

Mass Perception about Music during Lockdown in Nepal: A Case of Fine Arts Campus

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ABSTRACT

Engaging along with music during lockdown is a kind of common behavior of human being. This article mirrors the mass perception about music during the specific situation of lockdown in Nepal. Descriptive online survey design was used by taking 136 participants from Fine Arts Campus by purposive sampling technique. Frequency, percentage and presentation of charts were major statistical techniques used in this research. Finding indicates that most of the participants were enjoying by listening and participating musical activities during pandemic. Whatever the purpose of listening, singing, dancing, composing, recording, playing the musical patterns, mass people knowingly-unknowingly connected with music during lockdown. So, concluded that almost all respondents voted for the need for musical activities and varieties of music for managing their stress.

INTRODUCTION

Music is crucial element of the human life ([Rentfrow, 2012](#)). Whatever the situation exists, music is one of the major subject that matters in everyone's life, which is said to be a remedy for a broken heart ([Ko, 2017](#)). People, mostly enjoy the music whenever their mood is fresh, and generally make a concept about music as one the necessity of human beings, directly-indirectly. Lockdown, one of the most critical situations that arose in today's world due to the emergence of Coronavirus in 2019, has forced mass people to stay at home, avoiding physical behavior with each other to break the chain of Covid19 infection ([Yip & Chau, 2020](#)). Lockdown is the situation which imposes people to stay at home safely for a certain time duration ([Alvarez et al., 2020](#)), if the outer environment is affected by specific situations like war, infection and other calamities Since 2019, the same problematic conditions have arisen in front of people of various countries, world-wide, due to the emergence of Coronavirus ([Agarwal & Sunitha, 2020](#)). Basically, direct and physical contact with each other and droplets from coughing and sneezing, if inhaled by a second person, the widely spread coronavirus infection affects one's health easily ([Ammar et al., 2020](#)). So, as to break the chain of infection of corona, the states announced partial and full lockdowns in their territory for certain duration and regulated people to stay at their own home. In this situation, people started to work, study and contact others with online mode, if possible. Most of the people got isolated, they lost their jobs ([Rodríguez-Rey et al., 2020](#)), and could not carry out the job online during COVID pandemic. So, the ultimate activity is to just stay with family at home.

Music is a unique gift from nature to mankind ([Garg, 2006](#)). The music consist the elements of beauty, of sound, motion and form; without it beauty ceases to exist and life becomes death ([Antcliffe, 1916](#)). From the beginning of creation, music has been involved in every moment of the human race, including gods and goddesses, demons, and other creatures ([P. Poudel, 2021](#)). However, music is an aspect that has been found to play an important role in human life, in the other sense, as a mental

nutritious food. Music is one of the most beautiful works of human art (Tiwari, 2021). "Music is ubiquitous in all human cultures and is listened to by persons of all ages, races, and ethnic backgrounds" (Danhauser, 2005). Its soothing effect has the power to affect not only the human mind, body and soul but also trees, plants, animals, birds and other living beings in this world. In Eastern society singing, playing and dancing are all studied under music while in western society dance is not included under music, which helps human beings to connect with one's inner self and also serves as an excellent medium of self-expression. Music has the super power to bind people together due to its divine eloquence, which is a great source of entertainment (Pradhan, 2014). Since ancient times, music has been one of the main sources of entertainment, when there was no radio, television, internet, video games or any other way to entertain oneself, music helped people deal with boredom. The, so called lockdown in Nepal, is also matter concerning with isolation, study and work online, stop visiting, stay jobless and others.

So, in this article, how people passed their time at home during lockdown with the application of musical activities. What kinds of music did they entertain and why, when, how? The answer to these questions are articulated in this article through the questionnaires forwarded to respondents, randomly. This article aims to find out the interest and perception of general people about the music and its activities, especially during the lockdown.

