Soundtracks of Poverty and Development: Music, Emotions and Representations of the Global South

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This is a post-peer-review, pre-copyedit version of an article accepted for publication in the *European Journal of Development Studies*. The final authenticated version is available on the journal's website: https://www.palgrave.com/gp/journal/41287

Key words: Music, emotions, NGOs, representations of development

Abstract: Despite the strategic use of music and sound in the marketing of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), analysis of representations of global poverty and development has focused almost exclusively on images, video and text. Drawing on research in the fields of psychology, marketing and music theory, this article argues that analysis of representations of global poverty and development must include rigorous analysis of music and sound. The article examines the soundtracks of fundraising videos produced by NGOs based in the UK, US and Canada to address questions about the ways that music structure and sound create emotional narratives about poverty and development. Analysis reveals how music is used to shape emotional responses to NGO appeals and reinforces persistent stereotypes about the global South as sad and frightening and the global North as the source of agency to solve problems of global poverty.

Introduction

Analysis of the representation of global poverty and development has focused overwhelmingly on what we can see - images, video and text – with little attention to music and sound. However, it is well established that the structure of music and sound can be manipulated to influence human emotions and behaviour in specific and powerful ways, often subconsciously (Juslin and Sloboda 2011). It is also well established that music helps to create meaning and narratives, particularly in combination with video or film (Cohen 2013a; Green 2010). Just like visual and textual representations, music and sound can be (and are) used to tell stories and to reinforce or challenge narratives and stereotypes about poverty and development. Methodologically, the emotional power of music and sound mean that we need to listen much more carefully when we look at videos, films, websites and other media that represent the dynamics of global poverty and development. This article draws on research in the fields of psychology, marketing and music theory to examine the ways that specific features of music structure – such as tempo and pitch – can influence human emotions and public responses to global poverty. It then seeks to bridge the literature on music and emotions with critical examination of representations of global poverty

[1] We wish to thank Lisa Ann Richey, David Black and David Lewis for feedback on a previous version of this paper. As always, we are responsible for all errors and omissions.

and development, offering a new layer of analysis for understanding how those representations may influence public attitudes. The article proposes a framework designed to answer four questions about the music and sound that NGOs employ in their fundraising and marketing videos: What emotions are evoked by the music used in NGO videos? What narratives about poverty and development do those emotions suggest? What elements of music structure are used to evoke those emotional responses? Whose voices are heard in NGO videos – those of the people from the global South or voiceovers with Western sounding accents?

The article applies this analytical framework to the soundtracks of the thirty most-watched videos on Youtube produced by international development NGOs based in the UK, US and Canada. The article finds that the music and sound used in NGO videos consistently reflects and evokes three dominant sets of emotions: sadness, fear and joy. More than half the videos represent the global South with music that evokes sadness and fear. A second group of videos uses joyful music to represent a combination of people in the global South and the interventions of NGOs. The music in the videos thus reinforces three prevailing stereotypes about global poverty and development: 1) the global South as sad and frightening, 2) the global South as poor but happy, and 3) the global North as the solution to poverty in the global South. The soundtracks to the videos do not reflect any specific formula of music structure but do employ a consistent pattern of musical strategies to reflect and evoke these emotional narratives, such as slow tempo music in the minor scale with long rhythmic values, descending melodic lines and sparse instrumentation to evoke feelings of sadness. Significantly, almost all the videos use western genres of music that are likely to be familiar to western English-speaking audiences. The use of spoken voices is also significant: of the 22 videos with spoken voices, 18 have western-sounding accents and only four voices sound as if they are from the global South. In only one video do people from the global South speak directly for themselves in a language other than English. These findings suggest that the music and sound used in NGO videos reinforce persistent stereotypes about the global South and its relationship with the global North while also overriding the capacity of people from the global South to speak for themselves.

The article develops this analysis in four sections. In Section 1, we highlight the literature on representations of global poverty and development and the evidence that NGO marketing materials influence the ways that public audiences in the global North understand and respond to global poverty. Section 2 examines the power of music to shape human emotions and behaviour, with specific emphasis on the use of music in marketing to influence consumer behaviour. In Section 3 we explain the methodology behind our analysis of the most frequently watched videos from NGOs based in the UK, the US and Canada. In Section 4 we share our findings about the elements of music structure used in the videos and the ways in which music and sound reinforce persistent stereotypes about poverty and development.

1. How Representations of Global Poverty and Development Shape Public Attitudes in the Global North

NGO fundraising, marketing and communications play important roles in shaping the ways that ordinary people in the global North understand and respond to global poverty and other global injustices. NGOs recognize both that they exercise this power and that they have often used it to prioritize short-term fundraising goals over the ethical representation of the global South. (Darnton and Kirk 2011; VSO 2002; Warrington and Crombie 2017). As the executive director

