

Integrating Indonesian Traditional Music into Group Counseling for Social Anxiety Reduction: A Quasi-Experimental Study of *Gending Sriwijaya* Music

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Abstract

The integration of traditional music in reducing social anxiety is widely practiced in Indonesia, mostly uses traditional music from Java and Bali, while other regional traditions are less represented in empirical evidence. *Gending Sriwijaya* music as traditional music from south sumatra not just returning to a relaxed condition, but also internalizing the social values reflected in lyrics such as friendliness, independence, respect, self-confidence, and determination. Despite such traditional music has a potential to be integrated in reducing social anxiety through group counseling, the integration of *Gending Sriwijaya* music in counseling remains understudied. This study aims to evaluate the efficacy of group counseling with relaxation techniques accompanied by traditional *Gending Sriwijaya* music. The method used was quasi-experimental with control group. The study sample consisted of 14 students selected using a purposive sampling with criteria of high and very high anxiety levels, willingness to participate in all group counseling sessions, and familiar with *Gending Sriwijaya* music. Data were collected using the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A) and analyzed using the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test. The results indicate that social anxiety of participants in group counseling with relaxation techniques significantly lower compared to control group. The study's results emphasize the importance of integrating traditional music in reducing social anxiety among students.

INTRODUCTION

Excessive anxiety not only hinders a person's ability to focus on the tasks at hand but can also make it difficult to establish and maintain healthy social relationships. Irrational fears and excessive worry can cause individuals to avoid social situations, which, in turn, exacerbates feelings of isolation and loneliness. Psychological anxiety, which is common in various individuals, has the potential to arise in certain situations, such as when someone is taking a test, facing an exam, giving a speech, or when in a stressful condition where negative evaluation is a major concern (Goberman et al., 2011; Park et al., 2014). In addition, individuals experience performance-related stress or feel anxious or nervous in front of a crowd (Bartel & Thompson, 2021).

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The transition phase from adolescence to adulthood is a phase that is vulnerable to experiencing social anxiety. The prevalence of social anxiety increases with age, based on global reports, which is around 4.7% in children, 8.3% in adolescents, and 17% in young adults (Salari et al., 2024). Other studies show that individuals aged 16-29 years in seven countries, including Indonesia, have a prevalence of social anxiety of 36% (Jefferies & Ungar, 2020). Social anxiety has also become a mental health problem that is common among teenagers in this metaverse era (Muslihati et al., 2023; Rachmawaty & Bahiroh, 2025). Simpson et al. (2010) also explained that at the stage of development of adolescence or young adulthood, the anxiety that is often experienced is social anxiety disorder (SAD). Social anxiety is a feeling of discomfort when interacting with others because of the fear of being judged negatively. This situation is also related to the conflict between the desire to establish good relationships with peers and the fear of being embarrassed or evaluated negatively by them (Caouette & Guyer, 2014). Social anxiety will become SAD if this anxiety interferes with a person's normal life significantly (Myllyneva et al., 2015). The American Psychiatric Association (2013) defines social anxiety disorder as a condition that causes students to feel very anxious and try to avoid social situations or activities that require them to perform at school.

Global studies show that about half of adolescents can recognize depression. In contrast, far fewer recognize social anxiety disorder, and there is a lack of awareness to seek help in reducing social anxiety (Coles et al., 2016). Low awareness of SAD impacts students' social interaction patterns that tend to avoid unpleasant social situations that strengthen their anxiety (Gómez-Ortiz et al., 2016; Urbán et al., 2024). In the academic context, students with SAD tend to avoid social situations, such as speaking in front of the class, participating in discussions, as well as interacting with peers. SAD disrupts social interaction, identity formation, and overall emotional well-being (Mappaenre et al., 2023; McEvoy et al., 2022; Setiyowati et al., 2024).

SAD can have a long-term impact on academic performance, social relationships, and overall well-being. Individuals with high social anxiety tend to remember more negative information about their social performances than individuals with low social anxiety, even after receiving positive feedback (Edgar et al., 2024). In addition, they tend to experience more repetitive thoughts after social events, reinforcing their tendency to interpret ambiguous situations negatively even if they receive positive feedback (Badra et al., 2017; Hanurawan, 2022). SAD correlates with academic failure and the development of students' cognitive, social, and emotional potential, especially those involving communication processes such as discussions and presentations (Ghafri & Nassri, 2024; Mojtabai et al., 2015).

