

## A STUDY OF INDIAN MUSIC THERAPY

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### **ABSTRACT**

*When compared to Indian Classical Music, Western Music is far more often used in the field of music therapy. This is due to the fact that Western Music is considered to be more accessible. The author contends that the subjectivity of Indian classical music creates a barrier to universality, which is the root cause of this discrepancy in perceptions of the genre. The author made the assumption that the current therapeutic techniques of Western music are, to some degree, similarly relevant or extensible to Indian music also by attempting to find the correlation between the Western musical notes and the Indian musical notes.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Musical Notes, Svara, Raaga, Disease, Healing, Frequency, Harmonic Ratios.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Due to the fact that sound may be experienced all around us in a variety of guises, we may go about our days without giving much thought to the transformative potential of sound. Wave patterns are the building blocks of all sound vibration, much as the emotional waves that go through the human body. It doesn't matter if the medium is solid, liquid, or gas; sound can travel through all of them. "The arteries and veins become agitated and animated when sounds and music are played. Due to the fact that these results in the production of life-giving breath and that it provides harmony and rectitude to the heart, music therapy is regarded as a treatment that penetrates deeply into the mental and physical body. The melodies of music have the power to cure us on a fundamental level. It contributes to the alteration of the inner mechanism and aids in the treatment of disorders on a mental level. Socialization, self-expression, self-acceptance, communication, and the development of motor skills may all be fostered by listening to music. It is very inspiring, but at the same time, it has the ability to soothe and rest the user. Children are set up for success in enjoyable musical activities, and they are encouraged to have a positive self- image as a result.

The use of music therapy as a kind of treatment for a wide range of conditions is becoming more common in many nations today. Education in music therapy is being offered by a variety of prominent colleges located in other countries; the levels of study offered vary from certificate to doctoral. Nevertheless, in India music therapy is not yet an officially recognized field of study in any of the country's universities or other educational institutions..

As was said previously, the performer in Indian music is given the freedom to choose her or his scale as the primary tonic of the piece. The selected basic shadja (Sa) is responsible for the generation of various svara-s depending on certain ratios, most often harmonic ratios. There are 22 different shruti-s that categories them inside Indian music. However, according to the density theory for real numbers, there may be a great deal of ratios included inside any interval. According to what Daniélou [4] has to say, there are only 53 conceivable harmonic ratios. However, Table I provides a

listing of the ratios and frequencies with a step size of 0.01 just for the reason that our conversations could need some intermediate numbers as well. Because of this, the estimated frequencies could not have any ratios indicated in the column of harmonic ratios against these values. On the other hand, certain ratios might not exist harmonically but do exist mathematically. For the purpose of computing the frequencies of notes in the upper, middle, lower, and twice lower scale, we have taken into consideration two fundamental tonics of the middle octave, at 264 Hz and 256 Hz respectively.

### **What is Music Therapy?**

People who have requirements in the areas of psychological, emotional, cognitive, and communicative health may benefit from music therapy, which is a validated and effective kind of treatment. Even in patients who are resistant to alternative treatment options, research findings and clinical experiences testify to the efficacy of music therapy as a viable therapeutic option. The use of music therapy may improve one's overall quality of life. It incorporates interactions between the kid and a trained therapist, as well as between the children themselves, as well as between the children and their families, and between the children and the participants. In order to foster a constructive atmosphere and pave the way for development that is fruitful and satisfying, the components of music serve as a framework and a guide for the connections between the individuals involved. Music and rhythm, according to Barbara Crowe, a former president of the Music Therapy Association in the United States, are thought to produce their curative benefits by quieting the nonstop chatter in the left hemisphere of the brain. "Input from other modalities like vision, touch, and smell are obscured when a loud, repeating sound gives a steady signal to the brain."

Kenneth Bruscia, a key player and a prolific writer in the field of music therapy, provides a definition of music therapy in his book, *Defining Music Therapy* (pg. 20).

"Music therapy is a systematic process of intervention wherein the therapist helps the client to promote health, using music experiences and the relationships that develop through them as dynamic forces of change."

### **How and Why Music is a Good Tool for Health?**

Sound is recognised as the conduit via which expression and connection may occur among all existing things. It is believed that the human body has eight different energy centres known as chakras, each of which has its own unique sound frequency. "The surrounding area is filled with energy fields of resonance and movement, which are created when sounds that vibrate form patterns. We take in these energies, and they slightly modify the rhythms of our breathing, heart rate, blood pressure, muscular tension, and skin temperature.



**Figure 1: Music Therapy.**

Research has revealed that listening to music with a strong rhythm may trigger brainwaves to vibrate in harmony with the beat. Music with a quicker tempo has been demonstrated to bring about sharper attention and more alert thinking, while music with a slower tempo promotes a quiet and contemplative state. Also, research has shown that the alteration in the levels of brainwave activity that listening to music can bring can also make it easier for the brain to switch speeds on its own when necessary. This means that music can bring long-lasting benefits to your state of mind, even after you have stopped listening to it.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Dr. T.V. Sairam, in his Music Therapy training at Nada quotes beautifully that,

“The birth of language was preceded by the birth of music; music by sounds emanating through vocal chords and the sounds by hold your breath silence. It is the silence, which causes the sound, the music and the music, the language.”

