

Original Article

## The therapeutic effect of relative satisfaction on pain treatment: focus on gobchuchum (a hunchback dance) of Ok-jin Gong

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### ABSTRACT

Ok-jin Gong's hunchback dance is considered to be a strange dance in Korea. However, there have been no reports of the effects of music and dance therapy as a pain treatment. The aim of this article is to argue that watching and listening to the hunchback dance of Ok-jin Gong may have significant effects as a form of pain treatment. The creator of this style of dance suspected that dance in general can be an outlet for our inner emotions. Her dance in this case has received critical and complimentary reviews as well. However she has been cited as the main culprit behind the destruction of traditional dance forms in the Korean dance world. Nonetheless, her bewitching stage presence attracted much attention. She satirized the feelings of the under privileged' through music and dance. We tend to feel somehow relative poverty and small in the presence of a rich and successful man. On the other hand, the artist felt that it is the public who would be relatively comforted and satisfied in the presence of the weak and handicapped. A free spirit that makes us forget pain is the very essence of her dancing. Her dance and music sound as if she sublimated her sadness and ugliness, changing it to happiness and beauty. She puts herself in a low position and spreads a sense of freedom and relief to the world. Hence, the author felt that innumerable people have been comforted in these ways by her dance.

**Keywords** hunchback dance, Ok-jin Gong, pain treatment, music therapy

### INTRODUCTION

Ok-jin Gong's hunchback dance is considered to be an odd dance in Korea. However, there have been no reports on the effects of music and dance therapy a treatment for pain. We often compare ourselves to others. We somehow tend to feel relative poverty and small in the presence of a rich and successful man. On the other hand, the artist believed that it the public who will be relatively comforted and satisfied in front of the weak and handicapped. Accordingly, there are also those receiving consolation in relation to pain management issues. People without disabilities have an edge in competitiveness compared those who are physically handicapped.

Pain management has been studied with a play, and it is still being researched (Baratloo et al., 2016). Pain is generally known as illness progress in our mind and body. This pain increases in severity over time and finally promotes the disease associated psychological and physiological debasement (Krishnaswamy and Nair, 2016).

The artist considered dance as an outlet for our inner emotions. Dance is considered to be a unique form of motion exercise owing to its potential to create and express new action forms (Batson et al., 2016). She was best known for creating

'Ilin changmugeuk (a song-dance-drama performance by a single person, 1人 唱舞劇).' Along with jokes, songs, and dances are also expressed alone. Initially, her style of dance was not seen as artistic. Her dances nonetheless received critical and complimentary reviews. They have been applauded by a few and criticized by others. She has been cited as the main culprit behind the destruction of traditional dance forms in the Korean dance world. However, her bewitching stage presence drew the attention of many.

She stated "I also want to show that people need not be limited by physical handicaps as long as they are not disabled in spirit." She puts herself in a low position and spreads a sense of freedom to the world. Her dance and music sound as if she sublimated her sadness and ugliness by changing it to happiness and beauty. Thus, the artist believed innumerable people were comforted by her dance. This, at least, was a small comfort for her. The aim of this article is to argue that watching and listening to Ok-jin Gong's hunchback dance may have significant effects as a treatment for pain.

### Biography of Ok-jin Gong

Ok-jin Gong (Fig. 1, 1931-2012) was born in Jeollanamdo, in Youngkwang. The artist did not know of anyone who had been 'kicked around' by Fortune as much as she had been. At seven years old, she took responsibility for his father's debts and was sold for a thousand won in rural Japan. He had been a drafted worker. She suffered from heavy burdens and hunger in her girlhood. One day, her worst nightmare came true, when I was caught by the North Korean People's Army, and brought to a place of execution because she was a wife of police officer. However, she made an ardent request of them. 'Before I die, I

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want to sing a song.’ The effect was magical when she lifted her voice, and she miraculously was given her life back to. She recalls, unfortunately, her friend took her husband away, she would go blank and becomes; nervous, frustrated, and dumb, and these thoughts brought tears her eyes. However, she never succumbed to the difficulties and did, not let the unfortunate situations hamstring or stymie her.

In 2010, Jeollanamdo proclaimed *Simcheongga* creating ‘*Ilin changmugeuk* (a song-dance-drama performance by a single person, 1人 唱舞劇)’ as the 29-6th Intangible Cultural Asset of Jeollanamdo province. The artist was also given the title of Human Cultural Property No. 29-6 for *Simcheongga* for creating ‘*Ilin changmugeuk* (a song-dance-drama performance by a single person, 1人 唱舞劇) in 2010 from Jeollanamdo province.

