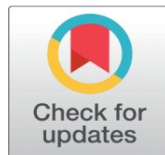


# RHYTHM OF INFLUENCE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE BEATLES AND BTS IN POPULAR CULTURE

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## ABSTRACT

A comparative study of Rock n Roll and K-POP through popular culture focusing on “The Beatles” and “The BTS.” The study examines the identity of two generations from the perspective of popular culture. It also investigates the historical, cultural, and economic background of two generations and the changing process of the production and consumption of popular music of that Era. The study analyzes their musical styles, lyrical themes, fan engagement strategies, and the ways in which they have influenced popular culture globally. Popular culture is the set of practices, beliefs, and objects that embody the most broadly shared meanings of a social system. Music, one of the most important elements of the culture, has emerged with a unique style. In today’s improving and ever-changing conditions, music has become an element which almost everybody in society encounters, benefits from and sometimes seeks solutions for their problems with popular music is a powerful tool to impact teens of all times. By looking on their journeys and impact, this study aims to provide insights into the evolutions of music fandom, cultural globalization, and the enduring appeal of iconic music acts across generations.

**Keywords:** Rock N Roll, K-POP, The Beatles, BTS, Popular Culture, Identity, Generations, Music, Fan Engagement, Cultural Globalization



## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Beatles and BTS, two of the most legendary and impactful music groups in history, originate from distinct time periods but possess striking similarities in their worldwide influence. The Beatles, established in the 1960s in Liverpool, England, transformed rock and pop music, becoming trailblazers in musical innovation, cultural significance, and extensive fandom. Their combination of memorable tunes, groundbreaking sound, and insightful lyrics secured their status as one of the greatest bands ever.

Conversely, BTS, which originated in 2013 in Seoul, South Korea, is a K-pop ensemble that has amassed a vast international following, reshaping the global music landscape with their distinctive mixture of genres, emotional resonance, and themes of self-acceptance, mental health awareness, and social justice. BTS has a passionately devoted fanbase known as ARMY, who have been instrumental in propelling the group to global fame.

The Beatles played a crucial role in the emergence of the "British Invasion" in the U.S. during the 1960s, paving the way for British rock bands to achieve international success. Despite their differences in language, culture, and period, The Beatles and BTS have a lot in common when it comes to creativity, fan interaction, cultural influence, and worldwide recognition. Both questioned the conventions of their respective industries and reshaped the interaction between artists and audiences. Their achievements provide insightful information about the shifting dynamics of pop culture throughout the world and the developing ability of music to unite and transform. They've also made history by being the first K-pop group to perform at the Grammy Awards and the first to reach the top of the Billboard Hot 100.

Though their musical genres and cultural backgrounds vary, both bands possess a unique talent for engaging audiences around the world, utilizing music as a means for societal change and personal expression. They are not merely musicians but also cultural figures who have surpassed the limits of their styles and eras, leaving a lasting impact on global pop culture. Through a comparative cultural analysis, this research seeks to examine these similarities and differences, concentrating on important aspects including fan culture, media tactics, social messaging, musical creativity, and economic effect. This research will help us better understand how music, media, and global culture interact by looking at how each group represents the ideals and issues of their respective eras.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

**The Beatles:** The Beatles' significant influence on culture is often a topic of scholarly research. Academics frequently describe them as the musical backdrop of the 1960s, closely associated with significant social and political movements. As Harrison (2003) points out, the Beatles represented a departure from conventional values and embodied the essence of the counterculture movement. Their impact reached far beyond just music—Giro (2006) observes that their style, way of life, and philosophical concepts shaped the thoughts and behaviours of young individuals. Their songs became a platform for protest, peace, and personal expression, helping to shape the spirit of their time.

**BTS:** BTS has similarly made a substantial impact on culture and society, albeit in a more globalized and digital context. Choi & Lee (2020) state that BTS has emerged as a beacon of positive social transformation, advocating for themes like self-love, acceptance, and mental health awareness through their songs and public interactions. Kang (2019) emphasizes BTS's crucial involvement in soft power diplomacy, noting that their achievements have not only enhanced South Korea's cultural influence internationally but have also spotlighted issues such as youth empowerment and social justice. Their fanbase, known as ARMY, is characterized by Park (2021) as a "global phenomenon," bringing together fans from diverse backgrounds and engaging in various social causes around the world.

The Beatles' achievements in the United States during the 1960s helped to position them as international icons. Frith (2007) points out that the Beatles played

a key role in the "British Invasion," a time when British music and culture captured the American market. Their success broke through national boundaries, supported by the emergence of television and radio, which allowed their songs to be broadcast to a global audience. Harrison (2003) states that the Beatles symbolized a departure from the conventional, with their music and message resonating with individuals from diverse cultures and backgrounds.

