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*Research Article*

## Where in Musicotherapy Should Music Educators Be?

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### Abstract

Education has been developing since the day man originated as one of the basic requirements for each field and training each individual who has entered social life by teaching the requirements in this life, education furnishes them with a chance to be a part of the society. On the other hand, there are numerous people in this social life facing various difficulties every day either innate or acquired and teachers are those who encounter such people most frequently. The fact that music educators lack training in therapy is a significant deficiency and how much and in what way should therapy be in music education and how much and in what way should music educators be involved in the process? How can appropriate studies be achieved without mixing education with therapy and by directing those in need of therapy to learn what kind of a therapy they need? In this study, what a music educator can contribute to and in what cases s/he can be of help are dealt with as well as analysing the requirements of musicotherapy with an educator's perspective to enable music educators to get acquainted with and interested in this area.

### Key Words

Music therapy • Music education • Teachers

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Every year, music educators encounter many students and individuals in education system who are in need of therapy due to being handicapped or having various illnesses and so musicotherapy is thought to be good for them. Of late, the tendency of Ministry of National Education to involve individuals in need of special education in mainstream education has led the number of students requiring therapy to increase gradually in mainstream education institutions. “Integration Program” can be defined as a special educational application that allows individuals with special requirements to have education with their peers in mainstream education institutions within the scope of a special program (Özbey, 2009). This program is considered significant in that it enables normal children and those with different features to live together, teaches the former to help the latter when required, enables the latter to show that they can achieve something and helps the former to accept, embrace and regard the latter as one of them. Since the children in the integration program can see more accurate examples in their peers, certain opportunities arise in raising the children and their integration with the social structure is facilitated. Besides, existence of institutions that provide such education to individuals in need of special education that facilitates their existence in and adaptation to the society by developing them through special education and the support these institutions give to the integration program will both boost the improvement in these individuals.

Nevertheless, if conscious educators aren’t available in special education and mainstream education institutions for integration of such students, crucially negative consequences may arise. A teacher, who has primarily been raised to train normal students, might be ignorant, and unconscious of how to behave in the face of individuals who learn, perceive and think differently. A speech defect, which may be regarded among the slightest problems, might lead to negative consequences due to educators’ wrong behaviours in class as well as contributing to positive improvements through correct behaviours. There are certain cases when musicotherapy works and needs to be used. For example, it is emphasized that autistic children have a special interest in music since many autistic children cannot talk but sing for communication, know and sing hundreds of songs by heart (Özbey, 2005). This is in fact a door leading to their inner world. Rhythm and rhymes are keys to this door. Games accompanied with rhythm instruments may yield improvements in the children’s communication skills thanks to a conscious music educator.

To achieve a therapy, the requirements of the field should be known, those in need of therapy in education should be recognized and contribution should be done to preparing ground for appropriate studies for therapy. It might be easier for educators of music whose effects on man are well-established and have become a subject for many researches to understand those who have various problems that haven’t been noticed by others and have been failed to be noticed in class environment, because music teachers might ask students to use their different limbs effectively and co-ordinately during music workshops.

Medical screening, having gradually improved in Turkey recently, may present these unnoticed cases better. Even so, some special cases may stand out more clearly in music lessons when students play various instruments or accompany songs with percussion, swing instruments. Rather than other branch teachers, this case catches music educator’s eye more because their drills and activities encompass various learning areas from listening, singings and playing to music culture and creativity.

## Method

### Research Model

The aim of the study is to attract music educators' notice to the area of musicotherapy and to emphasise the importance of therapy in terms of music education to the workers. In music education, enough study towards therapy was not done. Thus, in this study for drawing attention source scanning method was used and where in musicotherapy should music educations be, was scrutinised. Because it is required to have the special structure and special equipment of musicotherapy. Nevertheless it is the teachers who are face to face every day and perceive their needs best. It is argued what the subject of teachers should be from this idea. Therefore there isn't any sample.

### Findings

In this section, Relation between Education and Music, Relation between Musicotherapy and Music and Music Teacher and Therapy subjects were scrutinized.

