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## *CHAPTER TWELVE*

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### **THE THERAPEUTIC EFFECT OF MUSIC ON MENTALLY CHALLENGED: A CASE STUDY OF ENUGU STATE UNIVERSITY TEACHING HOSPITAL NEUROPSYCHIATRIC CLINIC EMENE**

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#### **Abstract**

*The human mental facilities structurally remain the powerhouse, the engine, the control panel and the motherboard of the body of the living human. Hence, once any of the facilities are impaired in any form, there tend to be psychological challenges, resulting mostly in mental disorder. However, the treatment of these mental problems could be either pharmacological or non-pharmacological. The non-pharmacological means employs the use of music therapy. Employing survey design, this study uses a questionnaire and interview to elicit information from respondents in Enugu State University Teaching neuropsychiatric clinic Emene, Enugu state. These respondents include the patients (in their sober moments), nurses and therapist (doctor). From the findings, it was discovered that music controls, induce healing, rehabilitates and restores order to last or partly damaged memory in the mentally challenged. With the evidence portrayed in this study, it is, therefore, recommended, among other things that more music scholars should venture into music therapy and that the government should equip the psychiatric to enable the therapist and nurses to adequately administer music therapy.*

**Keywords:** Music compositions, Music therapy, Mentally challenged and Neuropsychiatric hospital

#### **Introduction**

The case of health challenges generally has been a perennial issue. Although many means of cure and rehabilitation had been tried, yet the challenges seem more complicated every day, especially as it concerns mental challenges. Man has always and passionately shown interest in the causes and the cure of mental disorder. In the middle ages, many who were mentally disturbed were accused of being possessed by the spirit of witches, and were severely punished, and / or even killed (Carson, Butcher, & Mineka, 1999). As a result of this common notion of satanic possession, exorcism, which often involves prayers and songs, fasting and penance, and occasionally flogging were devised as seemingly means of cure of mental disorder. With developments in sciences, precisely social science, the mental disorder was discovered and designated to be a disease of the mind, which affects the human brain and impairs the power of judgment (Carson, 1999). Perusing through the different ages, one doubtlessly observes that most of the method employed for the cure of the mentally impaired persons were either found degrading or incompetent as means of treatment. But music has always yielded a positive result whenever it is used to control and treat the mentally challenged. The mental disorder involves the negative displacement of emotions which partially or totally mar the human brain and affects the consciousness of the person. Notably, music seems to be the most efficient 'tool that can both negatively and if positively arouse the

emotions of a human being or that of the other animals, whether it is perceived emotions or felt emotions.

Within the environment of any musical life performance, such well-organized musical activities magically attract the attention of almost all the mentally challenged person, whether the area is urban or rural. The holy bible also attests to the healing power of music, when David used music to bring Saul to sanity. As the; the bible says "And it came to pass when the evil spirit... Was upon Saul, that David took a harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him" (1 Sam 16:23).

In one of the Shakespearian plays, *the twelfth night* (2002), "Duke the protagonist says: if music is the food of love, play on, give me excess of it: that surfeiting, the appetite may sicken and so die" (p. 345). This shows the powerful effect of music and how it can control feelings, heal and express emotions. To wage war against any nation or ethnic group, music remains a veritable tool for success and peace. Even those who are in melancholic state or are traumatized as a result of bereavement, mostly find relief through the magic wand of music. The sportsmen and women, as well as all those who work every day, through music, endure the pains of daily exercise and are taken to another world, where pains and fatigue are only but Utopia. A farmer, who farms, while enjoying a good and choicest music, does that beyond his or her expectations. A crying baby at the sound of a lullaby starts "dreaming". Even in the Spiritual realm, the effect of music blossom so far as the human psycho-spiritual experiences are aroused; through this medium, one becomes spiritually satisfied.

Thus, music projects a depth, which profoundly penetrates the depth of the components of the human reasoning faculties, and exhibits curative intervening measures for the restoration of consciousness. Its wide effectiveness could be portrayed and aid a variety of health care. Such as it promotes wellness, manages stress, alleviates pains, expresses feelings, enhances memory, improves communication and promotes physical rehabilitation (Burghardt, 2002).

Within the urban and rural areas of Enugu state and other states in Nigeria, many citizens from time to time suffer from neuroses without the full knowledge of the borderlines between a normal person and a neurotic patient. Notably, even the well-known neurotics, maybe as a result of their professions, jobs or status have not been given proper attention, to redress their problems. A good number of them cloister churches and hospitals, and people presumably, blanket them as witches and possessed.

