Title

The utilisation of music by casino managers: An interview study

Abstract

Music is ubiquitous in retail and commercial environments, with some managers believing that music can enhance the customer experience, increase footfall and sales and improve consumer satisfaction. Casino gambling is popular in the United Kingdom and anecdotal evidence suggests that music is often present. However, little is known about the rationale for music use from the perspective of casino managers. In this study semi-structured interviews were conducted with five casino managers to establish their motivations for utilising music, the factors informing their choice of music and the extent to which music is used with the intention of influencing gambling behaviour. Results showed that casino managers utilised two types of music - recorded background music, often sourced via external music supply companies and live music. Live music was often situated away from the gaming floor and used primarily to accompany participation in non-gambling activities. Recorded background music was not used with the direct aim of influencing customers' gambling behaviour, but to create the right atmosphere for gambling and to promote certain moods within the casinos. To achieve these aims casino managers manipulated the tempo, volume and genre of the recorded background music. Casino managers also reported that some gamblers listen to music via portable music players, possibly with the intention of customising their gambling experience. This study is unique as it has provided a first-hand account of casino managers' implicit theories with regards to why they utilise music and the roles which music is considered to fulfil in casinos.

Introduction

Within consumer research music is considered as part of the "servicescape" (i.e. the built environment encompassing its human made and physical surrounds), in which music is perceived and responded to by individuals, and consequently influences behaviour (Bitner, 1992). Music is often included within the design of retail and commercial environments such as shopping centres, restaurants, hotels and bars. Research conducted with the managers of hotels, restaurants and public houses suggests that managers use music in various ways, including to attract customers, create an appropriate atmosphere, mask unwanted noises and, to communicate an overall image to their customers (Areni, 2003). Managers also manipulated musical parameters such as tempo to encourage customers to either stay or leave the environment depending on the time of day, with managers believing that fast tempo music leads to increased purchasing (Areni, 2003). Certain genres of music, such as classical music were also utilised by some managers to promote an up-market image (Areni, 2003). Silence was considered to be inappropriate by the managers interviewed by Areni (2003), who believed that customers would perceive the environment to be empty and of poor quality. The managers also used music in an attempt to prevent negative behaviour by customers and to discourage undesirable customers from entering the environment (Areni, 2003). The managers' views demonstrate that they consider music to fulfil a number of roles and manipulate music with the intention of influencing the customer experience.

Within the context of gambling environments, background music features within amusement arcades (Griffiths & Parke, 2005). Based on their observations Griffiths and Parke (2005) suggested that amusement arcade managers choose music with the aim of appealing to their customers' musical preferences, basing their decisions on associations between particular music genres and the targeted age and gender of customers, as well as to match the machine they were playing. In one amusement arcade, gamblers were permitted to request certain music to be played, with one manager stating during an informal interview that playing requests kept the customers happy and "when they are happy, they are spending" (Griffiths & Parke, 2005: 5). However, it is unknown to what extent the characteristics of music choice in amusement arcades are similar to those in other gambling environments such as casinos.

Casino gambling is popular in the United Kingdom and currently has a 16% share of the United Kingdom gambling industry (Gambling Commission, 2015). Casinos offer visitors the opportunity to participate in gambling and non-gambling activities (e.g. eating and drinking). Casino managers feel responsibility for encouraging individuals to visit and remain in the casino, and also to attract repeat patronage (Mayer & Johnson, 2003). One way that casino managers try to fulfil their responsibilities is by using casino atmospherics, defined as "the physical and non-physical elements of a casino that can be controlled to change the attitudes and behaviors of both employees and customers" (Johnson, Mayer & Champaner, 2004: 2). Music may therefore be one tool which can help casino managers to achieve their aims.

