Music Engagement Among Hispanic/Latino Adults Age 18 and Older

2020 AARP Music and Brain Health Survey — Adults Ages 18 and Older

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

The 2020 AARP Music and Brain Health Survey (Mehegan, L.L. and Rainville, G.A., 2020), supporting the Global Council on Brain Health (GBCH)¹, was conducted between April 1-14, 2020 and examined U.S. adults' exposure to, and participation in, music throughout their lives. This document showcases the results from the national survey for the Hispanic/Latino (H/L) population age 18 and older which represents a subset of the general population sample of adults age 18 and older.

In this fact sheet, we will explore active and passive music engagement within a national sample of Hispanic/Latino adults. Passive engagement in music was assessed by the percentage engaging in music listening activities including listening to music in the background, attending musical performances, and focused listening to recorded music. On the other hand, active engagement in music was assessed by the percentage engaging in activities such as singing, dancing, playing a musical instrument, or composing music either alone or with a group, either currently or in the past.

KEY FINDINGS

- Majority of Hispanic/Latino adults listen to recorded music in a focused way.
- A smart phone and a car radio are the most common ways that Hispanics/Latinos listen to music.
- Most Hispanic/Latino adults have actively engaged in some form of music or dance.
- Early childhood exposure to music is related to musical engagement in adulthood.

past, significantly fewer compared to African American/Black (AA/B) adults (83%) and adults in the general population (82%). Over half (56%) of Hispanic/Latino adults say they currently engage in this activity similar to adults in the general population.

Additionally, Hispanic/Latino adults ages 50+ are more likely than their younger peers ages 18-49 to engage in focused listening to recorded music (64% versus 53%). The differences by generation are particularly noteworthy when comparing Boomers to Millennials (67% versus 52%).

DETAILED FINDINGS

Music Listening among Hispanic/Latino Adults

A clear majority listen to recorded music in a focused way. Nearly seven in 10 (69%) Hispanic/Latino adults age 18 and older have listened to recorded music in a deliberate and focused way either currently or in the

More than four in 10 Hispanic/Latino adults listen to background music half the time or more often.

Younger Hispanic/Latino adults listen to music in the background while doing everyday activities more often than their older peers (48% for 18-49 vs. 38% for 50 and older), a pattern which is similar to that found in the general population. Additionally, more than half of

¹ The Global Council on Brain Health (GCBH) is an independent collaborative of scientists, health professionals, scholars and policy experts from around the world working in areas of brain health related to human cognition. The GCBH is convened by AARP with support from Age UK.

Hispanic/Latino Millennials (51%) listen half the time or more compared to 43% of Gen-Xers and 37% of Boomers.

About one in four Hispanic/Latino adults currently attend musical or dance performances; more older adults report having ever attended musical performances. While a majority (60%) of Hispanic/Latino adults age 18 and older say they currently attend musical performances or have done so in the past, Hispanic/Latino adults age 50 and above are significantly more likely than their younger peers to report doing so currently (31% versus 19%). The most noteworthy differences by generation in Hispanic/Latino adults are observed among Boomers (30%), Gen-Xers (24%) and Millennials (18%)² (Figure 1).

However, Hispanic/Latino adults are significantly less likely than are adults in the general population to say they currently attend musical or dance performances (23% versus 34%).

Music listening is most common on a smart phone and a car radio. The majority of Hispanic/Latino adults consume music on either a smart phone (73%) or a car radio (58%).

Figure 2 illustrates the significant differences between two age-groups of Hispanic/Latino adults in usage of commonly used music-listening-devices. Compared to their younger peers ages 18-49, older Hispanic/Latino adults age 50-plus are significantly more likely to listen to music on a car radio (70% versus 52%). Most notable differences by generations are seen among Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials (72% versus 61% and 50%).

On the other hand, more Hispanic/Latino adults age 18-49 listen to music on a smart phone than do Hispanic/Latino adults age 50 and older (81% versus 56%). Similarly, younger generations of Hispanic/Latino adults are more likely than older generations to listen to music on a smart phone, with a sharp drop-off for Boomers [Gen-Z (88%) and Millennials (81%) versus Gen-X (76%) and Boomers (56%)] (Figure 3).

² Results for members of Gen-Z and Silent generations are not included because of the small number of cases in those generations.

Figure 4: Preference of music by race/ethnicities

A clear majority of Hispanic/Latino adults have actively engaged in music or dance, either by themselves, with a group, or both, similar to adults in

Singing and dancing are the most common forms of current active musical engagement for Hispanic/Latino adults – engaged in by more than six in 10 (61%). However, the research suggests that Hispanic/Latino adults are significantly less likely to have ever engaged in singing than are African American/Black adults and adults in the general population (61% versus 84% and 77%). Fewer Hispanic/Latino adults engage in dancing compared to African American/Black adults (61% versus 77%).

