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Article

Online Song Intervention Program to Cope Work Distress of Remote Dispatched Workers: Music for An Adaptive Environment in the Hyperconnected Era

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Abstract: This study investigates the effectiveness of online song intervention program based on contextual support model in reducing work-related distress and enhancing psychological resilience among the ship crews dispatched for an extensive period for work. Eighteen overseas workers participated in a four-week intervention that included both individual and group sessions, where they engaged with songs to cultivate personal and interpersonal resources. A deductive content analysis following the intervention revealed 3 main categories, 6 generic categories, and 14 subcategories. The three main categories identified were relationships, autonomy, and mood regulation. The relationships category encompassed support systems and bonding, focusing on empathy, consolation, positive perspective, vicarious empowerment, trust, and changes of perspective. Autonomy involved fostering a sense of control and fulfillment through determination, anticipation, motivation, and achievement. Mood regulation was divided into grounding and emotional resolution, which included containment, sedation, externalization, and ventilation. The findings highlight that song lyrics offer valuable insights for developing resources aimed at mood regulation, social support, and self-efficacy, helping to alleviate work-related stress during dispatch periods. Songs also foster a sense of control, competence, and relational connectedness, with mood regulation emerging as a key feature of their emotional impact. These results suggest that incorporating songs with lyrics focused on personal and interpersonal resources could be an effective strategy to support remotely dispatched workers. Furthermore, this approach appears to be a viable and scalable solution for online programs.

Keywords: work-related distress; psychological resources; content analysis; song intervention program; contextual support model

1. Introduction

In the era of economic globalization, multinational companies frequently dispatch employees overseas for extended periods to meet their strategic needs. Dispatched employees are typically engaged in international assignments, outsourcing projects, or temporary personnel arrangements. These employees include company personnel sent to work in another country, usually as part of a project, contract, or corporate expansion, as well as those hired by agencies and assigned to work at client companies for a certain period. These workers face the dual challenge of adapting to unfamiliar cultures, languages, and work environments while maintaining productivity, which poses unique psychological challenges and emotional health issue (Galbraith et al., 2021; Wei & Kim, 2024).

Emotional health, encompassing emotional stability, positivity, and stress management, is critical to physical and mental well-being. Impaired emotional health can lead to negative outcomes such as anxiety, decreased sleep quality, and weakened immunity. These stressors are particularly severe for overseas workers lacking psychological resources in unfamiliar and often isolating

environments (Hippler et al., 2017; Medic et al., 2017). Given these specific challenges, traditional psychological support structures are often unavailable or insufficient for long-term and personalized inner resource support. While traditional methods such as counseling, cultural training, and communication support have improved workers' mental health and job satisfaction to some extent (Quirke, 2017), dispatched workers often require more time for verbal interaction and sustained support. Considering these significant demands innovative and personalized approaches are needed to enhance emotional well-being and resilience.

Songs uniquely combine music and language, conveying meaningful messages and emotional narratives while promoting emotional expression, social interaction, and self-reflection (Malloch & Trevarthen, 2018). In music therapy, songs engage listeners through comprehensible lyrics that address emotional and psychological states and reflect the songwriter's thoughts and feelings (Chong & Yun, 2020, 2021). This process facilitates direct emotional engagement, making song intervention an effective tool for emotional regulation and a valuable resource for individuals in isolated environments. By selecting song materials based on a contextual support framework, therapy can address a range of life issues, from repressed emotions to fostering autonomy, relatedness, and competence. These qualities assist in stress management and enhance psychological resilience and self-efficacy, defined as leveraging internal strengths and external support to manage stress and stabilize emotions (Avey et al., 2009; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). As a fusion of lyrics and musical content, songs provide cognitive and emotional stimulation that supports resilience in demanding environments.

Extensive research highlights the efficacy of music in supporting emotional regulation. Music enables individuals to access and process complex emotions, boosting self-esteem and fostering social recognition (Elvers, 2016). Song lyrics in music can resonate with the listener's experiences, creating avenues for self-reflection and stress relief (Gardstrom & Hiller, 2010). Song intervention has demonstrated significant efficacy in populations experiencing deficient inner resources due to social isolation, neglected adolescents or individuals recovering from trauma (Hirschberg et al., 2020; Lauber et al., 2022). These findings support the potential of song intervention as an emotional support tool for socially isolated workers, particularly in alleviating loneliness and enhancing social connectivity.