Relaxation techniques are one way to reduce SAD symptoms. This method works by helping individuals direct their mental focus and achieve physical relaxation by progressively releasing muscle tension. Relaxation is helpful in various situations, such as boredom from studying, giving enthusiasm, reducing anxiety, addressing lack of sleep, training concentration, and even arousing motivation to learn (Lestari et al., 2023; Leutenegger et al., 2022). Commonly used relaxation techniques include breathing exercises, meditation, stretching or yoga, visualization, biofeedback, hypnotherapy, and music. In this study, music is utilized as the medium of intervention to activate specific brain structures, providing comfort to individuals who listen. Research has found that music can prevent stress, reduce anxiety, improve mood, and help the body and mind relax (Chahal & Sharma, 2019; Gurbuz-Dogan et al., 2021; Romadhona, 2023; Shin & Kim, 2011). Music helps control the brain and the entire nervous system, thus providing various benefits such as improving mood, focusing attention, expressing feelings, improving speech skills, evoking emotions, increasing social interaction, and improving overall quality of life.

Integration of music into counseling interventions is an easily accessible and frequently chosen method to reduce stress and anxiety (Marzuki et al., 2013; Sari et al., 2023). Counselors can determine the genre of music used in interventions to reduce anxiety. Pop, Western

Classical, Traditional, and silent music increased relaxation in healthy individuals, but Rock music did not significantly affect relaxation (Malakoutikhah et al., 2020). Several studies recommend traditional music as a counseling intervention tool compared to other genres. The harmony and tempo in traditional music are optimal for relaxation and stabilizing physical and emotional well-being (Brownlow, 2017; Liu et al., 2022; Sanjiwani & Dewi, 2022). Traditional music has a calm rhythm and soft melody that provides calm and balance that can reduce anxiety and stress (Arizona et al., 2023; Blank, 2019; Permata & Maliya, 2024; Sholihah et al., 2025). In addition to traditional music elements, a positive attitude towards traditional music is a supporting factor for the success of using traditional music in counseling interventions (Alfiah et al., 2019; Dani & Pihasnawati, 2024).

In this study, *Gending Sriwijaya* was chosen as traditional Indonesian music to be integrated in reducing SAD through group counseling. *Gending Sriwijaya* is a melody accompanying the *Gending Sriwijaya* dance, a traditional Indonesian art originating from Palembang, South Sumatra (Mareta et al., 2019). The melody of *Gending Sriwijaya* comes from *gamelan* and *gong*, which are played at a slow tempo (Utami et al., 2018). *Gending Sriwijaya* combines melodies that move up and down and a regular rhythm, namely 4/4, and uses the A-B-A structure (Johanes, 2024). The soft and slow tempo of the music provides a calming effect and can reduce anxiety (Alfiah et al., 2019; Sholihah et al., 2025).

The traditional music integration in counseling research in Indonesia mostly uses traditional gamelan music from Java and Bali (Loth, 2016), while other regional traditions are less represented in empirical evidence. The therapeutic effects of traditional music are likely influenced not only by the quality of the music, but also by the cultural congruence between the music's values and the client's cultural identity, when the traditional music used aligns with the client's values and beliefs, the effectiveness of the therapy tends to be higher. For clients in South Sumatra, *Gending Sriwijaya* is not only a cultural heritage but also embodies noble ethical and moral values, thus it is expected to provide a more optimal therapeutic impact. Therefore, researchers will use *Gending Sriwijaya*, a traditional music that embodies the local wisdom of South Sumatra as a therapeutic medium. The relevance of the client's cultural values to the chosen music is expected to strengthen the influence on the intervention results. The *Gending Sriwijaya* music also has social values such as tolerance, humility, trust, care, harmony, patience, and sincerity (Hera et al., 2023). The values in the *Gending Sriwijaya* music are expected to expand the effect of reducing SAD, not just returning to a relaxed condition, but also internalizing the social values in the music. Thus, it can become a new behavioral pattern to which clients can be accustomed.

