artists. The category Isolation involves feelings of wanting
6 to isolate socially and not talk to others but finding solace in music. Understanding Others includes
7 how music brings about feelings of belonging and understanding others and the world. When music
8 helps to connect to one’s culture and allows people to express cultural uniqueness the surrogacy
9 role falls under the category Culture. Music that helps people to identify to a subculture and belong
10 to a particular social group the role falls under the category Group Identity. Examples of tweets
11 which came under the above categories include “Reminder to listen to this song when feeling
12 underconfident” (Shared Experiences) or “Something that reminds me of my childhood”
13 (Reminiscence).

14
15 To get the context of the music shared, we first pre-processed the text of each tweet to remove
16 links, hashtags, and emojis. In order to filter out tweets that did not represent the function of music
17 as a social surrogate, we manually removed tweets that fell under the Non social surrogacy
18 category. These tweets consisted of keywords/strings such as “mood”, “stream this song” or “listen
19 to this”. A total of 502 tweets were identified as showing roles of social surrogacy of which 150 and
20 165 belonged to time periods Wave-1 and Wave-2 respectively and 111 and 76 belonged to
21 Control-1 and Control-2 respectively. Only this set was used for further tests. An automated
22 approach was used to categorize each of these filtered tweets into one of the seven social surrogacy
23 categories. The sentence embedding of the resulting text of the tweets was calculated by using a
24 BERT transformer (https://huggingface.co/docs/transformers/model_doc/bert). Similarly, the
25 sentence embedding for each of the 30 statements was calculated. Cosine similarity which was used
26 as a distance metric to represent semantic similarity was calculated between each tweet and each of
27 the 30 statements in the embedding space. A tweet was allocated into the corresponding category of
28 the most similar statement embedding (provided the similarity was greater than 0.5). Thus, a tweet
29 was only mapped to either one or zero of the seven social surrogacy categories. Some examples of
30 tweets along with the allocated groups are shown in Table 2. This automated approach provided a
31 way to observe the ways music served as a surrogate during the pandemic without the intrusion of
32 human bias. It also allowed us to investigate which categories of surrogacy such as Reminiscence or
33 Isolation were more prevalent than others when users shared music online during the considered
34 time periods.

35
36 *Content Analysis* In some cases, the song name returned from the Spotify API
37 (<https://spotify.readthedocs.io/en/2.19.0/#>) did not match the song in LyricsGenius API owing to
38 gibberish lyrics. We weeded out such songs (n=236) from the pool of English songs (n=1,181). This
39 happened for songs which were remixed-versions or were sung live and hence such songs were
40 removed.

41
42 *Emotions* We examined the emotional connotations of the music shared in two ways - by using the
43 acoustic features of the songs and by performing a sentiment analysis on the lyrics. To obtain the
44 acoustic features, we used the Spotify API in order to extract valence and energy of the song which
45 provides insight to its emotional connotation. Valence is indicative of the pleasantness/positiveness
46 of the track while energy is self-explanatory. We then performed sentiment analysis on the lyrics
47 using a lexicon and rule-based sentiment analysis tool called VADER
48 (<https://github.com/cjhutto/vaderSentiment>). It is used in grammar-free texts like social media.

49
50 *Lyrical Analysis* We performed topic modelling on the lyrics using DICTION Software
51 (<https://dictionsoftware.com/>) to extract the topics of the songs that were shared during the different
52 data groups. DICTION is a language analysis software that uses dictionaries to determine the

1 topic(s) of a given text. There are 40 topics each of which has a dictionary of words associated with
2 it where no two dictionaries have the same words. It calculates the frequency of the words from the
3 text to determine the topics. We decided to use DICTION as it is a good choice for topic modelling
4 for free-grammar text like songs and poem since it has a word to word mapping [25, 6, 22, 2]
5 Further details about DICTION and the custom lists have been discussed in the appendix. We ran
6 DICTION on the lyrics of the songs belonging to Covid- 19 and control periods for all the 40
7 topics, and divided the frequency of words by the total number of words to normalize the scores.
8