The contextual support model is a psychological framework describing how environmental and situational factors influence motivation and behavior. The theory outlines three elements of coping and stress management: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Robb, 2000, 2003). In this theoretical framework, autonomy refers to the freedom to make decisions, relatedness to having secure and meaningful relationships both internally and externally, and competence to a sense of control. These three elements contribute to coping, which describes how individuals regulate their behaviors, emotions, and motivational orientations in psychologically distressing situations (Skinner & Wellborn, 2019).

One of the many limitations of traditional psychotherapy is the restricted access to experts who can communicate in the individual's native language, coupled with the time and location constraints of therapy sessions. Even when experts are proficient in the native language, scheduling therapy outside of working hours remains challenging. In the era of hyper-connectivity, music and song materials can transcend physical boundaries, offering immediate access when need (Arduman, 2021). The benefits of hyper-connectivity can be adapted into therapeutic programs to meet the specific needs of workers in remote areas who cannot access therapy experts. Many employees are dispatched to other countries for extended periods, with some situations being particularly intense, such as employees in the shipping industry. Song intervention provided via online connections can serve as a psychological resource and become a significant program for employers. For example, it can benefit workers on ships undertaking prolonged voyages in multiple foreign regions.

This study aims to provide an online song intervention program developed based on the contextual support model for ship crews to cope with work-related distress and better adapt to their working environment. The therapeutic use of songs may help overseas workers access latent

emotional resources, promoting resilience in coping with work-related stress. The research questions are as follows:

1. Does the online song intervention program based on the contextual support model specifically assist participants in better coping with work-related stressors?
2. How does the online song intervention program based on the contextual support model help participants build psychological resilience and resources for themselves?
3. What are the key findings from participants’ experiences after completing the online song intervention program based on the contextual support model?
4. Are participants able to use the song resources outside the sessions to improve their adaptation to their working blank environment?

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The participant's company is a Chinese company, headquartered in China, and a world-class overseas shipping company with workers all over the world. Participants were recruited from the crew members of this shipping company who were dispatched abroad for at least six months to one year. The continuous working time on the ship was at least three months on average. The inclusion criteria for the study were: 1) between 20 and 60 years old; 2) dispatched abroad for more than one year; 3) in good health, without any hearing or speech diseases. Recruitment is conducted through the Internet, and participation is mainly voluntary. A total of 18 Chinese dispatched workers signed informed consent and confidentiality agreements, participated in this study, and underwent a preliminary assessment of their readiness and psychological status.

Table 1. Demographic Information of Participants.

(N=18)		
Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	18	100
Female	0	0
Age (years)		
20-29	7	38.9
30-39	7	38.9
40-49	3	16.7
50 and above	1	5.6
Participant type department		
Technology	7	38.9
Shipping Crew (Cargo loading)	7	38.9

Management	4	22.2
<hr/>		
Length of working on the ship (years)		
4-6	9	50
7-9	8	44.4
10 and above	1	5.6
Length of time you last worked on board a ship (months)		
3-4	7	38.9
5-6	9	50
6 and above	2	11.1
Prior experience of therapy		
Yes	2	11.1
No	16	88.9
<hr/>		

2.2. Intervention

The intervention was designed based on a preliminary questionnaire, selecting participants preferred and meaningful songs to establish a music library. The music was played online, and the intervention was tailored to each participant’s resource conditions. The therapist selected appropriate songs from the library based on assessment results, using only published music with corresponding sheet music included as an appendix. Sessions took place online in a private setting with only the therapist and participant present. Music was played via an audio player, with participants able to adjust the volume. The intervention included music listening, lyric discussions, and lyric completion tasks. The intervention comprised both individual and group sessions. Individual sessions were held twice weekly (60 minutes each), while group sessions occurred once a week (90 minutes). The therapist, a PhD candidate in music therapy and the study’s researcher, was supervised by a professor with 20 years of clinical experience. The intervention plans were pre-reviewed to ensure accuracy. The sessions were conducted online in a designated music therapy room aboard the shipping vessel, ensuring privacy. Group interventions involved a temporary discussion group of 5–10 crew members from the same ship.

