

MUSIC THERAPY AS AN ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE

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ABSTRACT

Music is an incredible Art form. Its purpose is to make the mind calm and expressive by using the medium of Dance, vocal and instrument music as its tool. Music is a creative mode of expression that gives outlet to various emotions occurring inside the mind of an individual. Any art is meaningful only if it contributes to the society in a positive manner. The aim of music is not mere entertainment but in deeper sense its aim is to achieve higher goals, to enlighten and empower mind and soul in a creative way. Society is going through the challenges of AI technology today. A large number of diseases, mental disorders, Memory issues, Stress factors and Genetic ailments are growing at alarming rate. Stress has become part and parcel of every human being today from a school going child to an old age person. Stress levels are growing rapidly. In the digital world full of media exposure and gadgets life has been transformed drastically. Excess use of Mobiles, internet, media and AI have brought up unbeatable challenges in our life. This change in life style has affected almost all the areas of our life. Poor nutrition, unhealthy lifestyle, Financial crisis, lack of job security, Inactive social bonding, Genetically transferred diseases, Autism, Parkinson, Alzheimer, Dementia, Hypertension and Diabetes are some of the factors responsible for stress and anger. Although many treatments are available for such diseases in Allopathic, Ayurveda and Homeopathic field of Medicine. But could there be an alternative medicine to help curing these diseases is the area of my research in this paper. Music is strongly associated with the new field of Music Therapy. Previous Researches have shown that Music has a deep impact on each and every living organism in this universe. Music has an amazing power to cure Common Psychological disorders to chronic ones on the basis of sound therapy. The vibrations and frequencies of sound directly affect an individual psychologically and physiologically. This research paper explores the dimension how the constant listening and practicing skills impacts our mind and body. Music serves as a great healing force and is an essential part of our life.

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INTRODUCTION

Music is considered to be a fine art. As such it may be defined as an art which employs sounds (not necessarily words) combined so as to be agreeable to the ear, as a medium of expressing one's emotions and perceptions, and of creating in the hearers the emotions desired by the artist. It is the finest among all the fine arts. A music artiste has a more difficult task to perform than the other artists, sculptors, painters, poets and architects because the latter present their work to the audience in a tangible shape, therefore music is an abstract art with feelings expressed, the musician has to stimulate the

imagination of his audience and thereby engender in them those feelings to make himself understood¹. Music is more than entertainment. It has magical powers hidden in its expression.

Music is also a divine art and a source of healing an individual effectively. Music is a healing force, a composition of healing energy. In today's life scenario life is full of stress. The diseases have become an integral part of our life. The reason behind these diseases varies from one person to another. Suppression of thoughts, Emotions, Reactions, Anger, stress may be reason to these ailments at psychological and physiological level. To express existing thoughts is a human nature as human being is a social animal. If he has a gap or disturbance in communication, Lack of self-esteem, mental disorders, memory loss, the outlet to such untold emotions are blocked. The blockage of flowing energy blocks the flow of blood circulations all over the body as with stressed thoughts our nerves also contracts and allow less passage for blood circulation. Imbalance in thoughts and emotions blocks flow of good energy and results in various diseases and mental blockages. Many researchers have shown that music has a deeper impact not only on human beings but on all the flora and fauna also. Music is also the synonym of sound which is narrated as **Nada** in music. Music education is said to be Nada Vidya as the whole system of the music is evolved from Nada (Sound). Nada gives birth to shruties (Microtones) which again form swaras (Notes) , These swaras in multiple successions, constitutes various ragas and from ragas songs are produced. Vadya (Instrumental Music) is also related to Nada. Therefore we can say Nada underlies the three constituents of sangeeta.² The sound can be classified further into two types-Ahat Nada and Anahat Nada. The sound that deals with music is Aahat Nada that occurs with the stroke of two things and Anahat Nada is meant to be the vibration that deals with self-enlightenment that was used by the sages in ancient times. Whole of our life is surrounded with different types of sounds. The vibrations occurred from these sounds creates deep effect on our mind, body and soul. In this way Music and science are correlated. Music is a science arranged through vibrations in a systematic and aesthetic way. It can stimulate emotional and aesthetic responses, develop creative, technical, social and vocational skills and improve expression, communication, Confidence, self-esteem and facilitate positive changes in behavior and well-being.³ By making positive changes in thought process and behavior one can have mental improvement in psychological diseases to great extent. Music can play a valuable role in recovery of mental disorders too. Music listening and music making have been associated with a broad range of positive outcomes in the domains of health and well-being.⁴ The vibrations of sound and its effect on consciousness have been a matter of great mystery