9 2.3 Statistical Tests

10 The contextual information and musical content was compared between the following time
11 periods: Wave-1 (n=323) versus Control-1 (n=204), Wave-2 (n=263) versus Control-2 (n=155), and
12 Covid-19 as a whole referred to as Wave-1 + Wave2 (n=586) versus pre-Covid period of 2019
13 referred to as Control-1 + Control-2 (n=359). Context-wise, a frequency table was created for
14 comparing observed frequencies which were the Covid-19 periods and the expected proportions
15 which were the corresponding control groups. A chi-square goodness of fit test [24] was performed
16 to observe if the proportions were significantly different. Content-wise, we used the non-parametric
17 Mann Whitney U test (MWU) to examine the difference between valence and energy (the acoustic
18 features) across the conditions. For the lyrical analysis, MWU tests were also performed on results
19 of DICTION analysis between each of the above mentioned time periods. The Benjamini-Hochberg
20 procedure was used to account for running multiple statistical tests for all the comparisons listed
21 above. The results of these tests are reported in the next section.
22

23 3 Results

24 3.1 Context Analysis

25 The percentage of total tweets lying in each social surrogacy category during Wave-1 and Control-1
26 are shown in Figure 3. The chi-square goodness of fit test was significant ($p=0.028$), suggesting that
27 the proportions of tweets amongst the social surrogacy categories were significantly different
28 between Wave-1 and Control-1. Post hoc multiple z-test comparisons were done to observe which
29 categories showed significant differences in proportions. Two of the social surrogacy groups –
30 Reminiscence and Group Identity had a significant decrease in the proportion of tweets falling into
31 these categories during Wave-1. On the other hand, the chi-square test was non-significant across
32 the distribution of proportions when comparing Wave-2 and Control-2, or Covid-19 as a whole
33 (Wave-1 + Wave2) and pre-Covid-19 period (i.e., Control-1 + Control-2).
34

35 3.2 Content Analysis

36 *Emotions* Figure 4 displays distributions of valence and energy derived from acoustic features for
37 different conditions. Results of the Mann Whitney U tests revealed that valence of music shared
38 during Covid (Wave-1 and Wave-2 combined) was significantly lower ($U=613715$, $p=0.006$) than
39 pre-Covid time period. Similar results were observed when comparing Wave-1 with Control-1
40 where valence was significantly lower during Wave-1 ($U=231695$, $p=0.037$) while energy was
41 found to be higher ($U=229345$, $p=0.018$). No significant differences were observed in either
42 valence or energy of music shared when comparing Wave-2 with Control-2.
43

44 Sentiment analysis on lyrics as shown in Figure 5 was also performed. During comparison only the
45 time periods of Wave-2 against Control-2 showed differences that were statistically significant
46 ($U=33920.5$, $p=0.0005$) according to the Man Whitney U test. During Wave-2 the lyrics of the
47 songs had a lower mean sentiment (0.24) as compared to the Control-2 (0.39).
48

49 *Lyrical Themes* We observed that different lyrical themes were shared in different time periods.
50 Table 3 summarises the results of the Mann-Whitney U tests conducted on the various DICTION
51 categories.
52

1 Wave-1 demonstrated an increased sharing of music with lyrical themes signifying Exclusion
2 (U=33874.0, p=0.005) and Hardship (U=34698.5, p=0.041), when compared to Control 1. Similar
3 pattern was observed when comparing the Covid-19 time period to pre-Covid-19 time periods
4 where topics of Exclusion(U=103193.0, p=0.049) and Hardship (U=102221.0, p=0.05) were shared
5 more as well. The topic of Motion was shared more in Wave-1 than Control-1 (U=38425.5, p=0.04)
6 but was shared less in Covid-19 group as a whole than pre-Covid times as a whole (U=100560.0,
7 p=0.018). Wave-2 witnessed an increase in music with lyrical themes representing Communication
8 (U=12557.0, p=0.012) when compared to Control-2. Another observation to be made was that the
9 values of Satisfaction increased in the songs shared during Wave-1 when compared with Control-1
10 (U=38066.5, p=0.026) but the opposite happened when we observed Wave-2 and Control-2.

