

Example of music therapy assisted childbirth research paper

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Music therapy is defined as a clinical technique employed by physicians to complement medicine; however, the therapy needs a prescription from a trained music therapist to achieve the desired objectives. Such techniques are designed to aid patients in overcoming challenges; music therapy is employed in many settings including community centers, schools, and rehabilitation centers to help the patients deal with the challenges they face. Childbirth is an experience associated with a significant amount of pain; some people compare the pain experienced during childbirth to the pain endured by a person burnt alive. This comparison serves a purpose to describe the intensity of the childbirth process. Music therapy, therefore, is used in childbirth to ease the pain experienced. It influences the psychological, sociological, physical, environmental, emotional, biological, and developmental aspects of the mother during childbirth. Music therapists have discovered that music plays a significant role in easing the pain of childbirth. This discovery was made in an attempt to relieve mothers of this pain that sometimes overshadows the joy associated with childbirth. Music therapists have established ways to ease the pain experienced by a woman before, during, and sometimes after childbirth (Michel & Pinson, 2004). Therapists use music that the individual in labor is familiar with, and music that reflects positive imagery to promote relaxation during early labor. Relaxation is necessary during labor as it eliminates all anxiety and the unnecessary hormones caused by the angst. Music that triggers the brain to cause movement is also used during the childbirth process; this encourages the mother to assume positions that place the baby in a proper position and promotes cervix dilation.

The music therapy assisted childbirth program prepares a mother for childbirth both psychologically and physically. Music therapists offer sessions especially during the last trimester of a mother's pregnancy. These sessions are characterized by instructions from the therapist to the mother about various relaxation techniques and use of imagery provided by music. The therapists also teach mothers how to integrate music into their activities to support their emotional and physical needs they may have during labor and childbirth (Michel & Pinson, 2004). The instructors then help the mothers to select music that helps them calm down and focus on systematic breathing. Playing music during the childbirth process also encourages the patient to stay active during the procedure. The childbirth process is exhaustive; this exhaustion can cause unconsciousness, which may lead to complications in the process. A mother, therefore, needs to be conscious and active throughout the process to deliver the baby without difficulty. According to research, the rhythmic stimulation generated by music therapy prompts the human body to release endorphins, which are natural pain relievers. The use of music therapy during childbirth, therefore, stimulates endorphin release, which ease the pain experienced.

The pain associated with childbirth leads to aggression in some patients. This aggression may lead to a communication breakdown, for example, between a mother and a midwife. This can make the childbirth process complex.

Music can aid communication between a patient and medical practitioner as it forms a form of affiliation between the two. Music therapy, thus, can reduce a mother's aggression towards their attendant. According to studies, the toning and sounding techniques used in music also help a mother to

become self expressive. This is because the sound of music empowers them and encourages them to express what they feel during the childbirth process.

The use of music therapy during childbirth also promotes the respiratory process; during childbirth, a mother's breathing process is fundamental in the achievement of a safe delivery. This is because a mother shares air with her unborn baby. The brain controls the functions of the organs in a human body. The functioning of the brain also responds to the rhythms generated by music (Michel & Pinson, 2004). The rhythms regulate the breathing pattern; a given rhythm may cause a deep and slow breathing process or a fast breathing rate. When giving birth, for example, the mother may be expected to breathe faster to ensure a sufficient supply of air to the baby. Music therapy is used in such a case to alter the respiratory process.

Music therapy controls the heartbeat rate and blood pressure of a mother during childbirth. The body of a mother responds to various types of music in different ways (Campbell, 2000). The speed and volume of the auditory stimulus control the heartbeat; music that is loud and has a fast beat tends to increase the heartbeat and blood pressure. Moderate, slower, or softer music decreases the blood pressure and heartbeat. Depending on the stage of childbirth, a therapist can choose the music to play for mother.

Psychological studies indicate that a significant percentage of people have a phobia of hospitals. This fear is attributed to sounds produced by medical equipment. Music therapy, therefore, helps mask these sounds making mothers with such a phobia comfortable. Music fills a space or room with pleasant sounds creating a warm and jovial mood. Pleasant sounds also

stimulate the mind; music therapy helps mothers awaiting delivery to reminisce and meditate upon pleasing memories. This helps deviate their mind from thinking about the pain they may undergo during childbirth. Music therapy during childbirth creates a connection between a mother and their unborn child. Unborn children are said to share their mother's emotions; a sad mother sends a gloomy emotion signal to their baby while a happy mother shares a happy emotion with their unborn child. The objective of music therapists attending to mothers awaiting childbirth is to create a happy environment for them. The unborn babies, therefore, share this environment and this eases the childbirth process (Campbell, 2000). The mood created by music therapy during childbirth also helps a mother connect with their birth partner. This is because music creates a conducive environment for the mother and those surrounding her.

Music helps a mother assume control over their childbirth process. This is through efficient communication with their attendants, their partners, and others present in her support. Music therapy also aids the body control as it enhances stress and pain management. Music supports the motherhood process; it helps a mother to overcome the fear of the whole process and encourages her to relax and let it happen. Sometimes, music therapy enhances a mother's spiritual expression; in such cases, she might evoke some peak experiences, which are distractions from the pain of childbirth. All mothers awaiting childbirth should consider employing music therapy during the process. This is because music therapy has several benefits. These include control over the process, pain management, and the enhancement of relationships. Control involves the regulation of all process

that might affect the childbirth process such as breathing and body movements (Michel & Pinson, 2004). Effective control leads to painless and natural birth procedures. Choosing the right music for a mother helps them manage the pain they experience in childbirth. Choosing music for a mother entails monitoring their physical and emotional response to the auditory stimulus. Music also creates connections between a mother, their child, and partner. This enhances their relationships and provides a mother with the support they need to endure the process.

The effectiveness of music therapy on the labor and childbirth process was proved through a study. The study comprised fourteen pregnant women who participated in the music therapy assisted childbirth program. All participants said that music therapy helped them gain control over the labor and childbirth process. They also revealed that the therapy helped them manage pain, and it promoted synchronous breathing. Another separate study showed that 64% of women controlled their labor and childbirth with the aid of music therapy (Michel & Pinson, 2004).

Music therapy assisted childbirth programs have been used for a significant amount of time to aid the childbirth process. The first step in this therapy is choosing music that soothes a mother and that which provides her with entertainment. The second step is teaching the mother the significance of their relationship with their unborn child and those around her. The use of music therapy in childbirth has proved effective in the process as it helps the mothers control the process. This form of therapy aids muscle relaxation and regulates the breathing process. Music therapy has also been found to control heartbeat and blood pressure. According to studies conducted to

establish the effectiveness of the program 64% of women termed it as efficient; they stated that it helped them achieve comfort and control over the process. Music therapy, therefore, is an efficient means for enhancing comfort during the childbirth process.

References

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