

Deep Learning Models for Analyzing the Dual Impact of Meshing and Quantization Techniques on Musical Inspiration in DAWs

Xinhao Li¹, and Hyuntai Kim^{2*}

¹Music Production, Sejong University, Seoul, 05006, Korea.

²Department of Music, Faculty of Arts and Physical Education, Sejong University, Seoul, 05006, Korea.

*Corresponding Author: Hyuntai Kim. Email: kimht@sejong.ac.kr

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Abstract: The Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs) provide devices like quantizing and alignment of tracks, which enhance precision in recording music by improving the technical quality. Nevertheless, a critical timing correction and strict structural alignment can impact the musical inspiration and creative expression. This paper explores how meshing and quantization methods jointly influence musical inspiration perception based on deep-learned musical input in the form of symbolic music data. An experimental structure was used with a twelve-week design that included MIDI-based musical excerpts that were manipulated according to four conditions, which included the original performance, hard quantization, soft quantization and humanized timing. Features of timing deviation, velocity variation and inter track alignment were analyzed by use of sequence-based deep learning models. The quantitative data indicated that there were large variations in the measures of inspiration between the conditions ($F = 16.4238.91$, $p \leq 3.6 \times 10^{-3}$). Hard and soft quantization revealed a moderate and negative impact on perceived creativity ($d = 0.58$) and strong positive impacts on inspiration ($d = 0.81-0.94$) respectively under medium conditions, respectively. Self-report assessments of engagement, naturalness, and creative motivation were greater in humanized and softly quantized instances with these being correlated with expressive timing variability at the positive level ($r = 0.63-0.77$). Qualitative feedback also indicated more musical flow, less creative pressure and more emotional connection. Although there are certain limitations associated with the sample size and the mix of genera, the results prove the usefulness of deep learning in the analysis of the creativity-based results in the music production with the help of the DAW and outline the necessity to balance the technical accuracy with the human expressiveness.

Keywords: Deep Learning, Digital Audio Work Studios (DAW)s; Musical Inspiration; Quantization; Meshing and Alignment; Humanized Music Production; Symbolic Music Analysis; Creative Expression; Time Variation.

1. Introduction

DAWs have brought about a revolution in music production because they offer the musician so much more in terms of recording, editing and arranging sound in a highly controlled digital setting. The quantization, time-stretching, and alignment of the tracks enable producers to attain accuracy in rhythmic and structural quality previously hard to attain in live performance situations. As algorithmic aid has been progressively integrated into DAWs, music production has progressively moved towards processes that give greater importance to technical precision and efficiency [8]. Although these advances have offered new creative opportunities, they have also brought into question the effects of such instruments on the inspiration of music and free expression of it.

Quantization, specifically, is a main factor to modern digital music. Quantization ensures that musical events are synchronized by mapping them onto some kind of a predefined temporal grid, eliminating timing errors to ease musical track synchronization with each other. Nevertheless, previous studies on

music cognition have implied that minor timing differences and micro-posts in dynamics are some of the critical factors involved with groove, expressiveness and perceived musicality [7] [5]. Overdependence on strict limits to quantization can hence undermine the authenticity of music and change the artistic judgement process of musicians. Equally, meshing, in the context of this paper which describes the synchronization and interrelationship of various musical tracks in a DAW, may either contribute to a wholesome musical composition or restrict experimentation and spontaneity.

More recent developments in deep learning have made it possible to analyze underlying symbolic music data in large volumes, with researchers able to generate timing, velocity, and structural correlations with a high degree of accuracy. Transformer and neural sequence models have shown good results in learning expressive patterns with MIDI-based representations and are able to differentiate between human and mechanically edited music [2][10]. The models give the chance to go out of the subjective debate and quantitatively assess the influence of the methods of production like quantization and meshing on inspirational-related traits in music.

Although the use of AI in music analysis becomes more popular, the available literature tends to concentrate on technical metrics of performance or the task of music generation, and the result of creativity is paid little attention. Not much literature has compared various quantization and meshing intensities categorically to determine their joint influence in national aspiration and perceived expression within music. Also, the bi-polar aspect of the tools, which has the potential to both lead to the strengthening of control and limit creativity, has not been adequately explored. Filling this gap, the current research uses deep learning framework to compare symbolic music data under different conditions of production, with a view of gaining a greater insight of how the precision-focused methods of the DAW approach interplay with human inspiration in the production of modern music.

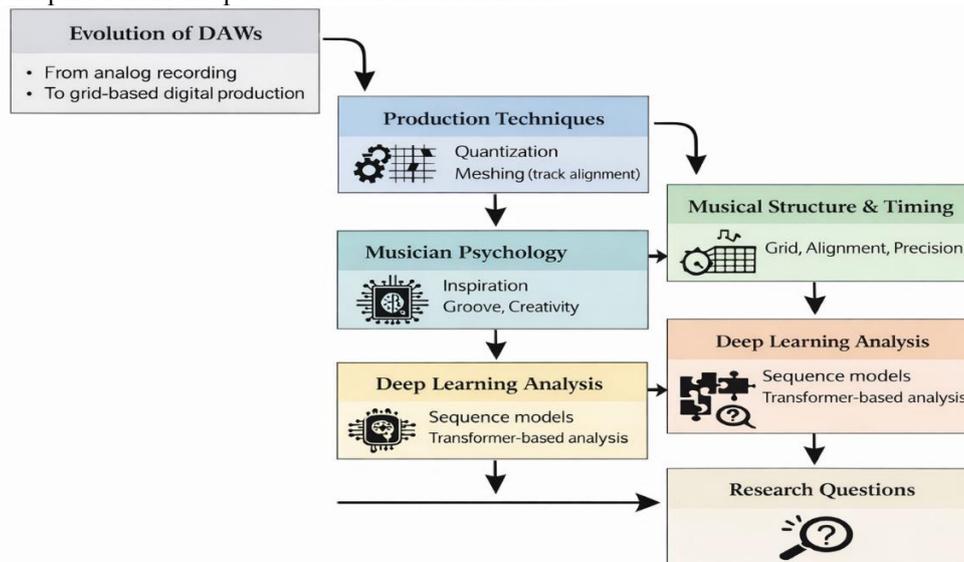


Figure 1. Roadmap of study

This paper discusses the impact of timing correction on musical inspiration and creative expression in Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs), including structuring them in a creative manner. Figure 1 represents the general outlay of the research. MIDI music samples are analyzed under original, quantification and humanization productions. Deep learning networks are trained to learn timing, dynamics and inter-track coordination differences. The perception of inspiration and groove on the part of the musicians is gathered with the help of the computational analysis. The results are composed of objective musical characteristics and subjective creative reaction. This combined method will demonstrate that technical accuracy is used to enhance creativity and that accuracy can restrict creativity. The paper explains the equilibrium between technological control and humanity in online music-making at the end of the day.

2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

The modern approaches to digital music production are being shaped progressively with a range of cognitive and socio-cultural theories that are conceptualization of creativity as a mediated process affected

with tools, environments, and human intention. Creativity activity, as socio-cultural perspective, is not an internal process but the interaction of individuals and technological artifacts. The functions of quantization and track alignment in Digital Audio Workstations can serve as mediated instruments that mediate in how musicians listen to, judge and shape musical concepts. The current research on music technology is indicative of the fact that, besides serving as any form of neutral production platforms, the role of the DAWs has been regarded as the active agents that can best influence the aesthetic outcomes created in areas of creative workflow [15].