11 12 **4 Discussion**

13 Our study examined the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on the type of music that was shared
14 online via Twitter in India. Overall music sharing seems to be different during Covid-19 and pre-
15 Covid-19 times. The number of music related tweets posted by users to share a certain song on
16 Spotify increased during Wave- 1. This increase in music sharing online could be attributed to
17 higher rates of social media usage during periods of isolation in the pandemic [32], or to how music
18 sharing builds a sense of community [28] which was needed during the pandemic. A portion of the
19 increase should be credited to the fact that Spotify was released in India during 2019, and as its
20 popularity began to grow, the number of users sharing Spotify links increased subsequently. Apart
21 from the increase in number of tweets there were several differences observed in the context and
22 content as discussed below.

23
24 We examined how music might function as a social surrogate during the pandemic. Tweets which
25 fell under the categories Company (in which people use music to feel less lonely and find comfort)
26 and Shared Experiences (which covers music experiences that help people to feel understood) made
27 up 41% of the total tweets containing music collected during the pandemic. During Wave-1, music
28 acted as a social surrogate through the role of Group Identity to a lesser amount then pre-pandemic
29 times. Group Identity involves feeling a sense of belonging to a particular social group on a smaller
30 scale, such as identifying with a particular artist or associating oneself with a fan group. India, a
31 collectivistic community, has shown to put a great importance on community, and as the pandemic
32 brought about distressing times, the sense of community tended to expand, which is reflected by
33 more music shared that was not targeted towards a specific subgroup. This result suggests that
34 perhaps people may have felt a less pressing desire to separate into smaller subgroups and preferred
35 to experience and share music with a larger, more diverse demographic to fulfil their need for
36 community.

37
38 Similarly the proportion of tweets falling into the category Reminiscence which is more self
39 directed (reminds one of their past experiences or a person), also decreased during Wave-1. While
40 past work [35] has demonstrated that media associated with a sense of nostalgia was consumed
41 more during the Covid-19, this study was done on a individualistic culture (Germany). India has
42 shown a different trend where the role of self-involved social surrogacy categories reduced during
43 the pandemic. Our interpretation is that music was shared to foster a sense of greater community
44 rather than for personal preferences.

45
46 Music shared online in India during Wave-1 was more negatively valenced but had higher overall
47 energy values in terms of acoustic features. The valence and energy values mirror the feelings
48 caused by the turbulent times the country experienced. This is in line with results from a study on
49 UK and US where songs with negatively valenced lyrics were found to be more popular during the
50 pandemic as compared to before [25]. Typically since negative valence of music is congruent to
51 negative valence derived from lyrics [9], these results are comparable and the cultures seem to show
52 a similar change in trends over the period of the pandemic. Lyrical themes of Exclusion (describes

1 the sources and effects of social isolation [25]) and Hardship (terms of natural disaster, problems
2 faced, and human fears) were observed more in India during the pandemic and these themes also
3 reflect the distressing times. There was also more Satisfaction (terms associated with positive
4 affective states [25]) related lyrical themes which has to do with positive affective states, although
5 valence was negative. This could be an attempt to try to balance the negative mood of the music
6 with positive words while still reflecting the current hard times of the pandemic. This result opposes
7 results done on a study of individualistic culture where lyrical themes of Satisfaction were less
8 predominant during the first six months of the pandemic [25], albeit limited to top charts on
9 Spotify. Nevertheless, these results concerning the lyrical themes of shared music highlight the
10 similarities and differences between the consumption and sharing of music in individualistic and
11 collectivistic cultures.

12
13 Wave-2 was much more disastrous for India [26] than Wave-1. Music sharing online evidenced a
14 decrease in the sentiment of lyrics as well as a decrease in the themes of Satisfaction. One potential
15 explanation in Wave-1 themes of Satisfaction arose by trying to build up hope but by Wave-2 the
16 decrease showed the opposite trend. Additionally, music shared with themes of Communication
17 (terms of social interaction either with one person or a group) increased during Wave-2. From an
18 evolutionary point of view, music has been used as a social bonding tool and reveals a person's
19 emotional states to others [23]. In this way themes of Communication in music expose a desire to
20 reach out and bond with others which could explain this increase. Overall, the combined duration of
21 Wave-1 and Wave-2 brought about music sharing with more negative valence than pre-Covid-19
22 times, with lyrical themes of Hardship and Exclusion thereby mirroring the dire situation of the
23 pandemic.