When the conditions of some neurotic citizens graduate into psychoses, some aimlessly loiter streets and markets places naked with little or no care. Even when they are drawn closer as a result of the genre of music being played within a community, they are shown the way to waste bin with wipes, even though care and treatment tend to be the solution to their conditions. Perhaps, all these were done as a result of lack of knowledge, and the presumption that the cost of *medication* and treatment for the mentally displaced is

outrageously high. Music therapy stands on a better platform to prove that all these are mere assumption as it offers opportunities for the mentally deranged to be controlled and treated with minimal cost. This research tends to unfold and arouse the awareness of the effects of music, which possibly cures or aids in the treatment of the deranged.

This study is guided by the question: what are the reactions of the mentally challenged to music, especially when it is being used for therapy?

### **Methodology**

This study employed descriptive survey research to review how music could exert a therapeutic effect on the mentally challenged. The research was conducted at Enugu State University Teaching neuropsychiatric clinic, Emene, Enugu state. The respondents were twenty (20) in number which includes the twelve (12) patients (in their sober moments), six (6) nurses and two (2) therapist (doctor). The sampling technique used was purposive sampling. While the questionnaire and oral interview were used to collect useful data. The instrument was validated by experts in the field of music and the department of psychology. Nevertheless, the data were finally and successfully collected and the analyses were well articulated and clearly stated.

### **Conceptual Framework**

#### **Therapy**

The word "therapy", etymologically is derived from the modern Latin word, 'Therapia' and Greek word 'therapeia' meaning curing, healing service done to the sick, a waiting on, service (McCormack,2001). Nonetheless, it could be designated as a process, which is ontologically remedial, rehabilitating or curative. In other words, therapy means any act, hobby, task, program that relieves tension. As an act, hobby, program or healing service, the resultant effects of therapy seem far from being instant; instead, it involves a process, which as a matter of routine possibly leads to the desired end. According to Frank (1988) "Therapy includes interactive processes between a person or group and a qualified mental health professional (psychologist, clinical social worker, licensed counsellor, or psychiatrist). Its purpose is the exploration of feelings, behaviours, and thoughts to increase problem-solving skills or achieve higher levels of functioning". (p. 9). It is through this therapeutic process that music, when used, demonstrate its natural power to illicit order and healing in the mentally challenged.

Notably, there are different types of therapy. These include radiotherapy (treatment by X-rays), psychotherapy (treatment by psychoanalytic method), occupational therapy (treatment employing work that exercises certain muscles), speech therapy and music therapy, which focus on the use of music to arouse, control, relieve tensions or cure the pathological or inherent abnormal mental state of the mentally displaced.

#### **Music Therapy**

The definitions of the word Music enormously vary according to different authors. But

generally, the word, music can be defined as "an organized sound pleasant to the ear. Based on the above fact, Walker (1998) defined music as "a living analogue of human knowledge, feelings, sensibility, emotions, intellectual modus operand and all other life giving-force which affect human behaviour and knowledge" (p. 57). Nonetheless, according to Levinson (1990) music is "sounds temporally organized by a person to enrich or intensify experiences through active engagement (e.g., listening, dancing, performing with the sounds regarded primarily, or in significant measure as sounds" (p. 273). It was in the same vein that Ojakovo (2010) says, "music is one of the most important means of disseminating information on human thoughts, ideas, emotions, traditions, norms values". (p.104). However, music could be defined as the rhythmic articulations and emotional expressions of the innermost yearnings of the psychological state of the human mind. Hence, music is a tool capable of penetrating both the conscious and the subconscious mind of the human being.

Music is not something that exists outside the consciousness of human Person or- any aspect of his everyday life. It is part of a life process, which integrates the faculties in human being. Furthermore, according to *American Heritage idioms dictionary*, 'effect' means "power to produce results; efficacy; force; validity; influences or a mental or emotional impression produced, by a painting or a speech". In an ordinary sense, the effect could be described as the impact or result of something like work done, anger repressed experience of difficult moments, tribal/national wars, music performed or played. Based on the above facts, the effect of something could be positive or negative. It is positive when the action that precedes the result is well designed and planned, and the consequences seem relatively satisfactory, while it is negative, when the reverse is the case. However, the therapeutic effect of something like drug or music explicitly designates a constructive venture, which resultantly anticipates a positive impact or effect. Likewise, the therapeutic effect of music optimistically highlights the intrinsic capacity of music, which constitutes the power to produce positive results in the treatment of the mentally deranged.

