



The Effectiveness of Classical Music Therapy in Reducing Anxiety Among Senior-Level Students when Facing Their Final Assignments Among Public Health Students at Universitas Indonesia Maju in 2023

Intan Puspita Asri¹, Agustina sari²

^{1,2} Indonesia Maju University, Jakarta, Indonesia

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CORRESPONDENCE

E-mail: intann.puspita13@gmail.com

A B S T R A C T

In 2019, approximately 301 million people worldwide lived with anxiety disorders, and 280 million people lived with depression. According to research conducted by the Center for Reproductive Health et al. (2022), anxiety disorders (26.7%) are the most prevalent mental health disorders experienced by adolescents, affecting both boys (25.4%) and girls (28.2%) in Indonesia. This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of classical music therapy in reducing anxiety among final-year public health students in 2023. The sample size for this research was 32 respondents. The research method used was a quasi-experimental design employing a non-equivalent control group design, with accidental sampling as the sampling technique. The pre-test and post-test results for the control group showed a p-value of 0.232, which means it is more significant than 0.05, indicating no effect. In contrast, the pre-test and post-test results for the experimental group displayed a p-value of 0.027, which is less than 0.05, indicating a significant impact. Thus, there was a difference in anxiety levels after applying classical music therapy among final-year public health students facing their final projects at Indonesia Maju University in 2023. In conclusion, classical music therapy is effective in reducing anxiety. Therefore, classical music therapy is expected to be one of the alternative methods for reducing stress, not only when completing final projects but also in other situations.

INTRODUCTION

Approximately 46 million, or one-fifth of the Indonesian population, are adolescents (UNICEF (*United Nations Children's Fund*), 2021). The current generation is called the 'Golden Generation' due to its significance in economic growth and Indonesia's position on the world stage (Bachtiar *et al.*, 2021). Throughout the world, nearly one billion people, constituting 10% of the global disease burden, suffer from mental health disorders (WHO, 2022b). In 2019, an estimated 970 million individuals worldwide experienced mental health disorders, with varying prevalence based on gender and age, such as anxiety and depression among both men and women. Specifically, in 2019, approximately 301 million people globally lived with anxiety disorders, and 280 million lived with depression (WHO, 2022a). However, despite these findings, resources for diagnosing, treating, and supporting individuals with mental health issues remain severely limited, particularly in low- and middle-income countries (WHO, 2022b).

In Indonesia, one out of three adolescents (34.9%) or 15.5 million young people have experienced mental health disorders within the last 12 months. One out of 20 adolescents (5.5%) in Indonesia, equivalent to 2.45 million adolescents, is currently suffering from mental disorders (*Center for Reproductive Health et al.*, 2022). According to the disease burden analysis, various mental disorders experienced by the

Indonesian population include depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, behavioral disorders, autism, eating disorders, and intellectual disabilities. Additionally, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is also prevalent (Indrayani *et al.*, 2022). In the study conducted (*Center for Reproductive Health et al.*, 2022) Anxiety disorders (26.7%) are the most common mental disorders in adolescents, both male adolescents (25.4%) and female adolescents (28,2%). anxiety disorders (26.7%) are the most common mental health disorders among adolescents, both in males (25.4%) and females (28.2%). Meanwhile, in the capital region of DKI Jakarta, based on the Basic Health Research (Riskesdas, 2018), the prevalence of emotional health disorders in 2013 was 5.2%, which increased to 10.1% in 2018.

Anxiety is an individual's response to an emotional situation, characterized by feelings of fear accompanied by nervousness, helplessness, isolation, and insecurity (Kustiningsih, 2020; Supriyana *et al.*, 2021). One of the factors contributing to anxiety can indeed occur among students while completing their final assignments (Junaidi, 2016; Livana *et al.*, 2018; Astuti *et al.*, 2021). Physical and psychological changes can also occur as students strive to adapt to their environment and the demands of their final tasks (Livana *et al.*, 2018). Music that is familiar and aligns with individual preferences can create a comfortable atmosphere, reduce anxiety levels, alleviate symptoms of depression, and uplift mood (Kustiningsih, 2020).