of a UK NGO wrote in 2002, "We have taken part in an intricate dance that sacrifices the long-term building of a balanced view for the short-term gain of raising funds for or awareness of our work" (VSO 2002: 2). A decade later, BOND, the umbrella organization representing British NGOs, reported that public understanding of global poverty in the UK had changed little over the preceding 25 years: "The causes of poverty are seen as internal to poor countries: famine, war, natural disasters, bad governance, overpopulation and so on" and the relationship between global North and South was "stuck" in the frame of "'Powerful Giver' and 'Grateful Receiver'" (Darnton and Kirk 2011: 6). Fundraising pressures continue to exert enormous influence over NGO communications. However, most NGOs do at least try to grapple with the tensions between the demands of charitable revenue generation and the ethical representation of global poverty. NGO consortiums in the global North have created voluntary Codes of Conduct that include guidelines on the representation of the global South (e.g., CCIC 2009; CONCORD 2006; InterAction 2018). Although NGOs use music and sound in highly strategic ways in their communications and marketing, the codes of conduct focus exclusively on text, images and video, overlooking the ways in which music and sound also shape public understanding and behaviour. The costs of overlooking music and sound can be high, as the Canadian branch of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) discovered when a 2019 video that used the R.E.M. song "Everybody Hurts" laid over images and sounds of Black African children crying caused a major organizational crisis (McVeigh 2020).

Academic analysis of representations of global poverty and development also focus overwhelmingly on the visual, although some scholars have recognized the importance of music in representations of international development (see Lewis, Rodgers and Woolcock 2020). Early critiques of the distorted representation of the global South by NGOs focused on the so-called 'pornography of poverty' – the use of graphic images of extreme hunger, malnutrition and suffering that told a story of passive victims in desperate need of help from charitable donors in the global North (Dogra 2014; Lissner 1981; Nathanson 2013). Postcolonial scholarship highlights the ways that representations of the global South by the global North in text, art and film created and reinforced ideas about the Southern 'other' as deficient in comparisons with the Northern 'self' (Said 1979; Escobar 1994; Ferguson 1996; Hall 2007; Pieterse 1992). Academic critiques of NGO representations have examined innovations in non-profit marketing, including the use of celebrities, cause-related marketing strategies, sex and humour (Brockington 2014; Cameron 2015; Cameron and Haanstra 2008; Chouliaraki 2013; Dogra 2014; Kapoor 2012; Lewis, Rogers and Woolcock 2014; Richey and Ponte 2011; Smith and Yanacopulos 2004). Nevertheless, as with NGO analysis, academic attention has neglected music and sound as important mechanisms through which ideas about global poverty and development are communicated, constructed, and reproduced.

2. **How marketing uses music to influence our emotions and consumer behaviour**

Marketers have long understood that music can be used to influence consumer behaviour, particularly for decisions that do not require serious cognitive engagement and can be influenced by provoking positive emotional responses to particular products or brands and helping consumers to remember them (Brunner 1990). Psychologists explain the role of music in shaping attitudes and decisions through the 'elaboration likelihood model' in which music operates through the 'peripheral route' to persuasion by shaping emotional responses to a product or idea rather that the 'direct route to processing' through cognitive engagement based on reason and

data (Cohen 2013b). Marketing and psychology research also highlight the physiological, neurological and behavioural effects of specific elements of music structure on consumer behaviour (Allan 2007; North and Hargraves 2008; Shevy and Hung 2013).

As the logic of the market and ideas from the private sector increasingly expand into the policies and practices of aid agencies and NGOs (Richey and Ponte 2015), it is important to examine marketing research to better understand the ways in which private sector marketing strategies have been incorporated into the fundraising and marketing practices of NGOs. In relation to music, marketing research suggests that the familiarity of music to listeners is important for shaping consumer behaviour, along with four components of music structure: tempo (i.e. beats per minute), mode and scale (e.g. major vs. minor), dynamics or volume (i.e. loud vs. soft and even silence) and instrumentation (i.e. the choice of instruments and how they are played). Other elements of musical structure also shape emotional responses to music – such as rhythm, pitch, melody, harmony, tonality, note density and phrasing (Bruner 1990; Chase 2006; Gabrielsson and Lindström 2011; Juslin and Sloboda 2011), but these first four components have received the greatest attention in research on marketing.

Musical Genre and Familiarity of music

The familiarity of music to listeners is one of the most important factors that determines the emotional effect of music on consumer behaviour. Marketing research indicates that music that is familiar attracts greater attention, provokes emotional reactions more consistently, enhances recall and requires fewer cognitive resources to process so does not distract attention away from the main marketing message. Unfamiliar music increases the 'cognitive load' on listeners and decreases their ability to recall advertising messages (Brunner 1990: 100; Shevy and Hung 2013: 9; Swaminathan and Schellenberg 2015: 190). The effects of familiar music on consumers can be achieved with both specific songs as well as music genres (e.g., classical, pop). In Western cultures certain patterns of music structure, such as rhythm and scale, have become established as normal so that untrained listeners typically perceive them as familiar by the age of five (Peretz 2011: 106). By contrast, elements of musical structure such as the pentatonic and heptatonic modes and the layered rhythms typical of music from many parts of Africa often sound unfamiliar to western listeners (Kubik 2010). As a result, marketers typically use musical genres that consumers will perceive as familiar, such as western classical music and pop. In this article we also categorize 'world music' as western and therefore familiar for western audiences. Following a range of ethnomusicologists (Bohlman 2002; Guilbault 1997), we use the term 'world music' to refer to music that combines western musical structures – such as rhythm, pitch and instrumentation – with elements of non-western musical structure creating a sound that is familiar to western listeners but that also evokes ideas about non-western cultures. The impacts of music structure on the emotions of listeners can be culturally specific, so it bears emphasizing that the fundraising videos produced by NGOs based in the global North target audiences from western cultural backgrounds for whom western music is familiar.

