

How amazing music therapy in counseling for millennials

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Abstract

Most of millennials college students in Indonesia still think that undergraduate thesis is a terrifying final project. In the process of making the undergraduate thesis, they often do something non-productive, like procrastinating doing it and avoiding their supervisors. This excessive academic anxiety toward undergraduate thesis could lead them to do something irrational, e.g. suicide. As one of college's internal agents of change, psychologists or educational counselors are expected to overcome the problem which frequently happens every year by giving the students an intervention in accordance with their interests and needs as millennials. Music, as one of millennials' essential needs, can be used as an alternative to therapeutic healing medium. Conventional counseling strategy that has been conducted all this time, shows only ineffective result. That is why it is needed to be changed into modern approach that is more effective in reducing academic anxiety of the millennials college students, which is integrative approach through music therapy intervention in counseling.

Keywords: music therapy, counseling, millennials generation, college students, academic anxiety, undergraduate thesis, psychology of music, educational psychology

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Introduction

Nowadays, the undergraduate thesis is a terrifying final project for most millennials college students in Indonesia (Situmorang, 2017a, 2017b, 2018a, 2018b; Situmorang, Mulawarman, & Wibowo, 2018). If examined more deeply, many of themillennials college students who still do not have a qualified skills to write, and have no interest in research. Furthermore, the low motivation of achievement and creativity in the effort to finish this final project are some predictors that can be highlighted (Situmorang, 2016). Therefore, ultimately many of themillennials college students who do procrastination, avoiding supervisors, doing things that are non-productive, and the most extreme is to commit suicide (Situmorang, 2017a, 2017b, 2018a, 2018b; Situmorang, Mulawarman, & Wibowo, 2018).

Anxiety towards undergraduate thesis like that is a form of academic anxiety at the college level (Ottens, 1991). If this continues to be allowed, it will be result in negative symptoms in the physical and psychological aspects that may hinder millennials collegestudents in their study process. Most of the millennials collegestudents who experience academic anxiety to the undergraduate thesis will tend to do negative things that can harm themselves and others, one of the most extreme behavior that often happens is suicidal behavior. Based on the news that was reported in the *kompas.com* media (2008), Hendrawan Winata, as a student of YAI University-Salemba committed suicide by jumping from the building of Atma

Jaya University Jakarta because his undergraduate thesis never finished. News reported by Wika (2016) through kompasnasional.com, reported that one lecturer of the University of Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara (UMSU) Medan, named Hj. Nuraini Lubis was killed by her own students in the toilet on May 2, 2016. Murder motive committed by Roy Mandosah Siregar against his lecturer is due to the issue of undergraduate thesis. The latest news released by Indrawan (2016) via Detik News.com on July 27, 2016, it was reported that one of the 8th semester students of Multimedia Nusantara University (UMN) named Efren Ody Ekiriandra was found "dead hang" in his own home using antenna cables. These three cases constitute a handful of cases occurring in Indonesia in today's millennials, especially those experiencing academic anxiety against undergraduate thesis.

Scrutinizing more closely on such cases, it is important to undertake a preventative intervention service to prevent this phenomenon upstream, and to conduct curative intervention services to treat those who have experienced this downstream academic anxiety. Psychologists or educational counselors at universities are expected to always be pro-active in preventing and treating millennials college students who had an experience of academic anxiety to the undergraduate thesis. In addition, psychologists or educational counselors are expected to perform a more effective and optimal in counseling intervention service to solve this problem. One of the modern counseling intervention services offered by integrative approach is through music therapy (Capuzzi & Gross, 2011; Sharf, 2012).

Music therapy in its application will be able to increase the production of all four positive hormones in the human body, i.e. endorphins, dopamine, serotonin, and oxytocin. The functions of these four positive hormones will be able to make the body more relaxed, reduce anxiety or stress, increase happiness, improve intelligence, and increase self-esteem (Mucci & Mucci, 2002; Djohan, 2006). The provision of music therapy as an intervention service to help millennials in reducing academic anxiety will be more effective than the conventional counseling intervention services that psychologists or educational counselors have done so far, because with the music therapy, the millennials collegestudents can reduce their anxiety towards undergraduate thesis and they can increase trust of themselves in completing the undergraduate thesis (Situmorang, 2017a, 2017b, 2018a, 2018b; Situmorang, Mulawarman, & Wibowo, 2018).

