

## Studying the Effectiveness of Music-therapy on the Level of Happiness and Satisfaction with Life in Elderly Women

Hatami. S<sup>1\*</sup>, Ghasemi. M<sup>2</sup>, Molaei. M<sup>3</sup>, Sharifi. T<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,3</sup>MA in General Psychology, Faculty of Humanities, Islamic Azad University- Science and Research Branch of Shahrekord

<sup>2,4</sup>Assistant Professor, Faculty of Humanities, Islamic Azad University- Science and Research Branch of Shahrekord

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** The aim of this study was investigating the effectiveness of music-therapy, on happiness and satisfaction of life in elderly female of Kiar province.

**Materials and Methods:** This was a quasi-experimental design study that consisted of pretest- posttest and follow-up the population of study comprised all of the elderly female in of Sartishniz village in 2014. They were initially screen using (DASS) questionnaire, and 30 participants were given a diagnosis of anxiety and depression were selected and randomly assigned to two groups of music-therapy, and control group (15 individual in each group). The experimental groups received 14 sessions (one session, 45 min) of music-therapy while, the control group did not receive any intervention. All subjects in the same condition in three stages: pre, post, and three-month follow-up were assessed using an Oxford Happiness and Dinner satisfaction of life. Collected data were statistically analyzed using Spss. one way variance analysis and LSD test... were used.

**Results:** The results of the Data analysis indicated that there is a significant difference between experimental and control group ( $P < 0.05$ ). Treatment method was effective in on the satisfaction of life and Happiness.

**KEYWORDS:** art therapy- music-therapy- happiness- satisfaction of life-

### 1- INTRODUCTION

World population aging is because of important reasons such as reduced rate of mortality due to medical advances, health, and education and also increased life expectancy and longevity. Since this phenomenon makes significant changes and transformations in all aspects of human life including a wide range of age structures, values and norms, and the establishment of social organizations, dealing with challenges faced by this phenomenon and adoption of appropriate measures to promote physical, mental, and social status of the elderly are of great importance and has been put on the agenda of the international community (Ho, 2001). Gerontologists divide the elderly into two categories including the young elderly aged 65-75 and the old elderly aged 75 and more (Kaplan and Sadock, 2001). The elderly suffer from specific problems, many of which cause stress in higher ages. Health and mental disorders is one of the major problems that threatens the elderly and their families (Malekshahi, 2000). An elderly has no choice but to cope with the grief caused by the death of spouse, friends, family members, or colleagues, change in job status and influence of credit, and loss of physical abilities and health (Kaplan and Sadock, 2001). Human psyche may show different reactions against external and internal factors. These reactions are called "emotion". "Mirth" is one of the aspects of emotion that is sometimes positive and sometimes negative and is the same as words like joy, exhilaration, and euphoria (Plachik, 2003).

In summary, it can be stated that every person, according to their worldview and thought, would have a feeling inside that is called "mirth" if they achieve their favorite things. In other words, mirth is the state in which there is no or little grief and concern in the heart and mind of humans (Eysenck, 2001). Psychological studies in recent years show that if people combine the relatively stab factors causing mirth (such as having a loving and supportive spouse or friends, healthy and productive career, and regular and enjoyable recreational programs) with small and transient ones (such as getting a good grade or being rewarded at work and going to a short picnic or travel), they will attain the highest degree of mirth (Eysenck, 2001).

Satisfaction with life, as one of the most important psychological needs, has always occupied the human mind because of its dramatic impact on the formation of personality and the whole life of humans.

Subjective feeling of satisfaction with life is an area in positive psychology that tries to study the cognitive assessments (overall judgment of satisfaction with life) and emotion of people (experience of pleasant and

\* **Corresponding Author:** Hatami S., MA in General Psychology, Faculty of Humanities, Islamic Azad University- Science and Research Branch of Shahrekord

