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MUSIC AND IDENTITY CRISIS: ADOLESCENCE, TRAUMA, AND THE DIASPORIC CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

From its origins to the present day, music has always influenced people and contributed psychologically to their emotional states. Accompanying individuals from birth to death and even beyond, music has remained by people's side in almost every emotional state, at individual, social, and cultural levels. Music, as one of the key components in the reconstruction of the self and the reinforcement of sociological ties, is deeply intertwined with social-cognitive and psychological processes through its selected modes of engagement-listening, performing, singing, and composing. This study examines the relationship between music and identity crises, focusing on periods in which such crises are most commonly encountered, including adolescence, post-traumatic experiences, and diasporic mobility. Music emerges as a means of expression for individuals experiencing an identity crisis, serving as a tool through which they convey their situation to their environment and seek acceptance. This study, which employs qualitative research methods, reveals how musical genres, lyrics, and cultural context influence identity crises.

Keywords: Music, identity crisis, adolescence, trauma, diasporic context.

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MÜZİK VE KİMLİK KRİZİ: ERGENLİK, TRAVMA VE DİASPORİK BAĞLAM

ÖZ

Müziğin varoluşundan günümüze insanların üstündeki etkisi ve duygu durumlarına psikolojik katkısı hep var olmuştur. Doğumdan ölüme ve sonrasına kadar insanlara eşlik eden müzik, bu süreç içerisinde bireysel, toplumsal ve kültürel olarak duygu durumlarının hemen hepsinde insanların yanı başında olmuştur. Bireyin benliğinin yeniden inşasında ve sosyolojik bağlarının güçlendirilmesinde önemli yapı taşlarından birisi olan müziğin tercih edilen seçilimleri (dinleme, çalma, söyleme ve besteleme) sosyal-bilişsel ve psikolojik süreçlerle ilişkilidir. Bu çalışmada, müzik ve kimlik krizi arasındaki ilişkiler incelenerek, ergenlik dönemi, travma sonrası ve diasporik hareketlilik sonrası gibi kimlik krizinin en sık karşılaşıldığı durumlar üzerinde durulmuştur. Müzik, kimlik krizi içerisinde yer alan bireylerin kendini ifade etme içinde bulunduğu durumu çevresine duyurma ve doğal olarak kendisini kabul ettirme süreçleri içerisinde bir ifade aracı olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Nitel araştırma yöntemlerinin kullanıldığı bu çalışma, müzik türlerinin, sözlerin ve kültürel bağlamın kimlik krizini nasıl etkilediğini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Müzik, kimlik krizi, ergenlik, travma, diasporik bağlam.

INTRODUCTION

Present in human life from the prenatal stage to postmortem rituals, music has played various functional roles, sometimes as a companion, sometimes as a guide, a reminder, or a source of hope for the future. With its presence, music has become a collective force, forming social bonds. Stokes (1994: 3) notes that the social and cultural worlds shaped by modernity (namely, the industrial-capitalist order, the nation-state, and secular rationalism) are difficult to manifest without music.

Thus, beyond being an art form, music has created analogies across many contexts through its functional structure. Frith (1996a) considers listening to music not as a passive activity, but as an active meaning-making process, emphasizing that listeners experience music emotionally, physically, morally, and culturally.

The emotional changes that occur in listeners as a result of the analogy formed between the music and the listener play a significant role in shaping the functions of music in human life. If we consider the bond between listener and producer as the beginning of a process, then the music created during this process, both structurally and culturally, fosters a sense of belonging ultimately leading to the formation of identity.

Personal identity is strongly linked to social identity, which encompasses the elements of self-concept derived from one's perceived membership in social groups. Individuals attempt to strike a balance between their social identity, which connects them to specific groups compared to out-groups, and their personal identity, which reflects their uniqueness within the same group. The characteristics of social identity that reflect individuals' orientations or attitudes toward these groups can be considered a component of personal identity (Schwartz et al., 2008: 638).

As a natural being, the human encompasses a multiplicity of instincts, inclinations, and vital forces (Lefebvre, 2021: 80). In this regard, music can be understood as the audible expression of the plurality and diversity inherent in human nature. Identity is not a fixed or static construct; rather, it is a dynamic process shaped by these instincts, tendencies, and vital energies. Music functions both as a stage and a vehicle in this process. It serves as a significant medium through which individuals express their emotional states and establish social bonds.

Identity is not a stable or immutable "essence"; instead, it is a process continuously reconstituted in everyday life through tools such as music (DeNora, 2000: 17). As Frith contends: "Music doesn't represent values but lives them" (1996a: 272).

> "We all hear the music we like as something special, as something that defies the mundane, takes us "out of ourselves," puts us somewhere else. "Our music" is, from this perspective, special not just with reference to other music but, more important, to the rest of life. It is this sense of specialness (the way in which music seems to make possible a new kind of self-recognition, to free us from everyday routines, from the social expectations with which we are encumbered) that is the key to our musical value judgments" (Frith,1996a: 275).

Stokes (1994: 3) argues that music is clearly a component of modern life and our understanding of it, highlighting how we express knowledge about other people, places, times, and things, as well as our relationships with them, through music. He further emphasizes that beyond being a form of cultural expression, music plays an active role in the construction of social identities and spatial affiliations.