A few studies have been published associated with the applications of music during specific situations. A study on uses and perceptions of music in times of COVID-19 (Cabedo-Mas et al., 2021) concluded that there was an improvement in their perception of the value of music in personal and social wellbeing during the lockdown in Spain. Likewise, another survey (Ribeiro et al., 2021) in Brazilian society concluded that most of the respondents applied music during their confinement due to corona infection. Another study was titled "Changes in uses and emotional reaction to music under stay-at-home restrictions with reference with Covid 19 and music" conducted in Israel (Ziv & Hollander-Shabtai, 2021). Most of the studies are found about the music and its efficacy. Still, music during the lockdown is mostly the new research subject to study in coming days. No other studies came into my sight, especially focused in the research field in Nepal. So, this study is advantageous for addressing the importance and application of varieties of genre of music especially during critical situation, such as, lockdown in Nepal.

Description of the variables

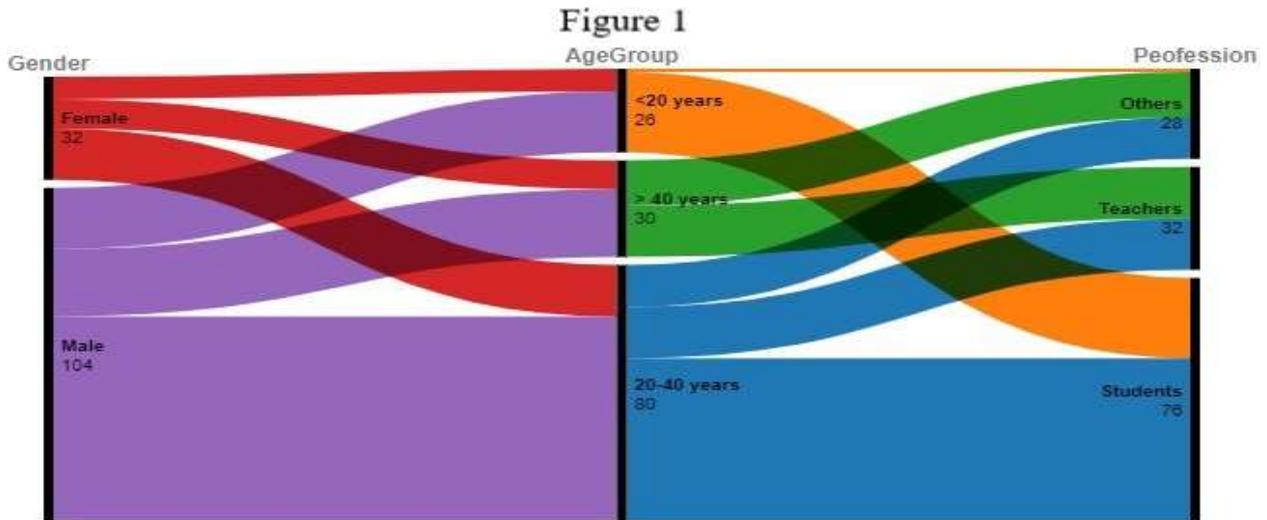
Gender, age, profession, genre of music and preferences are major socio-demographic characteristics used in the research. Here, gender has two categories male (76.47%) and female (23.53%). Similarly, age has been categorized into 3 groups: below 20 years, 20-40 years and over 40 years and professions into 3 categories such as students, teachers and others. The genre of music is classified into 7, namely, classical, modern, spiritual, filmy, folk, western, and all types, so as to know the musical preference of each respondent during lockdown. The time routine for engaging with music has been segmented as morning, afternoon, evening, all the time and some times.

METHODS

This study was based on online survey by using a Google Form. A random sampling technique was used to form a sampling for this study. 136 respondents were participated in the survey. Self-constructed tool consisting 14 items was employed during the research. The collected data were analyzed, using percentage, frequency, figures and bar graphs, in descriptive nature.