24
25 In sum, our study is the first that looks at music sharing trends online during the pandemic. Music
26 shared online provides a glimpse into the emotional state of a person. Studying the text
27 accompanying the sharing of a song online helps reveal the role music can play in our lives and its
28 benefits during distressing times. While this study has shown that collectivistic and individualistic
29 cultures both reported negative trends in valence of music during the pandemic, Wave-1 in India
30 reflected a glimmer of hope with the increase in lyrical themes of Satisfaction. Furthermore, India
31 as a collectivistic culture has a tendency to put the well being of a community at large above ones
32 own. This is well demonstrated by the role that Group Identity and Reminiscence played as a social
33 surrogate which decreased during the pandemic.

34
35 The social surrogacy approach which summarizes the various functions music plays as a social
36 surrogate can be extended to study music shared in other countries. It can also be extended to data
37 collected from other social media platforms. Future research on this topic could also benefit from a
38 mixed methods approach, where manual annotation of the tweets could complement the automated
39 approach, although it may not be feasible and scalable for a large number of datapoints. While our
40 study was limited to music with lyrics in English, future work can accommodate music and tweets
41 in other languages using advanced NLP techniques. While the sharing of songs with English lyrics
42 in India is a consequence of a western influence, the consumption of global products does not
43 necessitate a change in a culture's core values. For instance, despite the popularity of Bollywood
44 and the influence of Indian music in Western countries, like UK and USA, [21] these countries are
45 still categorized as individualistic [12]. Lastly, we note that we have collected the music shared only
46 on the Twitter platform, and as such the music analysed in the present study is not a complete
47 representation of the music listened to by the Indian population as a whole. Future work could also
48 explore the use of other platforms and collaborative playlists.

49

1 **5 Appendix**

2 5.1 Appendix 1

3 The 30 statements that were used to model the role of music as a social surrogate and their assigned categories as per
 4 [29] are given in Table 4.
 5

Table 4: Social Surrogacy statements corresponding to each group

Social Surrogacy Category	Statement
Company	It keeps me company.
	It can make me feel less lonely.
	It comforts me when I'm sad.
Culture	It mirrors the history and culture of my country.
	It makes me feel connected to my culture.
	It is a good way to express the uniqueness of our culture.
Group Identity	I would like to identify with a particular subculture.
	It helps me to show that I belong to a particular social group.
	It makes me feel connected to all the people who like the same kind of music.
	I would like to take the artists as role models
Isolation	It makes me feel connected to others.
	I don't want to talk to anybody.
	I like to have some sound in the background.
	I want to isolate myself from my surroundings.
Reminiscence	I don't want to hear the surrounding sounds.
	It reminds me of the people that I used to listen to the music with.
	It reminds me of a particular person.
	It reminds me of certain periods of my life or past experiences.
Shared Experience	It helps me reminisce.
	I can recognize myself in the lyrics.
	The songwriter has made similar experiences as I have.
	I like to immerse myself into the lyrics.
	I can identify with the musicians or bands.
	I can sing along with it.
It makes me feel like somebody else feels the same as I do.	

6

Social Surrogacy Category	Statement
Understanding Others	It helps me understand the world better.
	It makes me feel connected to the world.
	It tells me how other people think.
	It makes me feel like I belong.
	It helps me to understand what is going on in others people's heads.

7

8

1 5.2 Appendix 2

2 DICTION 7.0, as mentioned earlier, is a content analysis software which uses dictionaries of topics
3 to perform word to word mapping and gives a score related to each topic. The value of each
4 variable for a song is a float value. Even though it is a frequency, homographs are incremented as
5 decimals instead of '1' in the DICTION software. The 40 categories of DICTION can be divided
6 into the following sub-categories:
7

- 8 1. Dictionary based variables: Each variable has a dictionary of words associated with it. There
9 are 10,000 words classified into a total of 35 discrete variables. The number of words in
10 each dictionary range from 10 to 745. Table 5 contains a brief description of each of the 35
11 variables.
- 12 2. Calculation Based Variables: Four DICTION variables result from calculations rather than
13 dictionary matches. They are calculated using a formula which involves data like the
14 number of words in the text, length of each word, occurrences of each word, etc. Table 6
15 explains the different Calculation based variables.
- 16 3. Master Variables: The five master variables provide the most general understanding of a
17 given text. They are a combination of the Dictionary-based and Calculation-based variables.
18 They are formed by converting all subaltern variables to z-scores, combining them via
19 addition and subtraction, and then by adding a constant of 50 to eliminate negative numbers.
20 For example, Optimism, which is [Praise + Satisfaction + Inspiration] – [Blame + Hardship
21 + Denial] to which 50 is added standardizes the six variables. Table 7 gives an idea about
22 what the master variables signify.