Known for her distinctive views and wacky performance on stage, Ok-jin Gong was, also known to Korean as a master of *Byungshin- chum* (a dance of deformity). Her dance was not learned by watching other people and imitating what they did. According to Min-ah Ko, a researcher who works from an aesthetic perspective, it is distinctive and takes no notice of beauty and ugliness. She sang, danced and ran across the stage to comfort the crowd alone. Her sister and niece are handicapped person and thus, she said she hoped to encourage other disabled people and the weak.

You can enjoy Ok-jin Gongs’ dance on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/rhCMNxMYXSc>)

#### What is a gobchuchum (a hunchback dance)?

Gobchu is a hunchback. Gobchuchum however is an amazing creation. This was a creation by Ok-jin Gong. Such people are treated as second-class citizens. Ok-jin Gong spoke for them. People often feel that it simply means to feel sorry for these people. She danced to the accompaniment of pipes and drums with fervor for peoples who are discriminated against and suffer as a result of their disabilities. The sight was beyond words. Her dance was a suitable expression. She had an original mind about expressions of their feelings through music and dancing. Her dance was also unique and special in Korea. The author felt her dance provided comfort and courage.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The action of using music as a cure for ailments can be traced back to ancient African, Indian, Hebrew, Chinese and Roman civilizations (Archana and Mukilan, 2016). Music can have various benefits physically such as reducing muscle tension and chronic pain as well as psychologically by helping reflect past, enhancing reality and even changing one’s mood by relieving anxiety and depressions (Kumar et al., 2014). Music has been revealed to have an affirmative effect on a diversity of physical, psychological and behavioral aspects of human existence (Archana and Mukilan, 2016). Music therapy can easily be introduced to the nursing care field, as it is an acceptable form of treatment, which is financially practicable and simply available; besides these advantages, there are scarcely any cultural, legal, or moral concerns about its use (Shabani et al., 2016). Music is thought to decrease pain and anxiety. In one study, music therapy was shown to be effective when used to decrease pain intensity, fatigue, anxiety and analgesic consumption in gynecological patients during the postoperative period. A hallmark of human movement is volitional control the freedom to shift easily, automatically, and securely within the changing requirements of daily living (Batson et al., 2016). Vocal music therapy may be effectual in building necessary



**Fig.1** Ok-jin Gong, [http://search.daum.net/search?nil\\_suggest=sugsch&w=tot&DA=GIQ&sq=%EA%B3%B5%EC%98%A5%EC%A7%84&o=1&sugo=9&q=%EA%B3%B5%EC%98%A5%EC%A7%84](http://search.daum.net/search?nil_suggest=sugsch&w=tot&DA=GIQ&sq=%EA%B3%B5%EC%98%A5%EC%A7%84&o=1&sugo=9&q=%EA%B3%B5%EC%98%A5%EC%A7%84)

stepping-stones for effectual chronic pain management, in other words strengthened self-efficacy, motivation, empowerment, and social engagement (Bradt et al., 2016). Music decreases the anxiety and pain scores of patients during SWL and is associated with higher satisfaction scores for remedies (Akbas et al., 2016). Music engages a variety of brain areas involved in emotion, motivation, cognition, and motor skills, and musical input have been utilized to enhance socialization and cognitive, sentimental, and neuromotor operation (Raglio et al., 2015). Applied music, through its main elements – pitch, dynamics and harmony, meter, tempo and rhythm, allows the organization of movement in time and space, leads to movement fluency, provides impulses to muscles and supplies rhythmic instructions by which to initiate and maintain activity (Bukowska et al., 2016). Therefore listening to one’s preferred music along with exercise can have a significant beneficial effect by improving one’s autonomic balance. For these reasons, it also has a calming effect on the mind.

Researcher Kyu-won Lee reported “when I’m stressed, I think my life is too tough and unfair, but, I also want you to look at me and raise you spirits, as my trouble is nothing to Ok-jin Gong. It is good compared to Ok-jin Gong.” According to Ji-won Kim, also researcher Ok-jin Gong’s art philosophy enables us to think about inner freedom and happiness. Relative deprivation can directly influence a person’s sense of well-being, or lack thereof. We somehow tend to feel relative poverty and small in the presence of a rich and a successful man. However, on the other hand, author felt that it is the public who would be relatively comforted and satisfied in the presence of the weak and handicapped. She puts herself in a low position and spreads a sense of freedom and relief to the world. A free spirit that makes us forget a pain is the very essence of her dancing. Her dance and music sound as if she sublimated her sadness and ugliness, changing them into happiness and beauty instead. Therefore, author considered that innumerable people were comforted by her form of dance.

More research is needed on the relationship between dance and pain management. The author hopes such this article eventually lead to greater be comfort for both those with disabilities and those without them.

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#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

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