Unsubstantiated claims about how background music may influence casino gambling are available in the public domain. In 2011 the website Business Pundit published an article titled "10 most sinister ways casinos keep you gambling", in which it identifies various means by which music may maintain gambling. It states that "mild, looping, hypnotic music" (defined as "music with no sharp crescendos, sudden diminuendos or pulsing bassnotes") is played in casinos, which "aids the gambler in entering a trance-like state" (Business Pundit, 2011). This particular article portrays potentially negative consequences of music's inclusion for casino gamblers. Research conducted in a laboratory environment using videos of simulated casino settings suggests that music's ability to influence perceived at-risk gambling intentions (i.e. likelihood of gambling beyond planned levels) might be related to casino design. Marmurek, Finlay, Kanetkar & Londerville (2007) found that music increased perceived at-risk gambling intentions within a "playground" design casino (i.e. a casino distinguished by spaciousness, pleasing décor elements, green space and moving water), but decreased within a "gaming" design casino (i.e. a casino which focuses entirely on the gambling machines, features low ceilings and crowded gaming areas). Schüll (2012) in her writings about casino design cites literature produced by an external music supply company which suggests that casino managers can use music to control a casino's ambience. However, as yet, research has not provided conclusive evidence about how music functions in real casino gambling situations from the perspective of casino managers nor has it been established whether there are commonalities in what, where, when, why, how and who selects the music.

Casinos are often subdivided into a number of spaces. Sterne (1997) offers an interpretation of background music in malls and retail spaces that is helpful when thinking about music in casinos. Sterne's observations of a shopping mall in the USA revealed the presence of two main types of music which functioned to organise space and promote certain behaviours. The first, "background music", was music altered from its original version, in terms of its lyrics and instrumentation so that, according to Sterne, consumers would experience the music as unthreatening but familiar. This "background music" was programmed to be played in a certain order; as such the music may evoke certain emotional responses in listeners, influence the speed of consumer movement and construct a sense of continuity between spaces within the shopping centre. The second, "foreground music", is music presented in its original form and heard within shops. This type of music serves to demarcate a space for a particular target demographic, and may create conflict with the "background music" because of its volume and its ability to command attention. Sterne's descriptions provide an insight into how music's presence can be planned and controlled, and potentially fulfil a range of functions within retail and commercial environments.

In summary music is somewhat ubiquitous in casinos, as it is in other commercial contexts, and has the potential to be used to demarcate space and influence customer behaviour. The questions are to what extent these functions also operate in casinos, and the belief systems underlying how and why casino managers utilise music. The aims of this study are therefore to examine the reasons why music is present in casino environments from the perspective of casino managers; to determine the factors influencing their choice of music; explore whether music is purposefully utilised to influence individuals' behaviour or the gambling experience and to explore casino managers' thoughts about how gamblers engage with music. Addressing these aims will provide information directly from casino managers about how their decisions surrounding music's inclusion may impact upon the gambling experience and individuals' behaviour.

Methods

An Internet search was conducted to identify casinos located in two counties within the United Kingdom – Yorkshire and Staffordshire. These counties were chosen because they had casinos which comprised a mix of casinos which were run by two of only three companies listed by the Gambling Commission as owning the majority of casinos in the United Kingdom (Gambling Commission, 2011) and independent casino operators. All of the casinos held '1968 Gambling Act' licenses, meaning that they could contain a maximum of 20 gaming machines (Gambling Commission, 2015b).

Eleven casinos were identified and casinos managers were invited by letter and e-mail to be interviewed for a research project investigating music in casinos. Face-to-face interviews were preferred as it provided an opportunity to observe the casino's layout, facilities, gambling activities and audio equipment. Telephone interviews were conducted with casino managers in instances where he or she preferred this method of communication or could only be interviewed at a time outside of usual working hours. Of the 11 casino managers that were approached, four agreed to be interviewed and one casino manager agreed to provide informal comments via the telephone.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with five casino managers (3 female; 2 male) in the United Kingdom. Four of the casinos were located in city centres and one casino was located 5

miles from a city centre. Due to commercial sensitivities, information concerning the interviewees and the casinos in which they work are not disclosed within this article. The average length of the interviews was 23 minutes, with durations ranging from 5 minutes (informal comments) to 45 minutes.

Ethical approval was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee within the Department of Music at The University of Sheffield. Informed consent was obtained either verbally or via a Consent Form before the interviews commenced.

Interview schedule

The interview schedule consisted of a series of open-ended questions designed to encourage respondents to articulate their utilisation of music within casinos. The questions were informed by literature within the field of music psychology (North & Hargreaves, 2008) and consumer research which suggests that certain music can be utilised with the aim of influencing individuals' behaviour in commercial environments (Areni, 2003). For example, North and Hargreaves (2008) reviewed literature which suggests that the genre of music (e.g. popular, classical, rock), its tempo and its volume can influence indices of behaviour in everyday situations such as the speed of consumer activity, individuals' liking for and perception of environments, patronage, purchasing, time perception and waiting experiences.