Many musicologists approach music not merely as an art form or a means of entertainment, but as a structure that plays an active role in identity construction, community formation, and political engagement allowing individuals to express themselves, regulate their emotions, and shape their social interactions (Turino, 2008: 2; Bennett, 2000: 2; DeNora, 2000: 17). Moreover, music is not only a mirror of identity, but also a process through which identity is built, transformed, and experienced (Frith, 1996b: 108-127).

Considering the social context of music, Cohen (1991: 189) emphasizes that music reflects social identities, relationships, and lifestyles. He also notes that due to the ways in which musical diversity, styles, and sounds are adopted and employed to define various groups and geographic spaces, music becomes a powerful medium for identity formation. Stokes also underscores music's role as a potent tool through which individuals and communities express, negotiate, and reconstruct their identities (Stokes, 1994: 18).

As these definitions illustrate, music plays a critical and undeniable functional role in the formation of identity, the preservation of that identity, and its transmission to future generations.

While the concept of identity began to be studied in the 1960s as a psycho-social analytical category within the fields of sociology, anthropology, philosophy, and cultural studies, it did not gain significant attention in the discipline of ethnomusicology until the 1980s (Rice, 2007: 18). Accordingly, the concept of identity crisis, which is closely linked to identity itself, has also found a place within the framework of ethnomusicological inquiry.

Identity Crisis

The concept of identity crisis refers to a psychological state in which an individual's sense of self becomes ambiguous, prompting a reassessment of social roles and a search for self-definition, expression, or reconstruction. As emphasized in Erikson's (1968: 157) psychosocial development theory, this phenomenon is particularly intense during adolescence and early adulthood. However, identity crises are also commonly experienced in other contexts, especially following traumatic experiences and during diasporic transitions related to migration.

Individuals experiencing identity crises often seek a sense of belonging and may feel close to certain groups while distancing themselves from others. According to Toprak (2019: 111), individuals may attempt to dissociate from groups they do not identify with and, if their emotional needs are unmet, may experience psychological and physical conflict. Similarly, Yasa and colleagues (2022: 933) argue that individuals classify themselves within certain group identities and internalize the values of those groups as their own.

An identity crisis involves a state of uncertainty and conflict within one's self-concept. In Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory, this process becomes especially pronounced during adolescence and early adulthood, shaping how individuals reflect on their values, goals, and social roles. During this developmental phase, individuals often turn to various cultural and artistic modes of expression as tools for constructing their identities, among which music stands out prominently. Although music is a constant feature of daily life, Özdemir (2020: 13) notes that people frequently use music to shape their identities and to emphasize the identities to which they feel they belong. As individuals attempt to answer the question, "Who am I?", cultural elements such as music serve as navigational tools. Musical taste, as a form of personal expression, contributes to social belonging and emotional regulation.

However, music's role in identity crises is not always positive. While it can aid in resolving inner conflicts, it may at times exacerbate them. According to Linnemanna and colleagues (2015: 89), individuals experiencing identity confusion may use music as a form of emotional regulation. Emotional resonance, the formation of social identity, and the cultural context of music can all be considered meaningful connections between music and the experience of identity crises.

Identity crises most commonly manifest during adolescence, in the aftermath of trauma, and within diasporic experiences. This article focuses on these three contexts.

Adolescence is one of the most significant periods for experiencing identity crises. One of the key developmental tasks during this stage is to form a coherent sense of identity, which has important implications for psychological well-being and academic adjustment (Branje et al., 2021; Crocetti, 2017). As the pioneer of psychosocial development theory, Erikson emphasized identity formation as the central task of adolescence. This is the period when individuals begin to ask critical questions such as "Who am I?", "Where do I belong in this world?", and "To which social group do I affiliate myself?"

Major developments in identity formation typically occur between the ages of 12 and 18 (Erikson, 1968; Sawyer et al., 2018: 225). According to Erikson, one of the ego's primary tasks is to establish and maintain a coherent sense of identity. While he noted that identity development begins in childhood, he argued that adolescence is the phase in which this process becomes a central developmental task. Moreover, he asserted that identity development is not limited to adolescence, but is a lifelong process.

Erikson's model divides the human lifespan into eight stages, each characterized by a specific psychosocial conflict that must be resolved. Successfully overcoming these challenges fosters psychological resilience, while failure may lead to the development of fundamental psychological pathologies (Erikson, 1951/1968: 667). In this context, the adolescent phase of "identity vs. role confusion" is critical to personality development. During this stage, individuals seek to form their identities through exploration of career paths, social relationships, and gender roles.

Erikson conceptualized this stage in terms of two opposing outcomes: "identity achievement" and "identity confusion." The primary task for the individual is to explore and integrate both ends of this spectrum in a way that facilitates healthy adaptation to their environment. However, simply achieving a stable identity is not sufficient. The identity crises encountered during this period can serve as future reference points for individuals facing adaptive challenges. Successfully navigating this stage results in the development of a foundational psychological strength that Erikson termed "fidelity." In contrast, failure to resolve this conflict may lead to the pathology of "identity confusion" (Yazgan İnanç & Yerlikaya, 2016: 152). Erikson considered identity confusion to be one of the most significant problems facing modern psychotherapy, noting that healthy identity development is closely linked to overall mental health (Breger, 1974: 336).