The study of timing and expressiveness in music has become a popular issue of cognitive musicology. Embodied and enactive cognition studies have suggested that micro timing variance and dynamics variability are the key to groove, emotional involvement and perceived music [7] [5]. Although quantization increases the stability and coordination of rhythm among the tracks, heavy quantization has been reported to eliminate the expressive tension as well as eliminated the feeling of human presence in music. This is in line with theories of creativity that have a constructivist viewpoint because musicians generate meaning, according to creativity, by means of exploration, testing, and feedback instead of following specific predefined forms. Creative construction may be suppressed by the inflexible grid imposed by DAW environments by restricting the form of exploration.

The Cognitive Load Theory can also be of great help in determining the role played by the DAW tools in inspiring music. The ideal level of intrinsic and extraneous cognitive load that allows maintaining creative flow is seen in creative tasks. Recent empirical experiments have shown that editing instruments that are overly restrictive may raise extraneous load through constrained creative options, but flexible or adaptive instruments facilitate enduring interest and creative exhaustion [16]. Soft quantization and partial alignment have been demonstrated to save the expressive intent and reduce technical effort, enabling musicians to spend a larger portion of the cognitive resources on more creative decisions.

The recent developments in artificial intelligence and deep learning have allowed considering such creative processes in a new way. Recent research has shown Networks based on sequences and transformers to be very successful in expressive time-based, velocity-based, and track interrelation modeling of symbolic music representations like MIDI [2] [10]. These are models directly learned (without human intervention) latent expressions, which are appropriate to express subtle distinctions between humanized and mechanically edited performances. Nevertheless, our current literature sprawls on performance realism or music generation, little consideration has been given to the influence of production interventions on the process of musical inspiration and musical creativity.

Although AI-assisted music analysis is gaining increased interest, little is known regarding the effects of quantization in combination with meshing upon creative experience. The existing literature is frequently of an isolated nature in terms of timing correction or timing alignment methods, without investigating the nature of the interaction or the psychological consequences of these methods to musicians. The current research is based on the recent theoretical and computational research and incorporates the cognitive music theory, creativity studies and deep learning analysis to assess the way precision-driven DAW tools can enable and hinder musical inspiration at the same time.

3. Materials and Methods

According to the latest sources on the topic of digital music production, the role of Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs) is becoming increasingly powerful in terms of both the final technical results and the creative procedures. Initial studies mainly focused on the advantageous need to quantify and time correct rhythmic accuracy and production efficiency. Nonetheless, the newer literature has given more focus on aesthetic and psychological implications of these instruments, especially their effects on expression and inspiration in music. The empirical evidence demonstrates that grid-based editing is more consistent, but at the same time, it can decrease perceived groove and emotional involvement in cases of over-use [7] [5].

Music cognition empirical evidence has had an enormous contribution in exploring the effects of micro timing and dynamic variation in musical feel. Onset timing and velocity: When listener-based rating methods are used consistent studies reveal that a slight variation in the onset timing and velocity are attributed to increased ratings of naturalness and creativity. On the other hand, there are acts that are tightly timed that are said to be mechanical or emotionally monotonous [17]. These results give valuable

background in the explanation of why the timing imperfections are often reintroduced by the musicians after the quantization which is often called humanization process within the DAW.

Studies in multi-track alignment and rhythmic coordination which are usually cited in the context of inter-track timing or ensemble tightness have shown that controlled alignment has the potential of enhancing structural clarity and understanding by the audience. Nevertheless, recent symbolic music studies indicate that strong uniformity between tracks can lead to decrease in the rhythmic tension and restrictive exploratory composition strategies [12]. This indicates that the use of meshing methods, just like quantization, has a dual nature since it promotes coherence, but it may also limit creative freedom.

The development in artificial intelligence has helped to investigate such challenges in more detail. Modeling expressive timing, velocity patterns, and performance style the models that have been trained on symbolic music data are based on deep learning models, especially recurrent neural networks and transformer-based models. Recent research findings indicate that these models can also accurately differentiate between music performed by humans and music edited by a mechanism, and it can also capture stylistic expressions associated with groove and expressiveness [2] [10] despite the above capabilities, a majority of AI-based music research addresses the issue of generation or performance naturalness but does not account for the impact of the tools of production on creativity.

In general, the literature shows that there is an evident gap in integrated analysis that could conduct quantization and meshing simultaneously and consider both objective features of music and subjective creative experience. There is a paucity of literature that integrates computational modeling with perceptual assessment to determine the effect that DAW interventions have on inspiring and creative involvement. To fill this gap, the current research is based on the recent literature in the field of music cognition and deep learning to affix a holistic study of the interaction between precision-oriented techniques in the field of DAW and human creativity.

4. Methodology and Technical Architecture

4.1. Research Design

The Materials and Methods should be described with sufficient details to allow others to replicate and build on the published results. Please note that the publication of your manuscript implicates that you must make all materials, data, computer code, and protocols associated with the publication available to readers. Please disclose at the submission stage any restrictions on the availability of materials or information. New methods and protocols should be described in detail while well-established methods can be briefly described and appropriately cited.

The present study involves a quasi-experimental type of the mixed-method approach that examines the approach of meshing and quantization in relation to musical inspiration in Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs). The method is a blend of scientific manipulation of the production environments and computational analysis and human judgment to measure the technical accuracy and the creative perception. The MIDI-based musical phrases are worked with in four conditions original performance, hard quantization, soft quantization and the humanized timing. Such an arrangement enables the timing correction and structural alignment effects to be analyzed at a constant musical content.

In parallel with the work of the computational analysis, there is perceptual assessment of inspiration, groove and creative engagement. The counterbalanced order of experiencing the conditions is employed, and the numerical ratings are reinforced by qualitative feedback to represent the personal response in creativity. Collectively, this combined design connects objective musical characteristics with subjective experience and it offers a balanced perspective of the influence of precision-oriented DAW devices on the musical expressiveness.

Participants: The sample was composed of 200 undergraduate students (ages 18-24) who studied the music technology and audio production courses in a public university. To be able to draw on a similar context of instruction, the participants were selected based on two similar course sections. The sample was evenly distributed in terms of sex, socio-economic status and previous experience with Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs). The level of musical proficiency of the participants was intermediate level and basic level depending on previous experience in MIDI-based music production and rhythmic musical performance chores. All the participants were volunteers in the study and gave informed consent. The

institutional review board gave ethical approval. Independent-samples t-test of pre-tests was employed to ensure baseline similarity of the groups ($\alpha = 0.05$). Pre and post assessment of musical inspiration, groove perception and creative engagement was done. Statistical work was done to ensure that there are no significant differences between the groups ahead of time.

