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Research Article

A qualitative study on the effect of the Kahramanmaraş earthquake on the musical climate

Günsu Yılma Şakalar[1]* and Şaziye Nur Yurdalan[2]

Music Department, Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University, Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye

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Abstract

Ecomusicology examines the relationship between music and the environment, adopting an interdisciplinary approach. This study aims to explore the impact of an earthquake on the musical preferences of survivors in Kahramanmaraş. This research is significant as it represents the first field study in this area. It aims to determine the changes in musical preferences of earthquake victims before and after the disaster, addressing how the earthquake influenced Kahramanmaraş's musical climate. This qualitative study uses a case study design to evaluate the environmental effects on musical practices post-earthquake by examining the city's musical identity and history. The participants include 18 individuals, split evenly between genders and age groups, with some having lost relatives in the earthquake. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews and documents, focusing on how music listening habits and preferences evolved before and after the earthquake. The study found that before the earthquake, music served as a means of relaxation and stress relief. After the earthquake, however, music's role shifted towards desensitization. Participants, who frequently engaged with music and social media before the disaster, continued these practices post-earthquake, but with noticeable changes in their tendencies. Emotionality, sensitivity, and melancholy became more prominent in their musical preferences. The study revealed that post-earthquake, participants preferred more emotional and slow-tempo music, particularly arabesque. Music helped them forget their traumatic experiences and boosted their motivation. These findings suggest the need to diversify studies on natural disasters and music. The results can inform and improve musical approaches and practices, providing insights for future projects, research, and publications related to music in earthquake-affected regions, particularly Kahramanmaraş.

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Introduction

Musicology, defined as a discipline that approaches music from scientific foundations and logical perspectives, systematically encompasses historical and interdisciplinary studies within its sub-disciplines. Recently, musicology has increasingly focused on the relationship between music, society, culture, and nature, especially in interdisciplinary research.

Ecomusicology, while serving these studies, also emerges as a discipline that investigates music in the context of the music industry, environment, climate, and climate crisis. Examining national studies, Aslan's 2021 doctoral thesis titled "Organonscape, Atmospheric Relations, and the Ethnobiology of the Kemençe in Trabzon and Its Surroundings"

[1] Assoc. Prof. Dr., Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University, Fine Arts Faculty, Music Department, Kahramanmaraş, Turkiye. E-mail: gsakalar@ksu.edu.tr ORCID: 0000-0002-6635-5010
[2] MA Student, Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University, Social Sciences Institute, Music Program, Kahramanmaraş, Turkiye. E-mail: yurdalansazi@gmail.com ORCID: 0009-0004-8616-4985

explores the process of kemençe (a traditional Turkish instrument) making within the context of the nature-culture relationship, drawing from ecomusicological literature. Similarly, Işılay's article "Vivaldi's Four Seasons from the Perspective of the Annales School" focuses on the environmental context in which the composition was created, addressing topics such as history, climate, environment, and geography, thus benefiting from the ecomusicology discipline.

Internationally, Allen's 2013 work titled "Ecomusicology" defines ecomusicology as the comprehensive study of music, culture, and nature from all angles. It highlights that musicology draws from literary methodologies, and ecomusicology tends to follow this trend (Allen, 2013, 1). Mark Pedelty, in his 2011 article "Ecomusicology Where Nature and Culture Meet," emphasizes that environmental crises are fundamentally cultural issues, and cultural researchers, including musicologists, can significantly contribute to understanding ecological problems.

The relationship between musical climate and ecomusicology is close. While ecomusicology examines the environmental, ecological, and sustainable dimensions of music, musical climate encompasses the entirety of musical styles and practices in a specific region or time. The connection between these two disciplines focuses on the interactions between music and musical practices with the natural environment, ecosystems, and human activities. Karp (1982), approaching this interaction from the perspective of instrument science, discusses the feasibility of creating an appropriate physical environment for preserving musical instruments. The concept of "Storage Climate" is introduced in this research, which includes meanings related to storage conditions, ambient climate, and preservation climate. From an ecomusicological standpoint, this topic warrants further exploration. Additionally, Dunoyer's historical perspective study on the political musical climate of the Paris Conservatory in the 19th century provides an ecomusicological lens for understanding the musical environment (musical climate) shaped by music and politics within this significant artistic institution (Dunoyer, 1986).

Based on all this information, it can be said that earthquakes are a significant factor that can influence the musical climates of societies. The earthquake and tsunami that occurred in Japan in 2011 had a profound impact on the country's music industry. Many concerts and festivals were canceled, and musical activities were put on hold for a while (Tanaka et al., 2021). Additionally, after the earthquake, community music styles and trends were also affected. For instance, the 2010 earthquake in Haiti led to a revival of traditional Haitian music as people sought solace by reconnecting with their cultural heritage through familiar rhythms and melodies (Lusk & Andre, 2017). In Anatolia, following earthquake disasters, numerous folk songs and ballads were composed by troubadours expressing their emotions through music. This demonstrates that music continues to be utilized as a coping mechanism for dealing with earthquake trauma (Kızıldağ, 2023; Çetinkaya, 1999).

Figure 1. A view of Kahramanmaraş before and after the earthquake (Kara, 2023)

In this research, the impact of the Kahramanmaraş earthquake on the musical climate is investigated within the framework of ecomusicology. This qualitative study aims to contribute to the field of musicology with a new framework and contemporary approaches in an interdisciplinary context.

The relationship between musical preferences and musical climate

Before delving into the relationship between musical preferences and musical climate, it is pertinent to consider the emotional effects of music on individuals. The connection between music and emotions is a comprehensive and multifaceted topic that has been explored by researchers from various disciplines. Numerous studies have investigated the emotional responses elicited by music and the underlying mechanisms behind these responses.