Casino managers were asked to describe the music present in the casino, their decision making with regards to when, how often and where music was played, how the music was sourced, customers' responses to the music, and their purpose in presenting music (including whether the music was intended to influence gambling behaviour). The interview also gathered general background information regarding the casino facilities and customers, in order to provide some context for the responses.

The interview questions included those below, with question prompts shown in brackets:

   a) What does this casino offer its customers? (gambling and non-gambling activities)
   b) How would you describe your customers? (age, gender, activities engaged with, frequency of visits to the casino)
   c) How is music incorporated into the casino environment? (recorded music, live music, location - gaming floor/bars/restaurants, equipment utilised to facilitate music's inclusion)
   d) What are you aims when incorporating music into the casino?
   e) Which factors determine music's presence within the casino (time of day, busy/quiet periods, customer requests, type of gamblers who are in the casino)
   f) How would you describe the music that is incorporated into the casino (genre, specific artists, music from certain decades -60s/70s/80s/90s/00s)
   g) How would you describe the customers' engagement with the music? (clapping, dancing, singing-along, verbal comments/complaints, making requests, listening to music via portable music players)
   h) To what extent is the music played intended to influence individuals' gambling behaviour or their gambling experience (mood, atmosphere, emotions)
   i) To what extent do you consider music as an important aspect of gambling in this casino?

Interview Analysis

All the interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Failure of the audio recording equipment during one interview meant that the notes made during the interview were used in the subsequent analysis.

The content of the interviews provided descriptive information about music's utilisation in terms of what, when, where, why and how. The first author coded the data and created the themes by adoption the Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) approach. This approach afforded theoretical freedom and it is not bound to exploring how individuals make sense of their experiences. Thematic Analysis provided flexibility so that experiences and meanings were examined across an entire data set and common themes were revealed between different casino managers. Thematic Analysis describes data in detail through identifying, analysing and reporting themes (patterns) within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The five phases of Thematic Analysis were followed – 1) Familiarisation with the data; 2) Generating initial codes; 3) Searching for themes; 4) Reviewing themes, and 5) Defining and naming themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Mind-mapping software was used throughout the analysis to assist with the coding and identification of themes.

Results

During the interviews the casino managers referred to three different types of music which could be present in a casino environment – recorded background music, live music and self-selected music. Each type of music is now discussed in turn.

The presence of recorded background music

Casino managers considered music to be an integral aspect of a casino environment. Music together with two other structural features were utilised to create an appropriate gambling environment: "the first thing that happens, is that, spot on quarter to 4, the lighting has to be set, mood lighting, the *music needs to be on at a certain level and then, the heating, obviously it's got to be balanced, the air conditioning comes on. So it's not an individual thing, it's an integ*ral part of our, of er, setting the ambience". Music's presence within the casinos was constant during the casinos' opening hours. The concept of silence within a casino was deemed to be unacceptable and an inappropriate accompaniment for gambling: "we a*lways have music and erm, we must do really, we can't have it quiet*".

Two casino managers reported that music's presence had evolved over the last few years. Both remarked that casino employees used to provide the music, whereas now the music is supplied by external companies, which has led to music's presence being arguably more ordered: "Well this is the *first casino that I've worked that, erm, that's had its music predetermined...in the past it's always been* managers or staff who have brought in CDs."

The acquisition of recorded background music

In every casino the recorded background music was sourced from external music supply companies who provided music to the casinos in a variety of formats. For example, two casino managers were periodically sent compact discs, the music in the other casinos was either 'piped' into the casino via satellite or uploaded onto the casino's computer. In order to operate the equipment used to play the recorded background music, it seemed that the casino managers required minimal technological knowledge or involvement: "we switch it on", "*it's just a disc that we download on the* computer".

The benefits of using 'piped' music as opposed to using less-technologically advanced systems, for example, CD players, were voiced by some of the casino managers: "one of the reasons *that you have, that it is piped in by satellite cos the music is changing all the time you don't get the* same, you know". One casino manager appreciated 'piped' music as it kept up-to-date with new music releases, whereas another casino manager valued the use of 'piped' music for practical reasons as the system enabled the sound level to be consistent between songs.