Tempo

Tempo or beats per minute is one of the most important features of music shaping emotional responses to it as well as consumer behaviour (Gabrielsson and Lindström 2011). Abundant research indicates that listeners perceive higher tempo (faster) music as happier than slower tempo music and that higher tempo music has a more positive impact on consumer attitudes and

purchasing decisions (See Bruner 1990: 95; Webster and Weir 2005). However, the relationship between tempo, happiness and positive consumer attitudes is not direct as listeners seem to find medium tempo music between 70 and 110 beats per minute to evoke the most positive feelings (Brunner 1990: 95). Other research points out that very high tempo music can draw attention to a message but can also distract the cognitive resources of listeners away from the actual content of the message and weaken their capacity to remember it (Shevy and Hung 2013: 318).

Mode and scale

The mode of a piece of music refers to the patterns of intervals or changes in pitch between notes. Contemporary western music is most frequently composed in the Ionian mode, which includes the Major and Minor scales. The Major scale is defined by intervals in pitch following the pattern: whole step – whole step – half step – whole step – whole step – whole step – half step. In the Natural Minor scale, the most common of the minor scales, the pattern of whole and half steps is: whole step – half step – whole step – whole step – half step – whole step – whole step (Levitin 2006: 36-37). As Chase explains, this "seemingly technical difference … makes a profound emotional difference when you hear the resulting music" (2006: 241). In western cultures, the major scale is widely perceived as happier, brighter and more joyful than the natural minor scale, which is typically perceived as sad, sentimental and sometimes anxious or frightening (Brunner 1990: 100; Gabrielsson and Lindström 2011; Levitin 2006: 38).

Marketing research indicates that the mode and scale of a piece of music can have a range of effects on consumer behaviour. Stout and Leckenby (1988) found that music in the major scale and music that mixed the major and minor scales generated more positive attitudes to advertisements than music in the minor scale. Alpert and Alpert (1990) found that music in the major scale made respondents feel happier and more positive towards products and brands, while music in the minor scale made respondents feel sad but also increased the likelihood that they would purchase a product.

Dynamics / Loudness

The dynamics or changes in the relative loudness of a piece of music also has important effects on emotional responses and consumer behaviour as well as the narrative power of a piece of music to tell a story. Gabrielsson summarizes research on the emotional effects of dynamics in music, emphasizing the more positive effects of louder music and crescendo (soft to loud):

> *Loud music may be associated with expressions of intensity/power, excitement, tension, anger, and joy; soft music with softness, peace, tenderness, sadness, and fear… Large variations of loudness may suggest fear; small variations happiness or activity. Rapid changes in loudness may be associated with playfulness, pleading, or fear; few or no changes with sadness, peace, and dignity* (2018: 219).

Dynamics also include the silences between sounds, which can have a powerful impact on listener engagement and memory. Olsen (1995) found that stopping background music for up to 3 seconds to highlight a message can increase listener recall of the message, but too much silence decreased recall by allowing the attention of listeners to wander.

Instrumentation

Different instruments, combinations of instruments and how they are played can also evoke different emotions (Brunner 1990: 95, 97). Composers often choose instruments that generate higher pitched sounds – such as the piccolo – to evoke more joyful emotions and instruments that generate lower pitched sounds – such as the double bass or tuba to evoke feelings of solemnity (Levetin 2006: 28). For example, in Prokofiev's 'Peter and the Wolf,' the bird is represented with the flute, which plays higher pitch notes, and by a fast tempo melody (allegro), and the wolf is represented with the lower pitch of three French horns and a slower tempo melody (andante molto) (Levitin 2006: 28). A controlled experiment by Lucassen (2006) found that the cello consistently evoked strong sad emotions, the marimba prompted strong happy emotions, while the piano stimulated a range of emotions – associated with the wide range of pitches a piano can generate.

Other elements of music structure

Beyond the research on music in marketing, musicologists and psychologists have examined the emotional effects of almost all elements of music structure (Juslin and Sloboda 2011). For example, pitch – which corresponds with the frequency of soundwaves – can evoke a wide range of emotions from joy and excitement to sadness and fear. Typically, higher pitch notes evoke positive emotions, while lower pitches evoke negative emotions such as sadness and fear (Chase 2006: 172; Levitin 2006: 26). Melody, which is the pattern of a series of pitches also has emotional effects on listeners with rising melodic lines of increasingly higher pitch notes evoking emotions of anticipation, joy, fear and anger and descending melodic lines typically conveying feelings of sadness or serenity (Chase 2006: 627; Levitin 2006: 27). Rhythm, which is the duration that notes are played, can also convey and evoke emotions, with shorter rhythmic values generally evoking joy, longer rhythmic values evoking sadness or pensiveness, and sudden changes in rhythm evoking anger or fear (Chase 2006: 531). Individual elements of music structure may not evoke a strong emotional response on their own, but when multiple elements of music structure are deliberately combined, they can have clear, consistent and powerful emotional effects on listeners (Gabrielsson and Lindström 2011).

