



Music Therapy As A Means Of Stress Management: A Sociological Study Of Adolescents

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ABSTRACT:

Music is one of the few activities that involve using the whole brain. It is intrinsic to all cultures and can have surprising benefits not only for learning language, improving memory and focusing attention, but also for physical coordination and development. Music Therapy is an established healthcare profession that uses music to address physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs of individuals of all ages. Music therapy improves the quality of life for persons who are well and meets the needs of children and adults with disabilities or illness. Against this backdrop, the objectives of the study mainly includes the Meaning and importance of music therapy followed by its during and after COVID 19 pandemic. It also explores the forms of music to listen during any depressive situation along with the ways by which music therapy can help adolescents. This research has been conducted by using secondary data- books and articles related to music therapy. The findings reveal that Music actually helps to relieve most of us from stress and depression by taking us to an imaginary world (hyper reality) where we are able to fulfil our unfulfilled expectations and desires of practical life. In terms of survival too, managing one's emotions and social relationship is the major challenge that human race is facing. The most vulnerable group of such depression happens to be the youngsters who are facing different forms of mental distress to an unprecedented extent. This pandemic crisis and lockdown has tormented such a socio-psychological disorder among youngsters. With the significant rise in deaths caused by suicide, depression has been reported to be the major cause (as reported by World Health Organization). Furthermore, India is also reported to be the most depressed country in the world. One of the most effective ways to reduce such depression can be Music therapy. Music therapy provides capacity for evocation and relaxation. It is a means of recreation and leisure for most youngsters, especially adolescents. It helps to relieve an individual from any form of depression and reduces anxiety and pain perception by healing through muscle relaxation. Moreover, as it can be concluded that music heals the wounds caused by internal injuries and helps to improve social health since maintaining a proper health also depends on social factors and social norms and situations which encompass the individuals in society.

Keywords: *Music therapy, Melodic Intonation therapy, Aphasia, New normal*

INTRODUCTION:

Music is one of the few activities that involve using the whole brain. It is intrinsic to all cultures and can have surprising benefits not only for learning language, improving memory and focusing attention, but also for physical coordination and development.

Music Therapy is an established healthcare profession that uses music to address physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs of individuals of all ages. Music therapy improves the quality of life for persons who are well and meets the needs of children and adults with disabilities or illness.

Music therapy interventions can be designed to: promote wellness, manage stress, alleviate pain, express feelings, enhance memory, improve communication, and promote physical rehabilitation.

Music is capable of improving happiness, peace, health and concentration. It's important to operationalize the term

M-u-s-i-c:

M - Man's and other living beings

U - Under a range of frequencies of

S - Sound

I - Influence the

C - Common and Crucial life

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Ways by which Music Therapy helps to sustain a healthy social health of people:

Music therapy as a means to reduce physical ailments and diseases: Music therapy also integrates spirituality and addresses the imbalance between mind, body and spirit in improving health. Music therapy has been used in the treatment of several diseases and illnesses, physical and mental performances. Eg: According to research reported at the American Society of Hypertension meeting in New Orleans, listening to just 30 minutes of classical, Celtic or raga music every day may significantly reduce high blood pressure. 2nd Eg: Stroke patient: **Melodic Intonation therapy**

Melodic Intonation therapy:

One of the few accepted treatments for severe, non-fluent aphasia is Melodic Intonation Therapy (MIT), 1–6 a treatment that uses the musical elements of speech (melody and rhythm) to improve expressive language by capitalizing on preserved function (singing) and engaging language-capable regions in the undamaged right hemisphere (Watson, 2016).

How therapy works?

Seated across a table from the patient, the therapist shows a visual cue and introduces a word/phrase (e.g., “Thank you”). The accented/stressed syllable(s) will be sung on the higher of the 2 pitches, unaccented syllable(s) on the lower pitch. The starting pitch should rest comfortably in the patient’s voice range, and the other pitch should be a minor 3rd (3 semitones) above or below (middle C and the A just below it works well for most people). For those unfamiliar with this terminology, think of the children’s taunt, “Naa-naa – Naa-naa.” These 2 pitches create the interval of a minor 3rd, which is universally familiar, requires no special singing skill, and provides a good approximation of the prosody of speech that still falls into the category of singing. This form of music therapy is used to treat patients with aphasia. *Aphasia is an acquired loss or impairment in communication following brain damage, usually in the left hemisphere.* Patients with Broca’s aphasia (nonfluent aphasia) have difficulty producing grammatical sentences (Watson, 2016).

Finally, Zumbansen, Peretz, and Hébert (2014) were the only ones to investigate generalization to connected speech, which is the primary goal of MIT. They found that therapy that incorporated both pitch and rhythm led to the best therapy outcomes on connected speech. This suggests that the singing component of MIT may play a role in generalization (Watson, 2016).

The Mayo clinic in Rochester uses music to reduce tension and stress in patients who have undergone cardiovascular surgery. This aids in faster recovery by causing the patients to relax and adopt an optimistic state of mind.

