Effect of music therapy on stress

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Stress is the discomfort or distress caused by forces that limit our freedom or movement. Stress is inherent to every human being. In the modern world which has increasing expectations, the amount of stress is increasing day by day. It is of paramount importance that we are able to cope with stress.

Stress, if not tackled can lead to physiological, mental and social problems and disrupt one's life. The researcher felt that the stress amongst novice students who join nursing course are faced with lot of challenges. They have to deal with long hours of study, patients and family problems, strict discipline and rules governing attendance etc. The novice nurse can be discouraged to continue the profession if utmost care is not taken during the initial phase of adjustment.

Music has a profound effect on one's body and has proved to calm oneself. It has proved effective in reducing pain in patients too. Music therapy would aid in relaxing and its effect can be measured by assessing the physiological parameters.

The researcher, therefore, felt that assessing the stress level and measuring the physiological parameters before and after music therapy can aid to see the effectiveness of music therapy as a method of relaxation among nursing students.

Statement of the problem

A study to assess the level of stress and effect of music therapy on physiological parameters amongst nursing students of selected college.

Objectives of the study

- To assess the stress level among nursing students before and after music therapy.

- To assess the physiological parameters among nursing students before and after music therapy.

- To identify the opinion of the nursing students regarding music therapy.

Research methodology

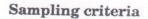**Research approach:** The study was conducted using quasi -experimental approach.

Research design: Quasi experimental one group pre-test post test design was implemented.

Setting of the study: The study was conducted in the classroom of K.J. Somaiya School and College of Nursing after taking permission for conducting the study.

Population: In this study, population refers to all the nursing students of K.J. Somaiya School and College od Nursing.

Sample and sampling technique: The samples included 31 students of first year Basic B.Sc Nursing. The sampling technique used was convenience purposive sampling.

Sampling criteria

Inclusion criteria: First year Basic B.Sc Nursing students of selected college who were willing to participate in the study.

Exclusion criteria: Nursing students from other classes of the selected college were excluded from the study.

Description of the tool : The data was collected by administering a self reporting questionnaire and a tool for recording the measurements of the physiological parameters.

The tool consisted of the following sections:

Section I : Demographic data of the students.

Section II: 10 item standardized - perceived stress scale

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Section III: Observation table to record the physiological parameters

Section IV: Opinionaire regarding music therapy

Validity: Content validity was done by giving the tool to 3 experts from nursing field. The opinions of the experts were considered and the tool was finalized.

Reliability: The reliability of the tool was checked by conducting inter rater reliability using Scoff's formula. The accuracy of the measurement was assessed and the co efficient of co relation was found to be 1, thus proving the reliability.

Pilot study: Pilot study is a small scale study done prior to the actual study to identify the lacunae, limitations etc.

The pilot study was done on students from 1st year Diploma program in nursing on 5 samples.

Data collection: The data was collected from 31 samples. The stress and physiological parameters were assessed prior to initiating the music therapy. The physiological parameters were then assessed at the end of each session of music therapy and stress was measured again at the end of 5 sessions. The music therapy was given twice a day for 5 days.

Results

Findings related to demographic data

Age: Majority of the samples (90.33%) were in the age group of 18-19 years. They were thus at the end stage of adolescence.

Gender: Majority of the samples were females. (93.54%)

Medical and surgical history: None of them had any prior history of any past medical and surgical illness.

Findings related to stress level

From the table on the next page, it is evident that the students had stress of varied levels and majority of them perceived moderate stress (64.5%) before being provided music therapy. The above table also shows that the stress levels amongst the students reduced after music therapy. There was none who perceived severe stress, whereas majority of them perceived mild stress (74.2%).

Findings related to physiological parameters

It was seen that pulse decreased in more than 60% of the samples after providing music therapy.

Respiration decreased in more than 50% samples after providing music therapy.

Level of stress	Pre test		Post test	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Mild	5	16.1	23	74.2
Moderate	20	64.5	8	25.8
Severe	6	19.4	0	-

The blood pressure remained unchanged in about 40% of the samples.

Thus, it is clear that music therapy helps in immediate relief of stress and can be used as a means of stress relief in adolescents. The long term effects of music therapy are still yet to be determined.

Findings related to opinion of students regarding music therapy

It was seen that 70.96% of the students enjoyed the music therapy.

In regards to the preference to listening to music again, 74.19% agreed to listen to music again. In case of frequency to listen to music, 52.17% preferred to listen to music once a day. 47. 82% preferred to listen to music for 5-10 minutes.

About 64.51% of the students felt relaxed after listening to music therapy.

Limitations

- Sample size was small. Hence generalization not possible.

- Data collection was limited to 5 sessions of music therapy.
- The music therapy was provided only for 25-30 minutes.

Recommendations

1. The same study could be replicated using a larger sample.

2. Two groups pre test post test design could be utilized.

3. The study could also identify the stressors and coping strategies utilized by the students.

4. A study comparing effect on physiological parameters using different relaxation techniques could be undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of the techniques.

Conclusion

It is evident from the study that nursing students have varied levels of stress. It is necessary that we identify the measures to be undertaken early to prevent the stress from affecting the students.

The study also implies that music therapy is a good form of reducing stress with immediate benefits.

References

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