In a study by Zentner and colleagues (2008), emotions evoked by music were examined, and a model proposing a better explanation for emotions induced by music compared to other models was put forth. The research demonstrated that emotions arising from music can be characterized, classified, and measured, highlighting music's ability to evoke specific emotional reactions in listeners. Gabrielsson (2001) distinguished between emotional perception related to music and emotional induction. Emotional perception refers to perceiving the emotional expression in music without necessarily being personally affected, while emotional induction represents listeners' emotional responses to music. This distinction underscores that music can indeed elicit emotional reactions in listeners, but the intensity of these emotions may vary.

Kallinen and Ravaja (2006) discussed the differentiation between the perceived emotional quality of music and the emotions it triggers in listeners. They noted that this distinction is not well-defined, and there are relatively few studies examining both the objective and subjective aspects of emotions arising from music. Consequently, further research is needed to better understand the relationship between music and emotions.

Xu and colleagues (2020) investigated the impact of individual factors on the perceived and felt emotions induced by music. They proposed that emotions evoked by music may be more sensitive to an individual's personal context rather than relying solely on an objective judgment of the expressed emotions in the music. This suggests that personal factors can influence how individuals experience music emotionally. Varner (2019) discussed the connection between music and social and emotional learning. The researcher emphasized that music can serve as an emotional stimulant, an aesthetic experience, a means of relaxation, self-expression, and a form of communal experience. This underscores music's potential to facilitate social and emotional development in individuals.

The relationship between music and emotion is indeed comprehensive. Music has the ability to evoke specific emotional responses in listeners, although the intensity of these emotions can vary. The underlying neurological basis for emotions elicited by music is not yet fully understood. Personal experiences can influence how music is emotionally perceived, and music also plays a role in social and emotional learning. Further research is needed to better understand the mechanisms underlying the relationship between music and emotion.

Musical preference is closely related to individuals' music listening choices. Preferred music serves as a tool that not only makes individuals feel comfortable, peaceful, and happy but also allows them to express themselves and their emotions more easily through music. Various studies have demonstrated that musical preferences have the potential to influence the musical climate. A study by Savage (2006) examines music preferences revealed by the Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion survey. The findings indicate that musical preferences are influenced by social factors and can vary among individuals. This suggests that changes in individual music preferences can contribute to broader shifts in the overall musical climate. Another study by Brisson and Bianchi (2019) investigates how alterations in musical elements during music selection impact the determination of dimensions related to musical preferences. The results show that changes in music selection can affect how music taste is perceived and categorized. Consequently, these shifts in music preferences can shape the classification and understanding of music, potentially influencing a wider musical climate.

Dunn and colleagues (2011) investigated the relationship between music preference, listening behavior, and personality. Their study emphasizes the importance of understanding the influence of social desirability when reporting different genre concepts and music preferences among individuals. This suggests that changes in music genres preferred based on personal tastes can be influenced by individual personality traits and, consequently, contribute to shifts in the musical climate. Warrenburg & Huron (2019) propose that individual dispositional factors and the inherent characteristics of music can impact an individual's music taste. This implies that changes in individual preferences may

be influenced by various factors, including personal characteristics and the features of the consumed music, collectively shaping the musical environment.

Kozlovskiy & Tkachuk (2018) argue that musical preference serves as a significant indicator for music industries to determine their direction. Changes in music preferences can lead to alterations in music production and promotion, thereby influencing the musical climate. Overall, these studies demonstrate that music taste can indeed alter the musical climate. Changes in individual preferences, influenced by social factors, personality traits, and self-identity, collectively contribute to shaping a broader music environment. Additionally, alongside changes in music selection and categorization, the impact of music industries can also play a role in contributing to shifts in the musical climate.

Furthermore, natural disasters can also be another factor influencing changes in the musical climate. Research has found associations between individuals' emotional states, introverted-extroverted personality traits, and their music preferences (Erdal & Tepe, 2021).

Musical climate in Kahramanmaraş

In Kahramanmaraş, where many poets, troubadours, and minstrels hail from, Turkish folk music and Turkish classical music are predominantly listened to. The bağlama (a traditional stringed instrument) is commonly used as an accompanying instrument. Among the local population, those who perform music often accompany themselves with the bağlama while singing folk songs. The city also exhibits a tendency toward amateur choirs specializing in Turkish folk music and Turkish classical music. Music education provided by community centers primarily focuses on instruments such as the bağlama, guitar, and violin. Additionally, there are private institutions within the city that offer specialized music education. These institutions cover not only traditional music but also provide training in classical Western music.

Weddings in Kahramanmaraş are typically held in either a mevlüt (a religious ceremony) style or an entertaining style. During mevlüt weddings, prayers and hymns are recited, while entertainment-oriented weddings feature lively dances and folk music played by davul-zurna (a traditional drum and wind instrument). Zarifoğlu mentioned a ritual known as "Çete Bayramı" during the anniversary of Kahramanmaraş's Liberation (February 12, 1920). This ritual involves reenacting the costumes of the guerrilla fighters who played a significant role in the city's independence, and they traverse the entire city during the week of February 12. Kahramanmaraş is also home to Abdals, who are found in many regions of Anatolia. Abdals are symbolic of the tradition of playing the davul-zurna. One of the notable figures in the city's struggle for independence is Abdal Halil Ağa, and the Çete Bayramı ritual serves as a symbol of this historical event (Zarifoğlu, 2022). During the anniversary celebrations, various scientific events such as theater plays, art exhibitions, concerts, tournaments, panels, discussions, conferences, radio/TV programs, and performances by the mehter band, folk dance groups, and davul-zurna ensembles take place. The Abdals also participate in the independence day festivities, showcasing their performances with the traditional drum and wind instruments.