Derek Bailey (1998), states in his writing about John Stevens' improvising lessons that his aim is to unite people in an experience. He adds that he always finds himself a bit weird as a teacher in this situation which Steven defines as a playing experience. It is seen here that such feelings as acting commonly as a society, trusting each other, living freedom while being dependent on one another are stirred. Bailey (1998), reflects this by saying that most improviser value improvisation due to the opportunities it creates one of which is "one's going out of him/herself." "A person can be guided to such a direction that, for a moment, may be for just one or two seconds, his/her reactions diverge from the normal. S/he can do something that s/he has thought impossible or something that s/he isn't entirely responsible for doing." This allows the individuals to complete and accept themselves and to discover new feelings in lessons or music practices. Thus, it contributes to that individual's development in lessons or extra-scholastic music activities by being in music either by improvising or by accompanying music and participating to playing.

Every case different from the normal requires a different and special behaviour; however, it is possible that teachers who are not conscious enough might lead to more negative consequences through wrong behaviours in sensitive situations. The same applies to music lessons; training music educators, whose help is expected, in such a structure that perceives the requirements of this area much better is a matter of great significance. Moreover, vocational or special education schools of the Ministry of National Education also have music lessons, but it is a fact that the music educators in charge of this education haven't been raised to meet the requirements of this area.

### Relation between Education and Music

An important branch and area of education, music is also used as a teaching method. Voice and rhythm that compose the core of music are employed in teaching the right manners easily and efficiently, which means that music is a merry, soft, flexible and natural aspect of education. What is meant here is not music education but education with music. Stimulating sensitivity, sharpening sensory perceptions and teaching how to listen and hear actively are the cases in which music is used as a teaching method.

Game and entertainment, forming the essence of music, present such a structure that can be accepted by everyone and allow common participation. During music practices, lessons and activities, it is seen that students are more tolerant, understanding, kind and affectionate to one another. This requires using music as a teaching tool both in education especially in acquiring social behaviours and in studies for the handicapped to be involved in the social structure.

A significant Turkish thinker and scientist, İbn-i Sina (Avicenna), after he learned all sciences of his time at the age of 17, said “Here is the man, where are the other sciences?” and when he started to deal with the science of music and get acquainted with music, realizing the greatness of music science, said “Here is the science, where is the man?” According to the scientist who used music as a psychologist, singing is the best exercise to protect health (İbn-i Sina, 2013).

Öke says “With its words, instruments and melody, music in Mevlana’s remedy kitchen is an education method” and adds that Ahmet Avni Konuk, who explained and interpreted Mesnevi-i Şerif, regards music as the teacher of life and states that music teaches love, one cannot be a lover without going through music and man loves the beautiful (Öke, 2012). The function of music as a remedy and a way leading to be the perfect human raises it higher in education branches.

Anthropologist Allan Merriam explains the functions of music as follows:

1. Emotional Expression: expressing ideas by revealing emotions,
2. Aesthetic satisfactions,
3. Entertainment
4. Communication
5. Symbolic representations
6. Physical reactions: It is used prevalently all around the world for dance and friendship activities.
7. Enforcing adaptation to social norms: In many cultures, warnings and instructions are given through music.
8. Existence of social institutes and religious rituals: Using music during religious prays; using music for social reasons exists in many societies.
9. Contribution to establishment and sustainability of culture: Music is a total activity of our expressions and the centre of our cultural psychology.
10. Contribution to the integration of the society: Music is generally used to gather people together (Cited by Abeles, Hoffer, & Klotman, 1994).

Uçan (1994), summarizes these functions clearly and reveals its place in human life in details. These functions encompass

1. Music’s individual functions’ musical stimulation and response types that leave positive impacts on cognitive, affective and psychomotor structures to help the individual to be balanced, satisfied, successful, healthy, sensitive and happy,

2. Music's social functions' roles in assuring meeting, agreement, fusion, solidarity, sharing etc. among individuals, social fractions and societies and between individual and society,

3. Music's cultural functions' musical accumulation and activities that enrich culture and interaction between cultures, carry cultural characteristics and transfer them from one generation to the next,

4. Music's economic functions' activities and regulations, especially those stand out in music like relations of supply-demand, distribution-consumption,

5. Music's education functions' that involve musical learning-teaching activities and related regulations to make individual, social, cultural and economic functions regular, efficient, healthy, productive and useful. Additionally, he also emphasizes that music has two educational functions; as an education field and an educational tool as well.