Spoken Voices

In this article we do not examine the musical quality of human voices but simply ask one basic question about whose voices are heard, specifically whether people from the global South speak for themselves, in their own voices and languages, or voices from the global North speak for them. This simple question reflects decades of debate about the relative power of subaltern agents to speak for themselves (Morris 2010; Spivak 2010), which have also been incorporated into NGO codes of ethics. For example, CONCORD, which represents European NGOs, calls on its member organizations to "Ensure those whose situation is being represented have the opportunity to communicate their stories themselves" (2006: 2). Similarly, InterAction, which represents US-based NGOs, advises that 'the voice of the people who are the subject matter of public education should be represented in materials' (2018: 16). We analyse the voices in NGO videos by coding spoken voices and accents as western or non-western, as male or female, and as speaking in English or other languages.

How music influences emotions and consumer behaviour

Neurological research has established that listeners not only perceive emotions expressed in music, but that music also evokes neurological and physiological reactions closely associated with emotional responses - such as increased heart rate, respiration, muscle activity (especially smiling), and electrical skin conductance (Peretz 2011). Brain imaging technology also indicates that music activates specific parts of the brain that process emotions as well as the release of neurochemicals, such as cortisol (Swaminathan and Schellenburg 2015: 191). In short, music not only represents emotions but can also make listeners experience those emotions. The scientific understanding of how and why music influences emotional reactions in the brain is still limited but suggests that neurological responses to music and sound served evolutionary functions, such as the fight or flight reaction, and that the brain's response to music is an evolutionary product of its capacity to interpret emotion in human voices (Juslin et al. 2011).

The process through which music influences emotions and in turn consumer behaviour is typically explained through the 'elaboration likelihood model' (ELM) which identifies two routes to persuasion and attitude change (Cohen 2013b). The central route involves the deliberate use of logic and rational analysis. The peripheral route involves features unrelated to the logical quality of an idea or attempt to persuade, such as the credibility or attractiveness of the person who delivers the message, production quality, and emotional responses to background music (Petty and Cacioppo 1986). The effect of music on consumer behaviour operates primarily through the peripheral route to persuasion, but some research also suggests that it can also operate through the central route by encouraging listeners to devote more cognitive attention to the message (Brunner 1990: 100; Shevy and Hung 2013). In the context of consumer decision-making, the central route to persuasion tends to operate when a decision requires serious rational analysis – such as buying a house or car or insurance – and consumers must consciously devote cognitive energy to the decision. As Shevy and Hung explain, "attitudes and learning produced through the central route of the ELM model are more enduring, more resistant to counter-persuasion, and more predictive of behavior than those produced through the peripheral route." However, "the price for trying to achieve a high-quality central-route attitude in advertising, though, is that it requires a strong argument that can withstand the scrutiny of potential consumers" (2013: 315). In this context, marketers and fundraisers often attempt to persuade consumers and donors through either a combination of the central and peripheral routes or through the peripheral route alone – by trying to effect how people *feel* about a product or brand rather than what they *think* about it.

Research indicates that the effect of music on consumer behaviour is most powerful in contexts of low cognitive involvement in which decisions can be influenced by peripheral factors related to how a person *feels* about a commodity or brand rather than their rational assessment of it (Brunner 1990: 100; Shevy and Hung 2013). All the elements of music structure discussed above can be manipulated to evoke specific emotional reactions by consumers towards a product or brand. Research on film soundtracks indicates that the music used in films can have similarly powerful effects on audience's reactions to characters, sometimes in contradiction to cognitive information from the script (Cohen 2013b; Green 2010). In the context of NGO fundraising videos, non-profit marketers may seek to prompt viewers to make donations through the central route to processing by presenting logical arguments about the importance of the cause and the capacity of the NGO to respond to it or through the peripheral route by trying to evoke emotional

responses from viewers. Our analysis of NGO videos indicates that fundraisers use both strategies but rely more heavily on peripheral strategies that seek to elicit donations by stimulating emotional responses to global poverty rather than by presenting rational arguments and factual evidence.[2]

3. Music, emotions and persuasion in NGO fundraising videos

Against the background of theoretical perspectives on representations of global poverty in Section 1 and research on the effects of music on emotions and consumer behaviour in Section 2, we want to understand how contemporary NGOs represent global poverty and development in music and sound. We pose four questions: 1) What emotions does the music in NGO videos portray? 2) What narratives about poverty and development do those emotions suggest? 3) What elements of music structure do NGO videos use to evoke those emotions? 3) Whose voices are heard in the videos?