2.3. Procedure

The study followed a four-stage process. In the first stage, participants were assessed for readiness and psychological mindedness to inform a tailored song intervention program. The second stage involved a four-week intervention incorporating both individual and group sessions. Individual sessions focused on personally meaningful songs, while group sessions used frequently selected songs to foster shared experiences and group cohesion. Intervention strategies included music listening, lyric analysis, and guided discussions to facilitate emotional expression and cognitive processing. In the third stage, the intervention was implemented by a certified music therapist specializing in therapeutic songwriting and emotional support. Music was delivered through live performances or recorded tracks, played via speakers in group sessions and headphones

in individual sessions. Participants could adjust the volume, and supplementary materials such as lyric sheets and self-reflection journals enhanced engagement.

In the final stage, qualitative content analysis was conducted to examine the psychological and emotional resources activated. Treatment fidelity was ensured through adherence to the structured intervention protocol and session monitoring. The intervention took place in a controlled setting to minimize distractions and optimize comfort. Group sessions involved 5–7 participants for peer interaction, while individual sessions provided a personalized therapeutic space. All procedures and ethical considerations were reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board at XXX University (IRB No: XXX).

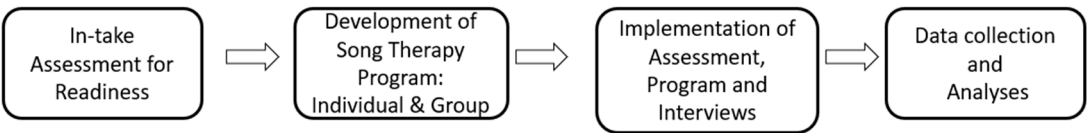


Figure 1. Procedure in Four Stages.

2.3.1. In-Take Assessment for Readiness

To formulate and deliver the most effective song intervention content, the study included an assessment procedure to assess individual's level of psychological mindedness and readiness for the program. The assessment questionnaires measured the extent of the readiness aimed to examine the participants' interest in engaging with resources for stress management. The questionnaire was tested by a panel of music therapists with more than ten years of music therapy experience to determine the validity and reliability of this questionnaire. In addition, the questionnaire assessed psychological qualities, focusing on participants' self-reflection and understanding related to stress and issues related to isolation and acculturation. These assessment items were crucial for understanding the specific needs of the participants, providing essential information for crafting the song materials used in the therapy program. Determined the content and type of songs selected

Table 2. In-Take Assessment Questionnaires for Song Intervention Program.

Section	Questionnaires
Readiness	-Willingness to understand oneself/others
	-Motivations and expectations to participate
	-Openness for changes and new perspectives
Psychological mindedness	-Ability to self-reflect
	-Concept of human unconsciousness and understanding
	-Willingness to explore insights and wisdom for oneself

2.3.2. Development of Song Intervention Program.

The song intervention program was developed based on the contextual support model, implying that the song materials were chosen according to the three components of the model: autonomy, relatedness, and competence. During the initial stages of program development, songs were collected based on popularity and familiarity with most adults of that age. Then these songs were sorted based on whether the lyrics contained positive messages regarding autonomy, relationship with self and others, or competency/self-confidence.

The selected songs were applied to weekly group and individual therapy sessions. Each week included one individual therapy session and one group therapy session. These sessions were designed to address the participants’ personal and interpersonal problems. Since all participants were male and had no prior therapy experience at the time of assessment, the intervention prioritized meeting their needs for personal inner resources through individual therapy sessions. At the same time, to build a group support system, group therapy sessions were held once a week, where participants empathized with common problems in therapy and enhanced their sense of belonging within the group.