RESULTS

Music plays a very important role on people's life because it helps to lessen the stress and anxiety (Van Buladaco et al., 2019). During the lockdown session, people have been suggested to stay at their shelter for certain time period. As the situation arisen at Nepal due to Covid 19 infection, all the population have been urged to stop their movement around the office, market and society to break the infection chain (Prasain, 2021). Thus, the environment along with anxiety, stress and pressure has been created in human life due to lockdown. In this situation, most of the people adopted music in their daily life. The purposeful adoption of music in one's life varies one to another. The results are as follow as per the following figures.



In accordance of figure – 1, 32 female and 104 male among the respondent group 136 people were classified into three groups, below 20 years, 20-40 years and over 40 years for the survey. The 3 age groups respectively enroll 26, 80 and 30 respondents, who found to be 55.79% students, 23.53% teachers and rest 20.59% others. In this figure, male students of age group 20-40 years were found more than female students, comparatively.

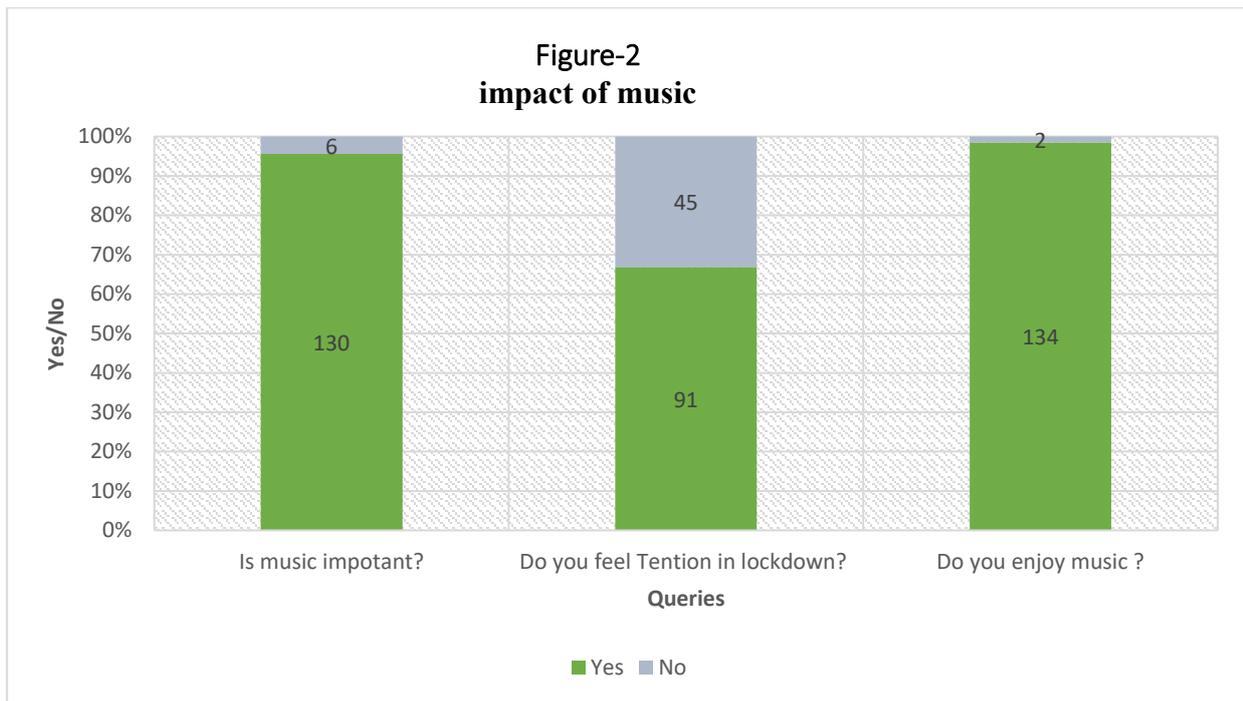


Figure 2 concentrates with 3 questions, where, 130 respondents (95.59%) agreed about the importance of music and rest 6 people refused to reply yes. Similarly, in the second query, whether people feel tension during the lockdown on not. Surprisingly, 45 people (1/3) didn't feel the tension in lockdown.

