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A Comparison of the Effects of Different Types of Background Music on Reducing Inappropriate Behavior by Patients Receiving Psychological Occupational Therapy

ABSTRACT

Background. Patients who are participating in static therapeutic activities arranged by occupational therapists in the rehabilitation department often exhibit inappropriate behavior, such as violence, brawls, desertion, dullness of mind, simpering, etc. Psychiatric research has repeatedly indicated that music helps diminish unfavorable mental and behavioral symptoms, and that music enables people to become absorbed in their work and learning, rather than be engaged in idle fancy which decreases their working efficiency. However, the types of music which can diminish inappropriate behavior more efficiently are still unknown.

Aims. The goal of this research was to study how different types of background music affected the inappropriate behavior exhibited by patients, during static therapeutic activities organized by the Psychological Occupational Therapy Department.

Methods. This study was conducted on 15 schizophrenic patients receiving occupational therapy in a medical center in Taipei. Four different kinds of inappropriate behaviors such as violence, brawls, desertion, and dullness of the mind and simpering were observed and recorded during their static work in occupational therapy. Four types of the background music were used, including Mozart's music, and Mandarin pop music, Chinese classical music, and jazz; those had selected by patients on a questionnaire. Changes in behavior under the influence of each type of music were evaluated and compared.

Results. We found that Mozart's music generally diminished all kinds of the inappropriate behavior during the static therapeutic activities, while the other 3 types of music, had variable reducing effects and even enhancing effects on the various kinds of inappropriate behavior. Patients' tastes in music did not interfere with the effect of Mozart's music in reducing all kinds of inappropriate behavior; however, it did interfere with the effect of the 3 other kinds of music in reducing or enhancing various kinds of behavior. We concluded that different types of background music can be applied to reduce or enhance different kinds of behavior in special groups of patients or people. It was discovered that there was a strong negative correlation between the LOCTA score and the frequency of change of inappropriate behavior.

Conclusions. Background music may be used for some sorts of behavioral, emotional, occupational, or group therapy in different medical fields.

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