One of the sociological contexts in which identity crises are relatively less frequently experienced is migration and its consequent formation of diaspora. The lives of migrants are often marked by numerous challenges; while trying to adapt to a new society, they face the risk of partially losing or transforming their original identities (Ćuk, 2020). At the same time, migrants tend to maintain a strong sense of ethnic group affiliation. This process involves not only the preservation of ethnic identity but also the difficulty of developing a sense of belonging in the host society. At times, this situation leads to a challenging reconciliation between differing moral worldviews and social norms (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005).

Research has shown that migrants experience stress and psychological tension when conflicts arise between their ethnic and national identities (Hirsh & Kang, 2016: 225). International findings further reveal that migrants tend to identify more weakly with the host country compared to their ethnic heritage, and report lower levels of national belonging than majority group members (Fleischmann & Phalet, 2018: 14). While forming connections with their country of residence, migrants often continue to maintain emotional and cultural ties to their country of origin (Berry, 2001: 617). For this reason, understanding migrant identity requires an awareness of the dynamics of multiple identities (Verkuyten, 2016: 2).

How migrants relate to their ethnic, national, and religious identities and how these identities intersect has become a central area of academic and societal discussion, especially within the broader context of integration into new societies. These questions often remain relevant for second and even third-generation descendants of migrants. According to Dağdeviren (2024: 29), individuals who share a common ethnic origin, culture, identity, and collective memory tend to preserve and share these values within their own communities when living away from their homeland. Although this is a frequent occurrence, diasporic minorities often engage in various cultural interactions and may experience identity crises through strategies such as assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization. Some individuals adopt these strategies in ways that allow them to preserve their cultural identities and assert a clear stance. However, others may undergo a syndrome of identity crisis by either engaging closely with members of the host culture or by relinquishing their cultural identity altogether.

The final context in which identity crises are frequently observed, and which is included in our analysis, is that of crises triggered by traumatic experiences. Traumatic experiences, along with other stressful life events, can serve as significant turning points in identity development. These events may undermine an individual's sense of stability and contribute to feelings of ambiguity in their self-concept, prompting adolescents to question and reevaluate their identities. This process may result in weakened identity bonds, intensified exploratory behaviors, repeated self-questioning, and at times, a general sense of identity disintegration (Waterman, 2020: 68).

Objective and Importance of Research

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between music and identity crisis within the contexts of adolescence, diasporic experiences, and post-traumatic processes, and to explore in depth the role of music in shaping individuals' self-perceptions, sense of belonging, emotional regulation processes, and social positioning practices from a qualitative perspective. Accordingly, the study seeks to reveal the effects of music on the subjective experiences of individuals experiencing identity crises and to elucidate the functional role of music in individual and collective identity formation.

This study is significant in that it approaches the relationship between music and identity not merely as an aesthetic issue, but within the contexts of psychological resilience, social belonging, and identity negotiation.

Although there are studies in the literature addressing the impact of music on identity, research that comparatively and comprehensively examines different contexts in which identity crises are intensely experienced remains limited.

Problem Status

Although music plays a significant role in processes of self-construction, identity formation, and emotional regulation, the mechanisms through which music shapes identity perception, functions at both individual and collective levels, and is interpreted within socio-cultural contexts, particularly during periods marked by intense identity crises such as adolescence, diasporic mobility, and post-traumatic experiences, have not yet been examined in a comprehensive and in-depth manner. In this regard, the central problem of this study concerns how music practices (listening, producing, and sharing) influence the emotional, cognitive, and social processes of individuals experiencing identity crises.

Based on this framework, the sub-problems of the study have been formulated as follows:

What is the relationship between musical preferences and personality traits as well as developmental processes during adolescence?

What role does music play in the negotiation of ethnic, national, and religious identities in diasporic contexts?

How is music used as a psychological regulatory tool in coping with identity crises in post-traumatic experiences?

How do music scenes and genre preferences influence belonging and social integration?

How do song lyrics and performance practices function in the rhetorical and symbolic expression of identity?

Assumptions

Music not only reflects identity but also performs a function in constructing it.

During periods in which identity crises are intensely experienced, the psychological and social functions of music increase.

Preferences for musical genres and the content of song lyrics make an individual's identity negotiation visible.

Digital music platforms, even indirectly, exert an influence on the process of identity construction.

METHOD

This study was structured within a qualitative research approach, grounded in a phenomenological research design, and employed both descriptive analysis and content analysis models. "According to Cropley (2002), phenomenological research focuses on experiences and phenomena that individuals are aware of but have not yet examined in a systematic and in-depth manner" (Yıldırım, A. & Şimşek, H. 2011: 72; Büyüköztürk et al., 2008: 20). The phenomenological approach, which emphasizes subjective experience and the study of consciousness (Sart, 2017: 70), is methodologically aligned with the theoretical framework and research objectives of this study, as it aims to examine the relationship between music and identity crisis in depth through individuals' subjective experiences, meaning-making processes, and socio-cultural contexts. The findings obtained within the contexts of adolescence, diasporic mobility, and post-traumatic experiences were examined through descriptive analysis, while song lyrics, playlists on digital music platforms, and data related to music scenes were evaluated through content analysis.