The anxiety experienced by senior public health students in the 2019 cohort of Universitas Indonesia Maju, Jakarta, in facing their final projects is evident. This information was gathered through interviews conducted in April 2023 involving ten individuals. It was found that the students' anxiety stemmed from various factors. Among these, 8 out of 10 (80%) students expressed difficulties managing their time due to simultaneous requirements for their final projects and internship activities, including preparing internship reports. Additionally, 6 out of 10 (60%) students reported feeling overwhelmed by their supervising professors' prolonged approval process for their research titles. Another 6 out of 10 (60%) students mentioned experiencing fatigue due to continuous revisions and frequent consultations with their supervisors. Moreover, 7 out of 10 (70%) students expressed challenges in locating relevant literature sources about their research topics.

Several studies have shown that students who are about to or in the process of working on their final projects experience anxiety. One such study (Astuti *et al.*, 2021) "The Anxiety Level of Students in Thesis Preparation in the Physical Education and Recreation Study Program at the Faculty of Sports Sciences, Universitas Negeri Padang" indicated that students' anxiety levels can be assessed from all sub-variables. Among them, three students (5.7%) met the criteria for being very difficult, 32 students (60.4%) met the strict criteria, and 18 students (33.9%) met the moderate criteria. To cope with or alleviate this anxiety,

various methods can be employed, one of which is music therapy, as seen in a study (Sutja *et al.*, 2021). They conducted on final-year students preparing for their academic final exams at the University of Jambi. The students' anxiety levels were moderate during the pretest, but after receiving music therapy during the posttest, their anxiety levels decreased.

METHOD

The research method employed in this study is a quasi-experimental design using a nonequivalent control group design. The study involved two groups: the experimental group and the control group. The research was conducted at Indonesia Maju University, South Jakarta, campus in August 2023.

In this study, the population consisted of students from the public health program in their final year, enrolled in the 2019 cohort at Indonesia Maju University, totaling 148 students. The sample size selected comprised 32 individuals, determined using the mean formula. These students were then divided into 16 students in the experimental group and 16 in the control group. The sampling method used was accidental sampling.

The inclusion criteria for this study were as follows: 1) Students from the public health program of the 2019 cohort at Universitas Indonesia Maju, Jakarta. 2) Currently in the process of finalizing their thesis. 3) A maximum age of 24 years. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria for this study were: 1) Public health students at Universitas Indonesia Maju outside the 2019 cohort. 2) Aged over 24 years.

The research instrument used in this study was the Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HARS) questionnaire, which is a measurement tool for assessing anxiety symptoms in individuals experiencing anxiety (Ranti, 2022). The HARS scale questionnaire indicates the presence of 14 distinct groups of symptoms

1. Anxiety: A feeling of fear that arises in one's mind and being easily irritable.
2. Tension: Anxious sensation, boredom, restlessness, difficulty obtaining adequate rest.
3. Fear: In situations like darkness, being left alone, the presence of strangers, crowded traffic, and large gatherings of people.
4. Sleep disturbances: Difficulty initiating sleep, waking up in the middle of the night, restless sleep, and occurrence of nightmares.
5. Cognitive impairment: Impairment in memory, difficulty in concentration, and frequent feelings of confusion.
6. Feelings of depression: Loss of interest in certain activities, fluctuating feelings of sadness throughout the day.
7. Somatic symptoms (muscles): Emergence of muscle pain, stiffness, muscle twitching, teeth grinding, and unstable body sounds.

8. Sensory symptoms: Ringing in the ears, blurred vision, changes in facial skin color to red or pale, excessive fatigue, and sensations of being pricked.
9. Cardiovascular symptoms: Increased heart rate, palpitations, chest pain.
10. Respiratory symptoms: Feeling pressure in the chest, a sense of suffocation or choking, and difficulty breathing.
11. Gastrointestinal symptoms: Difficulty swallowing, feeling nauseous to the point of vomiting, weight loss, digestive problems.
12. Urogenital symptoms: Frequent urination, difficulty holding urine, irregular menstruation.
13. Vegetative/autonomic symptoms: Dry mouth and face, excessive sweating, dizziness, or headaches.
14. Behavior during interviews: Signs of anxiety, trembling fingers, furrows on the forehead or eyebrows, tense face, increased muscle tone, and short, rapid breathing (Ranti, 2022).