Methodology: Listening to NGO Marketing Videos

In this project, we analyse English-language videos created by NGOs based in the UK, US and Canada. We focus on NGOs from these three countries with the goal of analyzing with the highest possible accuracy the spoken voices and lyrics in the videos as well as the relative familiarity of particular songs and musical genres. Our method to select NGOs and their videos should be easily replicable. For each country, we selected the top 10 NGOs from the membership list of the relevant NGO umbrella organization (BOND, InterAction, Canadian Council for International Cooperation), ranked by revenue - using data from the relevant government charity regulator. We selected NGOs based on revenue because it provides a strong indicator of the resources they have to invest in marketing and video production, suggesting that decisions about the use of music are more likely to be intentional. We then used the selection tools in Youtube to identify the most frequently watched videos produced by each NGO.[3] For some organizations, the top videos were all short, so we included up to three 30-second videos from each NGO in our list for a total of ten videos from each of the three countries. Although the sample of videos is not large, in total, the 30 videos had been viewed on Youtube over 105 million times and each of the top ten videos had over one million views (See Appendix 1). Based on the limited amount of factual information and the powerful emotional content in most of the videos, we infer that they were primarily created for fundraising purposes rather than public awareness or education.

To identify the emotions evoked by the soundtrack for each video, we each separately listened to each video and coded the soundtrack. First, we coded each soundtrack based on the emotions that it reflected, using Plutchick's (1980) model of 8 basic emotions (anger, anticipation, joy, trust, fear, surprise, sadness, disgust) with concentric circles that include an additional 24

[2] Of the 30 videos, 11 used the peripheral route (predominantly emotional messaging with little or no factual information) and 19 used a combination of the central and peripheral routes (emotional engagement mixed with some facts and rational argument). See Appendix 1 on project web page: http://johndcameron.com

[3] For each NGO we followed the same steps to identify the most popular videos on Youtube: 1) Search for NGO Youtube channel; 2) From the organization's Youtube channel, select 'Videos'; 3) Sort videos by 'most popular.' We identified and ranked the NGO videos by number of views on May 15, 2020.

variations in intensity.[4] Other models of emotions exist (e.g., Eckman 1992; Fritz et al. 2009) but we chose Plutchink's model because it includes the widest range of emotions and includes variations of intensity in emotions. For example, according to Plutchick's model, 'sadness' is a basic emotion while 'pensiveness' and 'grief' are the respectively less intense and more intense variations. In most of the videos, there were clear differences between music that sounded happy or exciting and music that sounded sad or frightening. However, the emotional tone of some of the music was more ambiguous and challenging to code – for example, subtle distinctions between pensiveness (mild sadness) and serenity (mild joy). To control for these ambiguities, each researcher coded the soundtracks separately and we then compared our coding. When codes differed, we re-individually re-analyzed the music and if our coding still differed, we assigned the more positive code (e.g., serenity rather than pensiveness). After coding each soundtrack based on our analysis of the emotions it expressed, we coded them again based on the use of spoken voice, distinguishing between videos in which people from the global South speak for themselves, people from the global North speak for themselves, or people from the global North speak for people from the global South, as well as the perceived sex of the speaker.

Finally, we coded the music in the videos based on their musical structure, first using the elements of music structure described in Section 2 (musical genre, tempo, mode and scale, dynamics, instrumentation) and then through an inductive process based on any other elements of music structure that were particularly prominent in each piece of music as well as the use of non-musical sounds.[5]

4. Music Structure, Emotion and Narratives of Poverty and Development

Music can tell stories and evoke powerful emotions. The music and sound featured in the 30 most-watched NGO videos in the UK, US and Canada reflected two clear and reoccurring emotional patterns that highlight persistent narratives about the global South and the process of global development (see Appendix2). The most common audio narrative, in 16 videos, used elements of musical structure that evoked negative emotions of sadness (9) and fear (7) to represent the global South. Eight of those 16 videos employed changes in the structure of the music to evoke more than one emotional response, with music that evoked sadness or fear to represent the global South and music that evoked joy to represent the global North and the interventions of NGOs. For example, three of the videos begin with images from the global South accompanied by sad music which becomes happy as images representing the interventions of the NGO appear. Similarly, two videos begin with images from the global North accompanied by joyful music which then becomes frightening and sad, respectively, as the images and storyline shifts to the global South. By contrast, 11 videos used music structure that evoked joy to represent people in the global South in combination with the work of the specific NGO, reinforcing the 'poor but happy' narrative about the global South (Crossley 2012) and the 'white saviour' narrative that Northern NGOs are the source of positive change (Cole 2017). The videos that accompanied these pieces of music featured images of smiling people from the global South interwoven with images of NGO staff to foster positive feelings. One video - by Amnesty International (Canada) - used a clip from Nina Simone's recording of 'Sinnerman' to evoke an

[4] See: https://www.6seconds.org/2017/04/27/plutchiks-model-of-emotions/

[5] Our full analysis of the 30 videos, including all coding, is available on the project web page: http://johndcameron.com

even stronger emotion – ecstasy - to highlight the work of human rights activists around the world. Curiously, however, this is the only video that represents actors from the global South – or any aspect of global development - with such emotionally positive music. Of the nine videos that feature images from the global North or Northern development actors (such as NGO staff), eight are accompanied by music that evokes positive emotions (serenity and joy). Only one video – Save the Children's #Dear Daddy video – uses music that evokes negative emotions (sadness) to accompany images and a storyline from the global North, in this case about misogyny.