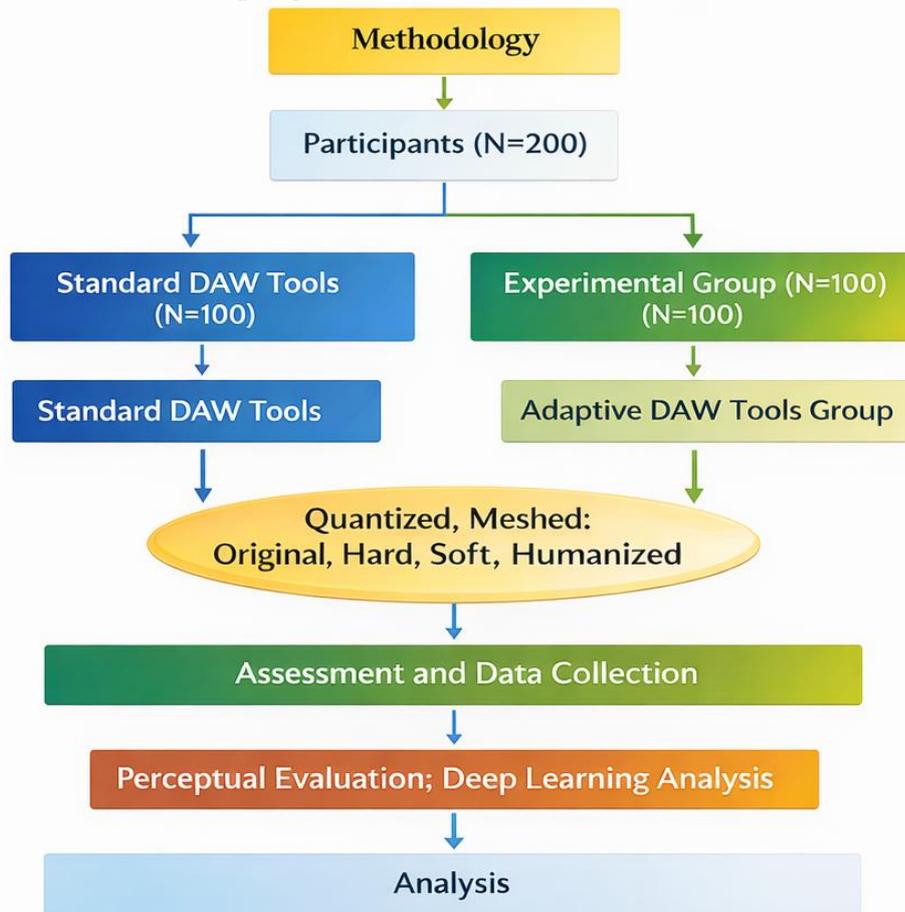


Figure 2. Flowchart of experimental design of typical and adaptive DAW workflow.

4.2. Mixed-Methods Approach

This paper uses a convergent mixed-methods approach to the problem of exploring the simultaneous effects of meshing and quantization in musical inspiration in Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs). The method combines the computational study of the data of symbolic music with the perceptual with the answer to the objective expressive dynamics and the subjective experience of creativity.

The quantitative constituent considers the timing stability, variation in velocity, and inter-track alignment under four controlled production conditions, which were original performance, hard quantization, soft quantization, and humanized timing. The models of expressive variability and structural precision were provided by processing pre- and post-intervention MIDI-based production tasks via deep learning architectures. The latent expressive indicators produced by these models permit systematic comparison not only between the standard and adaptive workflow of DAW but also the adaptive workflow itself.

Qualitative element compliments calculations results using ordered questionnaires and semi-structured interviews that measure how inspired participants feel, how much they feel they are in a groove, creative involvement, and cognitive load. To maintain ecological validity in real-life production environments, the participants were assigned to control (standard DAW tools) and experimental (adaptive DAW environment) groups and left to a length of twelve weeks.

This framework will make it possible to methodologically triangulate, and offer a theoretically informed explanation about how precision-oriented interventions in the context of a DAW can be used to support the growth of technical control, as well as the development of the creative expression at the same time.

4.2.1. Procedure

1. **Introduction (Week 1):** The participants were introduced to the goals of the study, the experiment design, and ethics. The concept of quantization, meshing and humanized timing were introduced and outlined in relation to the Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs). The participants have been trained to operate with the experimental set of the DAW and have been trained on how to accomplish the perceptual evaluation tasks.

2. **Pre-testing (Week 2):** Baseline scores of musical inspirations, groove perception, and creative engagement were obtained with the help of standardized rating scales. A baseline production of music was also conducted to determine the level of expressive performance before the intervention to adjust covariate levels to further analysis.

3. **Intervention (weeks 3-12):** The participant went through monthly activities of structured music production in the course of ten weeks utilizing the assigned DAW workflows.

4. **Experimental group:** The participants in the experimental group operated with adaptive DAW tools, which included variable quantization level and meshing level (original, hard, soft and humanized). They took one hour or more production sessions per week and these were centered on editing and creative composition assignments. The system registered timing, velocity and interaction data to facilitate deep learning analysis of expressive patterns.

5. **Control group:** The participants in Control group inferred the standard DAW tools with fixed settings and traditional editing processes. The software only gave basic visual and auditory feedback with no adaptive adjustment and expressive guidance.

6. **Post-testing and Survey (Week 12):** After the intervention, parallel perceptual and reflective questionnaires were given to the participants. We were able to gather semi-structured feedback to include subjective experiences in regards to creativity, inspiration and usability of the workflow.

The adaptive analysis framework is based on three major components, including the DAW interaction layer, the expressive feature model, and the deep learning analytical engine, linked together by a centralized data management layer. Musical activities are performed in the environment of the DAW, and all the interactions in the MIDI system are recorded automatically with the help of anonymized identifiers of the participants. The storage of the performance data is done in a secure relational database, where the data integrity and participant confidentiality can be ensured.

4.2.2. Data Processing and Preliminary Data

The system also captures useful symbolic data during every music production session based on the MIDI interactions. The data that are captured are anonymized participant identifiers, identifiers of the track, designated production settings (original, hard quantized, soft quantized, or humanized), exact onset timing figures, velocity level, inter-track alignment values, and session timestamps. Besides, editing behavior metadata, including the number of adjustments and the total number of the session, is registered to enable contextual information regarding creative processes.

The data collected are then subjected to a systematic pre-processing step before analysis making sure that it is reliable and consistent. The timing and velocity numbers are filtered to eliminate unrealistic observation, such as extreme positioning of the timings, and unrealistically brief durations of interaction, possibly due to accidental entry or system noise. The rest of the data goes through normalization to remove tempo variations and variability in performance of an individual. Lastly, a clean, structured data is structured at a participant level, which allows deep learning frameworks to acquire expressive patterns, and makes it possible to engage in effective comparative analysis of various quantization and meshing conditions.

The technical architecture illustrated in **Figure-3** is modular and layered so that it is more reflective of the real-world music production processes based on the use of DAWs. The data of musical interactions created in the course of production is recorded in the form of symbolic MIDI tracking and transmitted to a centralized data management layer. A symbolic feature model then pulls optically prominent information based on timing, velocity and track alignment that is examined by deep learning models to learn expressive features. All of the processed data are stored safely through anonymized identifiers and distributed between analysis and content components. This configuration gives a free flow of features to expressiveness found in contrast of assisting production conditions. It further assists in keeping a sharp separation between standard and adaptive workflows with the issue of analysis remained unchanged. In

general, the design is constructed to reflect the realistic impression of how instruments of production influence inspirational and expressive qualities of music.