Each symptom category is assessed on a scale from 0 to 4, representing the level of symptoms as follows:

1. Score 0: No visible symptoms
2. Score 1: Mild symptoms; one of the symptoms is present
3. Score 2: Moderate symptoms, half of the symptoms appear
4. Score 3: Severe symptoms; more than half of the symptoms are noticeable
5. Score 4: Very severe symptoms; all symptoms are present

To evaluate the anxiety level, the total score is calculated from each category (total scores range from 1 to 14), yielding the following results:

1. Total score < 14: No anxiety
2. Total score 14-20: Mild anxiety
3. Total score 21-27: Moderate anxiety
4. Total score 28-41: Severe anxiety
5. Total score > 42: High anxiety level, reaching panic levels

In this research, the intervention employed involved the use of classical music pieces: Mozart's Sonata for Piano and Violin K296 and Concerto for Flute and Harp in C Major, K. 299/297c, played for approximately ± 10 minutes for the experimental respondents.

The data analysis technique utilized in this research is univariate analysis to outline or describe the individual characteristics of each variable in the study (Nurhayati, 2020). It aims to elucidate how the anxiety level changes following the implementation of the music intervention. Classical music is employed as the intervention, while the anxiety level is measured using the HARS scale.

A research study applies Bivariate analysis to at least two or more variables (Nurhayati, 2020). The aim is to evaluate the impact of classical music intervention on the changes in the level of anxiety among final-year Public Health students of the 2019 cohort at Universitas Indonesia Maju, Jakarta. The data used consisted of pre-and post-intervention test results, which were then analyzed using the statistical software SPSS, with a significance level (α) set at 0.05. Prior to conducting bivariate analysis, a test for data normality was performed. The normality test results showed a p-value > 0.05, indicating that the data had a normal distribution. Therefore, the statistical test used was the paired sample t-test.

RESULT

Table 1. Distribution of respondents based on characteristics (gender, age, class) of Public Health students from the 2019 cohort currently undergoing their final assignment at Indonesia Maju University, Jakarta. (n=32)

Variable	Experiment		Control		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender						
Male	5	31	6	38	11	34
Female	11	69	10	62	21	66
Age						
21	1	6	2	12	3	9
22	13	82	11	69	24	75
23	1	6	3	19	4	13
24	1	6	0	0	1	3
Class						
Regular	12	75	12	75	24	75
Extension	4	25	4	25	8	25
Amount	16	100	16	100	16	100

Source: Data processed using SPSS (2023)

Based on the table above, it is shown that out of a total of 32 respondents in this study, it is predominantly comprised of 21 females (66%). The most common age group among the respondents is 22 years old, consisting of 24 individuals (75%), and the majority belong to the regular class, amounting to 24 individuals (75%).

Table 2. Distribution of anxiety levels among the control group of public health students from the 2019 cohort facing their final assignments at Indonesia Maju University, Jakarta

No	Stress level	Pretest		Post-test	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	Absence of anxiety	3	18,8	2	13,3
2	Mild anxiety	8	50,0	8	53,3
3	Moderate anxiety	4	25,0	4	26,7
4	Intense anxiety	1	6,3	1	6,7
5	Panic	0	0	0	0
	Amount	16	100	16	100

Source: Data processed using SPSS (2023)

Table 3. Distribution of anxiety levels among the experimental group of Public Health students from the 2019 cohort facing their final projects at Indonesia Maju University, Jakarta

No	Stress level	Pretest		Post-test	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	Absence of anxiety	4	25,0	3	18,8
2	Mild anxiety	6	37,5	8	50,0
3	Moderate anxiety	3	18,8	4	25,0
4	Intense anxiety	2	12,5	1	6,3
5	Panic	1	6,3	0	0
Amount		16	100	16	100

Source: Data processed using SPSS (2023)

Table 4. Normality Test Results for the Control and Experimental Groups of Public Health Students from the 2019 cohort facing their final projects at Indonesia Maju University, Jakarta. T-Test Results for Control and Intervention Groups