In a similar vein, BTS's ascent to worldwide fame has been propelled by the internet and digital media, which have allowed K-pop to traverse international boundaries in ways that earlier music genres could not. Kim and Lee (2021) assert that BTS's capability to leverage social media and streaming services has allowed them to connect with fans around the globe, overcoming language and cultural obstacles. Heller (2019) emphasizes that their use of multilingual lyrics, along with their proactive engagement with international fans, has contributed to their global success, showcasing the impact of digital globalization in the 21st century.

### **3. RESEARCH GAP**

Despite both The Beatles and BTS being acknowledged as transformative cultural symbols, academic studies that directly assess their effects on popular culture are still limited. Each band has significantly shaped their own generations, but the circumstances surrounding their rise—The Beatles amidst the societal turbulence of the 1960s and BTS in the age of digital globalization—offer distinct challenges and opportunities for comparison.

Both The Beatles and BTS have had a significant impact on fashion trends, yet the characteristics and context of their influence vary greatly. The Beatles' early aesthetic was largely influenced by their manager, Brian Epstein, and their style came to represent the youth rebellion of the 1960s. As the band transformed over time, their fashion choices evolved as well, reflecting their artistic development and alignment with the counterculture.

Conversely, BTS is often perceived as ahead of the curve in the K-pop industry, where the members' styles are more meticulously curated by their management but still deeply resonate with fans, thereby contributing to global K-pop fashion trends.

Although The Beatles' popularity facilitated the global spread of Western pop culture, their impact was primarily limited to the West during the 1960s. In contrast, BTS is part of the worldwide K-pop trend, which has integrated Western pop components with Korean traditions and has been effectively promoted globally through social media, resulting in a hybridized cultural identity. While there is considerable research on how BTS embodies cultural hybridity and contributes to the global proliferation of K-pop, there remains a lack of comparative studies on the global cultural exchange that both groups exemplify—The Beatles introducing Western pop to the world and BTS navigating the fusion of Eastern and Western cultures.

### **4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The proposed research that examines The Beatles and BTS in relation to popular culture holds considerable importance for multiple reasons. The Beatles and BTS rank among the most iconic and impactful music groups in history, and their influence extends beyond music, significantly shaping societal norms, trends, and cultural movements. By exploring how these two groups have affected popular culture across various generations, this research may offer meaningful insights into

the development of cultural dynamics, youth identity, and the globalization of music and media.

By analysing two of the most recognizable and significant figures in popular culture—The Beatles and BTS—this research contributes to our knowledge of how popular culture and the global music business are changing. This study provides insights into how music reflects and influences social ideals, generational identities, and international cultural interaction by contrasting musicians from various eras, cultures, and media environments. The research emphasizes how BTS has used technology in ways that The Beatles could not, yet both groups have attained similar societal resonance, making it especially pertinent in an era of fast digital development. Furthermore, this research emphasizes how crucial fan networks are to maintaining and growing cultural impact internationally.

## **5. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY**

The main goal of this research is to compare The Beatles and BTS, looking at how each group has shaped popular culture throughout the world. The purpose of this study is to investigate how these groups have had a comparable influence on music, media, young identity, and fan participation while coming from distinct historical eras and cultural origins. To comprehend the wider cultural importance of their worldwide popularity, the research examines their musical development, public personalities, fan networks, and societal influence. Furthermore, the study aims to demonstrate how cultural, social, and technical circumstances impact how artists engage with audiences and effect cultural change.

## **6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The cultural influence of The Beatles and BTS is examined and contrasted in this study using a qualitative research approach. This research is best suited for a qualitative method as it enables a thorough analysis of the social, cultural, and artistic components that characterize the effect of each group. Song lyrics, interviews, documentaries, biographies, academic papers, fan discussions, and media representations are among the secondary materials included in the study's content analysis. The research attempts to comprehend the underlying themes in the music, the development of public image, and the role of fan groups through interpretive analysis. The methodology is based on cultural studies and media theory, emphasizing the symbolic and communicative aspects of music and fandom in global contexts. It also applies discourse analysis to online fan interactions, including social media posts, fan forums, and digital campaigns, to investigate how fans interact with and interpret the cultural narratives surrounding both bands. The goal of this comparative analysis is not to rank the two groups, but rather to highlight the distinctive ways in which each has contributed to and influenced global popular culture.

