

Abstract in English

The present study bases on the fact that, up to now, there are few reliable specific results on the development of musical preferences and functions of music in adulthood. The previous studies on musical preferences in the field of music psychology, music education and media research are predominantly cross-sectional studies, whose samples consist of subjects in adolescence and early adulthood. The main part of the few studies on musical preferences in adulthood deal with the subject in gerontological and music–therapeutic context. The present study aims at elaborating factors that have got an influence on the interindividual and intraindividual development of musical preferences and the functions of music in adulthood. 48 subjects of three different age groups kept a music diary for a week, in which they documented their music listening behaviour. Subsequent to the music diary the subjects were investigated on the changes of musical preferences and functions of music in their biography by means of a two-part interview, a half-standardized and a narrative part. Out of the data on age, sex and education only the variable “age” has got a significant influence on musical preferences and the function of music. The music preferred by the oldest subjects differs clearly from the musical preferences of the two groups of younger subjects. With growing age the factors having an influence on musical taste and coming from the individual’s environment, e. g. friends, partners, media decrease rapidly. The oldest subjects tend to be rather mere music listeners, the subjects at the age of 45 – 55 tend to use music for a specific purpose and the youngest subjects at the age of 25 – 35 tend to use music as a diffuse background for all kinds of activities.