

Abstract.

Previous studies have established that music is an effective way of regulating emotional state, and emotion-congruent and emotion-incongruent music are all able to show a significant regulation effect as negative emotional coping methods (Juslin & Laukka, 2004; Shiffriss, Bodner & Palgi, 2020). However, no systematic comparison of the effectiveness of different congruency of music for people in a sad emotional state was examined. Thus, our study aims to make up for the research gap in the emotional regulation effectiveness using different music types within the context of Hong Kong. In the current study (N = 54), pre-induced in a sad emotional state, participants were asked to listen to happy-tone music as emotion-incongruent stimuli and sad-tone music as emotion-congruent stimuli. They were told to indicate their pre-and post-test arousal and valence score using the emotional grid(Eich and Metcalfe,1989). Overall, our results showed that both emotion-congruent(sad) and emotion-incongruent(happy) music could have a significant emotional regulation effect, with happy music more effective in the regulation of arousal score. Also, we discovered no significant moderation effect of extraversion and neuroticism. Moreover, in light of the results, we discussed the possible mechanism of how different types of music can cheer people up, and the limitation of the study were also analyzed for references for further re-test purposes. The implication of this study can be used in the clinical setting of implementing music psychotherapy and for people to adopt more effective negative emotional coping styles using the help of music.

Keywords: Emotional Regulation, Music Types, Effectiveness, Coping Styles