Photo 1. An ımage from Çete Bayramı (Gang Feast) (Zarifoğlu, 2022: 97)

In Photo 1, there is an image from the liberation celebrations of Kahramanmaraş during the opening ceremony. On the morning of the day when the events begin, an opening procession is held. Children dressed in Kahramanmaraş's regional attire, Abdals playing the davul-zurna, and symbolic members of the guerrilla fighters are seen.

The ethnic distribution in the districts is diverse. Communities with various ethnicities and beliefs, such as Circassians, Chechens, Balkan immigrants, Yörüks, Alevis, predominantly reside in the districts and villages, maintaining their own traditions and customs. Especially during weddings, Circassians use their own music and traditional instruments.

Video 1. Circassian Wedding in Kahramanmaraş (Şoray Uzun on the Road, 2021)

In Kahramanmaraş, radio stations regularly provide services via both the FM band and the internet. Their playlists encompass various music genres. Additionally, live programs covering different topics (science, news, art, interviews, etc.) are broadcast. Local TV channels also feature musical events happening in the city. Furthermore, local press outlets publish news related to various musical events. Over the past six years, the number of live music performances in cafes and restaurants has increased, and musicians have diversified. In addition to traditional music, Pop and Rock music genres are also performed in such venues.

Educational and musical activities related to teaching and learning are carried out in schools under the Ministry of National Education and at the University. Within Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University (KSU), artistic and scientific musical events take place both within the city and beyond. Collaborating with the municipality, singing competitions are organized, and choirs are formed. Musical activities are also conducted with student groups within the university (KSU Institutional Self-Assessment Report, 2022).

Following the earthquakes on February 6, 2023, a three-month state of emergency (Olağan Üstü Hal, OHAL) was declared. As a result, search and rescue operations, as well as support services (psychological, medical, physical, etc.), were intensified (Meclis Haberleri, 2023). Due to these circumstances, musical events and activities have been suspended, and the city has fallen silent for three months.

Theoretical Framework

Ecomusicology is a discipline that examines music in environmental, social, cultural, and economic contexts. It also investigates the relationship between music and the environment. Research in this field aims to understand the impact of music on individuals, societies, and environments. While exploring the relationship between music and the environment, studies also examine how musical styles in a region shape cultural identity. Aaron (2014) notes that ecomusicology is a combination of eco-criticism and musicology, emphasizing critical analysis of the interaction between music and the environment. Additionally, Williams discusses ecomusicology as a secondary approach that considers the intersection of non-human soundscapes and the human soundscape, as well as the mediation of physical and cultural environments through sound (Aaron et al., 2014, 5).

Langer's theory of affective morphology describes music as a representational symbol that doesn't merely depict specific emotions but rather *"represents a formulation of emotions, moods, mental tensions, and resolutions."* Aspects of an individual's inner experience—such as movement and rest, tension and release, agreement and disagreement, anticipation, satisfaction, excitement, sudden changes, and more—have formal similarities to music in both physical and mental dimensions. Music shares its dynamic structures, revealing *"the rhythm and pattern of emotions, their rise and fall, and their interweaving."* Furthermore, music assumes a unique cognitive role because the forms it expresses are *"beyond the reach of language"* (Langer, 1976). Langer's theory sheds light not only on isolated emotions but also on how an individual's inner life develops over time (Robinson, 2007).

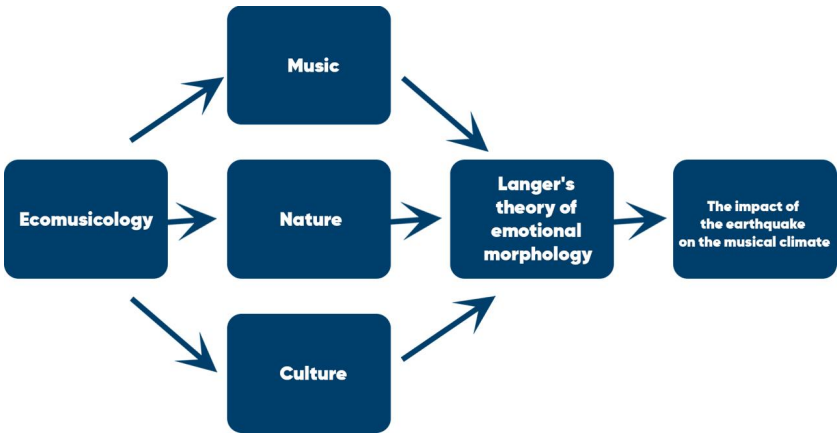

Figure 1. The effect of earthquake on musical climate in the context of ecomusicology and Langer's theory of emotion morphology

Importance of Research

Ecomusicology, as a discipline, examines music within environmental, social, cultural, and economic contexts. It also investigates the relationship between music and the environment. Given that Kahramanmaraş is situated in a region where active earthquakes can occur, its population faces the reality of earthquakes and the resulting physical and psychological destruction on a daily basis. Listening to beloved music is known to evoke positive emotions in individuals. Throughout one's life, exposure to extraordinary situations such as natural disasters, along with personal memories (both good and bad), can influence music preferences and the emotions music evokes in them.

Individuals' emotional states significantly impact their music preferences. Research has shown a strong connection between emotional states and the type of music individuals choose to listen to (Hunter et al., 2011). When experiencing distress, there is a notable increase in preferences for music that aligns with their mood, regardless of genre (Lee et al., 2013). This highlights how social and interpersonal contexts can also influence individuals' music preferences based on their emotional state. Understanding the musical effects of earthquakes on the people of Kahramanmaraş is crucial for further research in this area

Problem and Sub-problem

The main problem of the research;

- How is the musical preferences in Kahramanmaraş before and after the earthquake?

The sub-problem of the research;

- How did the erathquake effect the musical climate of Kahramanmaraş?