[Atabek \(2011\)](#), asks "Does music save man?" He also tries to answer "Does it save man from depression, troubles, exhaustion, loneliness and fear?" Yes, it is a fact that music is effective in various psychological problems and it facilitates expressing feelings.

Music feeds students' cognitive, affective and psychomotor features. Music feeds students' cognitive, affective and psychomotor features. It enables one to keep his/her feelings under control and to form a logical communication between feelings and cerebration and to use brain, muscles and feelings together while singing or playing. Thus, individual functions of music are fulfilled.

All these features of music make it an indispensable element of education. On the other hand, it is a fact that a pleasant music provides knowledge and health; it stimulates, soothes, enriches one's existence and has a refreshing and relaxing effect. These effects of music are called therapeutical effects. Nevertheless, musicotherapy is generally defined as a very special curative action adapted for the needs of each private case ([Ak, 2013](#)). In music education, such elements as rhythm, tune and harmony are used and education is given through the effective aspects of these elements.

It has also been seen that music has significant contributions on different learners. According to [Perry \(1995\)](#), children suffering from learning difficulties react to music just like the normal children. They may not be more sensitive than other people but music has benefits for them because it is a bridge for them to otherwise impossible things, it is a way for self-expression and communication with others (Cited by [Öner, 2006](#)).

[Nordoff \(2004\)](#), lists the positive factors indicating that individuals are sensitive to music as follows:

- Vamping the rhythm,
- Being moved or sad while listening to music,
- Focusing on music,
- Rejoicing while listening to music,
- Dancing or moving to the rhythm,
- Murmuring with music (Cited by [Öner, 2006](#)).

In music education, since rhythm is achieved through body or various rhythmic tools, the individual is completely involved in music through his/her body and the music tools in his/her hands thus improving abilities of self-expression, communication, being a part of a community or anyone present there at that moment. Moreover, during these rhythm drills difference between people vanish thanks to losing distinctions within musical elements. Then, it wouldn't be wrong to say that therapy starts right here.

### **Relation between Musicotherapy and Music**

The definition of musicotherapy “a systematic intervention process in which a therapist aids the client in supporting his/her health making use of the therapist's music experiences and relations evolving from these experiences as the dynamics of the change” (Bruscia, 2016) indicates a long process should be gone through to achieve the desired outcome. Although the existence of music in therapy as an approach goes back a long way, only recently has music taken its well-regarded place as a scientific branch of therapy and it can be said that there is still an issue of identity confusion. The interaction between the client, therapist and music is the core of the therapy in which music experience of the therapist plays a significant role. Hence, the therapist needs to have sound music knowledge like the basic concepts and principles in music education. However, only knowing or being able to apply the basic concepts aren't sufficient because his/her approach in applying these basic concepts and principles is also crucial. For example, some of the basic skills a therapist should have are knowing music theory and history, being able to compose and arrange, being able to perform at least at moderate level, having functional skills in piano, guitar, voice and percussion and non-symphonic knowledge as well as knowledge in improvising, conductorship and movements (Bruscia, 2016). Being a good performer or being well-acquainted with music isn't enough to be an expert therapist. On the other hand, a therapist should also know his/her client's characteristics, comprehend the cases arising from the disorder well, which requires being familiar with basic principles and concepts in special education and therapy.