Despite the somewhat prescriptive nature in which music was disseminated to the casinos by the external music supply companies, casino managers did have flexibility so that they could change the music on an ad-hoc basis in instances where the background music supplied by the external music supply company was not considered to be suitable. For example, casino employees were sometimes permitted to make playlists from the CDs which were supplied by the external company and sometimes chose which music was played. Two of the casino managers commented that they had freedom with regards to which music they played: "*But yeah, it's just at the management's discretion really; we can* play whatever we like"; "*Although we can change the music, I've got a manual system as well*".

Factors considered when deciding which recorded background music to play

As noted above, the majority of recorded music was provided by external music supply companies. However, the interview data indicated that the casino managers took a number of musical and non-musical factors into consideration when deciding which background music to play.

(a) Genre

Music from a wide range of genres was present within the casinos. During a face-to-face interview with one of the casino managers the first author was shown the music system which had been installed in the casino by an external music supply company. The music system included various playlists labelled by Genre or occasion, for example, Motown, New Orleans, Jazz, Latin, 70s disco, Hen Party, Halloween and Christmas, from which the casino manager could select. For one casino manager, the use of 'piped' music gave her a broad range of music genres to choose from, which was appreciated, because she believed that "there is no typical customer and there is a very, very broad section of the populous [sic] that frequent casinos".

Care was taken by the casino managers to try to ensure that the music played matched the musical preferences of the gamblers. Some casino managers observed their customers and used this information to aid their decisions of which music genres to play. For example, one casino manager noticed that older customers visited his casino during the day whereas younger individuals frequented the casino in the evening, in the early hours of the morning and on the weekend. As a result he chose different music genres: "*in the afternoon which is a quiet, it's fairly quiet, not many people in, they* provide kind of mainstream music, pop, classics, bit of jazz like Michael Buble, that kind of, but modern...I mean we do have jazz classics, but it tends to be more, erm, erm, more soul orientated". However, in the evening, the music changed – heavier music and current music were played: "The funk jazz, what you call funk jazz, maybe, er, when it starts rocking, you know the funk jazz rock and roll, kind of link is late *in the evening....erm, it's, it's, erm, I would say totally modern music, erm, from, it's* 90s music really".

Another way in which casino managers tailored music genres was by using music to match with the brand and image of the casino. As a result, in one casino, certain genres were deemed to be inappropriate - classical music, ska, reggae and garage music, and were not played. In a different casino the manager thought that jazz would not be appropriate for this casino because it would not match the musical preferences of the clientele: "some of the casinos are in nicer areas so their clientele *are possibly...a little bit classier perhaps than some of the customers we get, if that makes sense, I'm* not talking about all the customers, but you know som*e of the customers and I think that jazz wouldn't* really work here for the type of customers that we have".

(b) Volume

The main way in which the casino managers controlled the music on a moment-to-moment basis was by altering the volume. Three casino managers stated that they changed the music's volume in response to there being more people in the casino: "people absorb sounds so sometimes, you *suddenly get an influx of people, we could get erm, at 11 o'clock in the evening, we might get an extra* 150 people...between 11 and 11:30 so people absorb, people absorb sounds, the, the, erm, we need to adjust the level of the, er, we need to adjust the level of the music".

There were occasions when the volume of the music was decreased, which tended to coincide with customers receiving verbal instructions from casino employees about how to operate gambling equipment, how to play certain games and when individuals were playing card games in a card room. In these situations the casino managers thought that the customers needed to concentrate and therefore took steps to reduce the likelihood of music-induced distraction: "*it's quite quiet, in the card room* because you can play between yourselves in the card room if you like, you can just come in with a pack of cards and play poker"; "we would probably not have music playing when we have er, in the card *room, when we have a competition on, if we've got 70 or 80 people battling against each other*".

(c) Tempo

Only one casino manager manipulated the tempo of recorded background music – he played fast tempo music if there were more people in the casino: "you get more people, erm, you need a slightly more up tempo and slightly faster music, more up tempo". Tempo also seemed to be a factor considered by an external music supply company as the first author observed that the tempo (operationalised as beats per minute) of each musical track was displayed within the playlists of the music system in one casino.

