

Interim report

Music therapy with young people from multicultural backgrounds in South Korea: A mixed-methods exploration of the experience through the lens of person-centred practice framework

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The purpose of this research project is to gain an in-depth understanding of the music therapy experience of young people from multicultural backgrounds and to explore any effects of music therapy on their mental well-being. It ultimately focuses on giving voices to young people from multicultural backgrounds, collaborating together, and sharing healthful culture through music.

Until now, MTC funding supported a data collection stage that included participant recruitment and clinical practice. Five young people from multicultural backgrounds in South Korea between the ages of 12 and 16 engaged in 'Mu-Being', a music therapy programme consisting of 15 sessions. Each session was composed in a variety of ways according to the participants' choices and preferences and sometimes was creatively mixed. The researcher collaborated as much as possible with young people in the planning, doing, sharing and reflection of sessions. I am grateful to the Music Therapy Charity for funding which has offered young people from multicultural backgrounds a variety of musical experiences and meaningful connections.

After that, as part of the exploration of person-centredness in music therapy which is one of the pillars of this project, the researcher revisited NAMYANGJU CITY Multicultural Welfare Center in May 2022 to investigate the impact and meaning of a healthful culture that music therapy brings to individuals, institutions and communities. It was an important opportunity to understand how music facilitates young people's connection with the sustainable support of the community. Officers, practitioners, local community members, and staff working with young people were engaged and shared the reflection through creative way: musical improvisation and song-writing. That work will be mapped and synthesized to the arts-based work as a part of the project.

Along with this, the preliminary result has been shared with various seminars and conferences - NAMYANGJU CITY Migrant Welfare Center, Music therapy research seminar (Sook-myeong Woman's University, Seoul), EMTC 2022 (Queen Margaret University), Music therapy in the UK Today conference (Music therapy charity), Systematic musicology conference 2022 (Ghent University, Belgium). In line with this, I am planning to present the research project at the 'Asian Conference on Cultural Studies (ACCS 2023)' which is held in Tokyo, Japan this May. I will share the voices of young people from multicultural backgrounds using creative and artistic methods in relation to the methodology of this research project. This is intimately related to the purpose of this research project to convey the voices of young people from multicultural backgrounds, the stories of the community, and their context through shared experiences in a musical way.

The results of the research are hoped to offer valuable data necessary to share the voice of young people from multicultural backgrounds in a creative way and to develop social support and educational programme that reflect their experiences.