Researches on the relation between music and brain have indicated how effective music is on brain. Having developed recently among learning theories, Neurophysiologic Theory tries to explain learning according to the synapses and links between brain cells and functioning of the neural structure. While the brain processes the signals from the stimuli, various neural links are formed between brain cells and certain responses arise from the interaction between these links; that is, the responses as a result of stimuli are run by the brain. Brain opens to external stimuli through perception and these stimuli are recorded according to significance level. Information that doesn't excite feelings sufficiently and thus aren't considered significant are like low frequency electric impulses. Brain is continually connected to the external world through sensory organs. The data are recorded according to significance level and taken from there when needed. Various tests show that left lobe of the brain are supreme in such matters as speech, mathematical operations, series, numbers and analysis and works linearly in logic. According to multiple studies, the right of the brain is responsible for such functions as rhythm, imagery, colours, dimension, volume and music. The left hemisphere of the brain processes information linearly in logic. As the right lobe forms the artistic aspect, it is interested more in the whole picture than in details and processes information through figures and imagination (Cited by Duman, 2007). This proves the fact that communication between the brain and the body is possible, and can be developed, through music and it emphasizes that making use of the power of music is also a need in cases other than those requiring therapy. According to the results of Levitin (2006)'s study using fMRI, voices start at eardrum and are instantly resolved

according to tones. He adds that they now have more clear information about neurobiological structure. The fact that musical elements affect almost every corner of the brain lets us understand how effective music is. It is understood that music is an effective method also in brain disorders especially or in several cases requiring treatment. Treatment with music has been known from the ancient times to have significant effects on patients suffering from depression. Its effect in such cases as general care, attention-concentration and memory, perception and cognition, reasoning disorders has also been proved and it has been used effectively in various psychological disorders (Çoban, 2005).

### **Music Teacher and Therapy**

Music itself is an effective treatment tool for normal people as well as those requiring special care, help and training. However, this doesn't mean that it helps anyway. Moreover, it might not be right to use every aspect of music. One of the most important steps in forming communication is being patient, knowing the needs of the one requiring therapy and knowing his/her characteristics. After this step, many elements of music from playing to listening can be used within the treatment process. Every element from music choice to instrument choice should be dealt with special care that treatment requires. Duceurneau (2016), states that using rhythm in musicotherapy isn't an act by rote and doesn't serve the same purpose in every case.

At this point, it seems logical to analyse a music educator's characteristics and reveal his/her affinity or distance to therapy. A music educator, during his/her training process, not only learns the basic concepts, theories and historical bases of music education but also, unlike those trained to be musicians, learns how to teach and transfer the music information and concepts s/he has learnt. This training process enables him/her to do composition and arrangement, to gain medium level performance skills, to be able to play the piano efficiently, to be able to use various rhythm instruments for educational purposes and to be able to use his/her voice at such a level to be able to achieve what his/her task requires. Training on school instruments also enables him/her to gain skills in percussion instruments. As well as knowing music teaching methods, it also enables him/her to be efficient in using and applying improvisation, conductorship and movement knowledge. This teaching training is far more different than the one given in conservatory to train musicians and even more different than the detailed one given for a specific field like single instrument like piano, violin, flute etc. or composition; that is, it encompasses a wider scope for educational purposes to gain a wider perspective rather than specializing in a specific field. Besides, by being furnished with the basic concepts and principles of educational sciences, s/he gains such a quality that facilitates comprehending and taking into account the characteristics of his/her client and fosters his/her awareness.

Especially, rhythm applications are often used in multiple therapies. However, it is impossible to get a positive outcome if/when they are applied without being familiar with the group characteristics adequately, knowing what and how much his/her client can do, simplifying the method by arranging it for better perception and above all, using the method with a creative mind. The use of body or rhythm instruments also requires a serious approach; that is, trainer characteristics and approach are thought to facilitate achieving effective outcome in showing the required sensitivity. In this context, Ducourneau (2016), states that psychotic individuals present such behaviours as absolute denial, perpetual hitting, breaking or destroying something and hurting someone when something is started without knowing what is done why by letting things slide in rhythm

workshop. This shows that knowing the characteristics of those in need of therapy and their disorders and choosing appropriate material and method accordingly are imperative.

Music educators can achieve better results in individuals in need of therapy when/if they have therapy training to understand and ease their problems or train themselves in this field. When material and information that will enable them to be acquainted with individuals in need of therapy are provided, it is thought that their pedagogical background will support them when reinforced with various applied studies in what to do for individuals in need of therapy.