(d) Space of the casino

Recorded background music was utilised by casino managers to demarcate areas within the casino. One casino manager who received CDs remarked that: "the company that we pay actually send *us different CDs that say, they don't actually have a list of music on but just says erm, can't think of the right word, Party Music and they'll say Nostalgic*". The "Nostalgic" CD contained music which was considered as "mellow" and its presence was more in the background than at the forefront. This CD was played in the casino's restaurant: "the Nostalgic CD in the restaurant go back to the 50s and the *60s....I mean the restaurant again is mellow, people are eating so you don't want music blarring out*". In contrast the music that was played in the gambling area was more upbeat: "*on the gaming floor it's* always going be a Party Type CD".

Reasons why recorded background music is played

Casino managers gave two reasons for using recorded background music: to create the right atmosphere and to promote positive emotions. The casino managers reported that music was used primarily to create an appropriate atmosphere and ambiance: "*It's really, it's only there to add*

atmosphere and ambience"; "*it's not to influence gambling, just so much as the atmosphere*"; "it just *adds to the atmosphere doesn't it, for everybody*"; "*it's part of the ambience*".

None of the casino managers reported using music with the specific intention of influencing individuals' gambling behaviour either directly or indirectly: "Not at all"; "*it's not to influence gambling*". Despite reluctance to attribute the use of music to a direct influence on gambling, indirect influences did emerge. For example, one casino manager stated that the music was played to make individuals feel comfortable within the environment and to keep the gamblers awake or lively. In addition, a casino manager perceived that customers were less afraid to talk and converse with others if music was played. Another casino manager used music to influence customers' perception of their experience in the casino: "I think we try to make it influence how much of a good time people have which is why on a weekend we try and make it a bit more upbeat and we turn the music up a little bit". Moreover, the idea that favourable reactions to music will elicit positive reactions to the casino environment are implicit in the managers' remarks regarding the need for 'fit' and music preference.

Utilisation of live music in casinos

In three casinos, managers periodically employed local artists to play or sing live music in the casino. Live music was utilised for three main reasons - to accompany non-gambling activities, to provide entertainment and to advertise the casino.

(a) Accompanying non-gambling activities

Within two of the casinos, live music was typically situated in the restaurant or bar areas. Therefore live music tended to accompany non-gambling activities. Casino managers felt that the live music was more suitable for individuals consuming food or drink in the casino rather than the gamblers. The presence of live acts therefore demarcated space in the casinos.

(b) Entertainment

Casino managers employed live acts to provide entertainment during special events: "if we have some kind of party night or event you *know we'll put on some live entertainment*". Live acts tended to be booked during busy times of the year, for example around Christmas and New Year and on new member nights. The remarks of these two casino managers suggested that live music had a broad appeal because a wide range of genres of live music were played: "we go from everything from just, just sort of from lounge singers to you know, quite heavy rock bands"; "they just sing, you know all different songs from all different genres".

(c) Advertising

For one casino, the booking of live acts to play music in the casino was an important way of advertising the casino. Gambling providers in the United Kingdom are required to follow certain advertising codes produced by the Committee of Advertising Practice (Committee of Advertising Practice, 2014). This casino manager was aware of these guidelines when advertising, however, believed that music was a marketing tool which the casino could use: "Advertising is quite difficult, *because, we're quite tied* with erm what we can advertise and where we can advertise and when we can advertise and all that kind of thing and the only time, thing we can advertise pretty much freely is music, so we can advertise live acts. And obviously, the restaurant is just as the casino, we want that *to make money as well so it's really advertising and getting people into the club to eat in the* restaurant".

Utilisation of self-selected music

During the interviews, two casino managers remarked that some gamblers listened to music of their own choice (i.e. self-selected music). The casino managers had observed gamblers listening to self-selected music using portable music players when playing poker and slot machines: "yeah some *people when they're playing cards, will have an iPod yeah and they'll play their own music....and* sometimes playing the slot machines"; "*some of the poker players do, a lot, I mean that's part of the* culture of poker players, lots of them do have iPods and dark glasses and hats".