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1 **Figures**

2

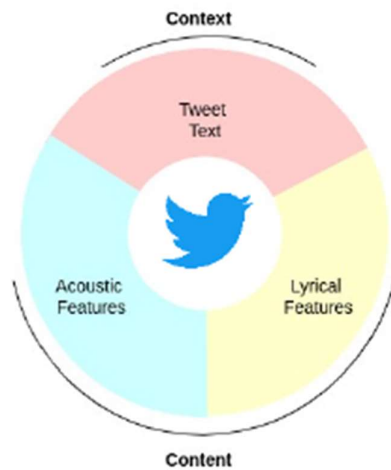


Fig. 1: Our study focuses on analyzing the context of music sharing from tweet text and the content of music sharing using acoustic features and lyrical themes.

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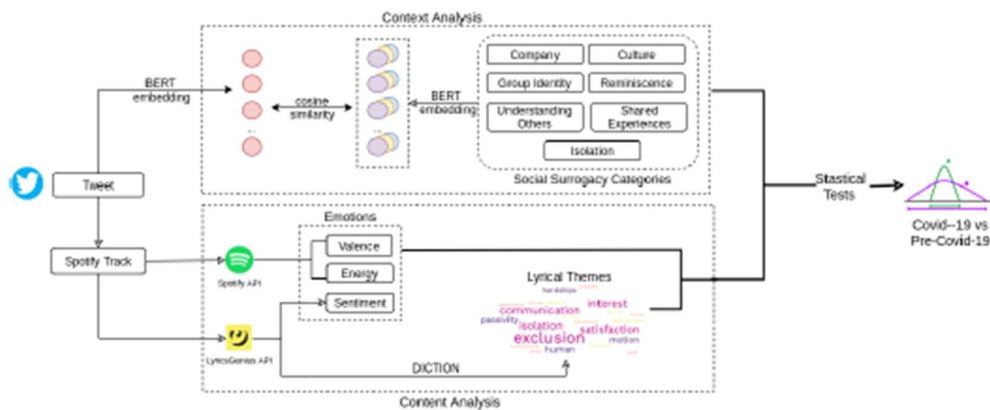


Fig. 2: Pipeline of extracting emotion, lyrical themes, and the function of music from tweets. Red circles represent BERT word embeddings and the purple, yellow, and blue circles symbolize the different embeddings obtained from social surrogacy statements belonging to different categories.

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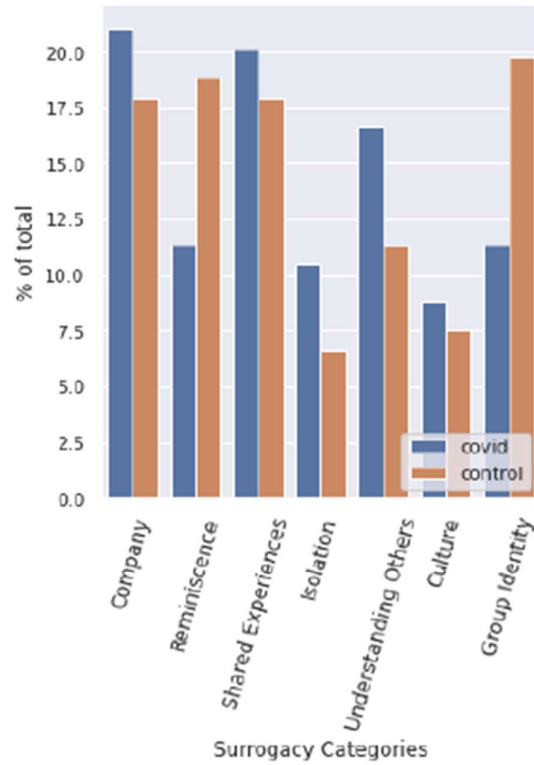


Fig. 3: Distribution of tweets into social surrogacy categories during Wave-1 and Control-1 (covid and control in legend respectively).