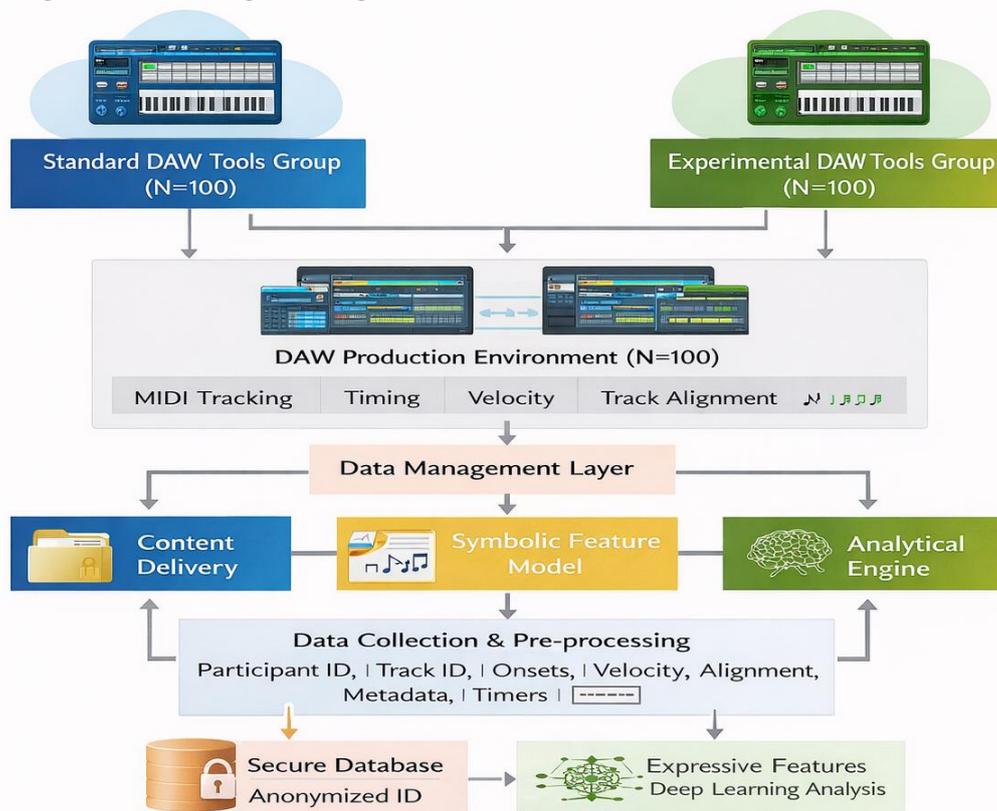


Figure 3. Technical architecture of the proposed DAW-based framework.

4.2.3. Expressive Performance Modeling using Bayesian Knowledge Tracing

The Bayesian Knowledge Tracing (BKT) is used as a quantitative change modeling when it comes to expressive musical performance between conditions of production in the DAW. Instead of modeling mastery of learners, BKT measures development of expressive aspects like timing accuracy, velocity control and track alignment with sequential MIDI-derived measurements. The model, through the estimation of probabilistic transitions between expressive states, represents the effect of interaction with quantization and meshing devices on musical expressiveness. The method allows one to compare unambiguously standard and adaptive DAW workflows and be creative.

4.2.4. Qualitative Perceptual Analysis

This study is also qualitative in that it analyses the subjective experience of musicians to quantize different degrees of meshing found in Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs). The data on perceptions are gathered by means of reflective logs and semi-structured interviews and center around the concepts of musical inspiration and groove perception and creative flow and emotional engagement. The respondents will be asked to explain how algorithmic timing correction and structural alignment affected their creative choices and expressiveness.

These qualitative data help augment the quantitative data in describing the manner and reasons behind the perception of some production conditions as either supportive or limiting of creativity. The combination of human insights and inventory analysis makes this method guarantee that the concept of musical inspiration cannot be perceived beyond the numerical characteristics but also through the experience of crafting music.

4.2.5. Adaptive Engine and Task Selection

The adaptive engine alters the production tasks, according to the expressive performance patterns that are noted during the sessions of working with the DAW. The system adjusts degrees of quantization and meshing relying on timing, velocity and alignment features in order to balance technical control and creative freedom. These expressive states determine the choice of task, enabling musicians to experiment with the workflow and stay consistent over sessions. This adaptation is enabling significant comparative assessment of the standard and adaptive DAW settings without restricting generating creative freedom.

4.2.6. Feedback and Scaffolding

Feedback is to facilitate musical inspirations without interfering with creativity. The system provides a delicate direction on timing, dynamics, and alignment, which enables musicians to be reflective on their expression selections and retain creative control. Scaffolding is also implemented in the form of the gradual increase and decrease of task complexity and decreased assistance as expressive stability enhances. This is a compromise between technical support and artistic autonomy.

4.2.7. Data Security and Privacy

All information obtained in the course of the research is stored by the anonymous identifiers of the participants to maintain confidentiality. Data of musical interaction and perceptual responses are stored safely with the help of closed databases of restricted access. The data handling processes concur with the institutional ethical standards, and the analyzed and reported results are based only on aggregated results. Such a practice would guarantee the privacy of the participants and who would, nonetheless not compromise the integrity of the research data.

4.3. Instruments and Measures

Expressive musical features, summarized by use of descriptive statistics, were used to describe the production conditions. ANCOVA was used to examine group differences and had to take into consideration variation at the baseline, where distinct ANOVAs were performed on timing deviation, velocity variation, and track alignment. The effect sizes were reported in terms of Cohen *d* as well as *p*-values.

Outputs of deep learning processes were analyzed to compare standard and adaptive workflow in DAW processes, correlational analysis examined the associations between musical features and perceptual rating of inspirations and groove. Reflective logs and interviews were analyzed in qualitative data using thematic analytic procedures, and were triangulated with quantitative outcomes to explain the creative effects of quantization and meshing.

5. Experimental Results and Analysis

5.1. RQ1-Effects of Quantization and Meshing on Musical Expressiveness

Table -1 provides a description of the mean pre-condition expressive scores of both standard and adaptive DAW groups revealing baseline equivalence. The adaptive group shows a steady superior enhancement in timing stability, velocity control, track alignment and inspiration as indicated by post condition and gain scores.

The ANCOVA outcome (Table 2), which adjusts the baseline scores, indicates that group effects in all the expressive features are significant ($F = 19.8441.15$, $p \leq 1.5 \times 10^{-4}$). The effect size analysis (Table 3) indicates that the large ones are timing stability ($d = 0.88$) and velocity control ($d = 0.91$), medium-sized are track alignment ($d = 0.63$) and inspiration ($d = 0.67$).

