

THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

THE PRESENCE AND ABSENCE OF MUSIC AS A
CUE FOR THE RECIPROCAL
INHIBITION OF GUITAR PERFORMANCE ANXIETY

By

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In loving memory of my niece, Hope Isabella Vega.

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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of music assisted systematic desensitization (MASD) on guitar competency, observed anxiety, and self-perception of anxiety during guitar performance with music therapy and music education students. Students were divided into an experimental and control group. The experimental group received two sessions of (MASD) after the first guitar performance and the control group received no intervention. Guitar performances were evaluated for level of competency, level of observed anxiety, and self-perception of anxiety.

Statistical comparisons of both groups indicate that there was a significant difference between the guitar competency scores of the two groups ($p = .051$), with greater gains on guitar competency made by the experimental group. No statistical difference was found between groups on the level of observed anxiety or self-perception of anxiety.

Subsequent analysis indicates that the experimental group had significantly lower anxiety from the first to second guitar performance ($p = .037$) while the control group did not ($p = .477$). The control group, however, had a significant decrease in level of perceived anxiety from the first to second guitar performance ($p = .017$) while the experimental group approached significance ($p = .15$).

The secondary purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the experimental subject's participation in MASD with guitar competency evaluations, observed anxiety, and self-perception of anxiety during the guitar performances. Graphic analysis of participants observed responses during MASD are presented within six case studies. Clinical implications of the results and guidelines for future research are discussed.