Method

Research Model

In this research, a qualitative approach has been adopted, and a case study design has been used. Yin (1984) defines a case study as an "experimental investigation that explores a current phenomenon within its real-life context, where the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and multiple sources of evidence are used." Zaidah Zainal (2007) also describes case studies as a method used to explore and understand complex issues through in-depth research. This design can be applied in various social science studies, and case studies have become significant in fields such as psychology, education, sociology, community-based issues, and business. The comprehensive observation, reconstruction, and analysis of the studied events help explain both the process and outcome of a phenomenon (Nhan, 2020). Using the case study design allows for the analysis of data obtained through different data collection methods related to the musical impact of earthquakes on the climate.

Study Group

The universe of this research comprises individuals aged 19 and above who have experienced earthquakes in Kahramanmaraş and currently reside in the same province. The study group consists of 9 individuals directly affected by the earthquake. Among the participants, 6 have not lost first-degree relatives in the earthquake, while 3 have

experienced such loss and voluntarily participated in the research. Of the participants, 4 are male and 5 are female. Their age distribution includes three individuals in the 19-29 age range, three in the 30-39 age range, and three aged 40 or older. Regarding education, one participant completed primary school, three completed high school, two have an associate degree, and three have a bachelor's degree. Occupations among the participants include one student, one retired public servant, one private sector employee, four public sector employees, and two self-employed individuals. Prior to the earthquake, all participants lived in their own homes, but after the earthquake, they either became tenants or stayed with relatives.

Additionally, to better understand the post-earthquake musical climate in Kahramanmaraş, unstructured interviews were conducted with a local street musician who began musical activities after the earthquake, a radio representative, and individuals associated with establishments such as cafes, restaurants, and wedding halls in Kahramanmaraş.

Data Collection Tools

Unstructured Observation

Unstructured observations play a significant role in qualitative analyses by allowing researchers to collect rich and detailed data in natural settings. Unstructured observations enable researchers to capture the complexity and nuances of observed phenomena. By immersing themselves in the research environment and meticulously documenting their observations, researchers can gain comprehensive insights into participants' context, actions, and interactions (Mulhall, 2003). This level of detail enhances the validity and reliability of findings, as it provides a more accurate representation of participants' experiences. Additionally, unstructured observations offer flexibility for researchers to adapt their focus and explore emerging themes or patterns. Unlike structured observations based on predetermined categories or frameworks, unstructured observations allow clarity and adaptability in data collection (Fetters & Rubinstein, 2019). This flexibility enables researchers to capture unexpected or unforeseen aspects of observed phenomena, leading to richer and more comprehensive findings. Furthermore, unstructured observations contribute to contextual understanding of the observed phenomena. Researchers can gain insights into the context where behaviors and interactions occur by observing them in their natural environments (Sundberg et al., 2021).

In this research, unstructured observations were conducted intermittently by researchers, unbeknownst to the participants, over a seven-month period following the earthquake. The focus was on the city's musical environment and people's relationships with music. The purpose of this method is to objectively understand the current situation, determine its scope, and contribute to the prepared semi-structured questions.

Unstructured Interview

Unstructured interviews are commonly used qualitative data collection strategies (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). These interviews are often recommended for long-term field studies, allowing participants to express themselves in their own ways and at their own pace, while researchers maintain minimal control over their responses (Jamshed, 2014). Understanding qualitative interviews as social interactions is particularly important for qualitative researchers (Pezalla et al., 2012). Documenting and managing qualitative research data, including data from unstructured interviews, is a crucial step in data analysis (Stuckey, 2014). Unstructured interviews are suitable for exploring complex or under-researched concepts (Mulcahy et al., 2021). As one of the primary data collection methods in qualitative research, interviews provide a powerful way to understand other individuals (Jong & Jung, 2015).

In this study, unstructured interviews were used to describe individuals' pre- and post-earthquake music listening habits. The interviews aimed to identify patterns related to relaxation, daily routines, personality predispositions, music selection preferences (genre), and purposes of music consumption following the earthquake.

Semi-structured Interview

Semi-structured interviews allow researchers to explore research topics in depth while balancing structure and flexibility (Kallio et al., 2016). Predefined questions provide a framework for the interview, while open-ended questions allow participants to elaborate on their experiences, perspectives, and emotions (Akyol, 2023). This approach enables researchers to gain rich and detailed insights into participants' thoughts and experiences. Semi-structured interviews

prioritize participants' perspectives and allow them to express their views in their own words (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021). By granting participants the freedom to share their experiences and opinions, researchers can capture the complexity and diversity of viewpoints (Akmal et al., 2022). This participant-centered approach enhances the validity and authenticity of the collected data. Semi-structured interviews offer flexibility during the interview process, allowing researchers to adapt their questions and follow up based on participants' responses (Lewis, 2015). This flexibility enables researchers to explore emerging themes or unexpected insights during the interview (Troshynski & Blank, 2007). In the study of post-earthquake musical experiences, semi-structured interviews were preferred to prioritize participants' perspectives and tailor the interview process based on emerging themes. The flexibility and rapport-building nature of these interviews contributed to the richness and authenticity of the collected data. Additionally, semi-structured interviews facilitated contextual understanding of the research topic.

The form, consisting of a total of four questions, is designed to allow participants to express their experiences and comments in their own words. This method aims to reach subjective reality and develop a richer and more detailed understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Kallio et al., 2016). For example, the question posed to participants, "Did you experience any changes in your music listening habits (duration, purpose, genre, etc.) before and after the earthquake?" seeks to understand whether there was a difference in participants' music preferences and, if so, the reasons behind it in detail (Akyol, 2023). An interpretive approach was used in designing the form to question social reality and understand subjective knowledge. The prepared questions were administered to participants via the Zoom program in an online environment due to researchers' negative impact from the earthquake and housing issues, which led them to be located outside the study area. Participants' voluntary participation was recorded through an informed consent form read to them. Additionally, a separate section was included in the interview for demographic information.

