IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

This is an empirical research work in which the effects of music were studied on depressed patients. The response to music is a subjective phenomenon. As of today, no specific research methodology to study the therapeutic effect of music has been established in India. There is no scientifically documented material available pertaining to the therapeutic effect of music on depression, which would stand as a guide to the present research.

The researcher had to go to great lengths to identify an institution and obtain permission for data collection. The researcher had to study hard to assimilate the fundamentals of Psychiatry, about depression and then correlating with the concepts of music for application as a therapy for depressed patients.

A comprehensive pilot study was carried out in which ten cases of depression were studied. On the basis of the outcome of the pilot study, research design for the present research work was developed. The method used in this research was ‘Case Study Method’. In total, fifteen (15) cases of depression were studied. Though the sample size is small, the design being of follow-ups, the effect of music in each case is studied in its minutest detail. In every session, for each piece of music, a subject’s responses were recorded in-verbatim. The data material narrates interesting and remarkable responses of subjects to different types of music.

Due to inherent constraints, a scale to measure the therapeutic effect of music in depressed patients is not available. The ‘Semi-Structured-Interview’ tool was developed from the investigator’s observations and experiences in the pilot study. Responses of the patients were recorded in-verbatim with respect to the domains specified in the tool. In the present endeavour, responses in-verbatim were used to measure the therapeutic effect of music.

Each case is described in terms of its peculiarities, and thus depicts unique features not usually reflected through the use of statistical methods. Qualitative and systematic documentation of the data will be of use in further studies in the field of music therapy in India.
Investigation of the Comparison Groups provides a useful documentation, which supports the therapeutic aspect of music.

The two Comparison Groups were:

1) Non-depressed Group (Subjects (N=15), were people from Normal Population)
2) Depressed Group (Subjects (N=15), were depressed patients not enrolled for music sessions)

The comparative examination of the Comparison Groups with the Study group present interesting findings and can provide a basis for further research in the field of music therapy in India.