This research investigates whether integrating *Gending Sriwijaya* music into relaxation interventions can help reduce social anxiety among students. By embracing local culture, this study aims to offer an alternative solution to social anxiety that is both effective and culturally relevant, enriching the healing process and promoting a deeper connection between therapy and the participants' cultural heritage in South Sumatra.

Methods

Design

This quasi-experimental research used a pretest-posttest control group design, where the experimental group was given a group counseling with relaxation techniques supported by *Gending Sriwijaya* traditional music, and the control group was given a usual intervention group without involving specific techniques or approaches.

Sample

This study used a purposive sampling method that focused on individuals with high levels of social anxiety, based on the results of a preliminary survey. The survey results show that

participants were grouped into four categories, specifically Low ($n=282$), Medium ($n=510$), High ($n=82$), and Very High ($n=14$). Participants with high ($n=82$) and very high ($n=14$) levels of social anxiety were considered for the study sample. Furthermore, participants were selected based on three specific criteria (a) high or very high levels of social anxiety, (b) willingness and ability to follow all stages of the intervention, and (c) familiarity with the *Gending Sriwijaya* music used in the intervention. This consideration follows the research recommendations of Alfiah et al. (2019), which state that if the sample was hearing traditional music used in counseling for the first time or felt unfamiliar with the music, it could cause discomfort and even leave the session. The researcher also used G*Power analysis to determine an adequate sample size, with parameters (α) = 0.05, Power ($1 - \beta$) = 0.8, and effect size (d) = 1.85 (Auliya & Yudiarso, 2023). Based on this analysis, the recommended sample size is at least 12 participants. After going through this selection process, 14 participants who met all criteria were selected as the research sample.