Sample question from the semi-structured interview form: *"In terms of the meaning attributed to music listening (such as deepening of meaning, imagery, or imagination) before and after the earthquake, did you notice any differences? Please explain."*

Document

To understand the impact of the earthquake on the musical climate, internet documents, books, and articles were examined to better understand post-earthquake musical experiences. This data collection method not only provided support for other data collection tools but also contributed to the reliability and validity of the research.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from semi-structured interviews were interpreted using content analysis by comparing them with other data collection tools. Based on individual observations after the earthquake, general information about the musical environment in the city (support, benefit concerts, radio broadcasts, wedding events, etc.) was obtained, and in vivo codes were created. After collecting the data, some of the generated codes were revised, and new codes and categories were added. The interview recordings were transcribed and transformed into text, preparing the data for content analysis.

Hsieh and Shanon summarized qualitative content analysis using three different approaches: traditional, directed, and summative. All three approaches are primarily used to interpret text data from a naturalistic paradigm (2005:1278). Studies employing qualitative content analysis focus on the characteristics of language as communication, paying attention to the content or contextual meaning of the text (Budd et al., 1967; Lindkvist, 1981; McTavish & Pirro, 1990; Tesch, 1990, cited in Hsieh & Shanon, 2005: 1278). In the analysis of this research, the method of qualitative content analysis was used to subjectively interpret the content of text data through Hsieh and Shanon's systematic classification process for coding and identifying themes or patterns (2005: 1278).

Data Collection Process

In the research, a number and age range were determined for participants. Considering their first-degree loss of relatives and their residence in the province, randomly selected participants were initially contacted via telephone to inquire whether they could participate in the research. Subsequently, online video conference interviews were conducted with

those who were available. Prior to posing interview questions, an informed consent text was read, and participants' voluntary willingness to participate in the research was recorded. The obtained video recordings were downloaded to a local computer, transcribed, and converted into text. The texts were then organized to prepare them for analysis.

Reliability and Validity

In terms of the validity and reliability of the research, the diversity of data sources, in-depth examination of data, and control of observer bias were considered. One-on-one semi-structured interviews and unstructured observations helped maintain neutrality by controlling observer bias. The variety of data collection methods supports data consistency and repeatability. Data collection tools and methods directly align with the research questions and objectives. Given that the findings can be generalized in similar contexts, this strengthens the external validity of the study.

Ethic

Before proceeding to the data collection stage, ethical approval was obtained from the KSU Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee in a session held on July 7, 2023, under protocol number 2023-25.

Findings

In this section, data obtained from participants' opinions regarding their music listening preferences before and after the earthquake were used to create themes related to purpose, genre, style, personality inclination, sense-making, and daily routines. Additionally, a series of observations were conducted to better understand post-earthquake musical climate variables, including unstructured interviews with radio representatives, wedding hall operators, café owners, and restaurant managers.

Observations and Interviews with Participants Living in Kahramanmaraş

Through unstructured interviews with street musicians, local radio representatives, and individuals associated with establishments such as cafés, restaurants, and wedding halls living within the province before and after the earthquake, various findings were obtained. The first voluntary musical support to earthquake victims was provided by a street musician from Kahramanmaraş. In the tent city set up in the city center, the musician performed music with his guitar for children ten days after the earthquake. They sang children's songs together (Bilir, 2023). The musician described this experience as follows: *"After the earthquake, I gave my first performance for children by singing children's songs ten days later. Despite that, the reactions were positive. I saw that people's distress was alleviated to some extent, and I even heard that adults joined in singing children's songs. These activities served as a great source of motivation for earthquake victims, although there were rare instances of negative reactions. My performance gained momentum, and I collaborated with different activity groups to visit villages every day, focusing on meeting the musical needs of earthquake-stricken children. Even adults requested specific songs during these activities."*

Following requests received via social media, the street musician continuously held concerts in various shelter areas (container cities, tent cities, schoolyards, sports halls, etc.) every week. They combined efforts with a self-organized group that distributed cotton candy to children and painted their faces, resulting in an increase in these activities. Other organizations also reached out to them via social media, requesting their participation in activities for earthquake victims.

Four months after the earthquake, the street musician continued to perform in various locations throughout the city. Regarding the reactions they encountered on the streets:

Some listeners cried while requesting specific songs. Initially, after resuming music in the same location where they had always played before the earthquake, the reactions were mixed—half positive and half negative. Some people said, *"You were part of the city's fabric, and seeing you here again makes us feel that fabric anew."* Others expressed joy, saying, "I saw you here, and it felt like nothing had happened to Kahramanmaraş." However, one reaction deeply affected them. A woman in her 50s or 60s approached, requested a song, and showed them a video. The video was taken before the earthquake and featured the musician singing the requested song alongside an elderly man. Tearfully, the woman hugged the musician and said, *"Son, we didn't realize my father's true value. If you hadn't been on the street that day and sung that song with my father, we wouldn't have a single video of him. We lost him in the earthquake."* Another poignant

moment was when someone who had lost their spouse in the earthquake requested their late partner's favorite song and sang it together with the musician. *The person said, "Seeing you reminds me of my spouse and children. Don't disappear from here."* Bilir, reflecting on this encounter, expressed astonishment at how someone who had lost family members could still approach music with such wonder (Personal interview with Bilir, 2023).

Findings related to musicians performing in cafés and restaurants are as follows:

Post-Earthquake Musical Activities:

Three months after the earthquake, musical activities gradually resumed, and live music and concert events began after Ramadan Bayram (Eid al-Fitr).

Initially, public participation was lower, but later, musical venues were observed to be packed.

Café and Restaurant Music:

Within the first two months after the earthquake, the restaurant featured background music. Notably, customers requested Arabesque music during this period.