For the individual sessions, the four-week intervention had structured objectives. In the first week, participants were encouraged to explore any difficulties they were experiencing in their work environment. Based on the participants' responses regarding their needs, songs were selected with lyrics addressing challenges and conflicts related to the working environment. The second week focused on identifying positive resources from the past and present. Participants were asked to reflect on any special associations or insights that the songs brought up, such as positive memories. In the third week, discussions focused on how to reconnect these identified resources in their current difficult or conflictual situation. In the final week, participants were encouraged to share any new insights or perspectives to develop strategies for self-care.

The goals of the group sessions focused on relationships and interpersonal issues. In the first week, participants discussed commonalities and challenges in the work environment based on shared experiences with coworkers. The second week explored the shared meaning of the songs around common themes and issues. In the third week, the group discussions focused on similar experiences, perspectives, or empathy related to the lyrics. In the final week, the groups exchanged ideas and strategies for using the songs as a collective resource. This session aimed to strengthen internal resources that elicit positive feelings and meaning, such as self-efficacy, confidence, etc. Working on lyrics they could empathize with or agree upon for their positive meaning enabled participants to build a support system among themselves. The whole process was conducted online, with music played online. A doctoral candidate in music therapy conducted the intervention. The other supervisor was a senior music therapist with 20 years of experience.

Table 3. Individual and Group Session Goals and Content.

Session		Session Format		Song Lyrics for
Session No.	Objectives			Resource
		Individual	Group	
1	Build Sense of	Identify any	Identify any	Find intrinsic
	Autonomy and	emotions or	similarities	motivation and
	Intrinsic motivation	energy	shared among	desire/hope
		triggered by	the peers	Gain self-esteem and
		songs		sense of autonomy

2	Identify positive	Share any	Share any	Build trust and bond
	sense of self and	associations	referential	establishing
	others	related to	meaning of	connections and
	(relationships)	songs that	songs that	relationships
		bring new	brings	
3		insights about	associations of	
		self	memories and	
			persons	
	Utilize resource of	Share any	Share any	-Reconnect
	one’s self-efficacy	specific music	commonalities	positive memories on
4	and	or lyric	or empathy	self-actualization
	accomplishment	messages of	related to lyrics	-Feel self-content and
		positive	in the song	Confident
		perspectives		
		and wisdom		
4	Share any new	Identify any	Exchange and	Seek challenges and
	insights or	strategic use of	share any ideas	goals to enhance
	perspectives to	both external	being support	sense of
	access resource	and internal	group for each	determination
		resources for	other	
		self-care		

2.3.3. Participation Format for the Program

The intervention was implemented online using digital devices, as the participants resided on a ship. Individual sessions were conducted in the participants' private rooms, where they used either a mobile device or laptop, depending on their circumstances. Group sessions took place in the activity room, which had a large monitor on one wall so that everyone could have a clear view. The intervention room was private and only the therapist and the participant were involved throughout the treatment process.

2.3.4. Data Collection and Analysis

The data were collected from the narratives of participants during the individual and group sessions and during the interview session following the termination of the program. Sessions had been recorded and transcribed verbatim. The obtained transcripts were analyzed to identify how participants had perceived and used the messages from the song lyrics. After each session, a questionnaire was distributed to which participants orally responded, focusing on how they had felt about the songs used in the session and any perceived benefits from the program. Following the completion of the program, post-intervention interviews were conducted with each participant, which were recorded and transcribed. The post-intervention interview questions were as follows:

Table 4. Interview questions.

Categories	Sample Questions
I Associations or memories related to the lyric	- What part of the lyrics comes to your mind? Any part of the lyrics that reflects your thoughts or feelings?
	- What memories do the lyrics bring up for you?
	- Could you share memories or associations?
II Messages from the lyrics	-Were you able to identify what the song lyrics suggest?
	-Were you able to relate to the singer or empathize with the singer’s experience?
	- Anything related to self, others or environments?
III Integrate the message of lyrics into daily life	-When do you think you can use imagery or messages for yourself in everyday life?
	-How can they help you with your work attitude?
IV Owning the song as coping strategy	-How can you use this song for other parts of your life, such as relationships?
	-What other benefit does this song give you?