Discussions

Millennials Generation and Music

After World War II, demographic groups (cohorts) were divided into four generations: baby boomers, X (Gen-Xer), millennials (Gen-Y) and Z. The baby boomer generation was born after the second world war (currently aged 51 to 70). This generation was called baby boomer because in that era the birth of baby was very high. Then, the next generation was the generation X which was born in 1965 to 1980 (currently aged 35 to 50). After this generation, the next generation was the generation of millennials born between 1981 to 2000 (currently aged 15 years to 34). This generation of Millennials (or Gen-Y) was a demographic group after Generation X, while the Z generation was born after 2000 to the present (Ali & Purwandi, 2016).

Each generation has its own characteristics. Baby boomers tend to have an idealistic character. They tend to uphold the principles that they profess, especially with regard to traditions that have been hereditary. In addition, they also have a conservative mindset, which is why these generations tend to be more risk-taking than other generations. Gen-Xer is a "sandwich generation" before millennials. Gen-Xer is a child of baby boomers, so the values taught by baby boomers are more or less still attached to Gen-Xer. This generation has begun to be modern and not as conservative as baby boomers anymore because of the influence of technology has started to develop (Ali & Purwandi, 2016; Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr, 2010; Strauss, Howe, & Markiewicz, 2006).

Millennials generation is a unique generation, and unlike with other generations (Ali & Purwandi, 2016; Brophy, 2007; Lenhart et al., 2010; Stein, 2013; Strauss et al., 2006). This is much influenced by the emergence of smartphones, the widespread internet, and the emergence of social media. Those three things affect the mindset, values, and behaviors adopted. Millennials generation is a generation of "technology literate". The results of research released by Pew Research Center (2010) explicitly explain the uniqueness of millennials generation compared with previous generations. The striking thing about this millennials generation compared to the previous generation is the very significant use of technology and pop or music culture.

Millennials generation life can not be separated from technology (internet) and music (entertainment), because it has become an important need for this generation. This can be seen from the findings of research conducted by Alvara Research Center (in Ali & Purwandi, 2016). The data show that millennials generation in internet consumption was much higher compared to other generations. That was that the internet has become a staple for generations of millennials for communication and self-actualization.

In the context of communication relations between individuals and self-actualization processes that occur in millennials generation, this generation is greatly optimizing the use of the internet in accessing the music needs that they expect. Various media and applications that can be accessed through desktop and smartphone such as youtube, itunes, joox, spotify, musically, dubsplash, smule, tiktok, and other platforms are very supportive millennials generation needs in terms of music, that is also indirectly used as a means of communication and self-actualization. Today, quite a lot of millennials are able to actualize themselves by working in accordance with their passion, especially in the field of entertainment or music by becoming professional musicians through their works that have uploaded into the media and the applications.

Definition of Music Therapy

Etymologically, music therapy consists of two words, "music" and "therapy". "Music" is used to describe media that is used exclusively in a series of therapies, whereas the word "therapy" is related to a series of attempts designed to assist an individual in eradicating the problem (Wigram, Pedersen, & Bonde, 2002). Usually, the "therapy" word is used in the context of individual problems that include both physical and mental aspects (Dewi, 2015). In everyday life, therapy occurs in various forms, for example, psychologists will hear and talk with clients through the counseling stages that sometimes need to be accompanied by therapy assistance (Ilie, 2013; Lilley, & Aurore; 2014), and physiotherapists will provide various physical exercises to restore certain muscle functions that an individual possesses (Atiwannapat, Thaipisuttikul, Poopityastaporn, & Katekaew, 2016; Çiftçi & Öztunç, 2015; Giovagnoli, Oliveri, Schifano, & Raglio, 2014). Thus, a music therapist will use music and music activities to facilitate the therapeutic process in helping to alleviate the problems experienced by their clients (Djohan, 2006; Gladding, 2016; Natalia, 2013; Wigram et al., 2002).

Music therapy is a profession that has emerged over the past fifty years from various professional disciplines in various countries (Djohan, 2006). Therefore, the process of defining music therapy as both a profession and as a discipline may vary, depending on the orientation and perspectives of a particular group based on practitioners who work as therapists, treated clients, and cultural distinctions adopted (Natalia, 2013). The general definition of music therapy is inclusive, and focuses on the function of music as a medium of therapy, as well as defining for whom therapy is intended (Gladding, 2016). However, the process of defining music therapy is reflected in the way this profession is implemented into every culture that exists in each country. In this way, things to consider are the three main factors, which are the professional background of the practitioner, the client's needs, and the approach used in the treatment (Wigram et al., 2002).