unpleasant emotions) about their lives. Feeling of happiness and satisfaction with life is one of the components of positive attitude of people about the world they live in. In fact, experience of happiness and satisfaction with life is the ultimate objective of life and sadness and sorrow are often considered an obstacle in the way of doing the tasks. Satisfaction with life refers to Satisfaction or acceptance of living circumstances and, generally, the fulfilment of a person's needs and wishes (Laughlin, 2001). Subjective feeling of satisfaction with life does not refer to a particular aspect of life, but it encompasses an individual's whole life. In fact, satisfaction with life involves the general assessment and attitude of a person about his/her life as a whole or some aspects of life such as family life and educational experience (Laughlin, 2001). Koivuma *et al.* (2002) reported that people who don't see themselves happy and are dissatisfied with life suffer from depression and anxiety and would suicidal more than those who are happy and satisfied with life. Myers & Diners showed that mental health is correlated with high satisfaction with life; the higher the level of satisfaction with life, the more prone a person would to positive emotions and feelings (Bakhshipour, 2005). Art therapy is one of the new ways of coping with psychological-emotional distresses that has been emphasized globally and is being widely used. Studies have shown that art therapy is used as treatment in various forms such as painting therapy, drama therapy, puppet show, film therapy, music therapy, and dancing (Crimmens, 2006; Salimpour, 2001). Art therapy is a therapeutic technique which improves the emotional status of patients suffering from mental tensions. Art activities help individuals to better express the feelings and emotions that they cannot demonstrate them through their behavior and speech, overcome their fears, control their anxiety, stress, and anger, make better decisions, improve their communication skills such as speaking and assertiveness, overcome their embarrassment and loss of self-confidence, and reach the desirable level of mental health (Fooladband, 2008).

Because of generation of energy, mobility, possibility of excessive abstraction, and inherent attraction, music is very pervasive and extraordinary has attracted human. There are many different types of music, each of which can have different effects on the mind and body. Considering these various effects, music can be used for counseling and psychotherapy in treatment works in the field of counseling and psychotherapy (Mohamadizadeh, 2009). Depending on the type of activities of participants, two types of music therapy including active and passive can be applied. Active music therapy involves singing, playing a music instrument or composing, while passive music therapy includes merely listening to recorded or live music (Canyon, 2007).

Music therapy is integrated into daily life more than any other health technology and has been associated with the feelings and emotions of people. Listening to music and singing a song are the most common practices of music therapy which are simply used in different situations of life in order to reach a feeling of comfort, lightness, freshness, and vitality and also energize the inner excitement. For the elderly who have a disturbing mental world, music order is a desirable organized experience which can take them away from the emotional turmoil in order to attain the ability to predict the activity and develop a relationship with music. Anyone should feel comfortable with him/herself before having successful and appropriate relationships in the society. Music is a "self-expression" tool which can enhance the feeling of "self-worth". This not only significantly decreases the number of visits paid to medical centers but also minimize the amount of taking drugs (Khoshkonesh, 2006).

In terms of the elderly, it should be taken into account that music elevates pain tolerance threshold and reduces palpitations, anxiety, and depression. The use of music has been very helpful and has reduced the multiple problems of the elderly. Various studies have shown that music has been mostly effective in reducing agitation, confusion, stress, and Alzheimer. Generally, music therapy has a significant effect on reducing the feeling of loneliness, fear of the future, physical problems, mental problems, anxiety, grief, nutritional problems, and attachment to others (Khoshkonesh, 2006). Ahmadi *et al.* (2013) studied the anti-aggressive effects of music therapy in an animal model of schizophrenia and showed that music therapy has been able to reduce negative and aggressive symptoms and desirably improve the pathological effects resulting from social isolation. Winter (2002) studied the effect of music on pain intensity and severity of pain in cancer patients in a hospital in the U.S. and concluded that patients in the experimental group who were under the treatment of music tolerated less pain than those in the control group. Elliot (2003) compared the effects of music and relaxation on pain intensity and severity of pain in cancer patients in a hospital in Australia and stated that although both music and relaxation were effective in reducing pain in patients with cancer, relaxation was effective more significantly. Nowadays, a variety of treatment approaches are used for treatment of mental disorders and promotion of mental health. According to the results on the effectiveness of art therapy (music therapy) in various areas, the present study aims to answer the question that whether music therapy can be effective in increasing happiness and satisfaction with life among the elderly women or not.