The transcribed data were analyzed using the deductive content analysis method. This method is effective for categorizing data and aligning it with predetermined theoretical concepts related to the therapeutic function of songs, thereby making the analysis process more systematic and organized. It not only facilitated a structured interpretation of the data but also enhanced the reliability and validity of the findings by adhering to predefined theoretical constructs. Consequently, deductive content analysis provided a clear and logical framework for drawing conclusions and generating insights into how song lyrics manifested and evoked various resources at both personal and interpersonal/relationship aspects.

3. Results

The researcher recorded and analyzed the entire interview and confirmed the interview results with each participant. The deductive analysis of the transcribed interviews, along with session, involved a structured approach. First, all data were transcribed and organized according to predefined theoretical concepts related to psychological resources. The transcripts were then coded and categorized based on these concepts, allowing for systematic identification of how song lyrics were used to develop psychological resources. Patterns insights were analyzed and validated against the theoretical framework, leading to a comprehensive understanding of the impactful role of song lyrics in enhancing participants' psychological resources.

The categorization of the word units and groupings yielded 14 subcategories in which participants' verbal statements were categorized according to the themes and key words related to beneficial aspects of one song. Each subcategory was operationally defined, and sample statements are shown in Table 5. The coding of the displayed parts is marked on the right side. Here are some examples: P1-1 indicates verbal statement provided by Participant 1 verbalized in their first individual session. Likewise, G2-2 means verbal statement provided by Participant 2, in their group session. INT4 means verbal statement provided by Participant 4 during their interview session.

Table 5. Operational definitions of subcategories and sample statements.

Generic	Operational	Sample Statement
Category	Definition	
	- Includes statement to understand and relate to each other's emotions.	- I can feel the emotion in the singer's voice. (P3-1)
		- I've been through similar situations before, and I know how you're feeling right now. (G4-12)- I felt the joy you described in lyrics. (G2-8)
	- Validates feelings and strengthens interpersonal connections.	- The rise and fall of the melody matched my emotions. (INT1)
Empathy	- Any kind of solace after disappointment,	- I am dealing with this struggle on my own, but music gives me comfort. (INT3)
	pain, or sadness.	- The steady music rhythm gives me a very stable feeling. I felt someone gently pat my shoulder to comfort me. (P12-1)
	- Any positive support to help	- Music filled the void and I felt a sense of comfort like never before. (S5-3)

	alleviates emotional pain.	- The “it’s okay” in the lyrics comforts me. (INT2)
Positive Perspective	- Focus on strengths and achievements, an optimistic perspective. - Perspectives regarding future outlook	- I believe that if we keep a positive attitude and work hard, as the lyrics say, “everything will be alright.” (G1-3) - His courage and perseverance inspire me. (G3-9) - His views touched me a lot, and I decided to make changes. (G2-5) - I hope that, as he says, everything that follows is as simple as breakfast. (G4-7)
Vicarious empowerment	- Feeling empowered through the success or strength of others. - Motivate yourself through the experiences of others on the team, making yourself more confident and motivated to pursue your goals.	- The lyrics “Push open the door to the world” gave me a lot of encouragement and courage. I want to be the one who opens the door to see the world. (S2-6) - This song conveys positive energy, and I believe I can do it. (S3-5) - In the past, I relied on my own internal support. Through the conversation just now, I realized the importance of team support. (G2-9) - I am very small in the entire ocean, but that does not mean that we are unimportant. We are also a very important part of this world. (INT8)
Trust	-Trust that the other person can listen and understand you and trust each other.	- I want to confess my inner thoughts to the therapist. (P9-3) - I got along very superficially before, but now we have become more comfortable after having deeper communication. (G3-8)

