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Oral Presentation

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Title:

Music Therapy for People with Mild Cognitive Impairment: An Early Intervention before Progressing toward Dementia

Abstract:

Forty elderly people with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) were recruited in the study. Twenty participants joined a 12-session music therapy group. The other twenty participants joined a control group. The results indicated that the participants of music therapy group had obviously improvement in cognition, daily functioning and mood.

Paper Description:

Belleville (2008) states that people with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) are at risk of developing Alzheimer's Disease or other types of dementia. Gates et. al. (2011) also mention that 10% to 15% of people with MCI will progress toward dementia. Therefore, early intervention for people with MCI is necessary and of great worth.

A pilot study was conducted in Hong Kong in 2013. Forty elderly people with MCI were recruited in the study by randomized controlled trial method. Twenty participants joined a 12-session music therapy group conducted by a music therapist. Another twenty participants joined a 12-session cognitive intervention programme without any musical elements (control group) conducted by the social welfare workers. Both programme contents were cooperatively designed by an occupational therapist and a music therapist. The contents of cognitive intervention programme consisted of attention, memory and cognitive training, education of memory strategies, general cognitive stimulation and compensatory cognitive rehabilitation. The music therapy groups also included all these cognitive-training contents with a wide range of music therapy elements such as singing new Chinese songs, improvisation, and musical-cognitive games.

Cognitive and psychosocial assessments were administered before and after the programme. Relative to the control groups, the music therapy groups demonstrated significant improvements in the Mini-mental State Examination (MMSE), Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCa), Category Verbal Fluency Test (VFT), Lawton Instrumental Activities of Daily Living Scale (IADL) and Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS-SF). The results indicated that 12 sessions of music therapy with cognitive-training elements had obviously beneficial effects in cognition, daily functioning and mood in elderly persons with MCI.

References:

- Belleville, S. (2008). Cognitive Training for Persons with Mild Cognitive Impairment. *International Psychogeriatrics*, 20:1, 57-66.
- Gates, N. J., Sachdev, P. S., Flatarone Dingh, M. A., Valenzuela, M. (2011). Cognitive and Memory Training in Adults at Risk of Dementia: A Systematic Review. *BMC Geriatrics*, 11:55.