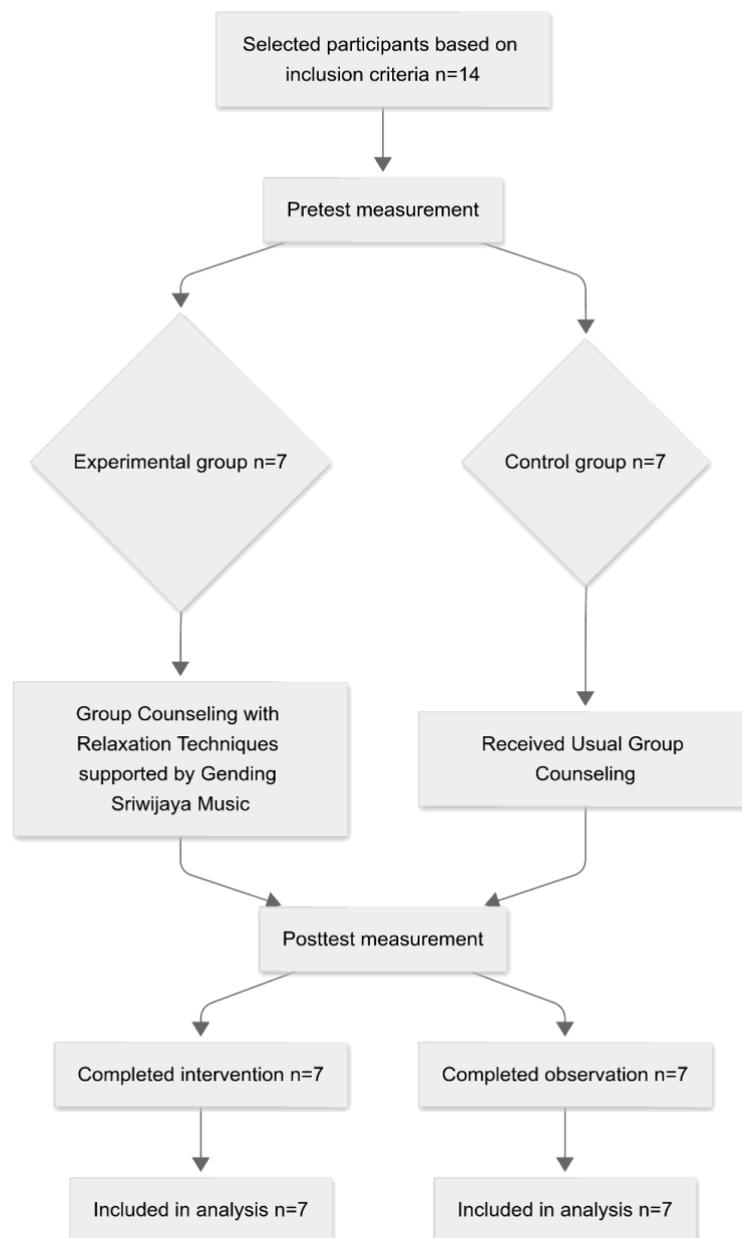


Figure 1. Research Procedure

Instrument

This study used the Social Anxiety Instrument adapted from the SAS-A (Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents) by Greca & Lopez (2013). The SAS-A contains 18 items to measure the level of social anxiety in various situations: interactions with peers (SAD-New, 6 items), fear of negative evaluation (FNE, 8 items), and anxiety in social situations (SAD-G, 4 items) (Apriliansa, 2019; Kurniawan et al., 2024; O'Connor & Fitzgerald, 2018; Suryaningrum et al., 2019). All items have a good validity with $r > 0.2732$, also reliability with $r = 0.873$. The Likert scale used in this questionnaire has five levels of answers, ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree', to assess the level of social anxiety experienced by students.

Procedure of Intervention

The intervention in this study consisted of 5 sessions. The sessions were designed following the pattern of group counseling with relaxation techniques from Yollanda & Rohmah (2020) which consisted of four intervention sessions. The researchers added one session for group formation. The duration of each group counseling session was determined based on the study's results by Hamdani et al. (2022) that the average use of relaxation techniques in group interventions requires 65 minutes. Each session has the same stages, and slight adjustments in activity or topics based on the results of initial reflection at the introduction and debrief stages. Table 1 describes the main activities in the counseling session.

Sessions 2 to 5 focused on developing and implementing relaxation steps using the *Gending Sriwijaya* music. They began with a reflection on the practice and exercises in the previous session and identified the challenges and difficulties faced by clients during the practice. The group discussed and determined the adjustments to the relaxation exercise. Finally, Session 5 focused on reviewing the student's overall progress in relaxation and re-measuring changes in SAD.

Data Analysis

To analyze the change in SAD levels between the experimental and control groups after the intervention, this study will use Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). ANOVA will allow researchers to determine whether there is a significant difference in the change in social anxiety scores between the group receiving the relaxation intervention with *Gending Sriwijaya* music

Table 1. Description of the relaxation technique session using the music *Gending Sriwijaya*

Session Part	Duration	Activities
Introduction	10 minutes	Introduction & explain therapy goals
Check-in	10 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students share SAD experiences Discuss challenges faced in reducing SAD
Debriefing	15 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Brief information about anxiety symptoms and triggers Introduce a deep breathing exercises and progressive muscle relaxation Discuss the use of <i>Gending Sriwijaya</i> music in Relaxation process
Skills Development	15 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Engage students in guided practice of the relaxation techniques Use soft instrumentals of the <i>Gending Sriwijaya</i> music as a background during exercise.
Practice	10 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students independently practice relaxation Use soft instrumentals of the <i>Gending Sriwijaya</i> music as a background during practice.
Closing and Homework	5 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Summarize session highlights and assign homework Encourage them to share their feelings and experiences after the practice.

and the control group receiving regular psychoeducation. Specifically, ANOVA will test the null hypothesis that the two groups have no difference in the average change in social anxiety scores. Suppose the ANOVA results' significance value (p-value) is smaller than the specified significance level ($\alpha=.05$). In that case, the null hypothesis will be rejected, indicating that the intervention given significantly affects changes in social anxiety levels.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This study accompanied traditional *Gending Sriwijaya* music using group counseling with relaxation techniques on reducing symptoms of Social Anxiety Disorder (SAD) in adolescents. Table 2 presents participant demographic data and a summary of descriptive statistics in the form of mean values (Mean) and standard deviation (SD) of SAD symptom scores in the experimental and control groups, as well as based on gender and age characteristics of participants at the pre-test and post-test stages.

Based on Table 2, the average SAD score in the experimental group (76.71 ± 6.29) and the control group (75.29 ± 8.36) are relatively similar. When viewed based on gender, the average SAD score of women tends to be higher than that of men. Meanwhile, based on age, the 17-year-old age group tends to have higher SAD than others (77.80 ± 7.91).