The casino managers thought that gamblers might opt-out of listening to gambling-operator selected music because they wanted listen to music that was guaranteed to match their personal music preferences. Furthermore the casino managers suggested that self-selected music could facilitate relaxation, elicit affective responses in gamblers and provide cognitive benefits: "*er, I've asked one or two people and they just say well they're here for a long time and they would rather listen to something*

that they appreciate"; "I mean I w*ould imagine that it helps to focus them…, if they don't appreciate* my music but they appreciate their own then it would maybe help to focus them help to relax them".

Gamblers' reactions to music

Throughout the interviews the casino managers outlined their perceptions of how gamblers reacted to and interacted with the music present in the casinos. Some of the casino managers felt that the gamblers did not notice the music, on the basis that the gamblers did not complain: "I know they *don't notice it because they never complain about it. Erm, which is, which is, which is a fairly good way of knowing that they don't notice it*".

One casino manager identified two types of gamblers who frequented her casino, one who was "consumed with gambling" and the other who was a "weekend gambler": "I think one is the *gambler who isn't concerned about erm, having a drink at the bar, isn't concerned about erm, you know, what's going off around him, he is just compl*etely consumed with gambling. He comes in, he *buys in and that's it then. Somebody could drop dead next to him and he wouldn't even realise it...We* have the weekend gambler who is a more sociable gambler, who comes in normally with a few friends, has a drink at the bar, and might have something to eat at the restaurant, maybe plays 20 quid and then goes home. So there are those two particular types."

This casino manager's identification of two types of gamblers informed her views about how gamblers respond to music. She believed that those "consumed with gambling" did not notice the music and were not interested in being entertained by music: "*the hardened gamblers, I don't* think...*they wouldn't even realise so if the music wasn't even on I don't think they'd even know*". Whereas "the customers that do appreciate the music are the weekend customers so the more up to date it is I think the better it is" possibly because "*they've come for a night out, they're in the bar* having a few drinks, you can see them singing quite often and dancing and things". Engagement with music was considered by this casino manager to be related to individuals' motivations for why they frequented the casino. The "weekend gambler" was thought to visit a casino primarily for a night out and gambling seemed to be a secondary thought. In comparison, the individuals who were "consumed with gambling" were perceived as directing their focus towards gambling, therefore had little interest in non-gambling activities.

The casino managers referred to a number of ways in which gamblers reacted to the music that was played within their casino. The casino managers had noticed both positive and negative responses to the music. Some individuals displayed physical reactions to the music that they heard by dancing, singing or clapping along. From this it was apparent that some gamblers did engage with the music present in casinos "*they say it's really good or they'll get up and they'll, you know they'll watch* the band and clap their hands, they*'ll maybe have a little bit of a dance*"; "*well because they've come for a night out, they're in the bar having a few drinks, you can see them singing quite often and dancing and things*".

In contrast, one casino manager believed that music that was too energetic could "fire people off" and lead to aggressive behaviour being displayed by some individuals. This indicated that music's presence within a casino may not have a positive influence on individuals' behaviour. Negative reactions from customers about the music were also voiced to the casino managers as some gamblers asked for the volume of the music to be lowered. For example, one casino manager reported that the location of the speakers within the casino hindered individuals' gambling participation: "Sometimes *when it's busy, when it's buzzing you can't, people want to make a bet, so they call a bet, they* announce a bet and if a speaker is directly over a table because we, at certain times, we move, we redesign the shape of the gaming tables, er, we redesign the position of the gaming tables, so therefore, *I mean and we wouldn't alter the position of a speaker so the speaker would stay where it was, so we suddenly find the it's over a table, so the people there can't really, erm the music is on too* loud in that area, erm, so yeah, I mean at certain times people are affected and so they say turn it down". On this occasion the casino manager took action to rectify the problem so music did not interfere with gambling.

Discussion

The interviews conducted with the casino managers provide a unique insight into which types of music feature in casinos, the factors that inform decisions concerning which music is played, why music is present in casinos and casino managers' observations of how gamblers engage with music. Casino managers used recorded background music to accompany participation in gambling activities and live music as an accompaniment to non-gambling activities. Live music has specific roles including promoting the casino, accompanying eating and drinking and entertaining customers. This study does

not support the claim that casinos play "mild, looping, hypnotic music" with the aim of making gamblers enter a "trance-like state" (Business Pundit, 2011); commercially available music was utilised within the casinos. The casino managers used recorded background music with the intention of creating an appropriate atmosphere for gambling and promoting positive emotions within the casino.

