

MUSIC THERAPY: AN ART BEYOND WORDS

Biswajit Saha

Associate Professor, University of Engineering & Management

Sayan Barat,

Bhaswar Banerjee

B.Tech Second Year, Institute of Engineering & Management,

Abstract:

Music is an abstract noun which can only be felt by soft core of the heart. Music can make a person cry, laugh and also love. It can also heal both mental and physical pain. It is a diverse way of communication that helps to deliver feelings. Now-a-days a therapy known as the music therapy has been developed to heal mankind. Therefore, healing music is treated as similar to curing music, meditational music. Music therapy is a type of expressive arts therapy that uses music to improve and maintain the physical, psychological, and social wellbeing of individuals-involves a broad range of activities, such as listening to music, singing, and playing a musical instrument. In this presentation we discuss various aspects of music therapy.

Keywords: Music Therapy; healing; depression; anxiety; autism; stress

Introduction:

Music therapy is 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 [1]. Music therapy is one of the expressive therapies, consisting of a process in which a music therapist uses music and all of its facets – physical, emotional, mental, social, aesthetic, and spiritual to help clients improve their physical and mental health. Music therapists primarily help clients improve their health in several domains, such as emotional developments, motor skills, communication, social skills, and quality of life by both active and receptive music experiences to achieve treatment goals [2-6]. Music therapy uses music to address a number of emotional, cognitive, and social issues in people of all ages. It is often used with people who have disabilities or illness, but the healing benefits of music can be enjoyed by anyone and at any age. The process of making and listening to music can provide a channel for communication and expression that may go beyond what is easily expressed in words.

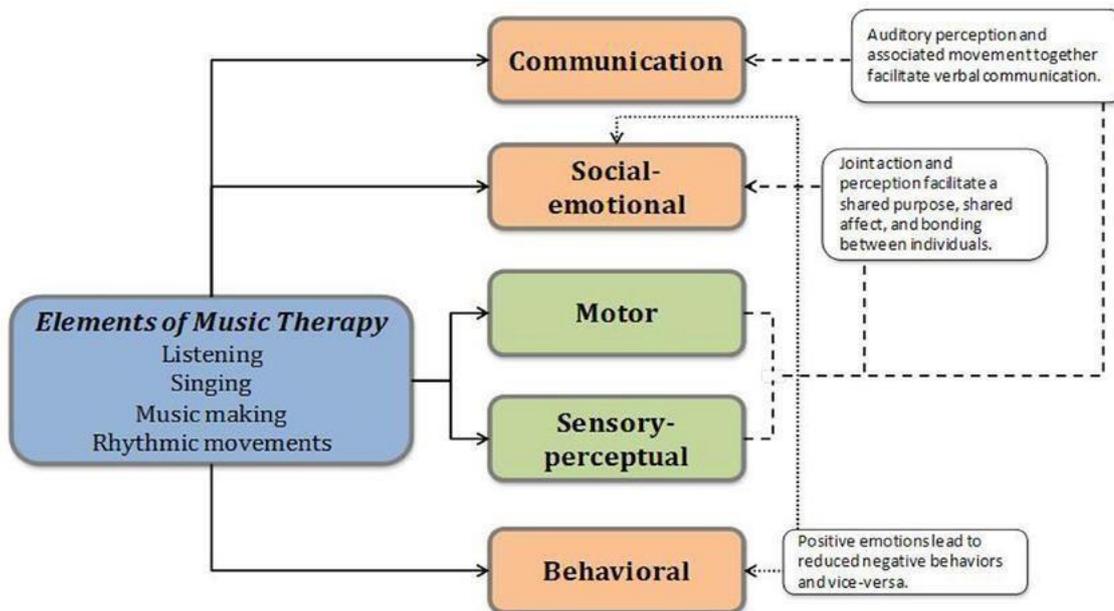


Fig 1: Overview of music therapy.

Definition:

Music therapy is the skillful use of music and musical elements by an accredited music therapist to promote, maintain, and restore mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Music has nonverbal, creative, structural, and emotional qualities.

History:

The connection between music and emotion has long been acknowledged, along with the ability of music to influence both mental and physical health. Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle all wrote about how music affects health and behavior, and aboriginal tribes from all over the world have used music as part of their healing arts. In the 1970s, “new age” music emerged as a genre of music without recognizable harmony, rhythm or melody that is used for yoga, meditation and relaxation. Music therapy in the United States of America began in the late 18th century. The profession of music therapy in the USA began to develop during World War I and World War II, when music was used in Veterans Administration Hospitals as an intervention to address traumatic war injuries. The doctors and the nurses witnessed the effect of music on the patient’s psychological, physiological, cognitive, and emotional state. Since then colleges and universities developed programs to train musicians how to use music for therapeutic purposes. In 1950, a professional organization was formed by a collaboration of music therapists that worked with the veterans, mentally retarded, hearing/visually impaired, and psychiatric populations. This was the birth of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MUSIC THERAPY (NAMT). In 1998, NAMT joined the forces with another music therapy organization to become what is now known as AMERICAN MUSIC THERAPY ASSOCIATION (AMTA). AMTA is the single largest music therapy association in the world, representing music therapists in United States and in over 30 countries around the globe. Today, music therapists work in a variety of different settings including hospitals and clinics, schools, substance abuse centers, nursing homes and private practice.