## **7. ANALYSIS OF THIS STUDY**

The Beatles and BTS are two of the most well-known and significant names in world music history. Few musical groups have had as big and lasting an impact as The Beatles and BTS, even though the global music business has seen several cultural revolutions. Despite living in different cultural and technological contexts and being separated by more than 50 years, these two groups have influenced popular culture in ways that go beyond music. The Beatles, created in Liverpool,

England, in the early 1960s, unleashed a cultural revolution that permanently transformed music, fashion, and adolescent identity. BTS, a seven-member K-pop group from South Korea, emerged in 2013 and climbed to become a global sensation, revolutionizing the role of musicians in the digital era. BTS and The Beatles are both renowned for their inventive and progressive music. The Beatles were notable from the beginning for their original songwriting, vocal harmonies, and sound. A significant turning point in the history of popular music was their shift from the energetic pop of "Love Me Do" and "She Loves You" to the more experimental and reflective songs like "Strawberry Fields Forever" and "A Day in the Life." In addition to being economic hits, albums like *Rubber Soul*, *Revolver*, and *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* were also significant works of art. The Beatles revolutionized songwriting, record production, and the notion of the pop performer as an artist. Fan culture has played a vital role in the success and legacy of both The Beatles and BTS. The term Beatlemania was coined in the 1960s to describe the frenzy and adoration the band inspired, especially among young women. Fans screamed, cried, and fainted at their concerts, and the group's every move was covered obsessively by the media. This fan phenomenon was one of the first signs of a new kind of pop culture, where artists became larger-than-life figures with deep emotional connections to their audiences. For both The Beatles and BTS, fan culture has been essential to their success and legacy. The craze and admiration the band sparked, particularly among young women, was dubbed Beatlemania in the 1960s. At their concerts, fans sobbed, yelled, and passed out, while the media relentlessly chronicled every move the trio made. One of the earliest indications of a new type of pop culture, in which performers became legendary personalities with strong emotional bonds with their fans, was the fan phenomenon.

The Beatles were closely associated with the counterculture of the 1960s, a time when young people were questioning authority, resisting war, and experimenting with new lifestyles.

Songs like "Revolution" and "All You Need Is Love" became anthems of social change. Through their influence on language, art, fashion, and even politics, the Beatles contributed to the formation of a generation's identity. Another aspect of the inquiry is the financial impact on both organizations. The Beatles played a key role in what was known as the "British Invasion" of the American music market by advancing British culture and elevating the UK to a prominent position in the global music industry. Their revenue from music sales, merchandise, and shows was enormous.

BTS has had a comparable effect in South Korea. According to the Korean government, BTS contributes billions of dollars to the country's economy through travel, merchandise, record sales, and brand sponsorships. The "BTS effect" has expanded the Korean Wave (Hallyu), enhanced global awareness of Korean culture, and even affected the fashion, cosmetics, and IT sectors.

BTS is already making an impact, even though they are still active. Their message is growing in importance in today's fast changing world, and they are inspiring a new generation of musicians, especially in K-pop. Their ability to bring together admirers from all walks of life is proof of the unifying force of music.

The final component of this examination examines the legacies of these two groupings. The Beatles continue to have an impact over fifty years after their breakup. Their music continues to be studied, covered, and enjoyed. Their influence can be seen in the work of several performers from a range of genres, and they laid the groundwork for how bands write, record, and perform their music. Both groups' economic contributions are examined as well, demonstrating their significant



influence on both their home nations and the music business. In addition to generating billions of dollars for the South Korean economy from record sales, travel, performances, and commercial endorsements, BTS has helped K-pop become more globally recognized. The "British Invasion" of the American music market was a consequence of the Beatles' popularity, which also helped the British music business. BTS has pushed for social justice, mental health, and self-love, whereas The Beatles supported peace and countercultural movements. Additionally, both bands have advocated for social causes through their platforms. The study discovers that these two groups are more alike than they may first appear to be. Through skill, creativity, and fan interaction, both became well-known. Both shaped the world around them and transcended music via their influence

## **8. CONCLUSION**

The Beatles shaped modern pop culture in the 1960s, while BTS has redefined it for the digital age. Both groups are cultural powerhouses whose influence extends far beyond music. Despite coming from different generations and cultural contexts, they have a lot in common, including a dedication to musical innovation, a strong bond with fans, innovative use of media, and an ability to engage with social issues. Their journeys reflect the changing nature of celebrity, media, and audience interaction. From Beatlemania's mass media phenomenon to ARMY's digitally empowered activism, these fan communities have been central to shaping each group's legacy. Furthermore, both The Beatles and BTS have used their platforms to promote changes in society and emotional healing, proving that music can serve as a medium for control, unity, and communication in addition to providing enjoyment. In today's increasingly globalized world, BTS has carried on the Beatles' tradition of opening doors for international rock and pop musicians by further removing linguistic and cultural boundaries. Moreover, both groups have used their platforms to address important societal issues, inspiring fans to reflect, act, and connect. This comparative study demonstrates that, despite the significant changes that have occurred in the world between The Beatles' ascent and BTS's success, music's ability to inspire change, break down barriers, and bring people together across borders, languages, and generations is still very much alive. In the conclusion, this study emphasizes how music continues to influence and reflect the times. The Beatles and BTS are prime examples of how musicians may act as cultural change agents by bridging generations and geographical divides via their work. We may better comprehend the changing link between popular music, society, media, and global identity by comprehending their trajectories. This study advances our knowledge of how musical phenomena are dynamic forces of cultural change rather than merely byproducts of the business.

## **CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

None.

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