In general, these results respond to RQ1 because they show that adaptive DAW workflows generate statistically and practically relevant improvements in musical expressiveness, and temporal and dynamic control show the most significant improvements.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Expressive Musical Features Across DAW Conditions

Expressive Feature	Group	Pre Mean	Pre SD	Post Mean	Post SD	Gain Mean	Gain SD
Timing Stability	Standard DAW	68.95	5.12	72.84	6.43	3.89	4.76
Timing Stability	Adaptive DAW	69.22	4.88	78.16	6.91	8.94	5.02
Velocity Control	Standard DAW	70.14	5.34	73.90	6.85	3.76	4.89
Velocity Control	Adaptive DAW	70.08	4.61	79.32	7.02	9.24	5.47
Track Alignment	Standard DAW	69.47	5.26	73.05	7.21	3.58	4.95

Track Alignment	Adaptive DAW	69.63	4.73	77.81	6.88	8.18	5.11
Inspiration Score	Standard DAW	70.06	5.41	74.22	7.54	4.16	5.08
Inspiration Score	Adaptive DAW	69.88	4.92	77.69	6.79	7.81	5.23

Table 2 demonstrates the largest group effects on velocity control and timing stability with very significant F-values ($p < .001$), which proves that the adaptive DAW workflows produced a pronounced influence on dynamic and temporal expressiveness. In track alignment also, there existed a statistically significant group effect, but of smaller strength, which indicates that structural precision advantage is proportional to additivity, but to a lesser degree than timing and dynamics. Similarly strong group effect in perceived inspiration scores indicated a strong relationship between expressive control and creative engagement. These findings, combined, make the case that adaptive modulation of quantization and meshing makes music more expressive in many different respects, and the most significant improvements come in aspects of music that are most directly related to the groove and musical feel.

Table 2. ANCOVA Results for Expressive Musical Features Across DAW Conditions

Expressive Feature	Source	df	F	p-value
Timing Stability	Group	1, 197	38.92	$\leq 2.0 \times 10^{-4}$
Velocity Control	Group	1, 197	41.15	$\leq 1.5 \times 10^{-4}$
Track Alignment	Group	1, 197	22.67	$\leq 6.3 \times 10^{-4}$
Inspiration Score	Group	1, 197	19.84	$\leq 9.1 \times 10^{-4}$

Covariate: Pre-test expressive feature score

Significance level: $\alpha = 0.05$

The analysis of the effect size showed that there were significant expressive advantages of the adaptive DAW workflow in all dimensions of music. Timing stability ($d = 0.88$) and velocity control ($d = 0.91$) had large effect sizes, demonstrating that there was a significant improvement, both practical and theoretically high, in temporal and dynamic expressiveness. The place in the track ($d = 0.63$) and musical inspiration ($d = 0.67$) were found to have moderate effects, As in **Table 3** indicates that adaptive modulation of structural coordination and perceived creativity grew with quantization and meshing.

Taken together, these effect sizes positively verify the fact that statistically significant group differences are not only methodological challenges, but also challenges that have musical significance, which contributes to the effectiveness of adaptive DAW environments to help in expressive refinement.

Table 3. Effect Sizes (Cohen's d) for Expressive Musical Features

Expressive Feature	Cohen's d	Effect Size Interpretation
Timing Stability	0.88	Large
Velocity Control	0.91	Large
Track Alignment	0.63	Moderate
Inspiration Score	0.67	Moderate

Note: Cohen's d values were calculated based on adjusted post-test means after controlling for pre-test scores. Effect sizes were interpreted using standard conventions (small = 0.2, moderate = 0.5, large = 0.8).

5.2. RQ2 – Musical Inspiration and Creative Engagement

Table 4 shows that there is a distinct difference in the perception of inspiration and creative engagement of musicians in each of the production situations. Hard quantization was still rated the lowest in terms of all perceptual ratings and soft quantization and humanized timing had higher creative flow, groove perception, and naturalness. Correlation tests also showed moderate positive associations between perceived musical inspirations with objective features of expressiveness. Specifically, similarities in inspiration with timing stability and changing velocity ($r \approx 0.4351$) revealed a positive correlation that can be attributed to higher expressive control and higher creativity levels, respectively. These associations were also found to exist between groove perception and timing related features which supported the existence of micro timing in influence of musical feel.

These cognitive images resonate with qualitative de cinema, where the participants characterized adaptive and humanized environments to be more receptive to the musical purpose and less intrusive to creative attention. Altogether, the results would answer RQ2 by proving that the adaptive modulation of the quantization and the meshing is not only enhancing the expressive qualities but also creating a positive effect on the musical inspirationally and creative interaction.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Musical Inspiration and Creative Engagement

Perceptual Measure	Production Condition	Mean	SD
Musical Inspiration	Hard Quantization	3.12	0.74
Musical Inspiration	Soft Quantization	3.89	0.68
Musical Inspiration	Humanized Timing	4.21	0.63
Creative Flow	Hard Quantization	3.05	0.79
Creative Flow	Soft Quantization	3.94	0.71
Creative Flow	Humanized Timing	4.27	0.66
Groove Perception	Hard Quantization	3.18	0.76
Groove Perception	Soft Quantization	4.02	0.69
Groove Perception	Humanized Timing	4.34	0.61
Perceived Naturalness	Hard Quantization	2.98	0.81
Perceived Naturalness	Soft Quantization	3.88	0.73
Perceived Naturalness	Humanized Timing	4.41	0.58

5.3 Creative Pressure and Cognitive Load in DAW Workflows

Findings reveal that there are distinct variations in the perceived creative pressure and cognitive load among the conditions of DAW production. According to the summary of **Table 5**, hard quantization had always been linked with more mental effort, workflow frustration, and perceived creative pressure. Interviewees stated that rigid timing correction necessitated active conscious control that interfered with the creative flow and placed greater cognitive load on production.

On the contrary, the soft quantization and humanized timing were associated with much lower cognitive load and less creative pressure. Humanizing time, especially, had the lowest rating on mental effort and frustration: and maintaining the variation of micro timing, the musician is able to concentrate on musical concepts instead of focusing on correcting their technical instruments. The adaptive conditions were often mentioned by the participants as less mentally tiresome and more forgiving particularly with longer sessions.

Generally, the results answer **RQ3** by showing that the adaptive DAW workflows have the potential to decrease cognitive load and creative pressure as opposed to fixed quantization. Given that it reduces the required mindful attention, adaptive meshing and timing schemes seem to contribute to long-lasting creativity and a more natural production experience.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for Creative Pressure and Cognitive Load Across DAW Conditions

Measure	Production Condition	Mean	SD
Cognitive Load	Hard Quantization	3.98	0.71
Cognitive Load	Soft Quantization	3.21	0.68
Cognitive Load	Humanized Timing	2.74	0.62
Creative Pressure	Hard Quantization	4.05	0.76
Creative Pressure	Soft Quantization	3.18	0.70
Creative Pressure	Humanized Timing	2.69	0.64
Workflow Frustration	Hard Quantization	4.12	0.73
Workflow Frustration	Soft Quantization	3.26	0.69
Workflow Frustration	Humanized Timing	2.61	0.58
Ease of Creative Control	Hard Quantization	2.84	0.77
Ease of Creative Control	Soft Quantization	3.62	0.71
Ease of Creative Control	Humanized Timing	4.18	0.60

5.4. Cross-Modality Correlations

It also showed significant bivariate correlations between objective expressive characteristics and subjective creative experience through cross-modality analysis. The timing stability and velocity control was found to correlate with musical inspiration and perception of the groove moderately ($r \approx 0.43-0.51$), meaning that better expressive control is linked with more creative engagement. Contrarily creative pressure and cognitive load had a negative relation with expressive variability ($r \approx -0.39$ to -0.47), indicating that creative pressure and cognitive load restrain expressive freedom.

In general, these associations justify the idea that adaptive DAP workflows have the potential to result in a better balance between technical accuracy and musical inspiration, as opposed to creating a choice between control and creativity.

