

**SERIAL POSITION EFFECTS: INITIAL UNCERTAINTY AND EFFECTS OF
PRE-CONTEST PRESENTATIONS TO EVALUATION OF MUSIC**

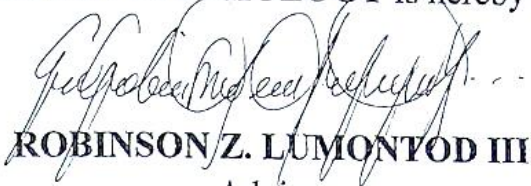
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An undergraduate thesis submitted to the faculty of the
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Muñoz, Nueva Ecija, Philippines, in partial
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BACHELOR OF ARTS IN PSYCHOLOGY

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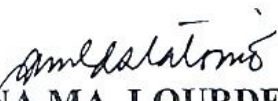

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
TITLE PAGE	i
APPROVAL SHEET	ii
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
LIST OF APPENDICES	xii
ABSTRACT	xiii
INTRODUCTION	1
Serial Position Effect	2
Initial Uncertainty and Pre-Contest Presentations	8
Present Study	14
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	15
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	18
METHODOLOGY	19
General Overview	19
EXPERIMENT 1	19
Participants	20

Design	20
Materials	21
Procedure	23
Data Analysis	24
RESULTS	25
Demographics	25
General Analyses	25
Serial Position	26
Initial Uncertainty	28
DISCUSSION	29
Serial Position Effect	29
Initial Uncertainty	31
EXPERIMENT 2	32
Participants	32
Design	32
Materials	33
Procedure	35
Data Analysis	36
RESULTS	36
Demographics	37
Mock Contest Results	37
Initial Uncertainty	38

DISCUSSION	41
GENERAL DISCUSSIONS	43
Pre-Contest Presentations and Initial Uncertainty	44
Limitations	46
CONCLUSIONS	48
RECOMMENDATIONS	49
REFERENCES	51
APPENDICES	55

List of Tables

TABLE	TITLE	PAGE
1	Experimental Design for Experiment 1	21
2	Reports of Musical Experience	25
3	Means and Standard Deviations of Ratings per Position and Song	26
4	Serial Position \times Grouping Condition Factorial Analysis of Variance for Repeated Measures	26
5	Experimental Design for Experiment 2	33
6	Reports of Musical Experience	37
7	Results of the Ratings	37
8	Analysis of Variance of the Singers Across Groups	40
9	T test for Dependent Samples between First and Fourth Singers Across Conditions	41

List of Figures

FIGURES	TITLE	PAGE
1	Position in a series affects evaluation for an option	18
2	Pre-contest presentations affect initial uncertainty of judges, affecting how judges evaluate in serial position	18
3	Difference scores of ratings from the mean	39

List of Appendices

APPENDIX	TITLE	PAGE
I	Consent and Evaluation Sheets	56
II	Facilitator/Experimenter Scripts	60
III	List of Songs Used	64

ABSTRACT

BONITA, JAN IMMANUEL C., Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, College of Arts and Sciences, Central Luzon State University, Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija, July 2017, **SERIAL POSITION EFFECTS: INITIAL UNCERTAINTY AND EFFECTS OF PRE-CONTEST PRESENTATIONS TO EVALUATION OF MUSIC**

Adviser: Mr. Robinson Lumontod III

Serial position effect implies an effect of temporal and/or spatial position to evaluation of an option in a series, and has been found in literature to be either advantageous or disadvantageous depending on the position. In musical competitions, judges are expected to be as unbiased as possible, but may still be affected by such extraneous variables as serial position. The Pairwise Comparison Model explains this evaluative inefficiency as an effect of comparison biases the judges make as the series progresses. Judges' initial uncertainty also seems to affect evaluation, especially the first option. The main objectives of this study are to describe the effect in musical contexts and propose a way to lessen the disadvantage from judges' initial uncertainty.

Two experiments were conducted. Experiment 1 tests the hypothesis that serial position affects evaluation for same and different recorded music performances. Participants listened and judged two songs in order, either same or different, with the different songs counterbalanced. Experiment 2 tests the proposed pre-contest presentations (PCP) for lessening the disadvantageous effect of initial uncertainty. Participants listened and judged four recorded vocal solo performances, preceded with sample audio performances of other singers, with excerpts from the actual audio to be evaluated, or none (control). Ratings using the provided criteria were analyzed. Serial position affects ratings

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for same audios, but has more unpredictable effects for different audios due to difference in quality. PCP excerpted from the actual performances significantly affects ratings for the first singer as compared to control, suggesting a lessened disadvantageous effect of initial uncertainty. Possible explanations and implications are discussed.

Keywords: Serial position effect, music competition, initial uncertainty, pre-contest presentations

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