### **Mentally Challenged**

The mental faculties of human mind constitute both the conscious and subconscious states of the mind, When one unparallel the other, invariably problem or illness is anticipated' and such challenges like depression, anxiety disorder, social phobia, eating disorders, and addiction occur. These challenges are not unpremeditated. Thus, many underlying factors precede the challenges and likewise the symptoms. Although the exact cause of most mental challenges is not known, it is becoming clear through research that many of these conditions are caused by a combination of genetic, biological, psychological and environmental factors. In the same vein, mental health professionals through research have shown that one could be termed a mentally challenged person only when:

- Behaviour is unusual;
- Behaviour is socially unacceptable or violates social norms;
- Perception or interpretation of reality is faulty;
- The person is in obvious personal distress;

- Behaviour is maladaptive or self-defeating; and
- Behaviour is dangerous.

The above-mentioned factors and conditions pose some difficulties as it concerns the definition of mentally challenged since any attempt could lead one into the risk of emphasizing only one or two factors. Nevertheless, according to an online dictionary, "mental challenge is any disease or condition affecting the brain that influences the way a person thinks, feels, behaves and /or relates to others and his or her surroundings", while a mentally challenged person is a victim of the aforementioned illness or one who is challenged by the simple task. Since the illnesses are mere challenges, this study seeks to propound the fact that they can be curable or controllable, and that music, doubtlessly exerts formidable influence in the treatment of the mentally deranged.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study employs Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis. The theory of psychoanalysis of the human person by Sigmund Freud articulates the structure of the mind, as well as the causes of neuroses. According to him, the structural elements within the mind comprised of "id" 'ego' and 'super-ego'. The instinctual sexual drives lurk in the id, the super-ego contains the conscience, while the ego designates the conscious self, and neurosis erupts when the three parts of the mind could not resolve the inner conflicts that emerged as the offshoot of the tension and interactions lurking in the mind ([www.iep.utm.edu/freud](http://www.iep.utm.edu/freud)). This theory also shared the view that what human person reacts to in the daily routines appear to be repressed and suppressed emotions which reside in the subconscious self, and the music itself could be seen as an expression of emotions.

The therapeutic use of music in the treatment of mental illnesses has been the concern of various authors and scholars with varying purposes, research methodologies and findings. It is practically based on this that Mereni (2007) says that "the nice feeling provoked by listening to music, the elevating sensation derived from experiencing music and the general sense of well-being felt at musical works show the power of music on the mind and psyche, and how it can change mood" (p.41). This stance seems not far from the reality based on the fact that listening to a piece of favourite music often induces a release of dopamine in the brain which triggers the sense of well-being in human person which from time to time leads to demonstration, dance or other unpremeditated expressions.

On another note, Esimone (2005) asserts that "many things tend to influence life and reveal clear changes in character, and music is so effective and very prominent at such. It goes beyond organized sounds that please the ear to penetrating the innermost being of man to cause a conspicuous change in the attitude of man" (p.I) Doubtlessly, music is an important part of people's daily life and activities. It intrinsically and outwardly changes one's life and outlook either positively or negatively. In line with this, research has indicated that music, "especially upbeat tune can take your mind off what stresses you, and help you feel more optimistic and positive" (Scott, 2016). While downbeat tune can bring fulfilment and release blocked energy necessary for work; thus, the variation in the flow of music depicts the

exclusive variations of the mood of the human person.

### **Findings and Analysis**

The number of patients that participated in the group discussion was twelve (12), names were optional. Among the patients, six (6) were males; while six (6) were females, all within the age bracket of 18-40 and above. The types of mental disorder common to them were dementia, anxiety, Alzheimer, schizophrenia, bipolar and depression. Occupation: two (2) were students, four (4) civil servants, three (3) artisans two (2) traders and one (1) a farmer. Marital status: five (5) were single, while seven (7) were married.

However, a greater percentage of all that participated agreed that they have a passionate love for music. While the highest respondents indicated that gospel music has so much effect on their dispositions, moods and approach to reality. When a piece of favourite music is played a greater number of them admitted that they feel relieved, some ordinarily feel good, very few seem normal and no one feels angry. Hence, the highest respondents were of the view that lyrics, as well as the melody of favourite music, elicits great therapeutic impacts in them. Even the nurses who were interviewed opined that the music therapy session has been what most of the patients anticipate, some see it as a time for prayers or time for a dance. According to the nurses, this particular program has been very useful and effective as it aids in the treatment and control of the patients.