## METHODOLOGY

The present study was a quasi-experimental research based on pretest-posttest and follow-up with the control group. Statistical population included the elderly women present in Taranom Center in the city of Kiar, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province in 2014. In pretest, their happiness level was measured by Oxford questionnaire and their satisfaction with life was evaluated by Diener Satisfaction with Life Scale and clinical interview. Finally, with regard to loss of sample and after obtaining the consent of the elderly, they were randomly divided into two groups of experimental and control. The subjects in experimental group were treated by the desired intervention in 14 45-minute sessions and three times a week. The control group received no special treatment. During these sessions, music was used to increase happiness and satisfaction with life. In active music therapy (group singing), a song which was rhythmic, biologically stimulating, and its melody was productive of pleasure, joy, and fantasia was chosen by the confirmation of experts and the subjects were asked to sing it in a group. The selected song was intended to help the subjects to express their feelings and motivations better and more accurate. In posttest, level of happiness and satisfaction with life was measured in the experimental group and the obtained data were followed up after three months.

### Findings:

Due to the repeated measurements done on the experimental group and the control group, mixed analysis of variance (intragroup-intergroup) with repeated measures was used in order to test the hypotheses.

The first hypothesis: Music is effective in increasing happiness.

Given the significant difference between the mean scores of happiness at various points, the results of Least Significant Difference (LSD) test was used for comparing the mean of one group with the mean of another. The results of this test are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Results of LSD test for pairwise comparisons

Confidence interval of 95%		Level of significance	Standard deviation	Happiness	
Upper limit	Lower limit			Condition (j)	Condition (i)
-0/123	-0/296	0/000	0/042	Posttest	Pretest
0/018	-0/154	0/115	0/042	Follow-up	
0/187	0/096	0/000	0/022	Follow-up	Posttest

According to Table 1, LSD test showed that there is no significant difference between pretest and posttest scores of happiness ( $p < 0.001$ ) and also between posttest and follow-up scores of happiness ( $\text{Sig} < 0.001$ ). On the other hand, no significant difference was observed between pretest and follow-up scores of happiness ( $p = 0.115$ ).

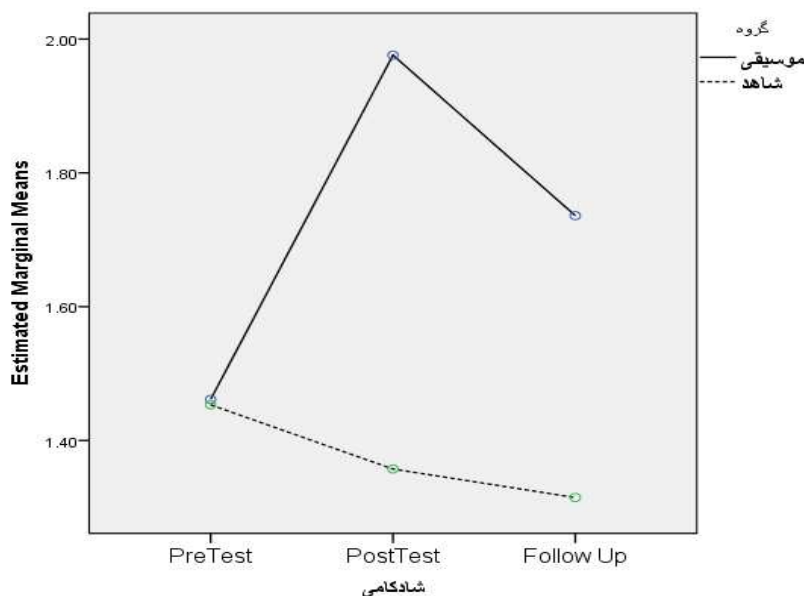


Figure 1: Marginal mean scores of happiness for music therapy and the control groups at three measurement points (group/ music/ witness – happiness)

As it is evident from Figure 1, mean score of happiness in music therapy group has increased linearly (along with intervention) and then dropped in the follow-up stage. But mean scores of happiness in the control group has insignificantly decreased at three points of measurement. Hence, it can be generally stated that music therapy has a significant positive effect on increasing happiness.

The second hypothesis: Music is effective in increasing satisfaction with life.

Given the significant difference between the mean scores of satisfaction with life at various points, the results of Least Significant Difference (LSD) test was used for comparing the mean of one group with the mean of another. The results of this test are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Results of LSD test for pairwise comparisons

Confidence interval of 95%		Level of significance	Standard deviation	Happiness	
Upper limit	Lower limit			Condition (j)	Condition (i)
-0.31	-0.73	0.000	0.1	Posttest	Pretest
-0.21	-0.55	0.000	0.083	Follow-up	Pretest
0.30	-0.026	0.096	0.081	Follow-up	Posttest

According to Table 2, LSD test showed that there is no significant difference between pretest and posttest scores of satisfaction with life ( $p < 0.001$ ) and also between pretest and follow-up scores of satisfaction with life ( $p < 0.001$ ). However, no significant difference was found between posttest and follow-up scores of satisfaction with life ( $p = 0.096$ ).