Casino managers consider music as an important feature of a casino environment. This is evident because music is seemingly worthy of financial investment in terms of using external music supply companies and by employing live acts; music is constantly present in casinos and it can be easily altered to match the casino's needs at any given time. The interview data demonstrated the casino managers' opinions that music's presence within casinos has evolved over the last few years as now external music supply companies rather than casino employees supply the music. Furthermore, the casino managers' noticed that some gamblers listened to music via portable music players. If true, this would suggest that music's presence has changed in two ways.

First, music's presence has progressed from being unplanned, unstructured and random to music which is more prominent, structured and ordered. The changing role of music within casinos reflects how piped music has evolved in other retail, leisure and entertainment venues. Kassabian (2004) notes that since the mid to late 1980s piped music has changed. Piped music now features original artists (rather than covers of original pieces of music which often have different instrumentation), the music has lyrics and/or percussion, the music played encompasses genres which the public may be less familiar with (e.g. World music) and it has shifted from the background to the foreground (Kassabian, 2004). This ordered presentation of recorded background music is similar to the use of music within a mall (Sterne, 1997) and may assist individuals to become familiar with the casino environment, and form expectations about what the casino environment will be like on subsequent visits.

Second, mobile music listening has become somewhat embedded into the gambling experience as evident by some casinos permitting their customers to opt-out of listening to the music provided by the management. Online gamblers have reported that an appealing aspect of internet gambling is listening to music of their own choice (Parke, J., Parke, A.J., Rigbye, Suhonen & Vaughan Williams 2012), and the data obtained within the present study suggests that this music listening behaviour takes place in other gambling environments. This inclusion of portable music devices within gambling environments reflects widespread changes in the culture of music listening. Gamblers are now able to decide which music to listen to, how and when. Therefore for some gambles the degree that they can control music's presence when gambling has expanded from making requests for certain music to be played (Griffiths & Parke, 2005) to being permitted to create an "auditory bubble" (Bull, 2005; 2006) in which their music listening is personalised and tailored to their needs, wants and desires.

Throughout the interviews it became clear that the ways in which casino managers' used music were informed by their intuitions rather than by published research. From this, it is apparent that this particular sample of casino managers is unaware of the body of research which suggests that music may influence indices of gambling behaviour. Nevertheless, some of the views put forward coincide with six of the 14 implicit theories suggested by hotel, restaurant and bar managers with regards to customer perception and behaviour (Areni, 2003). First, casino managers associate silence with the environment portraying a poor quality image and emptiness. Second, music was considered by the casino managers as able to "break the ice" and facilitate socialisation. Third, by referring to live music within casino advertising the casino managers thought that this could help to attract customers. Fourth, casino managers thought that there was the potential for recorded background music to distract gamblers. Fifth, recorded background music was considered as able to portray the right image and create an appropriate atmosphere for gambling. Within consumer research, atmosphere is considered to be influential in purchasing decisions (Kotler, 1973) and casino atmosphere can influence player satisfaction (Mayer, Johnson, Hu & Chen, 1998). Sixth, the casino managers, by believing that they have knowledge of those who visit their casino (age, gender, time/day of visit) and gamblers' behaviour, consider that recorded background music must match customer demographic profiles.

This study reveals the musical characteristics that are manipulated by casino managers to accompany gambling. Casino managers, like managers of hotels, bars, public houses and restaurants (Areni, 2003) consider the volume, tempo and genre of recorded background music when choosing music to feature in casinos. The volume of the music is adjusted – louder during busy times and quieter when managers thought that gamblers were required to learn or concentrate. On these occasions gambling takes precedence in the environment therefore the music is altered in order to facilitate gambling participation.