Nevertheless, the therapists in the clinic during the interview summarily shared the view that music therapy has been very relevant in the treatment of their patients as it tends to be recreational and often help the patients to individually express themselves. This according to him elicits some information which could be hidden to the therapist prior to the exercise. But he later admitted that music has helped him build a good and wonderful relationship with his patients as it sometimes involves singing with them, dancing with them and listening to their plight for the sake of having a better knowledge of their problems and contact with reality.

Just as the word love remains the utmost desire and need of every man, music as an expression of this innermost desire and need really seems to have curative power. No wonder the popular saying that “life without music would have been a mistake” so, music serves a purpose; it has never been used without a reason, otherwise it becomes the opposite, that is noise, which does more harm than good to the human person.

### **Discussion of the Findings**

Extensively, this study has laboured assiduously to justify that mental challenges are neither witchcraft nor spirit possessions. Rather, it is a disorder which does not keep one in touch with realities, but at the level of being challenged. It has been noted that music processes human brain in many different areas, thereby disengaging it from both acute and chronic stress that impedes the proper functions of the brain, making it possible for the mentally challenged to experience some kind of memory recollections as a consequence of participating in music therapy. Prior to this, the stress-free condition provides an atmosphere

for relaxation which makes it possible for the memory recollections to be triggered and often while in this state many sufferings for insomnia are propelled into a deep sleep.

Mood swing has also been traced as one of the major problems and symptoms of the mentally challenged. As it causes anxiety and depression, one's facial outlook and movement become affected, this study discovers that music therapy induces a gradual change in mood as the music that is being played stimulates the particular aspect of the human brain known as the "motor cortex", which is responsible for movement, foot-tapping, dancing and playing an instrument, intrinsically keeping the heart, spirit and mind in a bright state and the body energized.

A mental disease like schizophrenia depicts a psychotic condition characterized by abnormal expression or perception of reality, and disorganized speech, hallucination, and delusion seem to be the symptoms. When one sings, one may not deny the fact that one is communicating or tends to communicate. Thus, it is possible that music, beyond every doubt, could serve as a bridge to communication since it involves conscious uttering of well-articulated words sensibly and pleasantly. Music therapy does not only enhance the act of communication among the mentally challenged but rather it also gradually boost the patients' self-esteem, self-confidence and self-efficacy, making it possible for some of them at a time to improvise during the music session. Even the control and treatment of language and communication impairment in Alzheimer's disorder involves the use of music therapy.

Doubtlessly, isolation has been observed to be a common distinguishing symptom of mental illness. They often feel not welcomed, perhaps as a result of being stigmatized as mad people. Contrary to this, music therapy helps them to be happy, to freely associate with one another and to feel that no one is discriminating or stigmatizing them. Besides, emotions are also controlled during music therapy as many of them unconsciously express their deep-seated emotions as a result of their experience and in relation to the lyrics of the music being played.

### **Conclusion**

The mentally challenged in this present age are often neglected, discriminated, stigmatized and consequently dehumanized and less attention has been often paid to conditions that lead to such illness. In support of the findings of this study, therefore, the literature reveals that music has significant and great therapeutic effects on mentally challenged. It reduces the negative symptoms, increases the ability to interact with others, thereby reducing the social forms of isolation without any side-effect. In conclusion, mental challenges are the most delicate aspect of all the human illnesses; yet, this study has laboured vigorously to prove that they can be controllable and treatable depending on the type of mental illness involved.

### **Recommendations**

In the course of this research, the researchers got exposed to certain knowledge that gave rise to the following recommendations.

1. The mentally challenged should be allowed to have access to various musical instruments. This will go a long way to help the patients develop their motor skill especially for those who have a brain injury, developmental delays or sensory impairment. Those who can compose music should be allowed to articulate their sentiments and emotions to allow the therapist to gather more information about the patient's background and problems which could be later used for counselling.
2. Therapists should keep themselves abreast with modern techniques involved in administering music therapy. Songs should be selected based on needs. More therapists should be employed in mental homes for easy coordination.
3. Musicians, as well as composers, should be careful with their choice of words and rhythms of their music compositions, bearing in mind the impact of their music on the human brain, mood and memory.
4. Music therapy should be included in the curriculum of music students in tertiary institutions. This will go a long way to widen the knowledge of music students.

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