Researchers and academicians have been working upon the therapeutic and healing connection of music and emotions by the implementation of music therapy. Recent developments in the area of psychology have shown great impact of music on emotional state of human mind and its healing aspects also. Anxiety which is characterized by Physiological manifestations such as elevated blood pressure, heightened tension, excessive anxiety and persistent rumination (Karki and Mahara, 2022) is notably widespread as a mental health issue. The alleged advantages of music in mitigating anxiety and stress present a compelling basis for scientific exploration in this field.⁵

¹Bishanswaroop - Theory of Indian Music , P.1-2-K.K.Publications

²S.M.Tagore - Six principle ragas of Indian music , p.04

³World health organization, What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being ?A scoping review .World health organization .Regional office for Europe ;2019

⁴QuirogaMurica C, Kreutz. G, Clift S, Bongard S. Shall we Dance? An exploration of the perceived benefits of dancing on well-being?Artist Health.2010 ,sep 1 ;149-63

⁵Rerearch article /Journal of pedagogical research ; Therapeutic benefits of music in reducing Psychological anxiety ; vol.8, Issue 3,2024

Music Therapy is a popular and effective field nowadays recognized at national and international level. Music therapy is an alternative method of treatment for various diseases. Music affects not only the mind of an individual but on Physiology and motor activity too. Music is an important tool to activate each and every cell of our body through tones, notes, Rhythm patterns and genres. It surely activates auditory cortex, Motor system and improves circuits in brain. Listening to music, Playing an Instrument, Practising with consistency creates a great impact on the overall well-being of a person with various disorders. Music may enhance auditory system and immune system in a parallel way. Music may benefit patients physiologically, emotionally and psychologically. Music therapy may be used to improve well-being (AMTA,2008;Kemper&Danhener 2005) decrease anxiety and pain, improve symptoms of dementia, ease the dying process, improve motor skills and help premature infants gain weight. Music has been a gaining modality for thousands of years. Music therapy has been defined by the American music therapy association (AMTA) as The clinical and evidence based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program.⁶

Music therapy works on emotional well-being, Physiological and mental health, social functioning, Perceptual and motor skills, communication abilities, cognitive skills and traumas. It is used in various Hospitals, schools, nursing homes, senior citizen homes, outpatient clinics, Mental health centers, Rehabilitation centers and centers for disabled persons. A wide range of tones, notes, Rhythmic patterns, genres are used as a part of treatment in one to one or group mode. The purpose of music therapy is to bring out hidden emotions and thoughts through an expressive medium of music combining dance, vocals and playing instruments.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The impact of music therapy on various diseases has been analyzed with a qualitative approach. The research paper is based on descriptive and analytical study based on secondary data of information gathered from various resources such as reference books, articles, websites, research reviews, E-content, Newspaper articles, Podcasts etc.