With regards to tempo, only one casino manager played fast tempo music during busy periods. This particular utilisation of music has a basis in research conducted in retail and commercial environments – fast tempo music is perceived to help with turning tables in restaurant settings and can

be played with the aim of increasing the speed at which certain behaviours are performed (Areni, 2003). However this particular casino manager did not report using fast tempo music with these intentions, rather he/she intended to portray/create a lively atmosphere. Tempo was also an important musical characteristic for the external supply companies. This is evident because the audio systems situated within two casinos utilised playlists that listed the bpms of each musical track. Given that different playlists were played during the day, early evening and late evening through to closing time, it appears that the selection of music by external supply companies may relate to how circadian rhythms function. An individual's level of alertness peaks at the beginning of the day and reduces as the day progresses. Berlyne (1971) suggests that music which is fast or loud has more arousal potential and causes more arousal in the listener. Therefore the decisions of the external music supply companies may conform to Berlyne's model in that they choose music which progressively gets faster over the course of the day. If one applied this model to a casino environment the theory would predict that both gamblers' arousal and alertness levels would increase as a result of fast or loud music being present in the environment. The consequences of music-induced arousal for casino gamblers are currently unknown, although evidence from laboratory studies suggests that arousal induced using non-musical methods can influence electronic gambling machine (EGM) play, which is a gambling activity that often features in casinos (Rockloff & Greer, 2010; Rockloff, Signal & Dyer, 2007).

The construct of musical genre helps casino managers to match the music with their clientele and thus serves a number of functions in casinos. First, as casinos can be visited by individuals who are diverse in terms of their socio-demographic characteristics, playing mainstream Western popular music means that customers might hear familiar music and/or music that they like. Second, by using commercially available music that may have previously been released into the music charts this may help to communicate the view that casino gambling is inclusive; it is a popular leisure pursuit and an activity that everyone can engage in. Third, the use of different genres can help to demarcate space within the casino and provide an aural signal to gamblers which informs them that they are leaving the gambling floor and entering a restaurant.

Although casino managers did not use music to influence indices of gambling behaviour, they did employ music with the explicit intention of eliciting specific affective responses from gamblers – feelings of enjoyment, comfort and to maintain gamblers' arousal level. The notion of background music eliciting affect in gamblers does have a basis within gambling research - Griffiths and Parke (2003; 2005) hypothesised that background music may increase arousal, confidence, promote feelings of relaxation and induce a "romantic" affective state in slot machine players. Furthermore, slot machine players in an adult gaming centre and a bingo club reported that music helps to create an illusion of a cosy, welcoming environment (Husain, Wardle, Kenny, Balarajan & Collins, 2013). One way in which the casino managers attempted to elicit affective responses in gamblers was by playing music described as "party" and "upbeat" in gambling areas, which may be associated with promoting excitement, movement, celebration, enjoyment and higher levels of arousal. The casino managers may be trying to control social gambling situations by using music as a way of communicating to gamblers about how they should feel and behave within the gambling environment. From this casino managers' utilisation of music may represent a way in which they manage "social uncertainty" - where the social outcomes for a group or individuals within a group are unclear and potentially risky (Cross & Woodruff, 2009). This may be particularly apt within a casino environment where individuals may experience a range of emotions during their visit – some of which may be positive (e.g. when winning), others negative (e.g. when losing).

The interviews demonstrate one way in which a greater understanding of background music's use in commerce can be obtained – here through the lens of casinos. However we recognise the limitations of a small-scale study. First, the findings are not representative of all casino managers within the United Kingdom, and a larger-scale study may identify additional uses and beliefs, although the commonality found here suggests these would be few. Second, although the interview data provides a direct insight into casino managers' utilisation of music, it is a snapshot and consequently may have evolved since the interviews were conducted, as music delivery systems change and the changes in licensing which permit 'large' and 'small' casinos to operate in the United Kingdom (Gambling Commission, 2015b). Third, it is acknowledged that the casino managers might not have fully disclosed their approach, perhaps because they did not want to present either themselves or the casino in a bad light. Therefore future research may wish to adopt a mixed-methods approach to investigate how casino managers utilise music, how gamblers engage with music within casinos and approach the external supply companies to investigate how they create playlists for utilisation within casinos. An important goal for future research is to determine why gamblers listen to self-selected music – one reason may be because the music matches gamblers' musical preferences (as proposed by

Griffiths & Parke, 2005) and therefore gamblers may consider this type of music to support some of the psychological processes associated with gambling (Orford, 2011).

Despite these limitations, this study is unique in that it has gathered information from casino managers about the roles which music is employed to fulfil in casinos. Music is a tool utilised by casino managers and may provide a predictable, familiar and constant accompaniment to gambling, an activity which has uncertain outcomes.

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