In sum, the global South was represented with music that evoked negative emotions of sadness and fear in 16 videos. In 11 videos, music that evoked positive, joyful emotions was used to represent the combination of images from the global South and the NGO. By contrast, the global North and Northern NGOs were represented with music that evoked positive emotions of joy in eight out of nine videos, thus reinforcing prevailing stereotypes of the global South as sad and frightening and the global North as happy.

Music structure: How NGO videos use music to evoke emotions

Almost all the videos (28) used music in the soundtracks while two used carefully produced non-musical sounds (footsteps, wind, children crying, sirens, explosions) and several others used non-musical sounds, such as explosions and earthquakes, in combination with music. The soundtracks do not reflect any single musical formula but do reflect a consistent range of strategies to convey and evoke emotional narratives about poverty and development.

Musical Genres: Significantly, of the 28 videos that featured music, all used western musical genres – western classical (13), pop (11), jazz (1) and world music (3). It thus appears that rather than use the video soundtracks as an opportunity to share with western listeners music from the countries that NGOs work in, NGOs used music from the global North to represent the global South – prioritizing musical structures familiar to western listeners as a strategy to engage their emotions. As we explained in Section 2, marketing research shows that unfamiliar music increases the 'cognitive load' on listeners and decreases their emotional engagement and ability to recall advertising messages. From a marketing perspective, the decision to use familiar-sounding music makes sense, but from a representational perspective it is a colonial move to overlay western music onto visual images of the global South.

Music structure and the narrative of the global South as sad and frightening

Nine of the videos used music that evoked sadness to represent the global South and seven videos used music and sounds that evoked fear. To create feelings of sadness, the videos used similar elements of musical structure including slow tempo, soft dynamics, the minor scale, sparse instrumentation – such as solo piano or piano and cello, descending melodic lines, and long rhythmic values. Some pieces of music still used the major scale but combined with slow tempo, descending melodic lines and long rhythmic values to evoke feelings of sadness. The consistent use of these elements of music structure suggests that the video producers were intentionally trying to convey and evoke sad emotions through the music. For example, Plan Canada's 'Give Hope' video and CARE's 'Dear Daddy' video use almost identical elements of musical structure: slow tempo, soft dynamics, and the major scale combined with long rhythmic values and descending melodic lines played on the piano and cello. In one case – Save the

Children USA's 'Sexy Model' video – the soundtrack simply uses the absence of music to evoke feelings of sadness and seriousness that contrast with the joyful emotions evoked by the music at the beginning of the video.

Similarly, the seven videos that use music evoking fear also employed a similar range of musical strategies. Tempo was typically quick, evoking a feeling of urgency. The scale was most often minor, but in two cases the scale was indeterminate which created a sense of uncertainty and confusion. For example, Islamic Relief Canada's 'Myanmar Emergency Appeal' video uses long suspended notes on the cello in the minor scale interspersed with rapid drumming to evoke a strong feeling of apprehension and fear. The World Vision Canada 'Justice Requires Action' video and Save the Children UK's 'Most Shocking Second a Day' videos both used carefully produced non-musical sounds to evoke feelings of fear: wind, a child crying, adults shouting, sirens, gunshots and explosions. Islamic Relief UK's 'Yemen Emergency Appeal' uses non-musical sounds (explosions) followed by long melodic drones on the double bass with rapid tempo bursts of percussion on the timpani and snare drums to create a clear sense of apprehension and danger.

Music structure and the narrative of the global South as poor but happy and hopeful
The 11 videos that represented the global South with joyful music also used a consistent pattern of musical strategies, including fast tempo, major mode, loud or rising dynamics (crescendo), ascending melodic lines that increase in pitch, increased instrumentation – which creates a sense of crescendo, and short rhythmic values. For example, the music in Feed the Children USA's 'Cooking is Fun' video is clearly and consistently joyful. The feelings of joy are created with a quick tempo, major mode, loud dynamics, increasing instrumentation, short rhythmic values and a rising melodic line in the human whistling. Similarly, Amnesty International Canada's 'The More We Fight' video uses a clip from Nina Simone's recording of 'Sinnerman' to evoke emotions of pure ecstasy. The music is in the minor mode, which typically conveys sadness, but also uses a very fast tempo combined with increasing instrumentation, ascending melodic lines – with the vocals climaxing on a high pitch, and short rhythmic values which become shorter through the piece.

Music structure and the agency of Northern NGOs
Many of the videos also used elements of music structure to highlight the agency of the NGO, most often beginning with sad music to represent the global South and then becoming happier as the role of the NGO is introduced. These videos create the shift from sad to more joyful emotions by transitioning from elements of musical structure that evoke sad feelings to elements of musical structure that evoke joy. For example, World Vision USA's 'Chosen' video begins with slow tempo, soft dynamics, and sparse instrumentation (piano and soft voice) and then dramatically increases in tempo, dynamics, and instrumentation at the crucial point in the video when the intervention of the NGO is highlighted. Similarly, Heifer International USA's 'What We Do' video also employs a transition in tempo from slow to faster, increasing dynamics, increasing instrumentation, and ascending melodic lines to evoke a shift from sadness to serenity and joy as the work of the NGO is introduced. Significantly, 28 of 30 videos use dynamic silence in the final seconds of the video to highlight the logo of the NGO on the screen. As we explained in section two, marketing research indicates that short periods of silence increase the likelihood that audiences will remember a message – a strategy that NGOs seem to use very consistently.

