

THE IMPACT OF MUSIC ON STRESS REDUCTION AMONG WORKERS

Ariesza Permata^{1*}, Budi Sarasati², Aini Nadhifah Purnamasari³, Meiana Harfika⁴,
Wahyu Wijaya Widiyanto⁵

¹Faculty of Psychology, Wisnuwardhana University Malang
Jl. Danau Sentani Raya No.99, Madyopuro, Kedungkandang, Kota Malang, Jawa Timur 65139 –
Indonesia

²Universitas Bhayangkara Jakarta Raya, DKI Jakarta - Indonesia

³Institut Al Azhar (ISTAZ) Menganti Gresik, Jawa Timur - Indonesia

⁴Universitas Respati Indonesia, DKI Jakarta - Indonesia

⁵Politeknik Indonusa Surakarta Selatan, Jawa Tengah - Indonesia

*Corresponding Author : ariesza.sendratasik@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT The high number of workers experiencing psychological health issues or stress is deeply concerning. Individuals experiencing psychological distress or stress are likely to suffer from physical health problems as well. This study discusses the Impact of Music on Stress Reduction Among Workers. It uses a qualitative research method with a phenomenological approach. The participants consisted of five workers who experienced stress and used music as a tool to reduce their stress. The results indicate that music can indeed help reduce stress among workers, improve mood, and lessen anxiety. Music influences the effectiveness of stress reduction among workers.

KEYWORDS: *Music, Stress, Workers*

1. INTRODUCTION

We often hear about migrant workers experiencing psychological health issues. The number of workers suffering from psychological stress is alarming. When someone experiences psychological distress, it undoubtedly affects their physical health. It impacts the body and the immune system. A person may feel lifeless in their daily life, often described as being in a bad mood.

Numerous life problems can lead someone to experience psychological stress. Anxiety among workers often stems from being away from their families, children, or spouses. This separation is one of the greatest emotional challenges faced by workers. Workers experiencing psychological stress often tend to isolate themselves, feel unmotivated at work, lose interest in life, experience emotional exhaustion, and become highly sensitive. Common symptoms include increased heart rate and blood pressure. Some may even suffer from stomach problems.

Given these issues, intervention is crucial. Severe stress among workers significantly impacts their lives and job performance. Stress is a common psychological problem in society and greatly affects a person's health. Therefore, it is essential to take appropriate action. One method of addressing stress is music therapy (Eko Raharjo, 2007). Music is used as a therapeutic tool to reduce stress.

Music has the ability to touch a person's heart and soul during times of stress through sensory stimulation (Suryana, 2012). Elements such as rhythm, melody, harmony, and lyrics all contribute to strong emotional responses (Panjaitan, 2020). Stress is a psychological condition that often arises in daily life (Panjaitan, 2020). Listening to calm, melodious music with a steady rhythm can increase the production of endorphins and melatonin, leading to feelings of comfort and relaxation (Hayati, 2017).

Research shows that music can influence and alter brain activity and brain wave patterns (Pambudi, Dewi, Anggraeni, 2020). Music also triggers the release of dopamine, which enhances mood and promotes happiness (Yuliana & Arafah, 2023). Music therapy is one of the effective ways to cope with stress. It is a powerful treatment that reduces stress levels (Tasalim & Cahyani, 2021). As stress affects both physical and mental health (Matla Ilpaj & Nurwati, 2020), music—particularly instrumental or classical—can play a significant role in emotional healing (Khoiriyah & Sinaga, 2017).

Music therapy involves a systematic intervention process where therapists use musical experiences to improve health. Different types of music are used in therapy. Classical and nature-inspired music can promote relaxation and reduce anxiety. Energetic music can uplift mood and boost motivation. Lyrics with positive and inspirational messages provide emotional support.

Ultimately, the music that best helps workers heal is the kind that resonates emotionally and creates a deep personal connection—whether due to family issues, romantic problems, or concerns about children and other aspects of life. Due to poor economic conditions and high living costs, many people seek higher incomes. The growing economic demands have driven many to work abroad, especially as female migrant workers. They are attracted by the promise of higher wages compared to what they can earn in their home regions.

Many migrant workers come from impoverished rural areas, with strong motivations to earn enough money to meet their families' growing needs—daily necessities, children's education, and more. Local wages are often insufficient, pushing many to seek better opportunities abroad. The hope is that higher earnings will enable them to manage household finances more comfortably.

Working abroad involves significant sacrifices. Before leaving and committing to years away, workers must be mentally prepared. It's not as easy as it sounds, but their determination becomes the

main driving force. In such complex and demanding environments, many choose to work in order to improve their household income. Work reflects their socio-economic status.

Although traditionally considered the husband's role, many wives now work to support their families. Working abroad means leaving behind family and relatives, and enduring the pain of separation. They must also adapt to new cultures, languages, and environments, very different from life in their home country.

2. METHOD

A mother working abroad cannot accompany her children daily. As a result, children may experience irregular routines and lack of structured education, particularly regarding managing playtime and study time at home.

Therefore, frequent communication is crucial. One effective method for a mother to deal with the sadness and emptiness of being away from her family is listening to music. Music therapy can help ease emotional pain. This research adopts a qualitative phenomenological method, with five participants. Music listening can be done during work breaks or before sleep, turning idle moments into meaningful experiences. To alleviate stress, in addition to routine communication with family, workers are encouraged to listen to their favorite music regularly. This helps reduce the emotional burden of missing their loved ones, thus lowering stress levels.

Armed with the intention to improve their family's economy, many workers take the risk of working overseas. Migrating far from home to earn money is intended to improve household finances and raise family welfare. The income earned can meet daily needs, pay for children's education, build a house, and even fund a small business. It can also help them buy electronics or a motorcycle for daily use. Ultimately, their families can enjoy a more prosperous life and a brighter future.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Although many female workers may not have a high level of education, they often possess practical work skills, which motivates them to seek employment abroad. Despite the many challenges and issues faced, a significant number of them continue to aspire to work overseas.

