



## Mayukha Pillay

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Are lemons fast or slow? Are trombones bitter or sweet? Over the past decade, crossmodal correspondence research has grown exponentially and transformed our understanding and applications of music and sound. Relating to sound and taste, however, researchers have exclusively focused on elements of instrumental music. With the lack of research in vocal music and difference in the shape of sung vowels compared to spoken vowels, this research project aims to determine the correlation between taste perception and sung vowels and to elevate this into the multisensory dining experience. This is conducted through two quantitative phases. Phase one consists of 152 participants completing a within-participant survey, in which they listen to 10 vowel extracts and rate their sweetness, bitterness, saltiness and sourness. It is hypothesised that either rounder or front vowels would be perceived as sweeter. A further 42 participants complete a within-participant experiment, whereby they blindly taste the same sample of milk chocolate under three different background music (silence, sweetest vowel, second sweetest vowel) and rate the sweetness of the chocolate, the buying intention of the chocolate, the matching of the music to the taste, the pleasantness of the chocolate and the enjoyment of the music. It is hypothesised that the sweetest vowel increases the sweetness, purchasing intention and pleasantness of the chocolate. This project has crucial implications for the food, advertising and music industries and provides a powerful support tool for neurodiverse and disability communities - all with the sweet sounds of A, E, I, O, U.

### Biography:

Mayukha Pillay is a Master's scholar at Liverpool Hope University, where she completed a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Music and Psychology. She received the Sue Willis Memorial Award for Top Performing Student in Music. Born in South Africa, Pillay focuses on making an impact through music perception research, her studies including The Exploration of Frequency Modulation on Tactile Perception Across Various Textures and "Just a spoonful of music helps the food go down": The exploration of the effects of sensation transference and sonic seasoning on the pleasantness of the tasting experience. Pillay will pursue a doctorate programme to forward her career.