



Effectiveness of music interventions in reducing dental anxiety in paediatric and adult patients

Submitted by

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A thesis submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Philosophy

The Joanna Briggs Institute, Faculty of Health Sciences

The University of Adelaide

November 2011

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	1
ABSTRACT	3
STATEMENT OF DECLARATION	5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	6
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	7
1.1 Dental anxiety	7
1.2 Prevalence of dental anxiety	8
1.3 Consequences of dental anxiety	9
1.4 Causes of dental anxiety	10
1.5 Treatment of dental anxiety	11
1.6 Music	11
1.7 Music therapy and music listening	12
1.8 Music and its effects	13
1.9 Measuring dental anxiety	14
1.10 Gap in the literature	15
CHAPTER 2: THE SYSTEMATIC REVIEW PROTOCOL	16
2.1 Review Objective	16
2.2 Review Question	16
2.3 Criteria for considering studies for this review	16
2.4 Review Methods	17
2.4.1 Search strategy	17
2.4.2 Assessment of Methodological Quality	19
2.4.3 Data Extraction	19
2.4.4 Data Synthesis	20

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS	21
3.1 Description of studies	21
3.2 Methodological quality	23
3.3 Systematic review findings	23
3.3.1 Paediatric patients	24
3.3.2 Adult patients	28
CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	39
4.1 General Discussion	39
4.1.1 Study quality and characteristics	39
4.1.2 Paediatric patients	41
4.1.3 Adult patients	42
4.1.4 Length of exposure	44
4.1.5 Music preference and music volume	44
4.1.6 Reduction in dental anxiety	45
4.2 Implications for practice	46
4.3 Implications for research	46
4.4 Conclusions	47
4.4.1 Key Findings	47
4.4.2 Recommendations	48
4.4.3 Limitations	48
APPENDIX 1: CRITICAL APPRAISAL INSTRUMENT	50
APPENDIX 2: DATA EXTRACTION INSTRUMENT	51
APPENDIX 3: DETAILED SEARCH STRATEGY	53
APPENDIX 4: INCLUDED STUDIES	62
APPENDIX 5: EXCLUDED STUDIES	66
APPENDIX 6: THE JOANNA BRIGGS INSTITUTE LEVELS OF EVIDENCE	68
REFERENCES	69
REFERENCES TO EXCLUDED CITATIONS	74

Abstract

Background Dental anxiety has been identified as a significant and common problem in both children and adults and is considered an obstacle for dental care providers in the delivery of quality oral care. There are various treatment options for reducing dental anxiety and music is one of the treatment options. Music interventions can either be passive (music listening) or active music (therapy).

Objective The objective of this study was to present the best available evidence related to the effectiveness of music interventions on dental anxiety in paediatric and adult patients.

Data sources A comprehensive search was undertaken on major electronic databases from their inception to October 2010. The search was restricted to English language and other languages where a translation was available.

Review methods Randomised controlled trials, quasi-randomised controlled trials and quasi-experimental studies were included in the review. Critical appraisal and data extraction were undertaken using the Joanna Briggs Institute critical appraisal instrument and the standard data extraction form for evidence of effectiveness.

Results Two studies had paediatric patients as population group. One study found that music listening did not result in any reduction of anxiety during dental procedures on young patients. However, another study found that music reduced anxiety to some extent, which was not significant.

Five studies included in this review had adult patients as population group. Two studies concluded that relaxation when compared to music was an effective method of reducing patient's anxiety. One study concluded that music listening significantly lowered levels of anxiety and stress of females during dental procedures. Two other studies provided conclusive evidence on effectiveness of music in reducing dental anxiety in adults.

Conclusions There is enough evidence to suggest that adult patients may benefit from music listening during dental treatment. There is inconclusive evidence on the effectiveness of music in reducing dental anxiety in children.

Implications for practice It is recommended that pre-recorded music be offered through headphones during the dental procedure, particularly in adult patients to reduce their dental anxiety.

Implications for research More research needs to be performed before it is possible to show, with a higher degree of certainty, that music listening does have a significant effect on the reduction of dental anxiety, particularly in children.

Keywords: Music, music therapy, music listening, dental anxiety, adults, children

Statement of Declaration

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution to Sandeep Moola and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

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Acknowledgements

I wish to sincerely thank Prof Alan Pearson AM for not only supervising my systematic review and thesis, but also for his valuable input, knowledge and wisdom during the course of this research work in the past 18 months.

I wish to thank Dr Zoe Jordan for agreeing to be my associate supervisor for the last few months of my candidature and for reviewing this thesis.

I also wish to thank Dr Christina Hagger, my former co-supervisor for her valuable input during the course of the systematic review and Mrs Maureen Bell, Research Librarian, The University of Adelaide for her help with the search strategy.

Finally, I want to express my appreciation to my wife, Priyanka who has been so patient and supportive during this whole process.