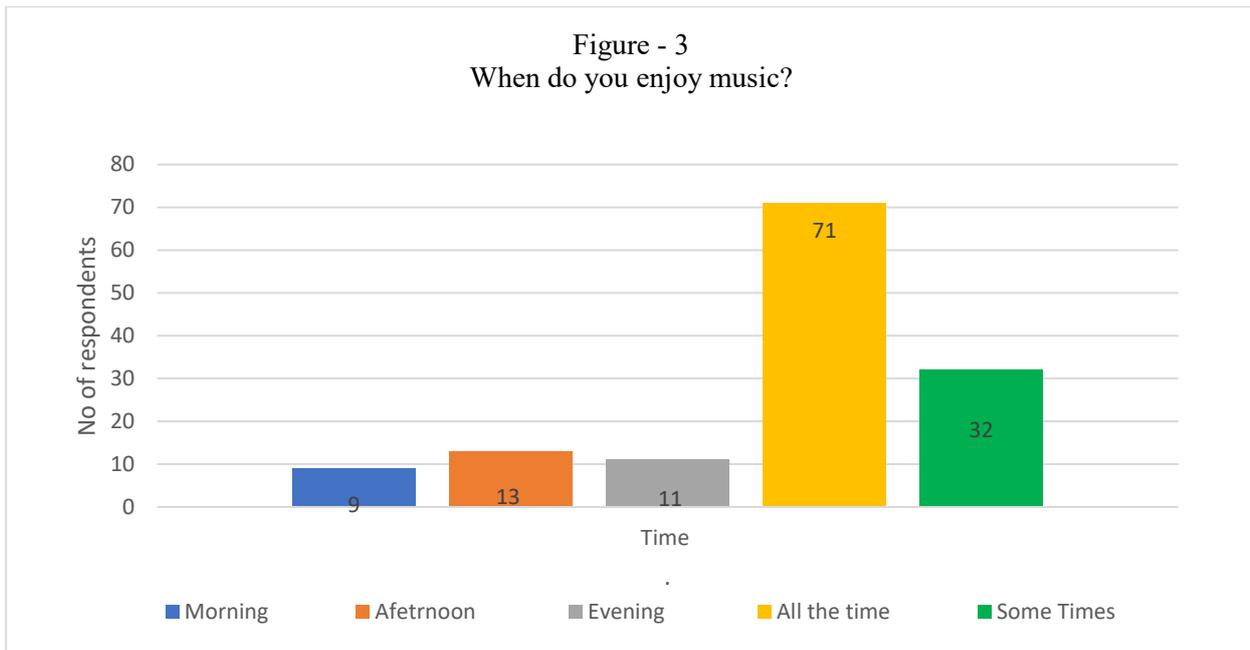
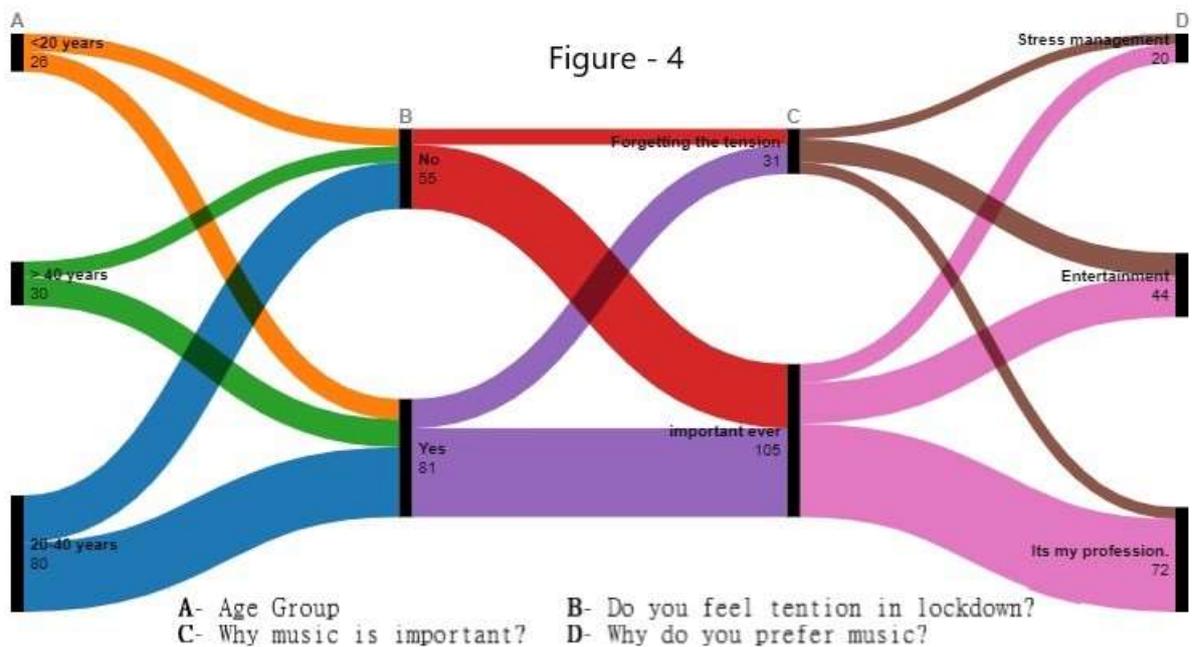