How does music therapy work:

Music therapy works on a number of different levels and in a number of different ways. It has been proven that music, especially pieces with a strong rhythmical element, can effect heart rate and breathing, and promote the release of endorphins, or natural painkillers. It has also been shown to reduce muscle tension, and can be very helpful in promoting relaxation. Music can also be helpful in releasing memories or negative thoughts that may have been repressed, which can help to change behaviors. It's not necessary to have any experience playing music, and the therapist will not teach you how to play music. The purpose of a music therapy session is to express you through music by improvising and responding to the music in new ways, regardless of skill level. Anyone can also use music therapy himself. Music therapy can be used in healthy individuals in a number of ways. Playing an instrument or beating a drum can alleviate stress, and listening to music can help with relaxation. Music can also be an important tool to use while exercising, for motivation and encouragement.

Disorders, Conditions, and Issues that can be benefitted from Music Therapy: Because of the universal appeal of music, as well as the many applications of music therapy as a form of treatment, it can be used to treat and benefit many different life problems, issues, conditions, and disorders. They include:

Attachment issues in children

Anxiety

Depression

PTSD

Grief and loss

Learning difficulties / disorders

ADD / ADHD

Developmental delays

Low self-esteem

Autism spectrum disorders Traumatic brain injury

Neurodegenerative conditions

Insomnia

Coordination problems

Postpartum depression

Postpartum anxiety

Postpartum pain

Dementia

Pain issues / Nausea and vomiting due to chemotherapy and schizophrenia. Music therapy is often combined with other forms of treatment, particularly for mental health conditions. If you think you or a loved one would benefit from music therapy, talk to your doctor or therapist to see if this would be an appropriate option for you.

Use of music therapy for children with emotional disorders:

Child or adolescent with emotional disorder may be characterized by many behavioral problems just like suicidal attempts, anger, withdrawal from family, social isolation from peers, aggression, school failure, running away and alcohol or drug abuse, to name a few. A lack of self confidence and self-esteem is often central to these difficulties. In adolescence period these types of sarcastic behaviors come in the minds of children. In these days, music plays a great role to fix their paths and to avoid the sarcastic behaviors. Again music therapy proves to be the best consolation to the interrupt minds.

Use of music therapy in the military:

Music therapy finds its roots in the military. The United States Department of War issued Technical Bulletin 187 in 1945, which described the use of music in the recuperation of military service members in Army hospitals. The use of music therapy in military settings started to flourish and develop following World War II and research and endorsements from both the United States Army and the Surgeon General of the United States.

Music therapy in the military is seen in programs on military bases, VA healthcare facilities, military treatment facilities, and military communities. Music therapy programs have a large outreach because they exist for all phases of military life: pre-mobilization, deployment, post-deployment, recovery (in the case of injury), and among families of fallen military service personnel.

Effects of music therapy:

Music therapy has various useful effects on human beings. Those effects include the following. Music-based activities can represent a valid and without side effects intervention for reducing psychological and behavioral disturbances related to neurological disorders and also for promoting the functional recovery.

Specifically, the most significant results of the music interventions on the psychological side can be identified in the aspects more closely related to mood, especially in the reduction of the depressive and anxiety's component, and in the improvement of the emotional expression, communication and interpersonal skills, self esteem and quality of life.

Finally, from the rehabilitative point of view, making music can involve and influence motor areas functioning and regulation.

Comparison of the Pretest and Posttest Values of Depression Among Students

Depression	Before No. (%)	After No. (%)
No depression	147 (62.3)	160 (67.8)
Mild depression	39 (16.5)	43 (18.2)
Borderline depression	15 (6.4)	15 (6.4)
Moderate depression	23 (9.7)	10 (4.2)
Severe depression	8 (3.4)	5 (2.1)
Extreme depression	4 (1.7)	3 (1.3)
Total	236 (100)	236 (100)

Conclusion

Our understanding of music therapy and its curative or preventative effect on illness changes over time. Our current assessment is that music is a 'powerful tool' to engage and include changes in

‘multi- sensory and motor networks’, which link and strengthen regions of the brain. Music therapy thus plays a big role in curing and solving different issues of our life. It eradicates both our mental stress and physical stress. It has many beneficial effects for curing the patients suffering from schizophrenia, psychological, neurodegenerative, or physical illness. Although there is more research that can be done as with any area of science, but there exists substantial evidence to support the use of music therapy alongside standard care in the prevention and treatment of illness in order to improve the lives of patients and caregivers worldwide. Evidence from the Nordic Journal of Music Therapy and the Journal of Clinical Nursing suggests that music can help improve mental health by reducing certain symptoms of depression and by making people feel more in control. It can reduce stress, help us get better sleep and improve our mood.

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