The use of sound for therapeutic purposes is not a novel concept in India. Meditation, penance, the worship of gods, healing, and other rituals were among the many places in ancient India and across the globe where it was done. Throughout history, whether ancient, mediaeval, or contemporary, music and sounds have been effectively used as a tool for crossing boundaries. The connection between music and the mind goes back a very long time. It is possible to trace its origins back to the Vedic period, at which time efforts were made to establish a connection between the "seven" fundamental notes of music and the "eight" primary moods described in Indian dramatic philosophy. “The seven basic notes are - sadaja, rishaba, gandhara, madhyama, panchama, dhaivata and nishada; whereas, the eight basic emotions are - sringar (love), hasya (laughter), karuna (compassion), vira (heroism), raudra (wrath), bhayanaka (fear), bibhatsa (disgust) and adbhuta (wonder). Love and laughter are associated with madhyama and panchama notes; wrath, wonder and heroism with sadaja and rishaba; nishada and gandhara with compassion; and dhaivata with disgust and fear”.

The recitation and intonation of Vedic mantras during the act of worshipping God has been practised for an untold amount of time as a treatment for a variety of disharmonies in both the person and the environment in which he lives. According to historical accounts, Swami Haridas, the guru of Tansen, was responsible for curing one of Emperor Akbar's queens using a particular raga. Naa Jiva Dhara, a work of the saint Thyagaraja written in the Bilahari style, is said to have been responsible for reviving a deceased person (T.V. Sairam, n.d.)." "The most recent and noteworthy applications of music therapy were documented during the First World War." [Citation needed] In hospitals, musicians of all stripes,

including amateurs and professionals, were invited to play for wounded service members since it was believed that their performances had a curative impact on those who had been hurt. Even medical professionals, such as doctors and nurses, were able to see some of the miraculous effects that music had on the troops. These professionals were aware of the need for a more structured academic environment in which to train the musicians, but they were also acutely aware of the power that music possessed to heal (Mark Lincoln, 2009)

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## **INDIAN CULTURE AND MUSIC**

The same may be said about music in modern times. The Indian method of music therapy is described as a "individualistically, subjectively, and spiritual art, aiming at personal harmony with one's own being and not at symphonic elaborations."

The belief that this culture has something extremely useful and vital to give towards the functioning and better future of our global civilisation is shared by a significant number of foreign scholars and spiritual seekers from other countries who are now residing in India. This ancient tradition discusses the 'Sanathana Dharma,' which is a universal truth, rule, and path that is an embodiment of our most fundamental human aspirations and most lofty goals of absolute perfection. Not only is there a wealth of music in Indian culture and tradition, but also in broad contexts such as people's private lifestyles, business hangouts, and political campaigns, music plays a significant role and can be found everywhere. For instance, businesses in the information technology industry often host "Fungama" gatherings including music and dancing. Or, when we go to purchase vegetables on the side of the road, we regularly hear the radio being played by the vegetable merchants. Music is played in all of our gyms and malls to help create a more enjoyable environment.

### **Indian Music and Spirituality**

"Music is the mediator between the spiritual and the sensual life." Ludwig van Beethoven

The tones of music are an important component in the processes of spirituality and reflection. It brings one to a higher level of meditative state, which is beyond the level of the physical world, and it untangles the knots that have been formed in the brain. When one is deep in the ocean of trance, the power of music has a tendency to raise them higher. To provide just one example, the Gayatri mantra has been accorded the utmost significance in Vedic dharma. This mantra is also known as Savitri, and it is also referred to as Ved-Mata, which means the mother of the Vedas.