Figure 3 focuses to the preferred time to engage with the music. 71 respondents used to enjoy the music all the time whereas 9, 13, 11 and 32 respondents be with music during morning, afternoon, evening and sometimes, respectively. 32 people seemed to be random to engage with music.



According to figure 4, among 136 respondents, near to 55 (40.44%) found with no feeling of mental stress during lockdown whereas 81 respondents (59.56%) found to be stressed. But, some of those who did not feel tension also agreed that music is important for forgetting the tension and 105 (77.21%) people felt that music is important forever. Coincidentally, 72 respondents has adopted music as their profession. Likewise, 44 people were found with music for entertainment purpose and only 20 people knowingly followed the music for stress management during the lockdown session in Nepal. So, this figure shows that most of the people except music professionals has a conception of music as just for entertainment purpose.

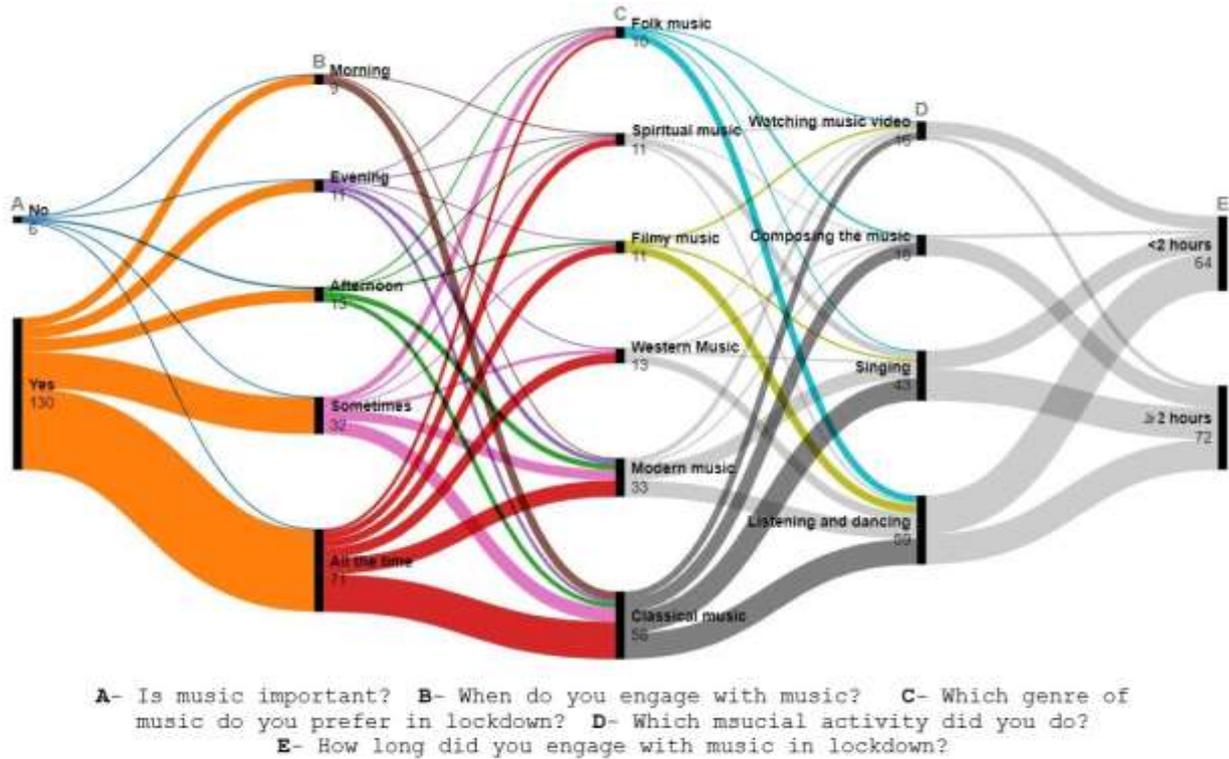


Figure - 5

Figure 5, concentrates with five major aspects, where the frequency of respondents who admire music or not, specific time, duration, genre and musical activities during the pandemic. 130 (95.59%) respondents agreed with importance of music. Moreover, among them 80.77% expressed their view that the role of music exists forever in their life, 105 respondents voted as per figure 4. Similarly, 31 out of 130 people said “music is best means to forget stress and tension in human life”. For another question raised among them about the genre of music they engaged with during lockdown, 62 (45.59%) people were found loving all genre of music, 33(24.26%) were found following classical music, 13(9.56%) for modern music, 11(8.09%) for