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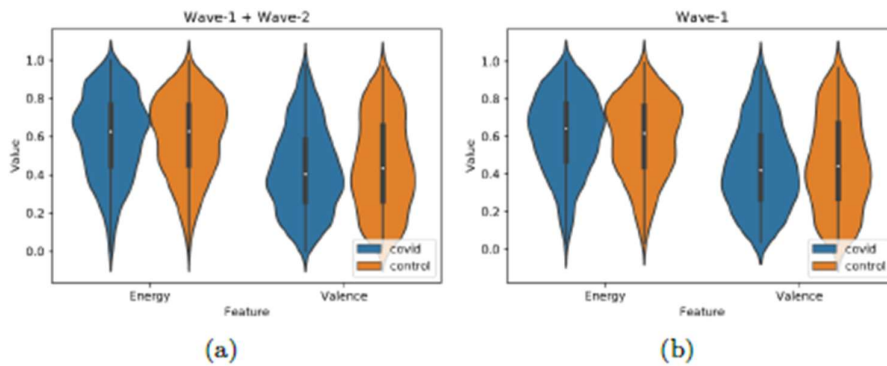


Fig. 4: Comparison of acoustic features between different periods. (a) Valence is significantly lower during Covid than pre-Covid. (b) Valence is significantly lower during Wave 1, while Energy is higher as compared to the Control-1.

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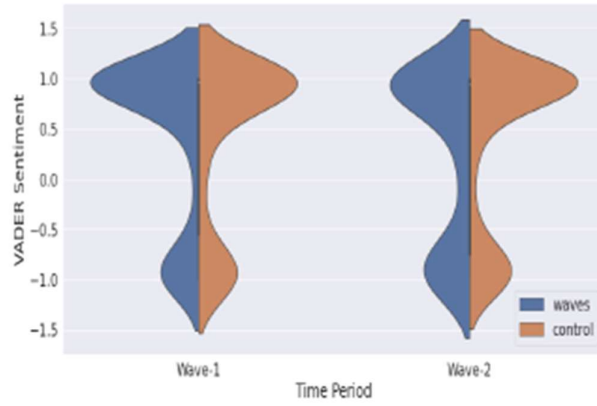


Fig. 5: Sentiment Analysis of Lyrics of the songs according to the different time periods. Mean Sentiment of Wave-1 was higher than Control-1 but it was vice-versa for Wave-2 and Control-2.

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1 Tables

Table 1: Summary of dataset statistics across Wave-1 and Wave-2 of Covid-19 and their Control groups -

Data Group	Tweets with Spotify URL	Tweets with English Songs	Songs with correct English Lyrics	Songs Rejected
Wave-1 (July-November 2020)	808	416	323	87
Control-1 (July-November 2019)	607	271	204	54
Wave 2 (April-June 2021)	556	317	263	94
Control-2 (April-June 2019)	351	177	155	48

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Table 2: Examples of tweet text categorized into Social Surrogacy Categories using BERT embeddings

Tweet Text	Most Similar Surrogacy Statement	Category
song i remember from childhood	It reminds me of certain periods of my life or past experiences	Reminiscence
the joy of discovering music thats totally you	I can identify with the musicians or bands	Shared Experiences
Dedicated to the Nocturnal	I want to isolate myself from my surroundings	Isolation

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Table 3: DICTION variables for different time periods that show significant differences with $p < 0.05$ in Man Whitney U Test ($*p < 0.01$). An arrow indicates an increase or decrease in the songs shared in the time period.

Wave-1 (vs. Control-1)	Exclusion* \uparrow , Satisfaction \uparrow , Hardship \uparrow , Motion \uparrow
Wave=2 (vs. Control-2)	Communication \uparrow , Satisfaction* \downarrow
Wave-1 + Wave-2 (vs. Control-1 + Control-2)	Hardship \uparrow , Exclusion \uparrow , Motion \downarrow

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