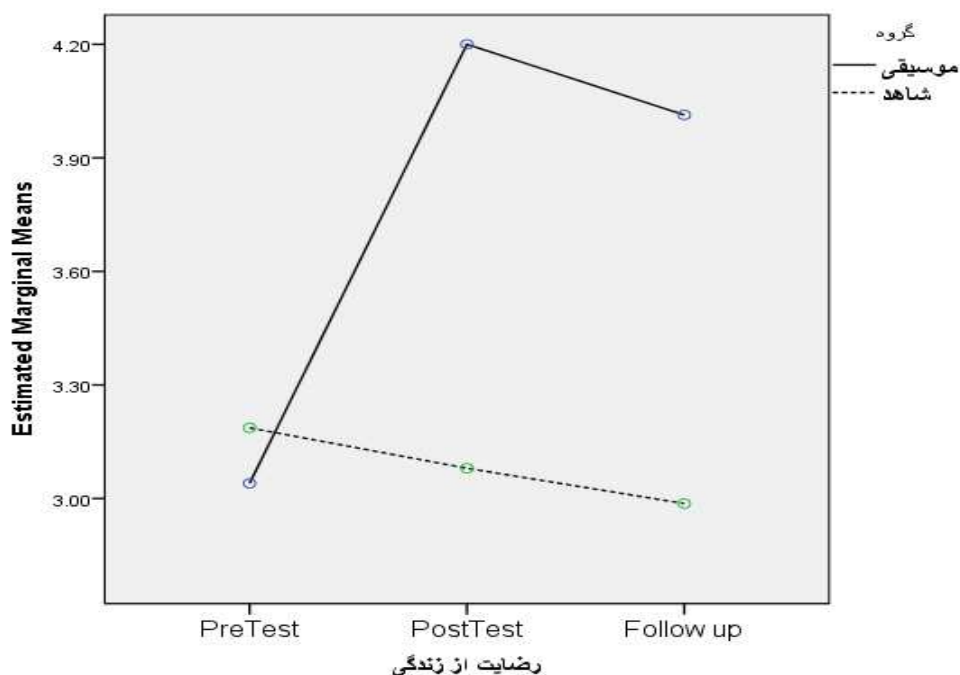


Figure 2: Marginal mean scores of satisfaction with life for music therapy and the control groups at three measurement points (group/ music/ witness – life satisfaction)

As it is evident from Figure 2, mean score of satisfaction with life in music therapy group has increased linearly (along with intervention) and then dropped in the follow-up stage, while mean scores of satisfaction with life in the control group has insignificantly decreased at three points of measurement. Therefore, it can be concluded that music therapy has a significant positive effect on increasing satisfaction with life.

## DISCUSSION

The results of the present study showed that music therapy is effective in increasing happiness and life satisfaction of elderly women. According to the results obtained (Table 1 and Figure 1), it was found that music

therapy has had a significant positive effect on increasing happiness. No similar study was found about the effect of music therapy on increasing happiness.

Table 2 and Figure 2 suggest that music therapy has had a significant positive effect on increasing satisfaction with life. This result is indirectly consistent with findings of Elliot (2003), Ahmadi *et al.* (2013), and Winter (2002).

Because of generation of energy, mobility, possibility of excessive abstraction, and inherent attraction, music is very pervasive and extraordinary has attracted human. There are many different types of music, each of which can have different effects on the mind and body. Considering these various effects, music can be used for counseling and psychotherapy in treatment works in the field of counseling and psychotherapy (Fooladband, 2008). Effects of music on human body has been physiologically proven; the pituitary gland stimulates hypothalamus to secrete a substances called endorphin and thereby relieve the pains, provide the causes of relaxation and happiness in human (Salimpour, 2001), and control blood pressure, heart rate, and depression. Music also elevates pain tolerance threshold and reduces palpitations, anxiety, and depression in the elderly.

### Conclusion:

The results of the present study showed that music therapy, as one of the practices of art therapy, increases the level happiness and satisfaction with life in the elderly women. Families or sanatoriums can use music in order to increase joy and comfort of the elderly. Playing a relaxing music can be a good choice for activating the spirit and psyche of the elderly.

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