For special occasions like marriage proposals, short musical performances were arranged upon request.

Live music programs started right after Ramadan Bayram. Initially, they were slower-paced, calm, and emotional, resembling recitals. However, six months after the earthquake, livelier, faster, dynamic performances with dance music were added.

The café and restaurant owner expressed, *"People want to blend into the environment. They want to relieve stress and move on. Everything seems normal to them now."* The frequency of live music programs increased from four days a week before the earthquake to six days a week due to high demand.

Weddings:

Until Ramadan Bayram (especially during the month of Ramadan), weddings were simple, often without music, and consisted of brief ceremonies.

After Ramadan Bayram, these types of weddings continued for about three more months.

Festive weddings with traditional music (davul-zurna) began around the sixth month after the earthquake and continued.

Initially, instrumental music dominated these weddings, but later, live music performances became more common.

One year after the earthquake, weddings returned to a pre-earthquake style.

These observations highlight how music played a significant role in post-earthquake recovery, providing comfort and a sense of normalcy for the community.

The local radio representative mentioned the following about the post-earthquake period: approximately 4-5 months after the earthquake (July-August), radio broadcasts resumed from where they left off. Initially, they offered instrumental music programs, featuring slow to moderate-paced, light popular music and Turkish folk music. Later, they transitioned to slower-paced music with lyrics, aiming for motivational and relaxing broadcasts. Regarding listener participation in radio programs before and after the earthquake, the representative stated, *"Before the earthquake, our participation was higher. During the initial post-earthquake broadcasts, we didn't expect people to suddenly connect to our radio while still dealing with their grief. But that's what happened... Everyone is trying to heal their wounds, and there are still people in container cities. Now, exactly one year has passed, and we have more listeners than before the earthquake. Participation in programs has increased, and the number of listeners has grown."*

Theme 1. Objective

Table 1. Findings on the effect of listening to music on participants

Before the earthquake	**f**	**f**	**After the earthquake**
To like	1	8	Towards forgetting
Accompaniment	1	7	Depersonalization
Increasing motivation	1	6	Increasing motivation
Participation in musical events	1		

In Table 1, findings related to participants' purposes for listening to music before and after earthquakes are presented. According to the results, participants tend to listen to music after earthquakes primarily to forget about negative conditions and situations they are experiencing or currently facing. Additionally, it was found that they also listen to music to boost motivation during adverse circumstances. However, there is a notable desensitization towards music that is listened to in order to cope with life's challenges.

"I started listening to more positive, carefree music without paying much attention to the lyrics." (P9)

Theme 2. Genre

Table 2. Findings on participants' music listening preferences

Before the earthquake	f	f	After the earthquake
Turkish folk song	2	2	Turkish folk song
Classical Turkish music	4	3	Classical Turkish music
Popular music	3	3	Popular music
Classical Western music	1	2	Classical Western music
Arabesque music	2	5	Arabesque music
		3	Rap music
		1	Religious music

Table 2 indicates that there has been no change in participants' preferences for Turkish folk music and popular music genres before and after the earthquake. While Turkish art music has been less preferred post-earthquake, there is an observed increase in participants' preference for listening to Western Classical and Arabesque music. Genres such as Rap and Religious music, which were not listened to before the earthquake, have been noted among the types of music listened to after the earthquake.

"I continue to listen to the same music after the earthquake." (P2)

Theme 3. Style

Table 3. Findings on the participants' characterization of music

Before the earthquake	f	f	After the earthquake
Slow	4	5	Slow
Sentimental	3	6	Sentimental
Upbeat	4	5	Upbeat

Table 3 presents the music styles that participants preferred to listen to before and after the earthquake. The findings indicate an increased listening frequency of emotional music styles post-earthquake. Participant P2 described this shift as, *"Before the earthquake, I used to listen to lively, upbeat songs, but after the earthquake, I started listening to songs with a slower rhythm."* Participant P1 mentioned not listening to lively music, while P6 stated, *"We began singing sadder songs after the earthquake, but I do not want to listen to emotional pieces."* P4 emphasized a preference for more upbeat songs, saying, *"I don't want to listen to slow songs."*

Theme 4. Personality predisposition

Table 4. Findings related to the participants' individual awareness through music

Before the earthquake	f	f	After the earthquake
Cheerful personality	1	5	Sensitive personality
Melancholic personality	2	3	Melancholic personality
Emotional personality	3	6	Emotional personality

Table 4 presents findings related to the participants' individual awareness during music listening. According to the data, no participant described themselves as a cheerful personality following the earthquake. They predominantly identified as emotional and sensitive personalities. Regarding individual awareness before and after the earthquake:

"I realized I didn't want to listen to things that reflect deep emotions, for instance..." (P4)

"After the earthquake, we seem inclined to listen to more emotional pieces." (P3)

"We became more emotional after the earthquake." (P1)

"We started listening to music as a family for psychological repair." (P6)

These statements reflect a shift in the emotional state and music listening preferences of the individuals post-disaster.

Theme 5. Making sense

Table 5. Findings on the meaning attributed to music by the participants

Before the earthquake	f	f	After the earthquake
Comforting	1	1	To cause discomfort
Stress relief	1	8	Stress enhancer
		1	No pleasure
		14	Desensitization

Table 5 examines the participants' experiences of ascribing meaning to music. Particularly after the earthquake, participants reported that the music they listened to made them feel desensitized (psychologically, sociologically, etc.). Additionally, an inability to derive pleasure from music was also observed. While music was associated with stress relief and relaxation before the earthquake, post-disaster interpretations predominantly involved discomfort and stress induction, especially in the initial weeks.