This study, which is limited to the contexts of adolescence, diasporic mobility, and post-traumatic experiences, focuses on the identity-related functions of music. Therefore, the findings are limited to the selected sample and the adopted theoretical framework.

FINDINGS

In this section, the functionality of music within the framework of identity crisis, as previously outlined in the theoretical background, is elaborated in detail. The findings related to the three selected cases, where identity crises are most prominently experienced, are analyzed and interpreted. The first focus is on the connection between music and identity crisis during adolescence.

Adolescence can be considered the stage of life in which music is most needed and most consumed. During this period, musical preferences are often perceived as a reflection of one's identity and function almost as a "badge" (Rentfrow & Gosling, 2006: 241). Adolescents define who they are, who they aspire to become, and with whom they wish to socially engage by identifying with specific music groups, their members, and other fans (North & Hargreaves, 1999). Song lyrics, along with the personas and images of musicians, resonate with diverse situations, thoughts, and emotions, thereby making music a powerful tool for expressing identity and navigating personal challenges (Ter Bogt et al., 2013: e381). Thus, it is not surprising that adolescent struggles and musical preferences are often linked.

Although non-mainstream genres are frequently depicted as inherently problematic, the relationship between music listening and behavioral issues is highly complex (Ter Bogt et al., 2013: e381). One theory developed to explain this complexity is the Peer Group Mediation Model, in which Slater and Henry (2013: 292) argue that music and music videos are directly related to substance use in adolescence, as young people may emulate behaviors portrayed in such media. According to the model, music and related media provide adolescents with socially recognizable identities even before they engage with peer groups that normalize such behaviors. Once adolescents become part of such groups, they not only adjust their attitudes and behaviors in line with group norms but also strengthen their emotional ties to the media content that initially guided them there.

Problem behaviors such as juvenile delinquency, substance use, and depressive feelings are often exacerbated within social groups that tolerate or normalize such behaviors. In this context, the widely held hypothesis, that adolescents' musical preferences reflect their personality traits and developmental issues, is strongly supported in the literature (Schwartz & Fouts, 2003: 211). Adolescents are known to be deeply connected to music, which plays a significant role in fulfilling emotional needs and shaping identity. Furthermore, they tend to use unique and unconventional musical choices as a means of self-expression.

A second focus of the study is the identity crisis experienced after migration and diasporic movement, particularly as a result of disconnection from cultural roots. In identity crises, the loss or rupture of cultural ties is closely associated with the cultural context of music. Music is not merely a reflection of identity but also a constituent part of its construction. Turino (2008) argues that identities are multi-layered and historically shaped, and that music serves as a force that both accelerates and reveals these identity processes.

Music contributes to individuals' understanding of their cultural origins, histories, and collective structures. Schramm's work Music and the Refugee Experience (1989: 16) proposes a three-stage typology of "transferred music" that enables the analysis of the migrant identity formation process and the role of music therein: pre-departure, departure-related, and resettlement characteristics.

Pre-departure features refer to the historical and sociocultural background of the migrant's origin; departure-related features concern the motivations and experiences connected to whether the migration was voluntary or forced; and resettlement features involve the interaction between the transplanted culture and the host culture.

Using this model, Zheng (1990: 50) studied Chinese immigrants in New York and demonstrated that differing migration conditions significantly influenced musical preferences. Similarly, Şahin's (2018: 179-197) research on Turkish-German young women revealed that transnational music experiences played a key role in shaping their sense of belonging, which at times resulted in internal conflicts. In the context of religion, language, and nation, music may function both as an escape from identity conflicts and as a mirror of those very tensions.

Thus, individuals undergoing identity crises may use music to reconstruct their connections to their roots and sense of belonging. "Younger generations may attribute new meanings to the music of their ancestral homelands, restructure it, and merge it with dominant cultural forms to construct and express a new identity" (Bennett, 2000: 142). However, in some cases, this cultural link may be entirely severed through mechanisms of denial.

Erdal and Kındap Tepe (2017: 575) argue that personality develops through both biological and environmental factors. This dynamic can lead to internal conflicts among young individuals engaged in the process of identity formation, as well as among those experiencing an identity crisis. For example, an individual raised in a traditional cultural setting may experience not only personal conflict but also family disputes when their musical preferences deviate from the cultural norms of their family. Similarly, individuals raised in one cultural context may experience cultural conflicts when attempting to live within a society that is culturally foreign to them.

The ability to "negotiate among various identities in a culturally diverse environment by using communication behaviors effectively and appropriately to achieve communication goals" (Portalla & Chen, 2010: 21) often begins with musical interactions, where introducing oneself and one's identity becomes a crucial first step. Intercultural awareness refers to an individual's cognitive understanding of both their own culture and that of others; intercultural sensitivity is related to the emotional dimension of recognizing and appreciating subjective differences (emotions, behaviors) between cultures; and intercultural competence involves the ability to achieve desired goals in intercultural communication (Crooke et al., 2023: 23). These dynamics also lead to various cultural outcomes for those living in diasporic communities. Musical adaptation can manifest as acculturation into others' musical traditions or, in some cases, as musical-cultural assimilation involving a detachment from one's original identity.