Whose voices are heard in NGO videos?

Questions about voice, silence and who has the authority to speak are central to longstanding debates about agency and representation in international development (Morris 2010; Parpart and Parashar 2019). As we noted above, the codes of conduct created by both Interaction (USA) and Concord (Europe) specifically guide their member organizations to enable the subjects of communications messaging to speak for themselves. It is thus perhaps surprising that in more than two-thirds of the videos featuring spoken voices, it is western voices that speak for people from the global South. 22 out of the 30 videos featured spoken voices either as voiceovers or directly from the people featured in the video (see Appendix3). In the 8 videos that feature people who appear to be from the global North, they always speak for themselves. However, in only 4 videos do people in the global South speak for themselves and in only 1 video (Oxfam Canada) do they speak for themselves in their own languages other than English (with subtitles) – with one other video (Islamic Relief USA), which features singing in Arabic. By contrast, 10 videos feature images of people in the global South but use a voiceover with a clearly western accent (American, British, or Canadian). In these 10 videos, a voice from the global North speaks for people from the global South, whose voices are effectively silenced. They are seen, but not heard. In many other contexts, it would be considered profoundly colonial for voices from the North to speak for people from the South, but in NGO fundraising videos the practice very clearly continues. Given the extensive debates about the importance of voice and the clear guidance in NGO codes of conduct to enable Southern voices to speak for themselves, it is difficult to understand why so many NGOs would choose to use western-sounding voices in their videos. The only explanation we can imagine is that the video producers and NGO marketing directors chose to prioritize voices that would sound familiar and be unambiguously easy for target audiences to understand rather than voices that would accurately represent the speakers and respect the dignity of Southern actors to speak for themselves.

There is no clear pattern in the gender of the voices in the videos – 9 feature female voices, 11 feature male voices and 3 use both. However, male voices were most common in the British videos (7/10 with spoken voices) while female voices were most common in the Canadian videos (5/8 with spoken voices), perhaps suggesting NGO efforts to target specific genders in their communications or cultural perceptions the relative authority of male and female voices (Anderson and Klofstad 2012; Sorokowski et al. 2019).

Discussion

Our analysis of the music and sound in the thirty NGO videos generated clear responses to the four questions that we set out to answer. First, the soundtracks reflected three prevailing sets of emotions, in varying intensities: sadness, fear and joy. Second, the soundtracks used music and sound that evoked these emotions in ways that articulated three persistent narratives and stereotypes about global poverty. People and communities in the global South were represented primarily with music and sound that evoked emotions of sadness and fear, reinforcing stereotypes about the global South as sad and frightening. Joyful music was employed primarily to emphasize the agency of Northern NGOs, with many of the soundtracks using a shift from sad to happy sounding music to represent the interventions of NGOs, thus reinforcing the white saviour narrative that solutions to global poverty come from the global North. Third, the soundtracks do not reflect any single formula of music structure but do reflect a consistent range

of strategies to convey and evoke specific emotional narratives about poverty and development. To evoke emotions of sadness, the videos use combinations of slow tempo, soft dynamics, the minor scale, sparse instrumentation, descending melodic lines, and long rhythmic values. To foster feelings of fear, the videos use quick tempos, minor or indeterminate scales and non-musical sounds, such as gunshots and explosions. Joy is represented with fast tempo, the major scale, loud or rising dynamics (crescendo), ascending melodic lines, increased instrumentation, and short rhythmic values. Finally, in answer to the question of whose voices are heard in the videos, we found that people from the global South are much more frequently represented with voiceovers in western sounding accents than allowed to speak for themselves, suggesting persistently stealthy forms of colonialism at play in decisions about NGO communications and marketing.

Conclusion

Development NGOs clearly use music and sound in their marketing videos in highly strategic ways in efforts to influence audiences' emotions and solicit charitable support. The structure of the music in NGO videos also clearly reflects and reinforces a series of prominent stereotypes about global poverty and development: the global South as sad and frightening, the global South as poor but happy, and the 'white saviour' narrative of NGOs and other actors from the global North as the solution to global poverty. Because the music typically plays a secondary role to the visual images in NGO videos, the emotional effects of music structure and the narratives about poverty and development in NGO music videos may not be immediately obvious to viewer-listeners, but abundant research highlights the hidden power of music to shape our feelings, understandings and behaviour.

