

Summary of Presentation

Authors

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Title

Perception of Complexity, Interest Level, and Preference for Harmonic Progression of Music for Adults With Schizophrenia

Paper description

Music therapy has been shown to be effective in minimizing perceptual distortion when music is used to assist patients with schizophrenia in identifying their own affect and emotionality (Gold, Solli, Krüger, & Lie, 2009). Previous studies showed that the individuals with SP perceive musical stimuli not in relation to emotions or direct perception, but as an object requiring evaluation. Likewise, for individuals with schizophrenia, perceptual and cognitive processing of understanding and responding to music may not be the same as in healthy adults. Harmony being the significant tonal element in music, this study examined how adults with schizophrenia perceived music differently from healthy adults without schizophrenia in terms of complexity of harmonic progression, degree of interest, and personal preference.

Thirty adults diagnosed with schizophrenia (SP) and 37 healthy adults without schizophrenia (NSP) listened to musical excerpts with five different harmonic progressions. After listening to each excerpt, the participants reported their perception of the complexity, personal interest, and personal preference for the musical excerpt on an 11-point scale. The results showed that the SP group tended to be less sensitive to increased harmonic complexity, and this difference reached statistical significance ($p = .040$). No significant differences were found between the groups in terms of their interest in or preference for harmonic progression in music. However, among harmonic progression, interest level ($p = .014$), and personal preference ($p = .000$), there were significant interaction effects. Findings from this study provides essential information for music selection in psychiatric settings.