Effects of Passive Music Therapy on Cognitive Function, Depression, and Quality of Life in Adults with Vascular Dementia: A Randomized Controlled Trial

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Abstract

Objectives: The aim of this study was to examine the effects of passive music therapy (PMT) on cognitive function, depression, and quality of life (QoL) in patients with vascular dementia (VaD).

Methods: Adults who met the criteria for vascular dementia (n = 34; mean age = 62.2 years) were randomly allocated to the PMT group (n = 17) or control group (n = 17). PMT was performed under the supervision of a music therapist for 45 min a day, twice a week for 8 consecutive weeks (16 sessions). Outcome measures included cognitive function, depression, and quality of life.

Results: QoL decreased during standard care and increased during music therapy ($p<0.01$, $F= 220.37$). Depression increased significantly more often during standard care than during music therapy ($p = 0.02$). However, total scores on the Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE) did not significantly change, but the scores of two subscales, 'language' and 'recall', improved significantly ($p = 0.023$).

Conclusions: A well-structured music therapy was associated with positive changes in depression level related to cognitive decline and enhanced quality of life in adults with VaD. To confirm these promising results, further research with a larger sample is needed.

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