In the formulation of The American Music Therapy Association (in Djohan, 2006), it is said that "music therapy is a profession that uses music and music activity to overcome various problems in the physical, psychological, cognitive, and social needs of individuals" (p.27). From the physical aspect, music therapy is a technique used for the healing of an illness by the use of a particular sound or rhythm given by a person who is a doctor with a specialization of psychiatry (Atiwannapat et al., 2016; Bibb et al., 2015; Çiftçi & Öztunç, 2015; Giovagnoli et al., 2014). From the psychological and cognitive aspects, music therapy is given by someone who is a psychologist or psychotherapist (Ilie, 2013, Laura et al., 2015; Lilley et al., 2014). While from the aspect of individual social needs, music therapy can be given by someone who is a counselor (Bradley et al., 2014; Gladding et al., 2008; Skudrzyk et al., 2009). In any of its professional practice, a music therapist may use certain types of music to assist clients in alleviating the problem by using classical music, instrumentalist, and slow music (Potter & Perry, 2005 in Natalia, 2013). Music therapy is a process that combines the healing aspects of the music with the counseling process to assist the counselee in eradicating the physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, cognitive, and social needs of a person (Natalia, 2013).

The Concept of Music Therapy in Counseling Practice

In the Guidance & Counseling (Educational Psychology) science, music therapy can serve as a form of intervention that counselors can use in their counseling practice (Capuzzi & Gross, 2011; Sharf, 2012). Through music, rapport process between counselor and counselee can take place well, because music is a universal language and can penetrate multicultural boundaries (Gladding, 2016). Historically, since the past civilizations music has been used by humans in the healing process in various cultures of the world, so today music can be used in the modern counseling process (Degges-White & Davis, 2017). The current process of modern counseling has to be interesting and fun, because it can make counselee be more open and motivated to change in a better direction, so that counseling process becomes more effective (Skudrzyk et al., 2009). The use of music in the counseling process is known as music therapy. The study of music therapy as a form of intervention of expressive therapy or creative arts in integrative approach counseling, which can be applied in counseling process is also explained concretely (Capuzzi & Gross, 2011; Sharf, 2012).

The effectiveness of the counseling process using music therapy is highly therapeutic, because through music therapy it can help counselor and counselee to reframing ideas, focusing perspectives, emotional externalization, and deepening understanding of an experience or problem (Bradley et al., 2014). Thus, there was a cathartic process that occurs in the counseling process through this music therapy. The counselee can find some solace and even some meaningful resolutions, especially if they share the words of a song with a counselor. In the counseling process, music can help counselors and counsees to find their goals to help them to see possible possibilities and to help them to become aware of the positive things that they can do (Gladding et al., 2008).

A counselor in every practice is required to have a sense of empathy, patience, sincerity to help others, wise, understanding, yet also flexible and has a great sense of humor (Bradley et al., 2014; Degges-White & Davis, 2017; Gladding, 2016; Gladding et al., 2008; Skudrzyk et al., 2009). All of the above requirements are important because in practice, the counselor works with individuals who are facing problems, suffering from illness, experiencing severe stress, requiring more attention due to their limitations, or being marginalized from reasonable social relationships for various reasons both internally and externally (Dewi, 2015; Zarate, 2016).

A counselor should also uphold the ethics of the profession, which is to maintain the confidentiality of the counselee data, respect the rights of the counselee, perform proper counseling procedures, and maintain professional work ethics either with counselors or with other relevant professions (Degges-White & Davis, 2017; Bradley et al., 2014; Gladding, 2016; Gladding et al., 2008; Skudrzyk, 2014). Therefore, education and training to become a counselor who can provide music therapy is cross-cutting, because music therapy is a multidisciplinary field that is closely related to areas of knowledge outside of music as well (Capuzzi & Gross, 2011; Sharf, 2012).

It is imperative that a counselor understands musical psychology well, knowledge of the various hearing processes and processes of the brain is essential to the physiological processes of perception of music (Gladding, 2016). In addition, by understanding musical psychology, a counselor may be able to explain various musical experiences and design the appropriate type of music for their counselee (Degges-White & Davis, 2017).

