

Mini Review

The Effectiveness of Music Therapy for Psychiatric Patients

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Abstract

Among various types of therapies used to treat physical, behavioral or psychological disorders, music therapy is one of the effective therapies with minimal side effects only. It is commonly used in western countries to treat various psychiatric diseases like depression, Parkinson's disease and schizophrenia. Only a certain kind of music is found to produce therapeutic effects like smooth jazz, classical music, and music with a soothing sound like binaural beats. The purpose of this discussion article is to create awareness about the impact of music therapy on mental health disorders and how effectively music can be used to diminish the symptoms of various mental illnesses. After learning about the therapeutic effects of music therapy, healthcare providers need to create awareness among individual and community level to incorporate music as a therapy for psychiatric patients.

Keywords

- Music therapy
- Psychiatric disorders
- Intervention

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this article is to create awareness about the impact of music therapy on psychological disorders and how effectively music can be used to diminish the symptoms of various mental illnesses. The therapy means treatment of a physical, mental or behavioral disorder [1]. (Merriam Webster, 2018) There are various types of therapies used to treat different mental, physical and behavioral disorders like play therapy, behavior therapy, pharmacotherapy, art therapy, and music therapy is also one of them. It is the utilization of music and melodic instruments to nurture, restore and maintain physical, psychological, emotional and psychic well-being.

Melody has emotional, nonverbal and innovative qualities which can be therapeutically to establish contact, cooperation, personal development and mindfulness [2]. Whenever a person becomes physically or mentally ill, the doctor recommends him/her medications. Besides the therapeutic effects of medications, there are side effects as well such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, etc. Some of the side effects can even damage the vital organs of the body like kidney, liver, heart, muscles, etc. But Music therapy is generally safe and has minimal side effects only, like a person may feel uncomfortable or irritated while hearing loud music or music might trigger strong emotions which can be painful for some patients so the music therapist must provide adequate support to such patients.

SOCIO-CULTURAL ASPECT OF MUSIC THERAPY

Music and non-musical rhythms have been a vital part of our cultural and social events like family gatherings, birthday parties, wedding ceremonies, etc. Nursery rhymes, Quranic recitations,

Adhan all require the use of melody, but in the Muslim religion, the music is considered prohibited (haram) thus, the use of music is limited. Whereas, in Western countries, music used as therapy is quite common in treating and minimizing symptoms of schizophrenia, depression, anxiety disorder, mood disorder, Parkinson's disease, and many other psychiatric disorders [3].

Music has been used since ancient times as healing medicine. At the end of World War II, American forces introduced music therapy in hospitals for wounded soldiers [4].

MUSIC, AS A MEDICINE

Music therapy can also be utilized to diminish pain and uneasiness after surgery. To assess the impact of melody on labor pain, nervousness and postnatal analgesic requirement in primiparous women a study was conducted. 156 primiparas women with expected vaginal delivery were arbitrarily allotted in the control group and music group. The women receiving music therapy reported a decrease in pain scores and uneasiness than the control group and the postpartum painkiller requirement was also diminished in the group receiving music therapy [5].

A research was conducted to assess the adequacy of therapeutic music for mentally ill clients and it was found that music improved social functioning in schizophrenia, posture in Parkinson's disease and decreases depression and improved quality of sleep and no side effects were observed and majority if the patients tolerated it very well [6].

Music impacts the emotional and reward center of the brain. Pleasant music releases of dopamine which produces a feeling of satisfaction and reward and also releases serotonin and natural opioids which uplifts mood and relaxes the mind. It reduces

stress by decreasing cortisol levels. Adrenaline is produced by fast and stimulating music which increases blood circulation [7].

According to Gallego and Garcia [8], forty-two Alzheimer patients undergone music therapy for about 6 weeks and the changes were examined by assessing their mental status examination and it was found that their memory, anxiety level, delirium, hallucinations, and orientation were significantly improved. So, the results driven from the study that music therapy can also be utilized to decrease the symptoms of Alzheimer patients.

But the question arise is that what kind of music is effective for producing therapeutic effects on health? The music that produces relaxing effects is non-lyrical music of 60-80 beats/minute and volume of 50-60db [9]. Another kind of music that produce a soothing effect is binaural beats that are produced when two distinct tones are heard at the same time [10].

During my clinical in Karwan-e Hayat, I observed that most of the patients were receiving antipsychotics and were undergoing through therapies like psychotherapy, ECT, talk therapy and when I search about interventions for psychiatric clients, I found Music therapy very interesting because it reduces the symptoms and produces no or few side effects only. I also observed that a music teacher also come here to teach patients to use different musical instruments like the piano, drum, and violin.

Music therapy can be used to help patients to address their hidden emotional, cognitive and social issues. Therefore, I used music therapy as group therapy for clients during my clinical. I observed that it requires a lot of attention and concentration which was not possible here due to a lot of disturbances. Some of the clients enjoyed listening to it and reported relaxation while others address discomfort while listening to it. So, I recommend such therapies should be used for the patient individually and not in groups, in a calm and quiet environment so that its therapeutic effects can be observed [11,12].

INCORPORATION OF MUSIC THERAPY IN CLINICAL SETTINGS

As a healthcare provider, various measures can be taken to incorporate music therapy as an intervention. Firstly, on an individual level, healthcare providers can encourage clients by teaching the therapeutic effects of music on health and include music as an intervention for their clients and then evaluate its therapeutic effects. Furthermore, in collaboration with other healthcare providers, we can arrange awareness sessions and conduct workshops at the community level to guide the public about the utilization of music therapy and its effects on health. Media is a channel through which we can grab the community's

attention to outspread our message worldwide. Also, in association with the institutional administration, we can amend some policies by including music therapy for the patients.

CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, Music has its effects on the overall well-being of an individual and can be utilized along with other therapies to manage the various physical and mental health conditions. We can create awareness among public and healthcare professionals regarding the therapeutic effects of music on individual and community levels and suggest institutional amendments in the interventions used for patients to foster better health facilities and speedy recovery.

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