Change of Attitude	- Having an open mind to share.	- I put my “life” in your hands. (P7-3) - People you spend time with every day are more trustworthy. (INT5)
	- Accepting a different attitude toward a situation or an event than before.	- I’ve come to understand the importance of refraining from defining the quality of my current work situation solely through a worldly lens. (P1-4) - Presently, I believe that having a fulfilling job, stable income, and a happy family equates to success. (P6-3) - It’s essential not to solely focus on the outcome’s quality; the process itself holds equal significance. (P7-2) - I would change sides and enjoy my time instead of wasting it anxiously. (INT2)
	- Reconnecting with the resolution and previous intentions.	- The lyric reminds me not to hesitate anymore and to embrace everything I have now. (P5-2) - Sometimes it is much easier to give up than to persist.
	- Feeling new strength for pursuing goals.	If I persist, I hope I see gains. (P10-3) - I decided to do one small thing every day starting from today, even if it is to read a page of a book. (S1-8) - Overcoming the boredom of work is a very important thing for me now (S3-7)
Anticipation	-Positive mind for what is to come.	-Like the lyrics I’m hopeful that things will work out for the best. I believe good things are on the horizon. (S2-8)
	-Feeling excited about the achievement.	

		<div>- Music give me feeling to travel, I’m really looking forward to the upcoming vacation. It’s going to be an amazing experience! (P5-2)</div> <div>- I’m optimistic about what the future holds. I believe there are great things in store for me. (P11-3)</div> <div>- The rising sense of melody gives me hope like the sunrise. ((INT2)</div>
Motivation	<div>- Intrinsic motivation and internal desire to move forward.</div>	<div>-The fast pace of the music is very immersive and makes me full of motivation to do things. (P10-3)</div> <div>-The lyrics remind me of my high-spirited self at that time and inspire my lazy self now. (INT9)</div> <div>-A dream I had forgotten about for a long time was suddenly ignited, and I wanted to continue to realize it. (G2-9)</div> <div>-Even when things get tough, keep going. Don’t be afraid to move forward. After listening to the music, I had such an impulse. (INT12)</div>
Achievement	<div>-Sense of achievement experienced through music that can be applied to other areas.</div> <div>- Sharing positive feelings about what</div>	<div>- When I loudly singing the words, I filled in by myself gives me a great sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. (P11-3)</div> <div>-I feel like I can see my inner thoughts more and more clearly. This is an improvement for me. (S2-9)</div> <div>- Sure enough, the road to overcoming difficulties is full of challenges and obstacles, but it also makes success even sweeter. (S4-11)</div>

	was achieved or accomplished.	
Containment	<p>- Any emotional skills not being overwhelmed by negative thoughts or feelings.</p> <p>-Ability to emotionally regulate.</p>	<p>- I learned how to control bad thoughts through music, which I think is a great gain. (P6-3)</p> <p>- I shifted my attention to music and stop thinking about those bad things. (P2-3)</p> <p>- It's not a bad thing to stop occasionally, it allows us to rethink and start again. (INT3)</p> <p>- I don't worry about so many things that will happen in the future and focus on the present. (P1-3)</p>
Sedative	-Soothing or calming of emotional arousal to promote feelings	- The familiar melody makes me feel the sense of peace. (INT7)
Centering	of calm and stability.	<p>- Music gives me some space and makes me feel like I have a higher oxygen level in this cabin. (S4-7)</p> <p>- The rising of melody gives me hope like the sunrise. ((INT2)</p>
Externalization	<p>-Expressing emotions, thoughts, or experiences outside of themselves.</p>	<p>- I really want to sing loudly, but I can't seem to do it. (P2-4)</p> <p>- The melody relaxes my body easily and makes my whole heart soft. (P4-3)</p> <p>- I think it would be a good idea to dance to this beat or listen to it during my work out tomorrow. (P9-3)</p>
Ventilation	<p>-Letting out or releasing repressed stress reaching emotional relief.</p>	- Heavy beats make me feel comfortable and release my stress. I like rock music. (INT10)

- The rhythm of this music hit me like a punch in the chest, making me feel like I had more room to breathe. (S3-4)
- Music opens a new world. I feel like the world is not just as big as a ship, and I can breathe in oxygen. (S4-12)

Following the grouping of individual verbal statements into subcategories, generic categories were identified based on similarities of the categorical themes. A total of six generic categories were defined: support system, bonding, sense of control, sense of fulfillment, grounding, and emotional resolution. Through these six themes, the essence of three main themes were identified: relationship, autonomy and mood regulation. Relationships pertained to any resources around relationships, attitudes, and openness, whereas autonomy pertained to intrapersonal issues, such as personal perspectives, belief systems, and self-efficacy. Finally, emotion regulation involves the mechanisms by which songs vent excessive or unresolved negative feelings or emotions.