After the intervention (Post-test), the average SAD score in both groups decreased. However, the experimental group saw a more significant decrease (52.57 ± 6.37) compared to the control group (60.14 ± 5.21). Both men and women showed a decrease in SAD scores from pre-test to post-test.

The initial condition of students before participating in group counseling in both the control and experimental groups was at a high SAD level. A decrease in the average score of 24.14 points occurred in the experimental group that performed relaxation techniques with the *Gending Sriwijaya* music, indicating a good improvement in the level of social anxiety after the intervention. The variability of scores in the experimental group did not change much after the intervention, based on the standard deviation during the pre-test and post-test, which tended to be the same. Meanwhile, in the control group that performed relaxation without the *Gending Sriwijaya* music, there was a decrease in the average score of 15.15 points and a more minor

Table 2. Demographic of SAD

Variable	MEAN \pm SD	
	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST
Group		
Experiment (n=7)	76.71 \pm 6.29	52.57 \pm 6.37
Control (n=7)	75.29 \pm 8.36	60.14 \pm 5.21
Sex		
Male (n=7)	72.57 \pm 6.75	51.86 \pm 5.33
Female (n=7)	79.43 \pm 6.13	60.86 \pm 5.04
Age		
15 (n=4)	77.75 \pm 9.39	59.50 \pm 5.80
16 (n=5)	72.80 \pm 4.14	44.37 \pm 9.04
17 (n=5)	77.80 \pm 7.91	54.60 \pm 5.50

Table 3. Post-test data description

	N	Mean	SD	SE	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
					Control	7		
Experiment	7	52.57	6.373	2.409	46.68	58.47	45	65
Total	14	56.36	6.834	1.827	52.41	60.30	45	65

Table 4. Statistical analysis on the dimensions of Social Anxiety

Dimension	Experiment	Control	p-value (between group)
SAD-New			
Pre (Mean±SD)	21.57±5.192	22.29±4.680	.791 ^b
Post (Mean±SD)	20.86±2.340	19.42±4.315	.456 ^b
p-value (within a group)	0.301 ^a	1.000 ^a	
FNE			
Pre (Mean±SD)	37.14±2.854	36.14±3.024	.536 ^b
Post (Mean±SD)	20.86±4.981	28.43±3.994	.009 ^b
p-value (within a group)	.004 ^a	.002 ^a	
SADG			
Pre (Mean±SD)	18.00±3.697	16.86±3.078	.541 ^b
Post (Mean±SD)	10.86±3.024	12.57±4.721	.434 ^b
p-value (within a group)	.011 ^a	.038 ^a	

a= Wilcoxon test, b= ANOVA one way

variability. A description of the differences in SAD scores in each intervention group is presented in Table 3.

Based on these conditions, it is estimated that relaxation using the *Gending Sriwijaya* music significantly reduces students' SAD. Table 4 shows the results of statistical analysis on the dimensions of Social Anxiety to prove the significance of changes in SAD in each group.

Based on the results analysis presented in Table 4, the conditions of both groups in the pre-test were relatively equal in all dimensions, thus making a balanced comparison before the intervention began. After the intervention, the experimental group showed a greater decrease in scores, especially on the FNE dimension, compared to the control group. However, the SAD-New and SAD-G dimensions did not show significant changes.

In the SAD-NEW dimension, the between-group results showed no significant difference between the experimental and control groups in either the pre-test ($p = 0.791$) or post-test ($p = 0.456$). The within-group analysis also showed that the change in scores from pre-test to post-test was not significant in either the experimental ($p = 0.301$) or control ($p = 1.000$) groups, indicating that the intervention had no significant impact on this dimension and that core social anxiety levels were relatively stable in both groups throughout the study period. In the FNE dimension, there was no significant difference in the pre-test ($p = 0.536$), but a significant difference was found in the post-test ($p = 0.009$), with the average score of the experimental group (20.86 ± 4.981) lower than the control group (28.43 ± 3.994). Within-group analysis showed that both the experimental ($p = 0.004$) and control ($p = 0.002$) groups experienced a significant decrease in scores, but the decrease in the experimental group was greater, so the intervention proved to be more effective in reducing fear of negative evaluation. In the SADG dimension, the between-group results showed no significant difference between groups in the pre-test ($p = 0.541$) or post-test ($p = 0.434$), but within-group analysis revealed that both groups experienced a significant decrease from pre-test to post-test, both in the experimental ($p = 0.011$) and control ($p = 0.038$) groups, which indicates that the decrease may also be influenced by external factors outside the intervention.

