PREFACE

Rabindranath Tagore had said, ‘Music starts where words end.’ Most people feel life intensely and pleasurably through music. Victor Hugo said, ‘Music expresses what cannot be put into words and also cannot be kept in silence. Truly, music is an integral part of our life. Right from conception, starting with the rhythmic heartbeat of the mother and the oceanic sounds created in her womb, our tryst with music is a long one. Music inspires us, soothes us and also cures us from different ailments. It mainly finds its efficacy in expressing the unspeakable to self or others.

So all over the world music today is being used to heal people from different diseases.

Autism is an unfolded mystery. The inability of people with autism to communicate is known to all but how to bring them out of it is not known. It has been present as an open challenge to all humanistic professionals to bring persons with autism to a communicative platform. Therapeutic development has not been able to match the dramatic rise in autism. We are not far from a situation where we will be alarmed to see that as much as 1% of the population is autistic.

Persons with autism have made it clear that communication with words is not their cup of tea. They are not so comfortable with signs and gestures as well (However Makaton therapy has shown that verbal communication augmented with non verbal one helps them to communicate up to a certain level.). Then in this
social world how do they connect? How will they communicate? Is it through music?

Music is a language by itself. Signs and gestures have to be converted into words again but music itself touches the emotions purely and deeply.

Persons with autism also show a special connection with music. Quite a few of them develop music before speech. They are attracted to any rhythmic and melodious stimulus. But this probably is not proof enough to conclude that persons with autism can communicate through music and music can help them to come out of their condition. In this scientific age we need to prove quantitatively. So the present study aims to prove quantitatively the effect of music upon autistic children.

It is expected that the musical intervention provided to them would bring them to a level of freedom and expression which they have never felt before. In the other side of the Atlantic music therapy has already been gaining force. But India, in spite of having the treasury of Indian ragas has not been able to provide a therapeutic support to the children.

So the present study has shouldered the responsibility of finding a suitable raga for the progress of the children and have also decided to expose the children to the already known to be therapeutic Mozart’s sonata.