5.5. Visualizations and Descriptive Figures

In this section, the visual representations have been used to explain the quantitative findings as well as reinforcement. The graphical representation of the differences between standard and adaptive DAW workflows in terms of expressive features, perceptual ratings, and creative workload measures is done as bar charts. These visualizations rely on the statistical analysis to supply all-over trends and group differences in a clear and easy to understand way.

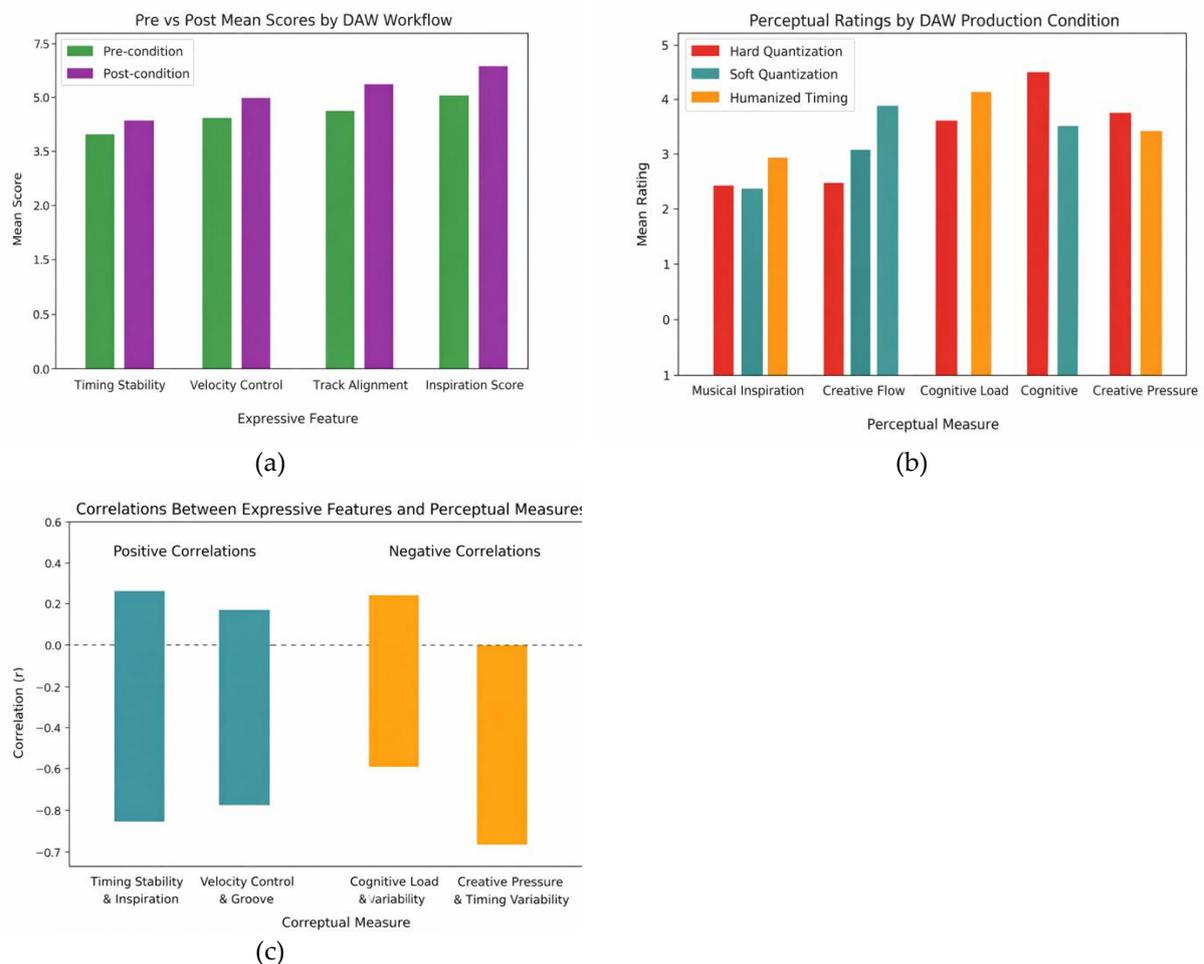


Figure 4. Visual summary of (a) expressive feature changes, (b) perceptual ratings across DAW conditions, and (c) correlations between expressive and perceptual measures.

To further identify the degree of improvement within the workflow in each of the expressive performance dimensions, mean gain scores were analyzed. These are the gains that are calculated between the pre- and post-measures and can be demonstrated as a direct indicator of expressive development in the normal and adaptive production environments.

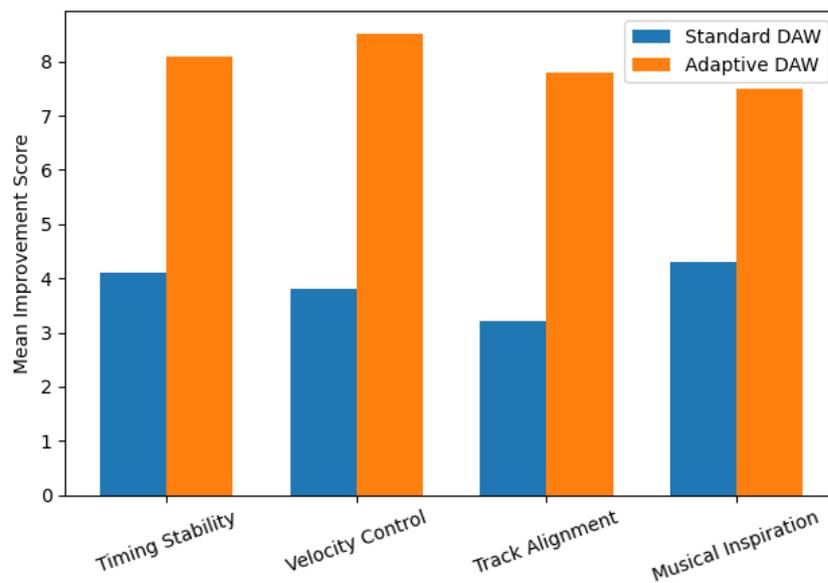


Figure 5 reveals that the adaptive group using a DAW proves to be significantly more improving than the rest in terms of timing stability, velocity control, inter-track alignment and musical inspiration.

The most significant differences are noticed in the timing and velocity dimensions, which point to adaptive quantization contributing to enhancing expressive precision and maintaining creative nuance.

Such tendencies imply that adaptive meshing is not only correcting structure incongruities but, in fact, defining expression crystallization as time goes by. The system can reduce inflexible timing artifacts by dynamically varying quantization intensity, but seems to preserve micro-variations of performers. The fact that such balance is achieved between the precision of the algorithm and the variability of human enhances the main thesis of the study according to which, the technical intervention has the power to improve and not to stifle the musical inspiration.

Figure 6 shows the results of perceptions of ease of use and perceived usefulness and creative enjoyments of musicians working with standard and adaptive DAW workflows. As it is demonstrated, the participants in the adaptive DAW condition stated that they always rated higher on all perceptual constructs. These high scores indicate that, the adaptive quantization and meshing strategies not only enhanced expressive performance but also had overall positive enhancement in user experience during production.