Four in 10 currently engage in singing and dancing by themselves. More than 60 percent of Hispanic/Latino adults age 18 and older have engaged in singing and dancing (61% each) at some point in their lives. While nearly two-fifths of Hispanic/Latino adults ages 18 and older currently engage in singing (43%) and dancing (37%) by themselves, it is a much lower percentage than that reported by African American/Black adults (singing by themselves – 66%; dancing by themselves – 51%).

Hispanic/Latino women more likely than men to have ever participated in singing and dancing. Female Hispanic/Latino adults are slightly more likely to have ever engaged in singing compared to their male peers (64% versus 58%), similar to results by gender in the general population. However, it has been observed that significantly fewer female Hispanic/Latino adults have ever engaged in singing compared to female African American/Black and female adults in the general population (64% versus 91% and 83%).

Nearly six in 10 (61%) Hispanic/Latino adults have ever engaged in some form of dance (versus 66% of the adults in the general population). Moreover, in alignment with the results seen in the general population and as seen with singing, female Hispanic/Latino adults are more likely to have ever engaged in dancing compared to their male peers (65% versus 56%). However, significantly fewer female Hispanic/Latino adults engage in dancing compared to female African American/Black adults and female adults in the general population (61% versus 88% and 76%).

One in three adults have played an instrument in their lives and piano is the most commonly played musical instrument. Relatively few Hispanic/Latino adults age 18 and older are currently playing a musical instrument alone or as part of a group (11%). A similar trend is observed in the general population as well. Additionally, fewer Hispanic/Latino adults have ever played a musical instrument when compared to adults in the general population and African American/Black adults. (33% versus 48% and 42%). Among those who have played an instrument, the piano or keyboard is the most common instrument played at a satisfactory level (30%), followed by acoustic guitar (23%), drums (17%), violin (17%), and electric guitar (13%).

There were no noteworthy differences by gender or age, with similar percentages of male (34%) and female (33%) Hispanic/Latino adults having ever played an instrument. Moreover, in-tune with the results seen by gender, younger Hispanic/Latino adults (ages 18-49) and Hispanic/Latino adults age 50 and older appear to be equally likely to have ever played a musical instrument (34% and 32%). This contrasts with the trend seen in the general population and in African American/Black adults where younger adults are more likely to indulge in the playing of musical instruments compared to their older peers.

Composing music is the least common form of music engagement. Very few – 15% of Hispanic/Latino adults - have ever composed music. Additionally, the research

shows that younger Hispanic/Latino adults are twice as likely to have ever composed music compared to their older peers (18% versus 9%), similar to adults in the general population (20% versus 10%).

Early Music Exposure

One in four Hispanic/Latino adults come from musical families. While nearly a quarter (24%) of Hispanic/Latino adults said that they come from a musical family, similar to adults in the general population, significantly more African American/Black adults (32%) report coming from a musical family.

There were no noteworthy differences by age, with both younger and older Hispanic/Latino adults equally likely to come from a musical family. However, as depicted in Figure 5, significantly more Hispanic/Latino adults who come from a musical family, compared to those who do not, report having ever engaged in musical activities such as singing (72% versus 58%), dancing (72% versus 57%), playing a musical instrument (45% versus 29%), and composing music (29% versus 11%).

Most adults experienced music in elementary school. More than half (52%) of Hispanic/Latino adults age 18-plus were exposed to music in elementary school classrooms at least some of the time, similar to adults in the general population. However, it is observed that

significantly fewer Hispanic/Latino adults ages 18 and older have been exposed to music in elementary school classrooms at least some of the time compared to White adults (69%), African American/Black adults (68%), and Asian American adults (68%).

Frequent exposure to music in elementary school is related to more music listening. As shown in Figure 6, compared to those who were “never” exposed to music in their elementary classroom, significantly more Hispanic/Latino adults who were exposed “often” to music report attending a musical performance (81% versus 43%), listening to music in a focused way (78% versus 59%), and listening to background music half the time or more (73% versus 33%). This reflects trends observed in the general population as well.

Additionally, frequent exposure to music in elementary school is related to active musical engagement among Hispanic/Latino adults as well. Significantly more Hispanic/Latino adults age 18 and older who say they were “often” exposed to music in their elementary classroom actively engage in music compared to those adults who say they were “never” exposed to music, similar to the general population.

While all of the differences are large, the most notable difference is for playing a musical instrument where 55 percent of those who were “often” exposed to music in elementary school reported ever playing a musical instrument compared to 14 percent who were never exposed. This represents a 41-percentage point difference (Figure 7).

METHODOLOGY

The data presented in this brief were collected through a 20-minute online probability-based survey via Ipsos KnowledgePanel®. 3,185 U.S. adults ages 18 and older including 524 Hispanic/Latino adults participated in the survey. Fielded from April 1–14, 2020, the survey data were weighted to include a balance of respondents by demographics. The margin of error for the national survey is ± 1.86 percentage points.

REFERENCES

Mehegan, L.L. and Rainville, G.A. 2020 *AARP Music and Brain Health Survey*. Washington, DC: AARP Research, June 2020; <https://doi.org/10.26419/res.00387.001>

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