Among the most prominent practices that help overcome identity crises in diasporic contexts are festivals and concerts. Particularly, gatherings of individuals who share the same ethnicity and cultural heritage through community festivals, concerts, and events play a significant role in preserving their sense of identity. In such events, the unifying power of music and its ability to reflect identity are the central elements.

For individuals exposed to trauma or experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), both theoretical and empirical findings point to the healing potential of music therapy. PTSD is characterized by symptoms such as intrusive re-experiencing of distressing memories, avoidance behaviors, emotional fluctuations, and heightened arousal levels, all of which can be alleviated through music therapy. Social bonding, emotional regulation, enhanced capacity for pleasure, and reduced anxiety are some of the social, cognitive, and neurobiological mechanisms that highlight music therapy's supportive role (Bensimon, 2022: 368). Research has concluded that music therapy can be an effective intervention for alleviating symptoms and improving functioning among trauma survivors (Landis-Shack et al., 2017: 334).

Much of the existing literature emphasizes the functions of music in surfacing and acknowledging unconscious or painful material (Ahonen, 2016: 270), enabling individuals to reframe and reinterpret experiences (Krüger & Stige, 2015), and facilitating the development of healthier coping strategies (Bensimon et al., 2008: 36). Neurobiological perspectives, which tend to place less emphasis on relational needs and individual capacities, often highlight music therapy's ability to regulate sensory stimulation, promote emotional balance, and support overall functioning (Bensimon et al., 2008: 45-46). Theoretical approaches also argue that music plays a crucial role in fostering resilience under conditions of stress or oppression. In this context, McFerran and colleagues (2020: 11-12) examined evidence regarding music's capacity to bypass higher cognitive processes and activate more primitive neural systems. They further emphasized the importance of incorporating reflexivity into trauma research, arguing that music should be viewed not only as an objective variable but as a contextual resource that provides meaning to individuals and can act as a tool for social critique.

Sacks (2023: 339) conceptualizes identity, whether musical, social, or personality-based, as deeply embedded within the nervous system. He argues that perceptions, emotions, and experiences shape brain structures from an early age, and thus the core elements of identity are never entirely erased as long as mental life persists; they remain both permanent and resilient. Findings from neuroscience also suggest that the musical identity experiences of trauma survivors can play a beneficial role in overcoming identity crises.

Music is often employed as a facilitating tool in the reintegration process of trauma survivors (Bensimon, 2022: 367). As a therapeutic intervention, music therapy is widely used to support recovery among various groups, particularly those who have experienced traumatic events.

The Functionality of Music in Identity Crisis

The activities involved in both the production and consumption of music, such as composing, listening, performing, singing, and dancing, play a significant role in the internalization of identity. In explaining the relationship between individuals' musical preferences and problematic behaviors, the literature points to three key socio-cognitive processes: selection, socialization, and reciprocal interaction.

First, individuals may model their own attitudes and behaviors after those expressed in the musical media they choose to engage with. Second, a person's social position and pre-existing psychosocial issues may significantly influence their musical preferences. Lastly, musical tastes may direct individuals toward specific musical scenes, which are social environments characterized to varying degrees by problematic behaviors.

In this context, the concept of the "music scene" emerges-categorized by Peterson and Bennett (2004: 1-15) as local scenes, translocal scenes, and virtual scenes. These music scenes represent social, cultural, psychological, and musical spaces in which individuals, particularly youth experiencing identity crises, feel a sense of belonging. In times of crisis, music scenes offer environments for solidarity, cohesion, and identity construction.

In settings such as concerts, clubs, and festivals, individuals experience similar emotions, fostering a collective sense of "we." Devotion to a specific genre or artist strengthens social bonds and reinforces a sense of group belonging. For individuals who identify with a particular music-based group, the sentiment that "only those who listen to my music can understand me" may isolate them from broader social life while simultaneously reinforcing unity within their chosen group.

According to Bennett, music serves as a performative space where young individuals express their identities. This performance is not merely an internal reflection but is also shaped through relationships with the social environment. By listening to particular genres and adopting their

associated styles of dress and behavior, youth define themselves and establish their social positions. For Frith, performance is more than what happens on stage, it is an outward manifestation of identity. Singers and musicians construct their identities through performance, and audiences, in turn, reinterpret their own identities while engaging with these performances (Frith, 1996a).

Thus, music brings together individuals who share common identities. However, this can also give rise to problems such as the suppression of the self among those still searching for their identity, or the development of biases against musical genres outside one's group of affiliation. Such dynamics may trigger social conflicts and deepen the risk of identity crisis. Phenomena such as social isolation and the formation of cliques are reflective of this process.

Whether integrated into a group or socially marginalized, individuals express their identity through the structures that constitute music, with musical genre being the most critical among them. People often construct and project their identity based on the types of music they listen to.

