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The Effect of Islamic Music Listening on the Psychological Well-Being of University Students in Malaysia

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Abstract

Introduction: Music therapy that aligns with Islamic values is endorsed and permitted by Imam Syafi'e and scholars such as Al-Razi, Farabi, and Ibn Sina. Accordingly, Malaysian university students aged 20 and above, who exhibit higher depression and anxiety scores, may seek solace in music. The current study examined the psychological well-being of Malaysian public university students before, immediately after, and one month following daily Islamic music therapy. **Materials and Methods:** A quasi-experimental repeated measures study was conducted on 46 undergraduate students from a public university. Participants, screened for psychological distress, engaged in daily 15-minute sessions of Islamic music for six weeks. Their psychological well-being was assessed using the DASS-21 questionnaire at three intervals: before the intervention, immediately after, and one month later.

One-way repeated measures ANOVA tested the hypothesis. Results: The total DASS-21 score, including depression, anxiety, and stress categories, significantly decreased post-intervention and remained low after one month without further intervention ($p<0.05$). Participants did not experience an increase in psychological distress during the follow-up period. Conclusion: Islamic music significantly reduced psychological distress among Malaysian students, with sustained effects observed one month later. Thus, daily exposure contributes to coping and relaxation. The single-group design controlled for individual differences offers clear insights into Islamic music's impact. This study suggests nurses use Islamic music as a culturally sensitive intervention to improve patients' psychological, mental health, and well-being. Future studies should explore long-term effects and include larger, randomised controlled trials to validate findings and examine variables such as spiritual well-being and religiosity. © 2025 Universiti Putra Malaysia Press. All rights reserved.

Author keywords

anxiety; depression; Islamic music; psychological well-being; stress

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