Table 6. Deductive content analysis through abstraction process.

Subcategory	Generic category	Main category
Empathy		
Consolation	Support system	
Positive perspective		Relationship
Vicarious empowerment		
Trust	Bonding	
Changes in perspective		
Determination	Sense of control	Autonomy
Anticipation		
Motivation	Sense of fulfillment	Competency
Achievement		
Containment	Grounding	
Sedation		Mood regulation
Externalization	Emotional	

Ventilation	resolution
-------------	------------

4. Discussion

This study provides practical meaning of using songs for therapeutic purpose to enhance intrinsic psychological resources and reduce stress among overseas dispatched workers. The intervention aimed to activate both internal and external resources, supporting participants' adjustment to the challenges of working in a remote, distanced environment. Based on the experiences shared by participants, several significant theoretical and practical implications emerged.

The results indicate that song lyrics can serve as a potent psychological resource in the dispatched work environment. Participants often engaged with lyrics that resonated deeply with their immediate personal and professional concerns, finding messages of personal relevance within the songs. This finding aligns with the theory of musical intelligence, which suggests that individuals have an innate capacity to use music as a tool for emotional self-care and psychological insight (Montello, 2002). By connecting with lyrics, participants could express, which promoted emotional processing and self-awareness.

Moreover, the song selected based on the key concept of contextual support model certainly helped the participants to explore different dimensions of their life such as very personal to self-efficacy. The group dynamics fostered a supportive environment, enabling participants to share their interpretations and stories related to the songs. This collective engagement activated interpersonal resources, promoting empathy, mutual support, and a sense of community. Participants reported feeling "empowered" by the shared lyrical messages and were encouraged by hearing others' experiences. These findings demonstrate that songs not only help individuals access their internal resources but also facilitate social bonds, fostering emotional support and a sense of togetherness—key factors in enhancing resilience in isolated work environments (Ansdell, 2016; Crossley, 2019; Morgan, 2015; Stige, 2017).

The study also found that song lyrics with positive or nostalgic themes helped participants access memories that reinforced their motivation and optimism. Reflecting on uplifting lyrics allowed workers to reconnect with joyful past experiences, which improved their mood and provided a temporary escape from the challenges of a foreign work environment. This process, referred to as positive episodic memory recall, has been shown to enhance mood regulation by evoking meaningful, life-affirming memories (Garrido & Davidson, 2019; Istvandity, 2014; Senske, 2008). Inducing emotional recall, song intervention interventions can boost intrinsic motivation and resilience among workers facing prolonged isolation or cultural adaptation challenges. Tailoring playlists or music interventions to include songs that resonate personally with workers may thus serve as a strategic approach for enhancing well-being. This aligns with existing research on the therapeutic functions of lyrics in building emotional resilience and providing comfort during stressful periods (Bradt et al., 2021; Jurgensmeier, 2012; Kerig et al., 2010; Petterson & Loy, 2008).

The findings also highlight the unique role of songs as a medium for both verbal and nonverbal expression of emotions. Many participants noted that the music enabled them to express feelings that were otherwise difficult to articulate. Encouraging participants to sing or listen to songs reflecting their emotions created an emotional outlet, reducing the psychological burden of unexpressed stress. Music served as a therapeutic release, allowing workers to process their emotions in a non-intrusive, natural manner. This supports the theoretical concept of music as a mode of emotional release, which posits that music can provide an avenue for emotional catharsis and self-expression (Matshidze & Klu, 2016). By offering a channel for nonverbal emotional expression, song intervention allows individuals to externalize complex emotions, fostering emotional balance and reducing work-related distress.

Lastly, song lyrics helped participants project and regulate repressed emotions, as music can evoke strong emotional responses. For many participants, externalizing emotions through lyrics allowed them to vicariously articulate feelings and thoughts they might otherwise have suppressed.

