

# Music therapy in pre-operative anxiety literature review examples

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At one time in the life of an individual, it is often required that an operative surgery is done in order to correct some disorders in the body. Undergoing an operation is not easy to understand and accept. As such, many patients tend to have pre-operative anxiety. There are various ways derived to control this situation. The essay below looks at how music therapy can resolve this issue.

## Introduction

In the general concept, anxiety is the state where an individual does not know what to do or which action to take. The situation comes about due to various life situations that can lead an individual into confusion or lack of awareness as to what could be happening. Lack of certainty or confidence can lead to this state in an individual.

## **Preoperative Anxiety**

It is well known that undergoing an operation is not an easy endeavor and most people tend to be quite unsure of what to expect as they go for the operation. Studies have been done in women who undergo the caesarean delivery system as well as men undergoing various reconstructive or corrective surgeries (Ebnesahidi, 2008; Arslan, Ozer and Ozyurt, n. d).

As normal procedure in the hospitals, patients who are supposed to undergo surgery often get admitted on the day of the surgery (Pritchard, 2009). As such, these people have little or no time at all to get some information from the doctors or the nurses as concerns to the surgery. Due to this, it comes out quite clearly that these individuals often get anxious simply due to lack of information. Hicks and Jenkins (2008) observe that the anxiety can come about due to two specific reasons, all related to information. These are: the patients can have an understanding or misunderstanding of the process. Both these factors determine the anxiety levels in different ways.

Lack of information is the leading cause for the anxiety. This is where the patient comes in and is booked for the surgery but he has no understanding of the effects or the implications of the surgery. As such, they tend to have a lot of information that might be from hearsay and that which is not verified. As such, they tend to be anxious due to the lack of a proper understanding of the process.

Having an understanding can also be a precursor to the anxiety. This is where the patient can be informed on the risks as well as the implications of

the procedure. However, since there is no time to talk with the doctors before hand, the patient can have fears that have been created due to the understanding of the risks. As such, if this issue is not addressed, then the individual is highly likely to have a lot of fears as concerns the procedure. Ultimately, this culminates into anxiety which can in turn lead to complications after the procedure. As such, it can be seen that anxiety is not new to patients of surgery and it can easily lead to the process going wrong.

In order to understand how best to deal with the anxiety, it is also important to understand how the anxiety can be estimated. Hicks and Jenkins (2008) indicate that the hospital and Depression scale (HAD) can be used to take these measurements. In fact, this is the scale that has been used in hospitals to determine the level of anxiety in the pre-operative patients. There is also the multiple affect check list (MAACL) as well as the linear analogue anxiety scale (LAAS). Using these different scales, it can be well estimated as to the anxiety levels in the patients who are to undergo the surgery, hence comprise measures of controlling it. As Pritchard (2009) observes, professionals should have various ways of identifying the disorder and helping to curb it. These interventions can be quite important as people who have the anxiety often tend to have more post operative pain as compared to those who did not have any pre-operative anxiety.

## **Music Therapy**

Though it is widely said that there are some people who have the anxiety and others who do not, it is worth noting that there is a higher likelihood of having the anxiety than not. As such, it is important to have the right

measures to ensure that the anxiety is put at bay. This is another elusive factor. Since it is not easy to tell or specifically define the level of anxiety, controlling it becomes even more of a problem. However, it has emerged that the use of psychology can be very effective in this control. That is, tuning the mind of the patient to be calm and composed as the procedure approaches. Though counseling goes a long way to ensuring this, it is also notable that music also has a major role to play, as indicated by AORN, 2007. As such, music can be used in pre-operative procedure where the patients listen to some music as they await to be attended to by the surgeon. The overall effect of music is that it helps to relieve the tension; hence the patient is more relaxed. Due to this, there is less post-operative pain and, therefore, there is no need for the use of more anesthetics on the patient after coming back to (AORN, 2007). From this argument, it can be seen that music plays a major role in the operative procedures.

## **Benefits of Music**

There are various benefits associated with the use of music therapy in the operative procedures as observed by Pfister (2011). One of the benefits is that music itself is an intervention for the preoperative anxiety. As such, there is no need for comprehensive practitioner intervention as music does the bulk of the work. Therefore, the practitioner can have more time to address other issues and attend to other patients.

Secondly, music is safe. Since there is no medication involved, there are no side effects that can come along as a result of using music. The music volume can as well be controlled to the decibels that the patient is

comfortable with. As such, there is no way that any harm can come to the patient. It is also economical to use music as a form of therapy. There are no major facilities or infrastructure needed to play the music. With a small transmitter, the patient can easily access the music on different radio stations as well as other sources of music. Therefore, this is a very economical means of controlling the stress levels in the pre-operative patients.

The highest advantage of the music, however, is the fact that it helps in relieving the pre-operative anxiety. Through this control, the patient is more relaxed even as he goes in for the procedure. Ultimately, there are no complications in the post-operative stage and the patient can easily come out of the procedure and start recuperating quite fast. For this reason, it cannot be denied that music forms an essential part of the operative procedures. If well used, it can be quite economical as well as safe to use for the patients. As such, this can be used as a complement to the curative measures at the hospital.

## **Relationship of Music Therapy to Anxiety**

All along, this essay has looked at the contribution of music to the relieving of pre-operative anxiety. However, there is no evidence given to show that the two are actually related. This is shown in this section. From the various studies that have been done, it has been established that music actually helps in reducing the anxiety and quickening the recovery process.

Such a report is given by Abneshahidi (2008). A study was done which included 80 patients. All the participants in the study were enrolled to receive a caesarean section. In the study, patients randomly received 30 minutes of music as they awaited the procedure. In the final analysis, it came out that the patients who had received the music therapy had less anxiety as they went in for the procedure and they also had less post-operative pain. This proves that there is a connection between music therapy and the pre operative anxiety. For this reason, it is very important to incorporate it into the procedure as it can lead to the effectiveness of the procedure.

Arsan, Ozer and Ozyurt (n. d) also have an input on this issue. They indicate that a study was done in Turkish men who were waiting to undergo a procedure in urogenital surgery. Of these, there was a control group which received no music and another test group, some of who got some minutes of the music and others did not. When the data was collected, it emerged that those who did not listen to any music before the procedure did not show any difference with the control group. However, the group that received the music had less anxiety and they went through the procedure without much of the post-operative pain. These findings further assert the fact that music therapy is related to pre-operative anxiety. The relationship is in such a manner that the presence of music leads to the reduction of the pre-operative anxiety. As such, practitioners should seriously consider having the music therapy as part of the requirement during a surgical procedure. This can go a long way in making the procedure more successful.

## Summary

This essay has looked at the role and impact that music has on the pre-operation anxiety. Through the use of comprehensive literature review, it has been established beyond reasonable doubt that there is a very strong correlation between music therapy and the pre-operative anxiety. It has also come out quite clearly that reduced anxiety leads to reduced post-operational pain. As such, it cannot be denied that there is a strong relationship between the two. As such, nurses who prepare patients for the surgical processes should always ensure that the patients listen to some music. This not only prepares the patients for the surgery but also makes them respond better to the curative process.

In the discussion, it has also been established that music therapy is a very safe, cost-effective and efficient way of controlling the pre-operative anxiety. It is therefore, recommended that this should be incorporated into the nursing procedure as a way of controlling the this anxiety.

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