spiritual (devotional) music, 8(5.89%) for filmy music, 5(3.68%) for folk music and 4(2.94%) for western music. Amazingly, the 6 people who said “music is not important” also were found engaged in western, folk and spiritual music as well as watching music video, singing, listening and dancing activities. In the answer of another important question “how do you manage stress with music?” 59(43.38%) were found for listening and dancing, 43(31.62%) for singing, 18(13.24%) professionals composed the music and 16(11.76%) people were found watching the music video during the lockdown. Thus, all the participants somehow, sometime were found to be with music during the pandemic situation.

DISCUSSION

Aim of the research was to find the types and genre of music which were mostly preferred and how people engaged with music and why? Was their choice helpful managing their stress level? What about the importance of music people think? Almost of the respondent argue that the music is important for the individuals. The study carried out by Rama and others 2020 also found similar result that listening to music at home was the safest mechanism to combat this grave situation. A study on “Music is for everyone”, stated “we can't escape music, even if we would (Horn, 2016). In this research also almost all respondents except 6 stated for the importance of music in their daily life. Those 6 people who did not think the importance of music in human life, 3 out them were interviewed through telephone call that why they didn't think “music is important”. One replied, “There are many other jobs to do in daily life and no time to even remember about the music”. Other answered his business in farming. Likewise, the last respondent found to be a sportsman that he loves playing rather than