The results of the analysis proved that the intervention was most effective on the FNE aspect in the experimental group, with a clearly greater impact than the control. Reductions in SADG occurred in both groups with similar intensity, while SAD-NEW was relatively unaffected. These findings suggest that a sharper intervention focus on FNE can yield significant results, while reductions in SAD-New require a more intensive approach or longer duration. Table 5 shows the statistical analysis based on the gain scores in each dimension and intervention group.

Table 5. Statistical analysis based on gain score

Dimension	Experiment	Control	p-value
SAD-New	2.86±4.488	.71±4.855	.408
FNE	16.29±4.231	7.71±3.147	.001
SADG	7.14±4.880	4.291±6.897	.389

The results of the ANOVA analysis in Table 5 confirm the findings of this study. ANOVA analysis of the gain values shows that in the SAD-NEW dimension there is no significant difference between the experimental group (2.86 ± 4.488) and the control (0.71 ± 4.855 ; $p = 0.408$), as well as in SADG (7.14 ± 4.880 vs. 4.29 ± 6.897 ; $p = 0.389$). However, in the FNE dimension, a significant difference was found with the gain value of the experimental group (16.29 ± 4.231) being much higher than the control (7.71 ± 3.147 ; $p = 0.001$), indicating that the intervention effectively reduced fear of negative evaluation compared to the control group.

Discussion

In this study, researchers used *Gending Sriwijaya* as traditional Indonesian music in the relaxation process. These results strengthen the role of traditional music in group counseling interventions, especially in reducing emotional problems such as anxiety. Research by (Sung et al., 2012) Sung et al. (2012) shows that traditional music can help clients adjust emotionally, and it is played for six weeks for 50 minutes each session. The integration of traditional music is an optimization of local wisdom in developing mental health interventions. (Long, 2023) Long (2023) also proved in his research that integrating culture and traditional music in psychoeducational groups helps students manage emotions, increase self-awareness, and social skills, thus impacting mental health.

The effect of traditional music in reducing SAD does not directly change client behavior. SAD has the same symptoms as general anxiety, namely rapid and unexpected mood swings (Akkus & Peker, 2022), excessive fear (Costache et al., 2020; Koyuncu et al., 2019), and physical discomfort (Reny et al., 2023). Interventions to reduce SAD are recommended to modify how individuals condition themselves, attention, and imagination (Gilboa-Schechtman & Azoulay, 2022). Listening to music in relaxation techniques is a receptive and passive activity, which plays a role in calming, soothing, increasing relaxation, and facilitating emotional regulation through reflection (Ting et al., 2023). Traditional music that tends to be soft is associated with lower levels of stress hormones that cause a relaxed state (Filippis & Foysal, 2025).

The potential for integrating traditional Indonesian music into counseling interventions is very large, given the diversity of Indonesian culture. The development of a counseling model based on local wisdom is a necessity, due to the diversity of Indonesian culture (Atmoko et al., 2020; Ramli & Hidayah, 2017) Previous research has mapped variations of traditional Indonesian music integrated into counseling interventions to reduce anxiety. Gending Banyuwangi as a medium for relaxation intervention has been proven to be able to significantly reduce anxiety in adolescents (Jannah & Wicaksono, 2024). Using gamelan in relaxation techniques significantly reduces stress and anxiety, especially on the client's systolic blood pressure and heart rate (Safaria, 2014). Also in line with the use of Balinese Selonding Gamelan, which can reduce anxiety, impact heart rate stability, and more regular breathing patterns, and provide psychological comfort (Artana et al., 2020).

The use of traditional and classical music in non-clinical interventions is recommended because, in conditions of anxiety and stress, individuals tend to choose the wrong music, namely, emotional and painful music. In addition, the low frequency of music makes it easier for students to enter a relaxed state. The soothing effect of low-frequency sounds can help people unwind and feel more at ease (Ma & Thompson, 2015; Wu et al., 2024). A slow and

regular tempo is another element in traditional music that can reduce anxiety. The harmony and tempo in traditional music are optimal for relaxation and stabilizing physical and emotional well-being (Brownlow, 2017; Liu et al., 2022; Sanjiwani & Dewi, 2022). Traditional music has a calm rhythm and soft melody that provides calm and balance that can reduce anxiety and stress (Blank, 2019; Permata & Maliya, 2024).