Techniques in Music Therapy

In the counseling practice, the technique in music therapy is divided into two, i.e. passive music therapy and active music therapy (Wigram et al., 2002). Passive music therapy is a music therapy performed by inviting the counselee to listen to a particular instrument carefully. Meanwhile, active music therapy is the process of giving music therapy that is done by inviting the counselee to play an instrument, singing, or creating a song (Djohan, 2006; Gladding, 2016; Wigram et al., 2002;). These two techniques of music therapy can be done through individual and group counseling (Gladding, 2016).

The process of giving these two techniques in counseling practice, counselors can perform activities such as listening to the music to the counselee, improvisation, and create a song. By inviting counsees to listen to music, it can help counselee change their moods to be more positive, and reduce their level of anxiety. When the counselor works with a counselee using music, improvisations can be achieved concretely by asking the counselee to vary the musical theme (Wigram, 2004, in Gladding, 2016).

Counselor can invite counsees to play their instruments and change the melody (i.e., make music faster, slower, or varied). The last technique that can be used is to create a song. The process of creating and developing a song, viewed as a therapy derived from within the counselee itself (Nordoff & Robbins, 1977). Creating songs is a creative act that puts the counselee on their own feelings. It can be used as a way of healing inherent in creative action (Schmidt, 1983). In actual practice, counselors can ask or encourage counsees to write or create a song work that represents themselves, so that in the next session the counselee can talk about the experience of creating a work of the song as a cathartic form. In addition, in active music therapy techniques, counselors can invite counsees to create a song lyric that matches the problems they are experiencing to help the counselee convey the feeling of pain experienced, so that it helps in the recovery process (Gladding et al., 2008).

Music therapy is designed with a thorough introduction to the circumstances and problems experienced by the counselee, so that the techniques given will be different for each individual (Bradley et al., 2014; Skudrzyk et al., 2009). For example, some counsees who are more suited to using active music therapy techniques, but some are more helpful with passive music therapy techniques, or vice versa (Zarate, 2016). Any music therapy will also be different for everyone. The appropriateness of music therapy will be largely determined by individual values, philosophy embraced, education, clinical setting, and cultural background (Gladding, 2016; Wigram et al., 2002). However, all music therapy has the same goal, which helps express feelings, helps physical rehabilitation, positively affects mood and emotional conditions, improves memory, and provides a unique opportunity to interact and build emotional closeness between counsees and counselor (individual counseling and groups) as well as between counsees and counsees (group counseling) (Djohan, 2006; Illie, 2013; Laura et al., 2015; Lilley et al., 2014). Thus, music therapy is also expected to help cope with stress, prevent disease and ease the pain experienced by an individual (Djohan, 2006; Gladding, 2016; Natalia, 2013).

Effectiveness of Music Therapy to reduce the Academic Anxiety of Millennials Generation Students

The study of conventional services conducted by educational counselors proved to be less effective. The first research on the use of group counseling services with a cognitive approach done to millennials collegestudents at the University of Hormozgan, Iran, proved less effective in reducing collegestudent academic anxiety to undergraduate thesis (Zarei, Fini, & khajehzadeh Fini, 2010). Subsequent research is about the use of group counseling services with "systematic motivational counseling" (SMC), proving that the results are less significant in reducing the academic anxiety experienced by millennialscollege students (Ghasemzadeh, 2011).

Basically an individual with anxiety is caused by the high production of the thyroxine hormone in the human brain. A person who undergoes a negative emotional process will stimulate the hypothalamus to produce high levels of thyroxine hormone. This is what causes the individual easily tired, easily anxious, easily tense, easily afraid, and insomnia, so that the individual circumstances become less optimal (Vianna, Barbosa, Carvalhaes, & Cunha, 2011). To solve this problem, a person must be able to balance itself in every condition experienced. One human brain has four natural morphines of the body, there was the positive hormones that it can ease the disease and make life become happy. The morphines divided to four types, i.e. endorphin, dopamine, serotonin, and oxytocin. The function of those natural morphines were able to make the body more relaxed, so it able to reduce anxiety or stress (Mucci & Mucci, 2002). One of the interventions to increase the production of endorphin and serotonin hormones is to relax by listening to music (Wigram et al., 2002). Psychologically, music has a positive relationship in human life that music is able to make a person more relaxed, to reduce stress, to create a sense of security and prosperity, to increase happiness, to improve the intelligence, to increase confidence, and to help release pain (Djohan, 2006). This is reinforced also by research that proves that music is able to increase the production of endorphin and serotonin hormones that result in an individual can feel happier and reduce anxiety experienced (Laura et al., 2015; Zarate, 2016).