Music is a great stress reliever. In a research conducted by Hanser and Thompson, music could uplift the mood of elderly people suffering from depression. When it comes to depression it’s better to listen to an inspiring and exhilarating music rather than sad songs which could make you feel worse.

Effective for adolescents with mood disorder: Adolescents have identified many benefits of listening to music, including emotional, social, and daily life benefits, along with the formation of one’s own identity. Music can improve one’s mood by reducing stress and lowering anxiety levels, which can help counteract or prevent depression.

Ethnomusicologist **Alan Merrim** (1964) once stated that music is a “universal behavior;” it is something that everyone can identify with. Among adolescents, music is a unifying force, bringing people of different backgrounds, age groups, and social groups together.

Relaxing music induces sleep: Relaxing classical music is safe, cheap and easy way to beat insomnia. Many people who suffer from insomnia find that Bach music helps them. Researchers have shown that just 45 minutes of relaxing music before bedtime can make for a restful night.

NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The objectives of the study mainly include:

- a. Meaning and importance of music therapy.
- b. Impact of Music Therapy during and after COVID 19 pandemic
- c. Forms of music to listen during any depressive situation.
- d. The ways by which music therapy can help adolescents.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This research has been conducted by using secondary data- books and articles. Extensive study has been conducted through e-books and blogs on certain musicians.

FINDINGS:

With the increasing phobia of Covid-19 and its after effects on society, music has become the only respite and the most effective means to maintain a better mental and social health. Before this pandemic crisis, most of us had been addicted to listening music in order to relive ourselves from the work stress and be engrossed into a world of fantasy, serenity and ‘other worldly’ aspects.

Music actually helps to relieve most of us from stress and depression by taking us to an imaginary world (hyper reality) where we are able to fulfil our unfulfilled expectations and desires of practical life. In terms of survival too, managing one's emotions and social relationship is the major challenge that human race is facing.

An icing on the cake is the lockdown which is producing negative impact on the social health of youngsters. The most vulnerable group of such depression happens to be the youngsters who are facing different forms of mental distress to an unprecedented extent.

Though society is gradually stepping into 'new normal' with changes steeping in ones everyday life, yet depression continues to haunt most of us, especially youngsters. This pandemic crisis and lockdown has tormented such a socio-psychological disorder among youngsters. With the significant rise in deaths caused by suicide, depression has been reported to be the major cause (as reported by World Health Organization). Furthermore, India is also reported to be the most depressed country in the world. One of the most effective ways to reduce such depression can be Music therapy.

Forms of music to listen during depressive situation:

Since music serves as the healing ointment during any stressful situation during this pandemic crisis, choosing the right music or track is also important for all of us:

Individuals can listen to soft melodious music (which is devoid of any melancholy!) Youngsters can listen to jazz or rock band for a stipulated time, exceeding which can either hamper their physical or mental health. Any kind of sad songs should be ostracized from the list since such songs ameliorate the grievance or depression the listener is suffering from. Soft music can be a good choice while watching any virtual tour (since physical tour has almost turned into an utopia!) which helps to relax and relieve any form of stress or anxiety caused by the present situation. Rabindra Sangeet can also be a good respite from the mundane daily household chores of individual spouses. Last but not the least, the listener may try his/her best to not allow any kind of negative thoughts to haunt his/her mind which can be detrimental for physical and mental well-being.

How music therapy helps?

Music therapy provides capacity for evocation and relaxation. It is a means of recreation and leisure for most youngsters, especially adolescents. It helps to relieve an individual from any form of depression and reduces anxiety and pain perception by healing through muscle relaxation.

Through counselling by music therapist, it helps to build self-esteem and boost confidence. It is also one of the effective means along with **Yoga**, to contain and control aggression or violence or anger.

It is also a form of psycho-social development which reduces seclusion and helps to heal an individual from within. Finally, it is also one of the most effective means of communication and socialization/ re-socialization of individuals (Torres, 2014).

CONCLUSION:

Though depression is a major socio-psychological illness which many a times requires medical intervention and social support from the family members, close kins, friends and the communities that the victim can rely upon, yet music therapy can also turn out to be one of the best means to battle such illness with finesse! The victim who is under continuous depression due to his/her problems in intimate relationship or career can also recover through the means of Music Healing.

Most of the times, victimhood is associated with stigma, helplessness, docility, and silence which can give rise to suicidal tendencies among youngsters. Such victimhood due to depression can be recovered through the means of Musical Healing.

Though it might not as fruitful as Yoga or Meditation, yet it helps to build the victim's self-esteem by invoking creativity which 'is an act of defiance in the face of helplessness, stigma and destruction.' By creativity it meant that the survivor has been able to open up about his/her problems either to music therapist or a counsellor and even to his/her family and close peers. Those who are able to battle through the depression through such therapy are the real warriors of society for being able to maintain their social health. This means that these survivors are being able to finally arrive at new understandings of the events happening around creatively with a positive mindset (Sutton, 2002). Moreover, as it can be concluded that music heals the wounds caused by internal injuries and helps to improve social health since maintaining a proper health also depends on social factors and social norms and situations which encompass the individuals in society.

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