One of the most common problems encountered is stress among workers. These workers face many challenges, including isolation, the need to adapt to a new environment, and separation from their families—spouses, children, and relatives. Over time, these problems can intensify. Often, migrant workers forget that the environment in which they now live and work is vastly different from their home villages. Language barriers and unfamiliar cultural norms can also contribute to chronic stress, affecting their daily activities, physical health, and mental well-being.

To cope with this, it is highly recommended that workers take time to listen to music, especially during work breaks or leisure moments. This activity serves as music therapy, offering a mental break and momentary relief from exhaustion. Music therapy is a therapeutic approach that utilizes the properties of music to uplift the mood and naturally support mental health. This form of treatment is widely believed to be beneficial for individuals experiencing stress or depression, ultimately improving quality of life for those with physical or emotional health problems. Goal-oriented interventions in music therapy can include:

- a). Listening to music,
- b). Singing

The benefits of listening to music on mental health include:

Increasing the production of endorphins, which are hormones associated with feelings of happiness

- a) Reducing stress hormones such as cortisol
- b) Regulating heart rate and breathing, aiding relaxation
- c) Improving focus and concentration
- d) Supporting emotional processing and trauma recovery
- e) Helping individuals explore coping mechanisms for stress
- f) Triggering psychological mechanisms that influence mental health
- g) Enhancing motor function
- h) Boosting emotional, social, and personal growth skills
- i) Music therapy also promotes development in several areas:
- j) Enhancing sensory skills (through touch, listening, and awareness)
- k) Improving cognitive skills (concentration and attention)
- l) Helping individuals manage stress more effectively
- m) Identifying the most effective types of music for stress reduction
- n) Understanding the psychological mechanisms that underlie music's effect on mental health

In today's world, women are no longer confined to the role of housewives. In a modern society where living costs are constantly rising, women often take on dual roles—including that of income earners, contributing to the household economy. Many women now help or even fully support their families financially, and their contributions are vital to improving family welfare and filling financial gaps.

Due to limited employment opportunities and rising household expenses, many women cannot afford to stay at home. Today, there is little distinction between men and women in the workforce. Women often work to increase family income, although the decision to work can still be influenced by the social and cultural context.

Working abroad as female migrant workers is appealing due to the perception of higher wages compared to local salaries. Many women are firmly committed to this choice, despite the sacrifices involved—leaving their families for months or even years to earn income that supplements their husband's insufficient earnings.

This is not an easy decision. It requires mental preparation and the willingness to leave one's home, children, and husband behind for the sake of financial stability. The underlying reason is clear: to improve the family's economic status and elevate their standard of living.

However, the consequences of working abroad are significant. Women leave their children and husbands behind. Child-rearing responsibilities may be taken on by others, which can disrupt the child's development. Although these women do not want to leave their families, they feel compelled to work abroad in order to earn higher wages and fulfill their families' needs. They endure this life full of challenges—religious differences, cultural differences, unfamiliar foods, and new social behaviors—which requires them to make continuous adjustments. This process can lead to high levels of stress and declining mental health.

Longing for home and family can disrupt concentration and work performance. Many also face emotional distress due to spousal infidelity during their absence. Leaving their children behind is already an enormous burden. Mothers experience deep emotional pain from being separated from their children for years. The psychological impact of this separation is difficult to describe. They go from seeing their children every day to waking up alone, far from home and the warmth of family.

The sacrifices made by women working abroad are immense. In order to support their families, they suppress their own emotions and desires. To prevent stress and depression—which can severely affect work performance—music therapy becomes essential. If they are unable to manage it themselves, professional help from a psychologist is recommended.

Music therapy can be done independently by listening to songs they enjoy, especially during free time or work breaks. This helps bring peace, happiness, and emotional balance. The choice of music should match their mood or personal preferences.

Psychological preparation is also crucial to prevent stress and depression. Therefore, before departing to work abroad, female migrant workers must be mentally and emotionally equipped to

deal with homesickness and emotional emptiness, which could otherwise cause prolonged stress and impair their job performance.

4. CONCLUSION

Life inevitably comes with challenges. Household problems—particularly economic ones—can cause significant strain in marriages. In many families, the husband's income alone is not sufficient to meet daily needs, children's education, and overall household expenses. These financial strains can disrupt family harmony.

One practical solution is mutual understanding and cooperation between husband and wife. Families must also prepare their children if the mother chooses to work abroad. This understanding can bring long-term happiness and stability to the household. Families must recognize that we now live in an era of gender equality, where women are equally capable of working, including abroad, to support their families. When the husband's income is not enough, the wife's contribution can prevent conflict and economic hardship.

The growing participation of women in international labor reflects a broader societal shift toward gender equality. Although separation due to distance and time is difficult, mental and emotional readiness is key.

Equipping migrant workers with music therapy training before departure can significantly reduce or even prevent mental health challenges. When properly prepared, these workers will have the tools to manage stress effectively.

Music therapy contributes to lowering stress levels and plays a crucial role in supporting mental health. The findings of this study can be used to develop music-based intervention programs aimed at improving psychological well-being.

Music therapy offers peace and stress relief. Instrumental or classical music is particularly effective, though personal musical preferences also play an important role. Music therapy is a systematic intervention where trained therapists—or individuals themselves—can use music experiences to promote healing. Different types of music serve different functions: classical and natural music help with relaxation and anxiety, energetic music boosts mood and motivation, and uplifting lyrics provide emotional support. Ultimately, the most effective therapeutic music is that which resonates emotionally, forging a personal connection with the individual.

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