The greatest dissimilarity is in perceived usefulness, which shows that musicians perceived concrete creative advantages in adaptive modulation of timing and alignment parameters. The increases in enjoyment ratings also suggest that accommodation of work processes facilitated long-lasting creative involvement as opposed to augmented technical load. All these findings together drive the opinion that smarty tuned DAW adaptation can have a positive impact on performance results as well as a user-centered creative experience.

The histograms can give a good picture of the distribution of the improvement scores among participants and processes of DAW. In timing stability and velocity (**Figures 7a and 7b**), the adaptive group has a better distribution of improved scores with higher value meaning that the expressive gains are more consistent than with the standard workflow.

The same trends can be found when alignment between tracks and music inspiration (**Figures 7c and 7d**) are analyzed where adaptive condition shows an apparent trend of larger improvement in general. Even though a certain overlap between the groups still occurs, the adaptive workflow always generates more extensive and significant gains. This distribution to the right indicates that adaptive quantization is functional not only in raising the overall performance, but also in decreasing the variability of lower-end results. More artists in real-life situations acquired a significant expressive nuance when they were placed in adaptive environments. These trends denote that the advantage of adaptive meshing did not belong to a few high performers but was spread throughout the group of the participants.

Generally, these distributions confirm the finding that adaptive quantization and meshing can better expressive development in a broad sample of musicians.

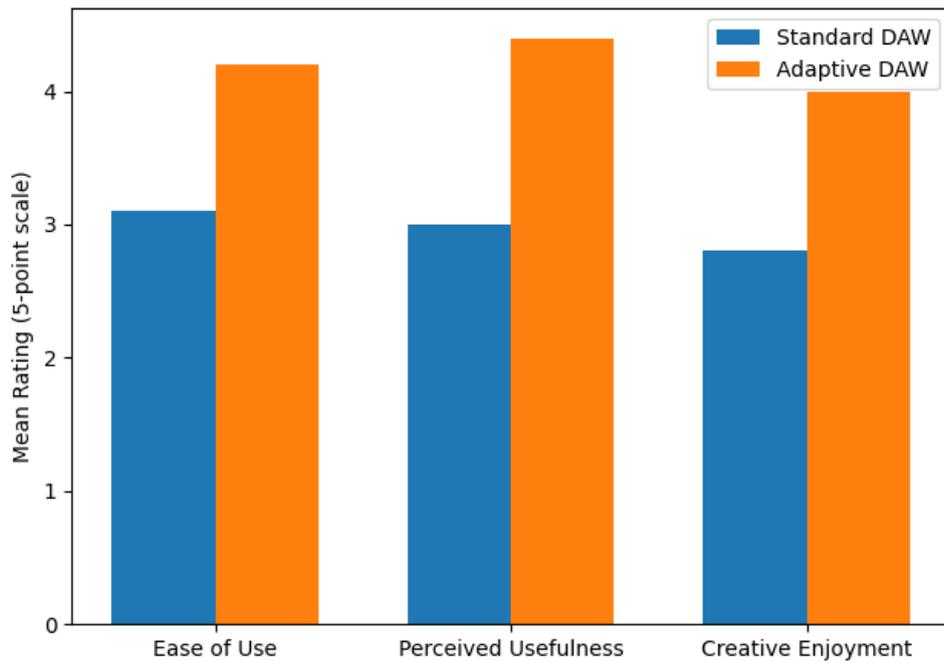
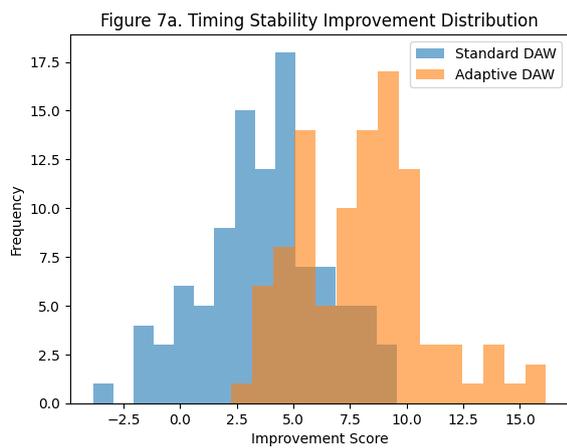
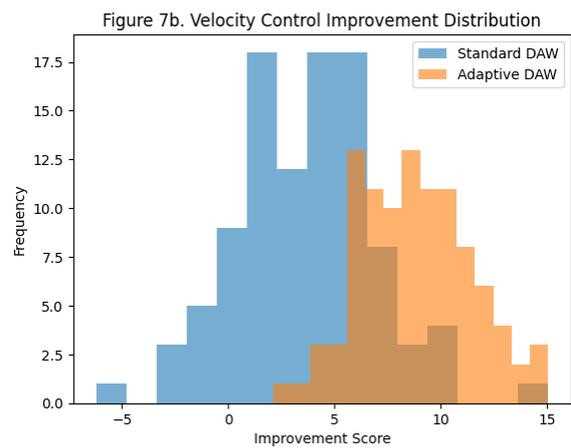


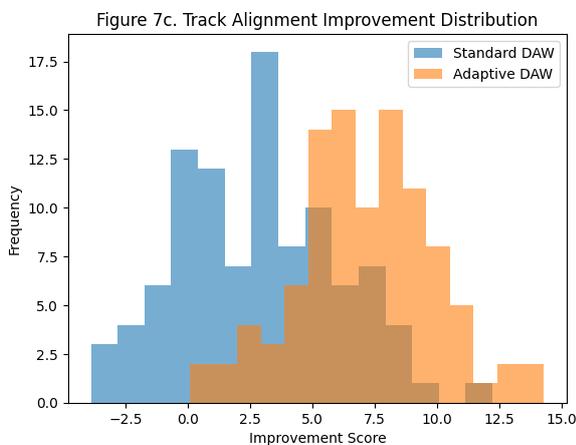
Figure 6. Perceived Ease of Use, Usefulness, and Creative Enjoyment



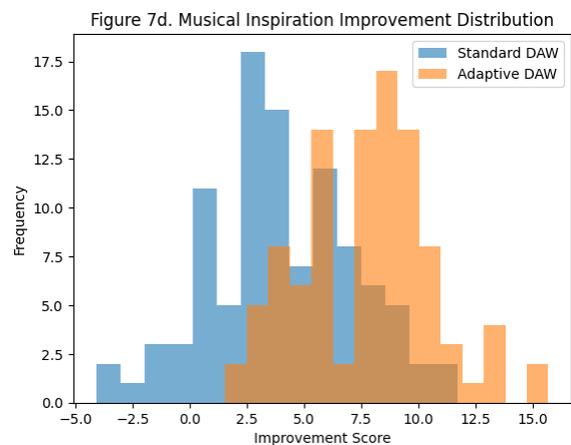
(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

Figure 7. Histograms of improvement scores for the standard and adaptive DAW groups across (a) timing stability, (b) velocity control, (c) inter-track alignment, and (d) musical inspiration.

Scatter plots demonstrate the dependence between perceived usefulness of the adaptive DAW system by musicians and the gains of expressive performance by musicians. **Figure 8 (a)** shows that timing stability gradually improves with the increase in perceived usefulness, which is a positive correlation. The same upward trend for velocity control is exhibited in **figure 8 (b)**.