We hope that other scholars with interdisciplinary backgrounds will work together to analyse the ways that music and sound are used to represent global poverty and development. More research is needed to expand the sample size of videos analysed to enable disaggregated examination of national differences as well as differences among specific NGOs and between different sectors of NGOs (e.g., environmental, domestic charities, international development). It will also be important to engage with the producers of NGO videos to better understand their intent, strategic and ethical considerations, and creative process. Another important area of research involves the representation of the global South in the soundtracks of feature films. We also call on NGOs to incorporate analysis of music and sound into their ethical guidelines for representing poverty and development, similar to the ethical guidelines that NGOs have already created for the use of visual images. These guidelines could include best practices for representing global poverty and development in music and sound, such as: avoiding music that reinforces stereotypes about the global South as either sad or frightening, avoiding music that highlights NGOs as the most important source of agency and change, using music to celebrate and emphasize the agency of actors from the global South, and allowing voices from the global South to speak for themselves rather than using voiceovers with western accents to speak for them.

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Appendix1: The 30 most watched NGO videos on Youtube (as of 1 May 2020)

UK NGO Videos				
Organization	**Video Title**	**Publication Date**	**Views**	**Time**
Save the Children International	Most Shocking Second a Day Video	05-Mar-14	64,165,422	1:33
Comic Relief	The YouTube Boy Band - it's all about you(tube)	20-Mar-14	15,193,696	4:08
Water Aid	If men had periods – manpons	26-May-15	2,397,846	0:51
Islamic Relief Worldwide	Saving Lives Since 1984	30-May-17	617,332	0:30
World Vision UK	Game of Thrones' Jerome Flynn meets children affected by conflict	08-May-19	248,525	0:37
VSO	VSO: Help make change on a global scale	13-Aug-12	127,661	1:55
Islamic Relief Worldwide	Give Qurbani with Islamic Relief	03-Aug-18	116,617	0:30
World Vision UK	Our kids need us	16-Dec-16	109,192	0:46
Islamic Relief Worldwide	Somalia Drought Appeal 2019	12-Jul-19	107,946	0:30
Care International UK	Lend with care - animated film	11-Apr-16	56,968	1:45
US NGO Videos				
Organization	**Video Title**	**Publication Date**	**Views**	**Time**
Save the Children (UK)	The Most Important "Sexy" Model Video Ever	06-May-14	4,582,304	2:17
US Fund for UNICEF	It's Time to End FGM – Chad Mannequin Challenge	06-Feb-17	1,815,334	0:57
Heifer International (US)	Heifer International – What We Do	12-Feb-14	1,457,196	1:56
Islamic Relief USA	Islamic Relief USA: Maher Zain - The Chosen One	23-Sep-10	1,295,233	3:55
World Vision USA	Share Big Dreams this Christmas!	09-Nov-16	883,971	0:30
World Vision USA	Together We Are Greater Than Hardship	26-Feb-16	772,426	1:00
Care International USA	#DearDaddy	16-Dec-15	669,734	5:00
Childfund International	ChildFund - Change The World	26-Feb-18	323,697	1:17
Feed the Children	Cooking is fun	07-Mar-19	319,421	0:59

Oxfam America	Caution: Ingredients May Cause Land Grabs	01-Oct-13	256,884	1:07

Canadian NGO Videos				
Organization	**Video Title (with hyperlink)**	**Publication Date**	**Views**	**Time**
World Vision – Canada	Justice Requires Action	06-Feb-19	1,721,892	0:33
Plan Canada	Give hope for a brighter future: Sponsor a girl	13-Oct-15	1,122,548	1:31
World Vision Canada	World Vision Canada: It Starts With Your Click	18-Dec-19	754,104	0:30
World Vision Canada	With love, victory over poverty is possible	19-Mar-18	753,032	0:30
Islamic Relief Canada	Hunger Kills - Your Zakat Saves | Save a life this Ramadan	06-May-19	713,317	0:33
Islamic Relief Canada	Myanmar Emergency Appeal	04-Sep-17	697,114	0:40
Oxfam Canada	Oxfam Canada: Ending Poverty Begins with Women's Rights	26-Feb-20	502,755	0:58
Amnesty International Canada	The More We Fight	07-Feb-19	394,512	1:15
Médecins Sans Frontiers / Doctors Without Borders	Doctors Without Borders - Your Support Goes A Long Way	11-Sep-16	388,980	1:49
CARE Canada	CARE: Bringing us together to end inequality	13-Dec-18	194,201	1:03

Appendix2: Emotions evoked by music videos*	**US Videos**	**UK Videos**	**CDN Videos**	**Total**
Negative emotions to represent global South (16)				
Sad / pensive	4	1	4	9
Fear	1	4	2	7
Positive emotions to represent global South (11)				
Serenity / Joy	4	3	3	10
Ecstasy	-	-	1	1
Positive emotions to represent global North (8)				
Serenity / Joy	2	6	-	8
Negative emotions to represent the global North (1)				
Sadness	1	-	-	1

**Some videos feature changes in the music structure to emphasize changes in emotional tone, so evoke more than one set of emotions - bringing the totals to more than 30.*

Appendix3: Who speaks in NGO Videos?	**US Videos (10)**	**UK Videos (10)**	**CDN Videos (10)**	**Total (30)**
No spoken voice	5	0	2	7
Voices with Western accents	4	9	6	19
Voices with accents from the global South in English	1	1	1	3
Voice of people from the global South in languages other than English (with sub-titles)	0	0	1	1
Female Voice	2	2	5	9
Male Voice	2	7	2	11
Both Female and Male Voices	1	1	1	3