This process of emotional projection enabled them to "ventilate" stress and work-related concerns, contributing to mood regulation and mental relief (Zhang et al., 2024). The projection of emotions through music echoes the psychological theory of externalization, where individuals find relief by expressing emotions through a separate medium vicariously. Song lyrics, by voicing these emotions through words, help participants confront and manage their internal struggles, promoting psychological resilience in the face of work challenges. Moreover, as examined in the literature review, another salient feature reported by the participants was the emotion regulation aspect of music. This study supported the findings that music enables individuals to access and process complex emotions, which can boost self-esteem and foster social acceptance (Elvers, 2016; Kniffin et al., 2021). It is undeniable that the indigenous therapeutic essence that music has is a medium as emotion regulation.

Suggestions for Future Directions

The development of the song intervention program for this study focused on a short-term, structured use of songs, considering that the participants were predominantly male and had no prior experience with therapy. The primary aim of the study was to help participants build psychological resources to improve their work performance and adaptation to confined environments. However, no follow-up was conducted after the program's conclusion. A follow-up evaluation to assess the long-term effectiveness of the song intervention would be beneficial. Should follow-up studies demonstrate positive outcomes, the song intervention intervention could potentially be applied to various work environments. Examining its effectiveness and adaptability in different occupational contexts, such as remote or isolated work environments, would provide valuable insights for broader implementation.

With the rise of digital technology, future research could explore integrating technology-based platforms (e.g., mobile applications, virtual reality environments) for delivering song intervention. This direction holds promise for expanding the accessibility and impact of song intervention programs across different settings.

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Appendix 1: Sample Session Application Plan for Song Intervention and Objectives

Session Flow	Therapist Guiding and Use of Song	Objectives
Checking-In	-Sharing current mood states and energy level	Focus here and now
Identifying	Focus on the difficult feelings from the past week	Identify personal threshold

Connecting	-Come up with an idea of resources that might be helpful to the current difficult mood and feeling	Explore inner resources of what may work for them
	-Discuss and share with the group and empathize with others	Formulate the group support
Song listening	-Identify any songs that come to their mind that would be helpful in coping the current situation.	Develop personal music resource
	- Listen to therapist presented song and explore any aspects of lyric stand out for them or mean anything	Project their inner issues to the presented lyrics
Resourcing	-Delineate which part of the lyric stands out for them	Internalizing the psychological power of the lyrical message
Reaffirming	-Share with the group what message the lyrics have and discuss in what dimension the message helps: personal, relational, or social - Relate to other group members for commonalities and differences	Formulate support system around the song lyrics for various messages it can bring

Appendix 2: Selected songs for sessions:

Sessions	Name of Songs	Singer	Major theme or message	CSM-related concept
1	There is a canteen beside the cloud	<i>Liming Wang</i>	The song describes for us a small village located on the edge of the clouds and a canteen in it, as well as the people and things closely connected with it.	Autonomy
	Blue Lotus	Xu wei	encourages listeners to reflect on the meaning of life, confront difficulties with bravery, and pursue freedom and ideals.	Autonomy
	My Deskmate	Lao Lang	The song is known for its gentle, beautiful, and touching melody, making it a notable piece in the genre of folk music.	Relationship

2	I Believe So	Jay Chou	Whether it is his firm belief in love or his positive attitude towards life, they are all conveyed vividly through his singing.	Efficacy
3	Friends	Zhou Huajian	The lyrics emphasize the importance of friends accompanying each other in life and facing difficulties together, allowing the audience to feel the warmth and strength of friendship when listening.	Relationship
	I Believe	Yang He'an	The lyrics of "I Believe" are filled with steadfast faith and hope for the future. They convey the message of pursuing dreams, overcoming obstacles, and anticipating a bright future.	Efficacy
4	Push the Door to the World	Huoxing diantai	The lyrics describe the courage and determination to face the unknown world and are full of philosophy and exploration spirit.	Efficacy
	A Journey to the Mountain	Mao buyi	The metaphor of a mountain road represents the obstacles and hardships one faces, as well as the determination to overcome them.	Autonomy

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