No		N	Min-Max	Mean	SD	Sig.	Result
Control group							
1	Pre-Test	16	0 - 31	18.44	7.536	0,445	Normal distribution
2	Post-Test	16	0 - 30	18.06	6.942	0.180	Normal distribution
Experimental Group							
1	Pre-Test	16	11 - 45	20.25	8.918	0.013	Normal distribution
2	Post-Test	16	11 - 26	17.12	4.500	0.247	Normal distribution

Source: Data processed using SPSS (2023)

Table 5. T-Test Results of Control and Intervention Groups

No		N	Min-Max	Mean	SD	Sig. (2-tailed)	Result
1	Control group						
	Pre-Test and Post-Test	16	0-31	0,375	1,204	0,232	There is no correlation
2	Experimental Group						
	Pre-Test and Post-Test	16	11 - 45	3,125	5,084	0,027	There is a correlation

Source: Data processed using SPSS (2023)

Based on the table above, the statistical test results using the t-test indicate that the pre-test and post-test results of the control group have a p-value = 0.232, which means > 0.05. Thus, it can be said that there is no correlation/no significant effect. Meanwhile, the pre-test and post-test results for the experimental group have a p-value = 0.027, which means < 0.05, indicating a significant difference. Therefore, it can be concluded that Ha is accepted and Ho is rejected. There is a difference in anxiety levels after applying classical music therapy among final-year public health students facing their final projects at Universitas Indonesia Maju in 2023.

DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Final-Year Public Health Students at Indonesia Maju University in 2023

The study involved 32 participants divided into 16 in the control group and 16 in the experimental group. The experimental group comprised five males and 11 females, while the control group comprised six males and ten females. Consequently, out of the total respondents of 32 individuals in this study, females dominated with a count of 21 (66%). Regarding the age distribution, among the experimental group, there were one individual aged 21, 3 individuals aged 22, 1 individual aged 23, and 1 individual aged 24. In contrast, within the control group, there were two individuals aged 21, 11 individuals aged 22, and 1 individual aged 23. Therefore, the highest age group among the 32 respondents was 22 years old, accounting for 24 individuals (75%). As for the class distribution, the experimental and control groups had 12 individuals from regular classes and four from extension classes. Hence, the majority of the 32 respondents were from regular classes, totaling 24 individuals (75%). Both males and females can experience anxiety. However, females usually undergo more severe anxiety. The symptoms of depression in females are more diverse compared to those in males (Muslimahayati *et al.*, 2021). Anxiety occurs more frequently in women because they tend to overthink and burden themselves. Hormonal factors play a significant role in altering women's moods (Elisabeth *et al.*, 2017).

Anxiety occurs more frequently in women because they tend to overthink, making it a burden on themselves. Hormonal factors play a significant role in women's mood changes.

Anxiety level of control group of final year public health students at Universitas Indonesia Maju 2023

After conducting the research, the results from the control group, consisting of 16 respondents, revealed that during the pre-test, the highest figure indicated mild anxiety among the respondents, with eight individuals (50%). At the same time, the lowest reported severe anxiety in 1 person (6.3%). In the post-test, the highest number remained with mild anxiety, counting eight individuals (53.3%), and the lowest severity of anxiety persisted in 1 person (6.7%).

This research indicates that the majority of 2019 cohort students majoring in Public Health experience a significant level of anxiety. The anxiety felt by students might stem from the perception that their final assignment embodies the culmination of accumulated knowledge during their studies, which could be influenced by the student's abilities to design and compose academic papers or other types of written work. This is reflected in their capacity to present and defend comprehensive content within their minds (Elisabeth *et al.*, 2017). Students often experience unexplained anxiety without comprehending the root causes behind it. This can lead to changes in their emotions and negative behaviors (Cyntia, Ni Putu Kintan P. Kareri *et al.*, 2021). It aligns with the research (Astuti *et al.*, 2021), the level of anxiety among students preparing their dissertations in the Health, Recreation, and Sports program at the Faculty of Sports Sciences, Universitas Negeri Padang, can be observed across all related sub-variables involving three students (approximately 5.7%). This indicates a highly demanding standard, where 32 students

(approximately 60.4%) fall below the strict category, while 18 students (approximately 33.9%) fall under the moderate standards category.

