

WIU CENTENNIAL HONORS COLLEGE
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Abstract

Poster

Major Music Therapy

Faculty Mentor: Jennifer Jones

Comparing Interpersonal Connection And Effectiveness Of Telehealth And In-Person Group Music Therapy

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The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the delivery of healthcare services, including music therapy, resulting in an increase in the frequency of telehealth sessions. Many aspects of music therapy are different in online, synchronous sessions when compared to in-person sessions. The purpose of this study was to compare interpersonal connection with the music therapist and among group participants between in-person and telehealth music therapy through an experimental design. College-aged participants were divided into two groups with one group attending online (n=3) and another in-person (n=5). Both groups received the same music experiences, with adaptations for the telehealth setting. Likewise, the survey tool was on paper for in-person attendees and online for those in telehealth. Following each music experience, participants rated the effectiveness of the intervention and the rapport with the music therapist and sense of connection with others in the group. In-person participants rated the movement to music experience as the most effective with the highest rapport ratings. Online participants rated music assisted relaxation and song discussion as equally effective, and their highest rapport ratings were tied between song discussion and movement to music. Improvements in pretest and posttest scores of wellbeing indicated that participants in both sessions experienced beneficial therapeutic effects. We found that the effectiveness of interventions differed across delivery types; additional research is needed to find out what is most effective for telehealth music therapy. There was a higher mortality rate in the telehealth session affected by attendance and failure to submit survey responses online.