In a study conducted by Güner (1998), it was found that individuals experiencing feelings of anger often gravitate toward heavy metal or punk, while those with melancholic dispositions tend to prefer arabesk or, depending on their sociocultural background, blues music. Erşanlı (2012: 117) argued that in Turkey, the fatalistic themes commonly found in arabesk music function as a form of catharsis (emotional release) for individuals experiencing an identity crisis.

Individuals may utilize musical genres as a means of constructing or reinforcing a sense of belonging. For instance, listeners of metal music may adopt a rebellious identity and demonstrate opposition to authority. Similarly, rap fans may resonate with the narrative of "success from the streets" and identify with that ethos. Another example is seen in the case of K-pop listeners, who, by embracing the aesthetic and behavioral codes of Korean culture, may experience tensions or conflicts with their local or national identities.

North and Hargreaves (1999: 90) found that musical preferences are linked to personality traits such as extraversion, openness to experience, and neuroticism Individuals undergoing an identity crisis may use musical styles both to gain social acceptance and as a means of asserting themselves, what could be described as a performative act of resistance. Some even select music genres that are disliked by perceived "out-groups" as a way of reinforcing oppositional identity.

Music streaming platforms have increasingly capitalized on this psychological mechanism. These platforms exploit emotional vulnerability for commercial gain by creating playlists targeted at users who are in the process of identity formation or experiencing identity crises, such as those titled 'Songs Your Mom Would Hate. As Li et al. (2023: 183) suggest, individuals may use music as a tool for personal empathy or interpersonal emotional resonance, seeking to meet emotional needs and support internal motivation through musical engagement.

Young individuals in particular, who express uncertainty and emotional reflection through music during periods of identity crisis, tend to form emotional bonds with the artists associated with their preferred genres. The lifestyle, worldview, and public persona of the musicians they admire and follow can serve as templates for constructing a sense of self. For example, a young person who idolizes a rock star may adopt the artist's rebellious stance as a symbolic expression of a personal quest for justice and identity.

However, when this admiration becomes excessive when the individual overly identifies with the artist to the point of suppressing their own individuality, it may have adverse psychological consequences. In such cases, the search for identity is no longer exploratory but imitative, potentially hindering the development of an autonomous self.

Beyond musical genres, song lyrics also represent a key structural element in the identity-building process, particularly for individuals undergoing identity crises. The verbal expression of emotional experience through musical structure may be considered one of the most powerful forms of

communication. Lyrics that reflect personal experiences and internal conflicts can resonate with listeners, offering them a sense of validation or catharsis.

The influence of lyrical content, commonly emphasized in Eastern cultures, has also become globally prominent with the rise of Western genres like hip-hop, R&B, and rap. In recent years, these genres have fostered a transnational lyrical discourse that connects emotional expression with social identity. Individuals experiencing identity crises may use song lyrics as rhetorical tools in confrontational contexts, for example in response to being challenged or invalidated by others. In such moments, they often draw upon lyrics as emotional weapons, asserting their newly formed identities and seeking recognition.

CONCLUSION

Music, as one of the key components in the reconstruction of the self and the reinforcement of sociological ties, is deeply intertwined with social-cognitive and psychological processes through its selected modes of engagement, listening, performing, singing, and composing. During periods of identity crisis, music assumes a functional role by offering individuals both a medium for emotional expression and a platform for belonging.

This functional role of music can be understood as a form of externalizing inner conflicts, including the ambiguity surrounding one's sense of identity and the questioning of social norms and behaviors. Through its diverse stylistic forms and the lyrical content of songs, music provides semiotic meaning to the emotional turbulence experienced by individuals in identity crisis. It further assists individuals in defining their social positions by acting as an identity marker.

Music enables individuals to align themselves with groups to which they feel a sense of belonging while simultaneously distinguishing themselves from perceived "others," thereby drawing symbolic boundaries of identity. This is especially significant for adolescents and individuals experiencing diasporic identity crises, as shared musical events such as concerts, festivals, and music scenes facilitate communal emotional experiences. Through such events, the feeling of isolation that often arises from identity crises may be reduced, giving way to the emergence of a collective sense of "we."

Music plays a crucial role in emotion regulation during critical periods such as adolescence, in reinforcing both former and new cultural affiliations in diasporic contexts, and in coping with traumatic experiences. In adolescence, individuals in identity crisis often use music as a tool to express themselves, to assert resistance, and to make their internal struggles visible. Similarly, individuals facing identity crises in diasporic contexts utilize music to negotiate the dual demands of maintaining cultural continuity with their heritage while adapting to a new sociocultural identity. Migration, in this context, must be analyzed holistically-taking into account the social, cultural, and historical dimensions of the pre-migration, migration, and post-migration phases. Only through such an approach can we fully understand the identity-related and musical responses of migrant individuals and communities.

In cases of identity crises arising from traumatic experiences, music plays a psychological and neurological role by aiding individuals in reconnecting with their former identities. As such, music emerges not only as a therapeutic medium but also as a symbolic pathway to personal continuity and resilience.