"Before the earthquake, music was a constant in my life. It played everywhere in my home. Now, there's a stillness, and even if it plays, I don't feel affected." (P1)

"Hmm, I used to imbue songs with more meaning, finding parts of myself in them, but now that the genre of music has changed, I've started to feel nothing." (P9)

"Listening to music after the earthquake might be making me feel upset, perhaps because it makes me think about what happened." (P2)

Theme 6. Life routine

Table 6. Findings on participants' positioning of music

Before the earthquake	f	f	After the earthquake
Presence in the environment	10	1	Tendency to accompany
Social media	5	6	Social media
Frequent music listening	4	17	Tendency to listen to music
Reluctance to sing	1	1	Loneliness
Tendency to sing	1	9	Escape from music

In examining the positioning of music within the life routines of the participants, a tendency not to engage with the music listened to post-earthquake, as well as a sense of loneliness, has been observed. This contrasts with the pre-earthquake period. A tendency to avoid music listening and musical environments is also among the findings post-disaster. Pertaining to these situations:

"When music plays on the radio while driving, I want to shout along... but I can't accompany it... I don't feel it inside, I can't scream. I want to sing out loud." (P1)

"Currently, listening to music has affected me more positively. It has helped increase my energy, elevate my mood, and reduce the negative thoughts in my head. In the initial period after the earthquake, listening to music tended to drag me down, making me feel worse, obviously because of the songs I was listening to." (P9)

"Immediately after the earthquake and still now, I listen to music alone, especially in the car, because I consider the perspective of society." (P8)

"I listen to music with my headphones so no one hears it because we have losses... However, when I hear music playing along with those images on social media, I immediately turn it off because I don't want to hear it." (P4)

"Before the earthquake, we were more intertwined with music as a family, but after the earthquake, we stopped listening." (P3)

"After the earthquake, I felt a bit more collected and started listening to all kinds of music more." (P5)

Conclusion and Discussion

This qualitative study on the change in musical climate after the Kahramanmaraş earthquake evaluated participants' music listening habits, the meaning they derive from music, and changes in their musical preferences. The findings indicate significant changes in music listening habits, the effects of music on individuals, and musical preferences in the post-earthquake period. These results aim to understand the role of music listening habits in psychological recovery and the impact of the earthquake on the musical climate by discussing the findings in light of the literature.

The intensity and physical destruction of the earthquakes centered in Kahramanmaraş are undeniable, and they have also led to various psychological devastations among individuals. While the fabric of the city has been damaged, this has consequently caused fluctuations in the musical climate. Although folk music was not rejected, it was not incorporated into life for some time. The mourning process was more intense during the first three-month period, with even wedding ceremonies being conducted with memorial services. Compared to the post-earthquake period, memorial service weddings were less common in the city before the earthquake. During the same period, background music was present in cafes and restaurants, predominantly slow-paced and instrumental. Music played a role in events such as marriage proposals. Street music was performed, focusing on solidarity, particularly to provide morale and motivation to children affected by the earthquake. The data indicates that the musical climate can change in the first three months following a disaster compared to the pre-disaster period.

The widespread impact of the earthquake disaster, which had a very strong effect, has led to many changes (psychological, physical, financial, spiritual, etc.) that have negatively affected individuals, resulting in significant outcomes in the way music is interpreted, positioned in daily routines, and in preferences and tastes. According to the research findings, participants used to listen to music for relaxation and stress relief before the earthquake. This finding aligns with studies by Gabrielsson (2001) and Kallinen and Ravaja (2006) on the effects of music on emotional perception and emotional arousal. However, after the earthquake, music listening was associated with desensitization (numbness), with participants indicating that they became desensitized while listening to music. This change suggests that music was used as a tool in the psychological recovery process and that traumatic experiences altered the meaning of music. Zentner et al. (2008) noted that music can trigger emotional responses sensitive to individuals' personal contexts. In the post-earthquake period, participants used music to forget and motivate themselves. This indicates the complex role of music in the psychological recovery process, varying by personal and societal contexts. Increased music listening, desensitization (numbness) towards the music listened to, a tendency to listen to slower-paced music, and a tendency to listen to music as a means to forget the experiences are results that support Langer's theory of emotional morphology.

The study reveals changes in musical preferences after the earthquake. Participants, who preferred lively and cheerful music before the earthquake, started listening to more emotional and slow-tempo music afterward. Particularly, arabesque music was identified as the most preferred genre post-earthquake. This finding is consistent with Lee et al.'s

study (2013), which suggests that individuals prefer music that aligns with their emotional states and that these preferences can change based on psychological conditions. After the earthquake, participants' individual awareness increased while listening to music. They described themselves as more emotional and sensitive. This indicates that music heightened emotional awareness and served as an emotional reflection tool in the post-earthquake period. Robinson (2007) discussed how music represents emotional and mental processes and shapes individuals' internal experiences. In this context, the increased emotional awareness of participants after the earthquake can be explained by this representational power of music.

Before the earthquake, music was an integral part of participants' daily lives, but its role changed in the post-earthquake period. Participants tended to avoid music and preferred to listen to it alone after the earthquake. Music encountered on social media was found disturbing, and there was a desire to avoid such music. This finding is crucial for understanding how music is perceived in a social context and its place in daily life. Observational data are essential in understanding and interpreting social phenomena, as emphasized by Mulhall (2003) and Sundberg et al. (2021). Observations and participants' relationships with music after the earthquake help us better understand the role of music in societal and individual recovery processes.

The change in the musical climate in Kahramanmaraş post-earthquake created significant impacts at both societal and individual levels. Despite the continued listening to traditional music genres such as folk and classical Turkish music, these genres were not fully integrated into daily life. The mourning process was intense during the first three months after the earthquake, with even wedding ceremonies being conducted as memorial services. Tanaka et al. (2021) examined the impact of natural disasters on the music industry, noting that music events were suspended post-disaster. The situation in Kahramanmaraş is consistent with these findings.

