

EFFECT OF RAGA IMPROVISATION ON COMMUNICATION AND JOINT ATTENTION BEHAVIORS IN A BOY WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

Keywords: (Music Therapy, Autism, Communication, Improvisation, Joint-Attention)

Abstract

Background

Child 'S' was diagnosed mild mental retardation with autism, showed limitations in communication and attention. M-CHAT scoring key indicated that 'S' was having 'Autism Spectrum Disorder'.

Autistic features, variety of communication modes, attention dysfunction, hyperactive behavior and attention deficiency were observed. 'S' showed interest towards music along with demonstration of few musical skills during initial assessment.

Therapy sessions were planned accordingly to study the effect of Raga Improvisation on Communication and Joint Attention Behaviors of 'S'.

Observation

Over stimulus and zero engagement caused hyperactive behavior and self talk. New and complex musical activities helped to hold interest and attention of 'S'. Ability to complete a musical activity without getting distracted worked as positive reinforcement for 'S'. Raga Improvisation complimented his musical skills.

Results

- Eye contact, Attention time, Intentional communication, Finger co-ordination, Creativity level was improved
- Distraction Time and Hyperactive Behavior was reduced
- Self talk was replaced with musical improvisation

Conclusion

Raga improvisation was a powerful way to engage multisensory and motor network and inducing changes and linking brain regions within this network. Musical experiences involved listening, watching, feeling, moving, coordinating, remembering and expecting. Music provides one of the richest emotional, sensory-motor and cognitive experience. Involvement of various regions of brain contributed for engagement of 'S' in music therapy sessions. It significantly reduced ASD symptoms and helped to achieve Joint Attention and Communication.