In this study, the "Gending Sriwijaya" music was integrated during relaxation practice. Soft instrumental music was played in the background during a 15-minute guided practice session, followed by 10 minutes of independent practice. Deep breathing exercises and Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) were the relaxation practices. The exercise duration was in line with the general procedure for using music in relaxation techniques, which lasts between 15-30 minutes (Shin & Kim, 2011; Yusli & Rachma, 2019).

Cultural acceptance is an important factor in using traditional music to reduce anxiety. Traditional music has its advantages in certain cultural contexts. *Gending Sriwijaya* is not only traditional music, but also has socio-spiritual values. *Gending Sriwijaya* as a musical and cultural work has a function to strengthen social solidarity and internalize spiritual values that lead society to a harmonious and peaceful life (Johanes, 2024; Lestari, 2024). Spiritually, this music contains holiness, peace, and appreciation of God or a higher power. While socially, it emphasizes harmony between fellow human beings, mutual help, honesty, and mutual respect. The introduction and meaning of the music are developed at the psychoeducational stage to make it easier for students to appreciate the music played as a relaxation medium.

Counselors need to consider these cultural factors when choosing intervention media. This consideration is also discussed in the use of traditional music in anxiety recovery interventions in several countries, such as the five elements of traditional Chinese music (Liu et al., 2022), Lanna music (traditional Thai music) (Wannachaiyakul et al., 2022), traditional Iranian music (Rasoli et al., 2024), and *Hicaz & Huseyni maqams* (traditional Arabic music) (Gulmez & Eroy, 2023). In the context of Middle Eastern Muslims, traditional music is also known as Sufi music (Auliya & Yudiarso, 2023). The intervention can be adjusted by integrating murottal with relaxation techniques for those with low tolerance for listening to music (Astuti, 2022; Bungsu & Kurniati, 2020; Islami et al., 2020).

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

This research focuses on culturally based interventions, thus revealing more about the strength of local Indonesian culture in interventions to reduce social anxiety. In contrast, SAD theory suggests that various individual and social factors, including gender differences and cultural context, influence SAD. In this study, it was found that before the intervention, female samples tended to have higher SAD than male groups. This phenomenon is in line with several previous studies showing that female students tend to have higher SAD than male groups (Asher et al., 2019; Barnett et al., 2021) that female adolescents are more likely to experience social anxiety (Hayati, 2023; Rapee et al., 2019) because they are more sensitive to social evaluation and pressure from gender expectations (Pickering et al., 2019). In the post-test results, it was also found that males had a lower average SAD than females. This phenomenon has not been studied more widely, so it is a limitation of the study. For further research, it is necessary to conduct a qualitative analysis of gender factors to reveal how both groups view social situations that cause social anxiety and their receptive abilities during relaxation with *Gending Sriwijaya* music or other traditional music.

This study is also limited in the intervention target, namely reducing physical and affective anxiety symptoms. Holistic intervention is needed to provide maximum results. Cognitive behavioral therapy-based intervention is needed as a follow-up, especially in facilitating students' social skills practice. Thus, student changes will be more holistic, namely

calm in facing social changes, and can carry out appropriate social behavior, so that students become more adaptive to the social changes they face.

CONCLUSION

Group counseling with relaxation techniques accompanied by traditional *Gending Sriwijaya* music was significantly more effective in reducing symptoms of Social Anxiety Disorder (SAD) in adolescents compared to relaxation without music. This finding is supported by a greater decrease in SAD scores in the experimental group, a significant difference in the ANOVA analysis, and a higher proportional decrease in the N-Gain analysis. Traditional music plays a role in creating a calming effect and facilitating emotional regulation. The study's results emphasize the importance of counselors considering cultural acceptance factors in interventions. This study also has limitations related to receptiveness to traditional music and gender differences in reducing SAD, which suggests the need for qualitative research and integration of CBT interventions for more comprehensive results.

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