MUSIC AS AN ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT

Music has been a great healer from ancient times. Nowadays the musicians are exploring the field of music therapy at international level. No doubt music therapy starts from a mother's lullaby to enhancing mantras and shlokas in religious rituals. In sikh religion 31 ragas have been compiled in Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Sacred book of sikh religion) that sets a remarkable example of musical verses that heal the mind when recited with technique and devotion. When the music and meditation combines it makes a unique pathway to enlightenment. The neuroscientists hypothesize that regular meditation actually alters the way the brain is wired and that these changes could be at the heart of claims that musical meditation can improve health and well-being.⁷ It is a well-known fact that each individual has a unique identity and behavioral traits. The way of perception, grasping power, mode of reaction, varies from person to person. In music therapy a trainer or a Music therapist deals with a client by observations of age group, general behavior, grasping power and given responses. By studying client's history and observations a music therapist makes a desired goal to achieve for each client specifically. After observation the therapist decides the number of sessions for reaching goal with the co-ordination of client's family members. In the disease of Autism the client finds it difficult to communicate and interact properly and the effect is

⁶AMTA ,2008,P.1;Music therapy and Health benefits - Smith, Diane C,RN, BSN; Waugh, Shirley, RN, BSN,KansasNurse;Topekavol.84,issue4,May-june,2009,p.3-5

⁷Kamakhya,K.Effect of learning music as a practice of Nada Yoga on EEG Alpha and General well-being. Journal Yoga Mimams: KaivalyadhamLonawala, Maharashtra.2011,43(03):215-20

reflected from their facial expressions, body posture and gestures. The Physical symptoms include shaking body, flapping hands too. Systematic and structured therapy of music provides the client an effective way to perceive auditory information. While going through the process of listening musical phrases, compositions or playing a percussion, non-percussion or wind instrument following well designed music forms the client gets involved in musical activity actively or passively. As the therapy goes on the anxiety level of the client starts declining. The outcomes of music therapy for Autism are increased attention, improved behavior, enhanced auditory process, increased socialization, decreased anger and achieved goal of safe self expression. GLOBAL INSTITUTE FOR CHILDHOOD, AMRITSAR provides treatment for autistic children. TAMMANA a non-profit NGO, DARPAN AUTISM(NGO) are well known organisations working for Autism.

Unfortunately, many of young deaths are happening in our society due to depression. Feelings of helplessness, loss of interest in daily activities, social isolation, Loss of sleep or oversleeping, feeling of sluggishness, fatigue occurs in such patients. Music helps such persons to recover from the situation effectively. By playing an instrument, listening to favorite numbers of songs, singing specified genres of music can heal the disease of depression by music therapy. It develops our brain and the abilities associated with it. It is beneficial for developing skills of children and other age group of individuals. Music therapy helps in curing dangerous and some chronic diseases.⁸

CONCLUSION

Music is a unique medium that gives expression to one's emotions in an authentic way. It has power to heal Psychological and memory or brain issues related diseases to great extent. Music is a science that deals with sound and vibrations. It has ability to calm mind and reduce stress levels. Music is a creative art and meant to be a mood twister. It affects the brain of an infant to the memory disease of an old person. Music is a supportive tool to reduce the pain at mental and physical level. By the melody of beautiful notes and structured rhythmic patterns of beats one can get rid of trauma, anxiety and fear. When blended with meditation it becomes a miraculous energy healing force that not only transforms our thought process but also shows us the path of enlightenment. The role of music is much important in the treatment of various diseases such as Autism, Parkinson, Alzheimer, Hypertension. Adolescent mood disorders, Depression, Dementia and other nervous disorders. Today in the medical field music has become an alternative tool to help the patient recovering diseases. Internationally music therapy has been used as a powerful tool in world level organizations but at international level it needs a boost. The need of the hour is to generate more funds, equipments, Training courses at graduate and post graduate level to encourage youth to take responsibility to contribute to special need society. Music may be an alternative therapy for various diseases in future prominently as a non-pharmacological way of treatment.

⁸Kamioka H, Tsutani K, Yamada M, Park H, Okuizumi H, Tsuruoka K, Honda T, Okada S, Park S J, Kitayuguchi J, Abe T. Effectiveness of music therapy: a summary of systematic reviews based on randomized controlled trials of music interventions. patient preference and adherence, 2014;8: 727

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