Music as an intervention that can be applied in helping an individual in reducing anxiety has been proven. Research conducted by Sharma and Jagdev (2012) shows evidence that the use of music can be able to reduce the academic stress experienced by 30 millennials generation. Furthermore, research conducted by Lilley, Oberle, and Thompson (2014) also proves the effectiveness of music can be able to reduce anxiety before performing on millennials. The use of music can also be given in the counseling process. Music can be used to help individuals to understand their emotional and cognitive development. Individuals can listen to songs, or play an active musical instrument. Through music, counselors can make the counseling process more interesting and effective, this is very appropriate in accordance with the

interests of the millennials (Skudrzyk, 2009). There are several techniques that can help counselors and counsees in reframing ideas, focusing perspectives, emotional externalization, and deepening understanding of an experience or problem. One of them is through music (Bradley et al., 2014). The use of music in the counseling process has many therapeutic benefits. Music can be used as a counseling strategy in the form of relaxation techniques to reduce and to overcome anxiety and emotional tension (Gladding, 2016; Gladding et al., 2008). Relaxation techniques as the effective coping skills to reduce anxiety levels. Music was used as the media to calm, and help counsees to feel comfortable, so the counseling process becomes more effective.

Music therapy performed at the College of Notre Dame, Belmont, California. Uses sound stimuli (sounds, music) to determine the effect of sound on stress and relax conditions experienced by a person, it was currently worldwide (Djohan, 2006). But the application of music therapy is still rare, because it is still a new thing, especially in counseling. Music therapy can have a positive impact on anxiety. Music therapy is a technique that is very easy to do and affordable, but the effect is quite large. The meta-analysis study of music as a therapy media has been done in Indonesia (Dewi, 2015). From the results of these meta-analysis studies, it is suggested that music can be used as an approach in helping individuals who had experience physical, behavioral, and psychological barriers to be able to become better. Research on the effectiveness of music as a media of therapy on academic anxiety of students of millennials generation has also been done (Rosanty, 2014). From the results of this study, music can be used as an intervention to reduce the academic anxiety experienced by millennials. However, this study only proves the use of Mozart music as passive music therapy only, and this study is not yet explain about the giving active music therapy.

Finally, in 2018, the first study in Indonesia on the application of music therapy in integrated counseling practice with the conventional approach by comparing passive and active music therapy, finally performed by Situmorang (2018). The results showed that the integration of CBT group counseling with music therapy proved to be effective in reducing academic anxiety and increasing the self-efficacy of millennials collegestudents. The study compared the effectiveness of CBT with passive music therapy and CBT with active music therapy techniques. Furthermore, the results of this study was demonstrate that CBT group counseling with active music therapy was the most effective technique in reducing academic anxiety and improving self-efficacy, compared with passive music therapy. More details explain that passive music therapy has been shown to be more effective than active music therapy, especially during pretest vs. posttest. However, during pretest vs follow-up and posttest vs. follow-up, active music therapy is much more effective in reducing academic anxiety and improving the self-efficacy of millennials collegestudents who are preparing the undergraduate thesis.

Conclusions

Based on the above explanations, it can be concluded is that millennials and music generation has a significant attachment. Counseling interventions for millennials college students through music therapy are more effective than conventional counseling services, because music is one of the closest things to millennials. In addition, nowadays music becomes an important requirement for millennials generation in the process of self-actualization. If psychologist or educational counselor can do counseling services through music therapy, it will undoubtedly provide a new understanding for education in Indonesia that it is time to move to one of the more effective modern approaches. Hopefully, in the future no more news in the mass media about millennials college students in Indonesia who commit to suicide behavior due to excessive anxiety towards the undergraduate thesis. This review can be an interesting topic to be studied in the future for theoretical development of science that can be practically implemented.

It is expected that further research on this subject be able to concretely discuss the effectiveness of counseling by using music therapy intervention in helping millennials college students to reduce their academic anxiety. In addition, this conceptual study is expected to provide a new insight for psychologists and educational counselors in Indonesia to be able to develop a program design and intervention strategy, through counseling services using passive music therapy and active music therapy techniques to reduce academic anxiety and improve self-efficacy of millennials generation. In particular, this study is expected to provide an idea for the provision of music therapy training for psychologists and educational counselors who interested in expressive or creative therapy in counseling.

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