listening to music. So, people, who were busy as usual, did not need to engage with music at all. A research found that average American citizen listens music 18 hour a week ([Rentfrow, 2012](#)). Likewise, other research work addressed “listening to music (perhaps unlike performing it) was used by most people as a means of enhancing everyday activities that are mainly solitary and individualistic” ([Sloboda, 1999](#)), which emphasizes the role music for enhancing the daily activities. Ubiquity of music (P. Poudel, 2021) is widely articulated in the past, with various approaches. Thus, a conclusion can also be drawn that people, whether they think that music is important or not, finally anyhow, anyway they follow any genre of music and naturally could not avoid music in their life. In this article, 40.44% of the respondents were found stress less during lockdown, among them 45 people randomly selected and interviewed through telephone call, were found busy in their online classes and business, busy in household duties, farming activities, online gaming and other entertaining activities like music, sports. Kemper and Danhauer mentioned in their study, “Music is widely used to enhance well-being, (also) reduce stress” ([Kemper & Danhauer, 2005](#)). The result found in a survey which indicate that during lockdown, respondents perceived an increase in the time they devoted to musical activities such as listening, singing, dancing or playing an instrument ([Hansen et al., 2021](#)). Further, results found that the value of music had been highly perceived during the lockdown in Spanish society ([Hansen et al., 2021](#)). Similarly, another research indicated that a high percentage of respondents adopted music listening during lockdown to improve their mood and deal with isolation, especially those with severe depressive symptoms ([Hansen et al., 2020](#)). In this study too, most of the respondents adopted musical activities like singing, dancing, watching music video, composing music to manage the stress due to lockdown. Likewise, 24.26% of the respondents prefer classical music in Nepal whereas, a research ([Rama et al., 2020](#)) found silent about this genre of music. The reason behind choosing music during lockdown was fighting with boredom, to forget the nostalgia of the past and entertaining free time ([Rama et al., 2020](#)). Only 23% of the Nepali respondents preferred music for overcoming the nostalgia of the isolation in my research and rest opted music forever, whereas, 22% of the respondents preferred music for same cause in the state of Sikkim ([Rama Mohan et al., 2020](#)) which seems same tendency. “Carefully selected music can reduce the stress, enhance a sense of comfort and relaxation, offer distraction from pain, and enhance clinical performance” ([Danhauer, 2005](#)). Study stated that music as resource rather than a commodity ([Maloney, 2017](#)). According to him everybody need this kind of resource for livelihood. Figure 5 shows most of the respondents preferred to listen and dance during lockdown. This is why that listening activity does not need any style, training, methods to do. Listening is basic activity that everyone do easily and dancing is too. It does not matter that how they did. Likewise, singing any song or tune is also the basic activity, a human can do simply. So, for diverting his or her mind knowingly or unknowingly from stress to amusement, singing or humming eases more. Watching music video, of course, need more concentration of his/her eyes, which is possible if some activity is to be abandoned. Most of the Nepalese urban people has excess to internet and devices to watch videos everywhere. But composing a musical item means something special, which requires special ability. During the lockdown, few of the respondents preferred to compose music as above figure.

CONCLUSION

This study was carried out to find out that how Nepalese people make perceptions regarding music during the lockdown. For this purpose, people were asked about their interest in music and musical activity, the genre of music, and the reason for their preference regarding music. Regardless, people were found to following music during each isolative period except for some respondents, even though all got to engage with music in various ways and genres. Singing, listening, and dancing was found to be more powerful musical activities during the lockdown in Nepal. The perceptual tendency of people with music was found higher during the social distancing period. This finding will be significant for those parties who compose and produce the music as per the mass preference. Teachers, students, scholars, musicians, and other concerning institutions can use the finding of this study in a convenient way. The research is limited to the students, teachers and others of Fine Arts Campus, hence further study can be conducted by taking large sample size from different discipline. The study can also conduct by taking non-academic background population like business man, house-wife, government and non-government job holders, labors and illiterate peoples. Future researchers are suggested to find

the perception of music in accordance with geographical, social, caste, professional, and other aspects by using different methodological aspects.

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