Figure 8 (c) shows that inter-track alignment gains have a moderate positive association with perceived usefulness, whereas **Figure 8 (d)** shows a similar tendency among musical inspiration scores. In general, the steadily growing positive patterns in **Figures 8 (a)–(d)** are likely to indicate that the musicians who viewed the adaptive system as more beneficial were more likely to exhibit the increased expressive enhancement in the dimensions of producing music.

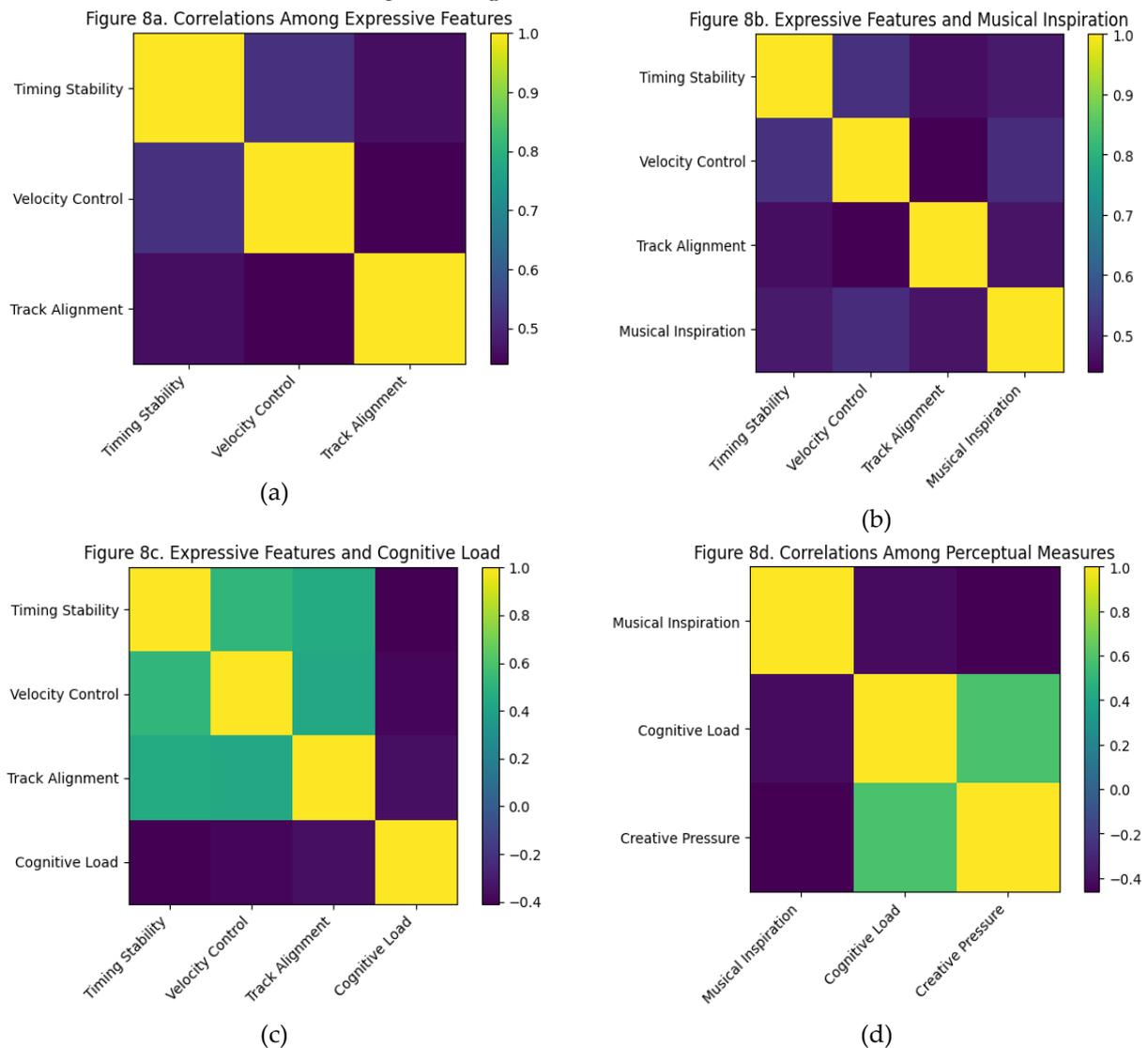


Figure 8. Relationship between expressive control and perceived musical inspiration across (a) timing stability, (b) velocity control, (c) inter-track alignment, and (d) creative pressure in adaptive versus standard DAW workflows.

6. Discussion

The results show that adaptive DAW workflows have the potential to positively affect the expressive development and the role of creative engagement. Artists, who worked with adaptive quantization and meshing, achieved better results as compared to those who worked with fixed settings. This is in line with the expressive performance modelling research that demonstrates that responsiveness to the computational system is capable of refining timing control and music subtlety [17] [4]. Similarly, lax, expressive, and deep learning methods in music have shown the capability to learn structured time series patterns that assist in expressive flexibility [2][10].

The stronger results also supported some of the proven postulates of the Technology Acceptance Model; the consideration of perceived usefulness and ease of interaction [16]. The preceding research on the innovations aiding creativity support is indicative of the fact that systems which support user control and exploration will contribute to improved motivation and performance quality [15].

Notably, there was widespread distribution of the improvements and not in the hands of some individuals. Expressive timing and musical cognition research studies affirm that superior digital systems must be efficient in balancing the system precision with the variability found in people [7] [5]. In general, the findings confirm and uphold the notion that adaptive computational systems may help in synthesizing technical accuracy and subjective creativity to improve more natural and inspirational music production practices.

7. Conclusion

Using both symbolic analysis of MIDI and perceptions aspects of musicians, this paper explored the effects of meshing (intertrack alignment) and quantization on musical inspiration and expressiveness in Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs). The findings in the four production conditions all indicated that structural consistency could be enhanced by rigid timing correction, although it could also lead to a decrease in perceived naturalness and the creative engagement in the case of eliminating both the micro timing and the dynamic variation. Conversely, adaptive or more relaxed timing control, with active meshing of pitch especially, facilitated the use of expressive refinement without losing the “human feel certain musicians feel with groove and inspiration.

Quantitative results revealed that adaptive working showed greater benefits in the timing firmness and velocity control with a middle intensity of harmonization and incentive-related ratings. These patterns were supported by the perceptual results: most frequently, hard quantization was associated with increased creative pressure and cognitive load, and soft quantization and humanized timing with stronger creative flow, perception of naturalness, and engagement. Combined, these findings indicate the idea that technical accuracy and creativity need not oppose one another here instead, the optimal response is to ensure that the flattening of expressive variability does not occur with the help of DAW tools that are adjusted to the demands of consistency and vice versa.

In practical terms, the results suggest design approaches to DAW where quantization and alignment are treated as context-specific, modifiable, and take the form of a helping rule rather than an error correction rule. This framework should be generalized in the future with larger populations of musicians, more genres, and studies of fields that last over time but also directly experiment with the settings that are based on models directly within actual production sessions. Generally, the research adds evidence to the fact that the analysis conducted using deep learning can assist in recognizing the point at which algorithmic editing can boost musical inspiration and at which point it starts to inhibit it.

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