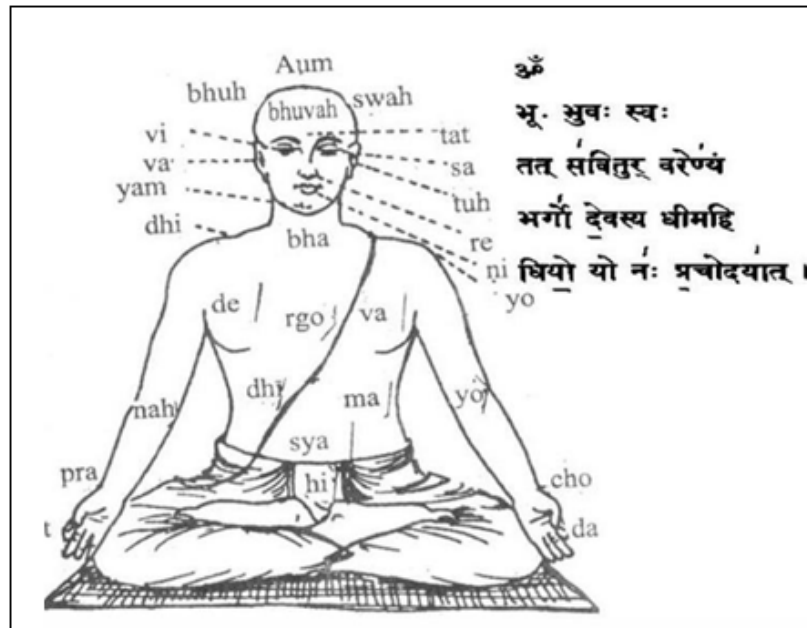


Figure 2

Once upon a time, music producer Karsh Kale said, "For someone the sound of the bansuri is the sound of Krishna, while for someone else the sound of sub bass frequencies is a link to spirituality." When asked whether music has a fundamental spiritual element, Ravi Shankar said, "The ultimate form in music is spirituality." [Citation needed] When this occurs, it may have a significant impact on not just our conscious thoughts and feelings, but also our unconscious processes and even our physical well-being. Therefore, it is essential to steer the population of the globe towards spirituality and music for the sake of their health and the transcendence of their persona.

It's possible that some people have forgotten where spirituality originated, yet India has long been a leader in this field. It has been claimed that we are the offspring of rishi-munis; hence, it will not be a difficult procedure to reboot spirituality, yoga, and music therapy in India.

### Folklore and Therapy

At a time when there was nothing really comparable to music, the only forms of musical genres that were there were folk music and worship music. Margi sangeet and Deshi sangeet, Saamik- Aarchik sangeet and Laukik-Alaukik sangeet were some of the several categories that were done with time and the necessity of the hour; nonetheless, the premise remained the same. The elite, learned class oversaw the performance of organized music, also known as classical music, which was used for worship and mantra chanting. The general populace listened to music that was more casual or folk-oriented.

The songs of the ordinary people, sometimes of a casual or light nature, that they composed in order to carry out the customs and rituals of everyday life make up folklore. Folk songs and dances, as the word "folk" (masses) implies, are the genesis of music due to the fact that it was developed and sung wholeheartedly by ordinary men. The beginning of music may be traced back to these folk songs and dances. Every nation, area, and culture has its own traditional music that is performed in the language, accent, dialect, beat, metre, and pitch that are most comfortable to them. Folk music, which was made by the people of an area for the people of that region, reflects not only their way of life but also their mental processes, temperaments, rituals, castes, creeds, and even clothing codes. It does not adhere to any norms or standards

regarding music, and as a result, it is exceptionally personal, fluent, and informal for the general populace. There are folk songs for every event or without any purpose, such as weddings, rituals, childbirth, baby showers, agriculture-folks, festival-driven, seasonal-folk, folklore for celebrating youth or adolescence, and so on. There are also folk songs that have nothing to do with any occasion. In point of fact, classical music was developed after folk music with the purpose of standardising and organising the contents of the former.

### **Concept of Raga Therapy**

Ragas, which are the modes of Indian music, and talas, which are their metric-rhythmical equivalents, are utilized to quicken or slow down the heart rate and metabolism, as well as to induce feelings of heat or cold, desire, frustration, happiness, energy, or lethargy, amongst other emotions. The "raga-based approach" is the method that is used in the Indian style of music therapy the majority of the time. The application of musical compositions that concentrate on the swara patterns is really what it comes down to. Because Raga is exclusively Indian music, Indian music therapy is usually referred to as Raga therapy. This is because Raga is our very own music. India music therapy, also known as Raga Chikitsa, is a popular topic of discussion among musicologists and scholars in the modern period since it seems to have a lot of potential applications.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The future of music therapy seems to be fairly hopeful and bright as more and more individuals are choosing non-invasive methods of alternative and complementary treatment. In addition, we have seen in this unit that recent scientific research in the fields of mental disorders, stress, the functioning of the brain, and a wide variety of other topics has thrown open a new endorsement for the antiquated concepts of therapeutic values in sound and music. This was shown to us in this lesson.

Music therapy is just beginning to develop in India, and there is a need to develop practice and research in order to bring to the forefront of international attention the therapeutic utility of the great treasure that is the one-of-a-kind Raga system of music and the positive approach of the Indian healing traditions that advocate for health. You have been a pioneer in the United States in establishing Music Therapy competencies through rigors research, and in a way, you have given a direction to large professional organizations like the American Music Therapy Association, which is doing a great deal of work regarding competencies and levels of practice now. Indian Music Therapy has a lot to learn from you. In the United States, you have been a pioneer in establishing Music Therapy competencies through rigors research.

Not just in the framework of medical and treatment, but also in terms of spirituality and wisdom, it is of the utmost importance to disseminate information about root-level remedies among the general population of India, such as music therapy. People are very misinformed and are finding it difficult to cope with the ongoing demand for pharmaceuticals and steroids as a result of the present scenario. They have a critical need for direction on grass-roots, holistic healing as an alternative to symptomatic therapies that are not guaranteed. The use of music therapy in India is only scratching the surface of its potential, and we as a team need to explore every avenue possible to take it to the next level in the course of treatment.

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