In conclusion, music functions as both a constructive and interpretive force psychologically and culturally offering individual and collective tools to navigate and cope with identity crises.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Müzikle dinleyici arasındaki anoloji sonucu dinleyicilerde oluşan duygu değişimleri, müziğin insan hayatındaki işlevlerinin oluşmasında ve gerçekleşmesinde önemli yere sahiptir. Dinleyici ve

üreticiler arasında oluşan bağı bir süreç başlangıcı kabul edersek bu süreç içerisinde oluşturulan müzik hem yapısal hem de kültürel olarak oluşturduğu yapısı ile bir aidiyet duygusu geliştirir; bu da doğal olarak bir kimlik oluşumuna sebep olur. Kimliğin oluşturulması, oluşan kimliğin korunması ve gelecek kuşaklara aktarılmasında müziğin işlevsel boyutu yadsınamayacak kadar fazladır.

Birçok müzikolog müziği, yalnızca bir sanat formu, bir eğlence aracı olarak değil aynı zamanda kimlik inşası; topluluk oluşturma ve politik katılımın aracı; bireylerin kimliklerini ifade etmelerinde, duygularını yönetmelerinde ve sosyal etkileşimlerini şekillendirmelerinde aktif olarak yer alan bir yapı olarak ele alır (Turino, 2008: 2; Bennett 2000: 2; DeNora 2000: 17).

Bu araştırmanın amacı, müzik ile kimlik krizi arasındaki ilişkiyi ergenlik dönemi, diasporik deneyimler ve travma sonrası süreçler bağlamında ele alarak müziğin bireylerin benlik algısı, aidiyet duygusu, duygusal düzenleme süreçleri ve sosyal konumlandırma pratikleri üzerindeki rolünü nitel bir perspektiften derinlemesine incelemektir. Bu doğrultuda çalışma, müziğin kimlik krizi yaşayan bireylerin öznel deneyimleri üzerindeki etkilerini ortaya koymayı ve müziğin bireysel ve kolektif kimlik oluşumundaki işlevsel rolünü açıklamayı hedeflemektedir.

Bireyin benlik algısının belirsizleştiği ve toplumsal rolleri sorguladığı bir süreçte kimlik oluşturma, ifade etme ve yeniden inşa etme gibi yaklaşımlar kimlik krizini işaret eder. Kimlik krizi, Erikson'un (1968: 128) psikososyal gelişim kuramında vurguladığı gibi özellikle ergenlik ve genç yetişkinlik dönemlerinde yoğun yaşanır. Bunun yanında kimlik krizinin en çok yaşandığı durumlar arasında travma sonrası psikolojik süreçler ve göç nedeniyle ortaya çıkan diaspora yaşantısındaki kimlik oluşturma deneyimleri sayılabilir Dolayısıyla makalede bu üç başlık üzerinde durulmuştur. Müziğin üretiminden tüketimine kadar geçen süreçteki etkinlikler (bestelemek, dinlemek, çalmak, söylemek ve dans etmek) kimliğin içselleştirilmesinde önemli bir yer tutmaktadır. Bireylerin müzik tercihleri ile problem davranışlar arasındaki ilişkiyi açıklamada üç temel literatür (sosyal-bilişsel seçme, sosyalleşme ve karşılıklı etkileşim-ilişki) bize önemli kanıtlar sunmaktadır. İlk olarak, bireyler seçtikleri müzik medyasının içerdiği tutum ve davranışları model alarak kendi davranışlarını ve tutumlarını bu doğrultuda şekillendirebilirler. İkinci olarak, bir bireyin sosyal konumu ve hâlihazırda sahip olduğu psikososyal sorunlar onun müzik tercihini belirleyici bir rol oynayabilir. Son olarak, müzik tercihleri bireyleri içinde yer alan toplulukların daha fazla ya da daha az düzeyde problem davranışlarla tanımlandığı müzik sahnelerine yöneltebilir. Bu bağlamda özellikle müzikal sahne olarak nitelendirilen "müzik scene" kavramının önemi ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bireyin benliğinin yeniden inşasında ve sosyolojik bağlarının güçlendirilmesinde önemli yapı taşlarından birisi olan müziğin tercih edilen seçilimleri (dinleme, çalma, söyleme ve besteleme) sosyal-bilişsel ve psikolojik süreçlerle ilişkilidir. Kimlik krizinin yaşandığı dönemlerde müzik, bireyler için bir ifade aracı olarak aidiyet zemini sunar. Dolayısıyla müzik işlevsel bir rol üstlenmektedir. Müziğin aldığı bu işlevsel rol, süreçte ortaya çıkan kimlik algısındaki belirsizliğin yanında toplumsal davranışların sorgulanması gibi içsel çatışmaların dışa vurulması olarak da tanımlanabilir. Müzik hem çeşitli formlardaki tarzlarıyla hem de şarkılarda geçen sözler vasıtasıyla kimlik krizindeki bireylerin yaşadıkları duygusal çalkantılara semiyotik olarak anlam yükler.

Bireyler, ister bir gruba dâhil olsun ister toplumdan soyutlanmış olsun, kimlik oluşumlarını müzik aracılığıyla ve müziği oluşturan yapılarla ifade etmektedirler. Bu yapıların başında müzik tarzları gelmektedir ki en önemli yapı budur. İnsanlar dinledikleri müzik tarzlarına göre kimliğini oluşturur ve yansıtır. Kimlik krizinde hissettikleri belirsizlik ve duygusal yansıyı müzik aracılığıyla ifade eden özellikle genç bireyler dinledikleri tarzın sanatçıları ile bir bağ kurmaktadır. Dinlediği, takip ettiği ve kendisine idol olarak örnek aldığı müzisyenlerin yaşam tarzı, duruşu, hayata bakış açısı ve olaylara tepkileri bir kimlik şablonu oluşturabilmektedir.