Post-earthquake, it has been determined that the participants' music listening preferences were significantly influenced by the loss of life in the community and the associated mourning. Slow-paced, emotional music was predominantly preferred, while new music genres (rap, religious music) were also explored. Music listened to before the earthquake was not played in the initial months following the disaster, and even when it was played later (5-6 months, etc.), there was a notable tendency to not enjoy it, regardless of the lyrics, tempo, genre, or style, and to avoid engaging with it while still continuing to listen. A preference for listening to music in isolation from society and avoiding music encountered through social media, television, radio, etc., has been observed. The revival of pre-earthquake memories through music post-disaster has led individuals to listen to music of a different type and style than the one evoking those memories. From this, it can be said that the emotions individuals cannot verbally express but convey through music reflect their personal musical climate.

In the six-month period and beyond, weddings have been observed to be conducted both with memorial services and in traditional styles. Live music has begun to replace background music at weddings, initially featuring slower and medium-paced wedding music. Live music has also started in cafes and restaurants, playing slow, medium, and occasionally upbeat tempo music. Radio broadcasts have been conducted with both music and speech, and music without speech, predominantly featuring slow and medium-paced music. Street music has continued in the city center as it was before the earthquake. The intensity of the participants' music listening preferences during this period supports these data. The data suggests that the musical climate can change less in the six-month post-disaster period compared to the pre-disaster period.

Based on the data obtained from participants after the earthquake, it can be said that the musical climate in Kahramanmaraş prior to the earthquake has shown variability due to emotional traumas caused by the earthquake. Although activities that were common before the earthquake began to be held again in the seventh month after the earthquake, they were not as intense and spirited as before. This is further evidence that the reality of the earthquake in Kahramanmaraş has directed the musical climate. One year after the earthquake, it has been observed that musical activities at weddings, cafes, restaurants, radios, and on the streets have been conducted more frequently compared to before the earthquake.

The earthquake caused not only physical but also psychological destruction in Kahramanmaraş, deeply affecting individuals' music listening habits and the meaning they derived from music. Music was an essential tool in the psychological recovery process in the post-earthquake period. The findings demonstrate how the musical climate was shaped in the post-earthquake period and the role of music in individuals' emotional recovery processes. Long-term studies and similar research in different provinces are recommended for future studies. Additionally, further research is needed on how the musical climate influences cultural music preferences. These studies will contribute significantly to the field of musicology and help us understand how the musical climate changes after natural disasters.

All these results contribute to the layers of the musical climate, and it is a fact that the human factor, which directs the climate, cannot be independent of nature, environment, and culture. The negative effects of any of these factors also negatively affect the feeling, interpretation, and positioning of music in life. The musical climate can be shaped by psychological factors in society, the emotions that music evokes in individuals, and negative reasons experienced (natural disasters and related losses, etc.).

Recommendations

For future Researchers

The data collected in the seventh month after the earthquake covers a period of approximately seven months. Observations and unstructured interviews conducted to understand the musical climate in Kahramanmaraş continued until the first anniversary of the earthquake. Therefore, this study does not include data beyond this period. For this reason, long-term studies should be conducted on the subject, and contributions should be made to the literature. Furthermore, the research should not be limited to Kahramanmaraş; significant contributions should be made to the field by conducting studies on other provinces affected by the earthquake.

Recommendations for Applicants

The earthquakes centered in Kahramanmaraş have led to significant destruction, not only physically but also psychologically. Kahramanmaraş is a province with a deep cultural structure. Musical studies to be conducted after the disaster will support the understanding of the musical climate factors and variables of the province. More research is needed on how the musical climate may influence the cultural music preferences in Kahramanmaraş.

Limitations of Study

This research was conducted between July 2023 and February 2024 and was limited to young and adult earthquake survivors living in Kahramanmaraş.

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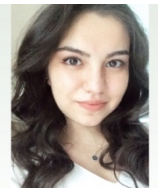
Biodata of Authors

Assoc. Prof. Dr. **Günsu Yılma Şakalar** was born in 1986 in Edirne/Turkiye. She completed her undergraduate education at the Trakya University State Conservatory in String Instruments/Cello. She completed master's degree at the İnönü University Music Sciences and Technologies Program. Her doctoral studies was completed at the Yıldız Technical University Art and Design Program. Currently, she serve as an Associate Professor at the Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Music. Engaged in national/international artistic activities with the cello and rebab, hosting radio programs related to the sub-disciplines of Musicology, and producing patents and scientific publications, Yılma Şakalar continues interdisciplinary music researches. E mail: gsakalar@ksu.edu.tr
Researchgate: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Guensu-Yilma-Sakalar
Publons: https://www.webofscience.com/wos/author/record/AGU-6625-2022



Şaziye Nur Yurdalan was born in 1998 in Kahramanmaraş/Turkiye. She studied violin and piano at Kahramanmaraş Fine Arts High School between 2012-2016. She completed her undergraduate education at Gazi University Gazi Faculty of Education, Department of Fine Arts Education, Music Education Program from 2016 to 2020. She is currently continuing her master's degree at Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University Social Science Institute, Music Program. **E Mail:** saziyenuryurdalan@gmail.com Orcid: 0009-0004-8616-4985

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Appendix 1. Interview Form

Interview Form

Q1. Was there any difference in your music listening habits (in terms of duration, purpose, motivation/genre, etc.) before and after the earthquake? Explain please.

Q2. Was there a difference in terms of the meaning attributed to listening to music before and after the earthquake (such as deepening in meaning/image/imagery)? Explain please.

Q3. Was there any change in the psychological effect (such as depression / peace, etc.) caused by listening to music before and after the earthquake? Explain please.

Q4. Were there any other changes in your music listening before and after the earthquake? Explain please.