











same cultural background than users from other cultures. This cultural difference must be taken into account when establishing mood metadata for music services.

### 5.3 Connection with Social Media

Social media play a significant role in sharing and discussing music among university students in Hong Kong. YouTube makes it easy for people to share videos in various online social communities such as Facebook, Twitter and Google Plus. Furthermore, users can view the shared YouTube videos directly on Facebook which makes it even more convenient. This is one of the key reasons our participants preferred YouTube. However, music services like iTunes have yet to adopt this strategy. For our study population, linking social network to music services would certainly enhance user experience and help promote music as well.

### 5.4 Smartphone Application

Many participants are listening to streaming music with their smartphones, and thus naturally, offering music apps for smart devices will be critical for music services. Both YouTube and iTunes offer smartphone apps. Moreover, instant messaging applications, such as WhatsApp, is found as the most common reason for using smartphones among Hong Kongers [10]. To further improve the user experience, music-related smartphone apps may consider incorporating online instant messaging capabilities.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Music is essential for many university students in Hong Kong. They listen to music frequently for the purpose of entertainment and relaxation, to help reduce stress in their extremely tense daily lives. Currently, there does not exist a single music service that can fulfill all or most of their music information needs, and thus they often use multiple tools for specific searches. Furthermore, sharing and acquiring music from friends and acquaintances was a key activity, mainly done on online social networks. Comparing our findings to those of previous studies revealed some cultural differences between Hong Kongers and Americans, such as Hong Kongers relying more on popularity and significantly less on genres in music search.

With the prevalence of smartphones, students are increasingly becoming “demanding” as they get accustomed to accessing music anytime and anywhere. Streaming music and music apps for smartphones are becoming increasingly common. The most popular music service among university students in Hong Kong was YouTube due to its convenience, user-friendly interface, and requiring no payment to use their service. In order to further improve the design of music services, we recommended providing an advanced search function, emotion/mood-based search, social network connection, smartphone apps as well as access to high quality digital music which will help fulfill users’ needs.

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