Duygusal dışa vurumun sözel ifadeyle yansıtılması ve bunun müzikal bir yapı ile sunulması en etkili iletişim aracı olarak nitelendirilebilir. Müzik sözleri, bireylerin kendi deneyimlerini yansıtan mesajları bulundurması nedeniyle bireyin yaşadığı çatışmalara yanıt olabilir. Özellikle doğu kültürlerinde sıkça karşılaşılan müzik sözlerinin etkisinin gücü Batı dünyasında son yıllarda popüler olan Hip-hop, R&B ve Rap müzikleriyle birlikte küresel perspektifte bir yapı oluşturmaya başlamış durumdadır. Kimlik krizindeki bireyler, özellikle kendilerine karşı gelinmesi durumda şarkı sözlerindeki ifadelerle trip atma eğilimi göstererek yeni oluşturdukları kimlikleri kabul ettirme çabaları içerisinde şarkı sözlerini koz olarak kullanabilmektedir.

Ayrıca müzik bir kimlik göstergesi olarak kimlik krizindeki bireyin sosyal konumunu tanımlamasına yardımcı olurken, kimlik krizindeki bireylerin hem aitlik hissettiği grupla özdeşleşmesini, etkileşim ve iletişim içerisine girmesini hem de öteki diye tanımladığı gruplardan ayrışarak bir kimlik sınırı çizmesini sağlar. Özellikle ergenlik dönemindeki ve diasporik olarak kimlik krizi yaşayan bireylerin konserler, festivaller ve müzik scene gibi etkinliklerle bir araya gelmesi aralarında ortak duygu paylaşımını kolaylaştırır. Bu etkinliklerle kimlik krizi sonucu ortaya çıkan bireysellik duygusu minumuma düşer ve ortak bir paydada buluşulan “biz” kavramının oluşması sağlanmış olur.

Kimlik krizi bireyin benlik algısında yaşanan belirsizlik ve çatışmayı ifade eder. Erik Erikson'un psikososyal gelişim teorisinde özellikle ergenlik ve genç yetişkinlik dönemlerinde belirginleşen bu süreç bireyin kendi değerlerini, hedeflerini ve toplumsal rollerini sorgulamasıyla şekillenir. Bu kriz sürecinde bireyler, kendi kimliklerini oluştururken çeşitli kültürel ve sanatsal ifade biçimlerine yönelirler. Müzik, bu ifade biçimlerinden biri olarak öne çıkar.

Travmaya maruz kalmış bireyler ile travma sonrası stres bozukluğu (TSSB) yaşayan kişiler için müzik terapisinin iyileştirici potansiyeline işaret eden hem kuramsal hem de ampirik bulgular mevcuttur. TSSB, rahatsız edici anıların istemsiz biçimde yeniden yaşanması, kaçınma davranışları, duygusal dalgalanmalar ve artmış uyarılma düzeyi gibi belirtilerle tanımlanmakta; bu bağlamda müzik terapisi, söz konusu bireyler için önemli faydalar sunabilmektedir. Müzik terapisi, travmatik olaylar deneyimlemiş gruplar gibi farklı gruplarda iyileşme sürecini desteklemek amacıyla terapötik bir müdahale olarak yaygın şekilde kullanılmaktadır.

Müzik; ergenlik gibi kritik dönemlerde duygu durumunun düzenlenmesi, diasporik hareketlilik bağlamında eski ve yeni kültürel aidiyetlerin pekiştirilmesi ve travmatik deneyimlerle başa çıkma süreçleri açısından öne çıkmaktadır. Ergenlik döneminde kimlik krizindeki genç bireyler kendilerini ifade etmek, karşı duruşlarını göstermek ve bu durumlarını ifşa etmek için müziği bir araç olarak kullanmaktadır. Diasporada kimlik krizindeki bireyler de benzer şekilde hem eski kültürel kimliğe sahiplik hem yeni kimliğe adaptasyonunu sergilemek için müziği aracı olarak kullanmaktadır. Her göç deneyimi sosyal, kültürel ve tarihsel bağlamlarıyla birlikte ele alınmalı; göç öncesi, göç sırası ve göç sonrası tüm aşamalar incelenerek göçmen birey ve toplulukların kimliksel ve müziksel tutumlarındaki farklılıklar bu bütünlük içerisinde anlamlandırılmalıdır. Travma sonrası ortaya çıkan kimlik krizlerinde ise müzik bu bireylerin eski kimliklerine geri dönmelerine yardımcı olmak adına hem psikolojik hem de nörolojik olarak kullanılan bir yapı olarak kendisini gösterir.

Sonuç olarak müzik, kimlik krizine karşı bir taraftan bireysel diğer taraftan ise kolektif olmak üzere psikolojik ve kültürel olarak yapılandırıcı ve yorumlayıcı bir işlevsel güç olarak kendisini gösterir.