Based on the researcher's assumptions, students experiencing anxiety while composing their theses might lack sufficient self-control. There are several methods to alleviate anxiety, such as maintaining a positive mindset, as negative thoughts can adversely affect emotions and actions. Comprehensively understanding a paper's content is crucial to reduce anxiety. Additionally, social support from family and friends can enhance students' motivation to learn. This social support creates an impression that assistance is available if students struggle to complete their assignments. Knowing that someone is ready to help can positively impact students' motivation to complete their theses.

The anxiety level of final-year Public Health students in the Experimental Group at Indonesia Maju University in 2023.

After researching the experimental group consisting of 16 respondents, during the pre-test, the highest number of individuals experienced mild anxiety, which accounted for six people (37.5%), while the lowest reported panic with only one person (6.3%). In the post-test, the highest number remained with mild anxiety, totaling eight individuals (50.0%), whereas severe anxiety was observed in only one person (6.3%).

Based on the research findings, it was observed that the test group experienced a reduction in anxiety levels, particularly among many students, after undergoing classical music therapy treatment. The effect of this classical music therapy involved changes in individuals experiencing relaxation, creating a sense of security, and reducing anxiety levels (Astuti *et al.*, 2021). Music therapy illustrates the connection between an individual's response to music, which is strongly associated with the emotional relationship between the music and its listener. Listeners can experience a sense of calmness and tranquility when they listen to music (Larasati *et al.*, 2019). This occurs due to the decrease in the stress hormone Adrenal Corticotropin Hormone (ACTH) (Astuti *et al.*, 2021).

Based on the assumption of the researcher, the results of the above study indicate that classical music therapy influences the experimental group of public health students from the 2019 cohort at Universitas Indonesia Maju, where there is a difference in scores between the pretest and posttest. It is hoped that classical music therapy can become not only an alternative in addressing anxiety when facing final assignments but also an alternative in dealing with anxiety in other situations.

The Difference in Anxiety Levels between the Control Group and Experimental Group of Final-Year Public Health Students at Indonesia Maju University in 2023

Based on the conducted research on the anxiety levels among the control and experimental groups of final-year Public Health students at Indonesia Maju University, the statistical analysis using t-test results

showed that the pre-test and post-test outcomes of the control group had a p-value = 0.232, indicating >0.05 , therefore considered significantly similar (no effect). However, the pre-test and post-test outcomes of the experimental group had a p-value = 0.027, indicating <0.05 , hence significantly different (indicating an effect).

The reduction in anxiety levels within the experimental group might be attributed to classical music having beats or tempos that align with the human heartbeat, approximately 60 beats per minute. If the tempo is too fast, it may induce a relaxation effect; thus, following this rhythm can diminish excessive stimulation and prevent reaching an optimal resting state (Elisabeth *et al.*, 2017). Apart from its aesthetic dimension, music also holds therapeutic potential, particularly in assisting to alleviate, heal, and restore physical conditions in patients and medical professionals. Similar research was conducted by Hendricks (2001) in Afriadi (2020) "The Treatment of Adolescent Depression." The research findings demonstrate a significant positive correlation ($p < 0.0001$) between the application of music therapy techniques and the reduction in depression scores. A notable difference is observed between the group applying music therapy techniques and those that did not implement these techniques.

Based on the above, the researcher suggests that classical music therapy has proven effective in reducing anxiety levels in individuals. This is because classical music can evoke feelings of tranquility for its listeners.

CONCLUSION

Based on research conducted on 32 final-year students majoring in Public Health at Indonesia Maju University in 2023, classical music therapy has effectively reduced anxiety. The pre-test and post-test results in the control group showed a p-value = 0.232, indicating >0.05 . Meanwhile, the pre-test and post-test results in the experimental group displayed a p-value = 0.027, meaning <0.05 , suggesting a significant difference. Classical music therapy is expected to serve as an alternative method in reducing anxiety, not only during the completion of final assignments.

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