On the other hand, in a classroom environment, teachers often encounter students with physical, mental and psychological differences, in need of therapy or even special education. The fact that they often encounter diagnosed or undiagnosed individuals in fact requires that music educators should be trained how to deal with these cases or branch out to serve individuals with special cases. While it might be rather difficult to realize and guide the needs of undiagnosed individuals in other lessons, it could be much easier in music lessons on the strength of various activities that activate feelings and require fingers, hand muscles and various other parts of their body.

All these appear as qualities readily existing in the natural process of music training and even let music lesson be therapy environment in its own right. It is thus understood that music educators should be trained in musicotherapy and acquire certain basic knowledge in therapy during their training.

It is not possible for every music educator to have a qualified therapist training and it cannot be expected from every music educator to achieve this and conduct therapy. However, there are music lessons at vocational schools and special education institutions too and those in charge of these lessons are expected to be trained in music education and have had therapy training. Even so, in reality, what kind of training they have had bears no importance; it is enough that they are teachers. Certain studies can be conducted in programs training music teachers at education faculties. For example, students who want to train themselves in this field can be provided with opportunities to furnish themselves with therapy and special education qualities through elective courses or courses from other relevant faculties. This field can also be supported by institute and post-graduate studies. Moreover, development of this field should be reinforced by opening private rehabilitation and therapy centres or involving them in general health institutions. It is thought that as such, music educators will be more interested in the field and they will contribute to the field by co-working with therapists.

Another subject to be emphasized is that therapists and music educators should collaborate. It is therapists' responsibility to guide music educators, to determine what kind of studies should be conducted in which cases, to analyse and monitor various aspects of the development in individuals requiring therapy that music educators lack, and to guide the therapy process. Therapists without music training or those who try to use their deficient information in their sessions clearly cannot conduct sound musicotherapy. Musical creativity, in particular, is a result of complete and qualified music training. Success of therapists without qualified music training can only be coincidence. This demands that therapists and music educators should collaborate more and deal with various cases together.

Another point to consider is that Special Education Application Centres (Schools) - where education and therapy are expected to co-exist in specialized education for medium-advanced level handicapped or autistic



individuals- need music educators and there is a gap in the number of music educators in this field. Although numerous studies could be conducted at such schools, unfortunately, it is not possible to say educators take this field into account sufficiently. At these schools, where individuals who cannot go to normal schools due to their various handicaps are educated, curriculum is different and special. Music lessons exist only one hour a week in this curriculum. Music is also considered among elective courses if there is a music teacher.

In terms of the overall structure of the courses, it is seen that singing in particular has an important place. A child who sings relaxes emotionally and discovers the sensation in the lyrics. Various feelings, thoughts and information can be comprehended more easily through songs (Güler, 2008). In the curriculum of Special Education Application Schools, music lesson is given at elementary 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and secondary 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th classes and regarded as one of the most efficient disciplines used in the education of students requiring special education and considered to support all developmental areas. It is also emphasized that music activities also have an important function in generalizing the skills gained in other lessons. It is revealed that singing together and dancing have positive contributions to socializing, increasing self-confidence and achieving emotional development. Rhythm and singing exercises are particularly emphasized and it is stated that students can do these drills easily and that students should be in music by performing, singing, playing and beating out personally. Among the suggestions in such studies is that attention is required in breathing exercises in case students' health conditions might not be convenient. Music is suggested to be often involved in the process and what kind of applications can be done is explained in details (MEB, 2013). A music education program has also been provided for other students requiring special education. It is arguable to what extent these exercises can/should be involved in musicotherapy. However, it shouldn't be forgotten that its aim is to contribute to child development through music.

### Discussion

All in all, as for the question "where in musicotherapy should music educators be", it can be said that they should be in charge of music lessons particularly in special education institutions and they should regard this responsibility as a therapy rather than as education. Furthermore, teaching methods developed by Dalcrose, Orff and Kodaly, which have been used by music educators in general music education, can also be adapted to be used in therapeutic studies with especially autistic and mentally handicapped children. It is known that rhythm instruments are effective in communication with children with Down syndrome. Moreover, choruses to be established in such private or state institutions and music applications with songs or appropriate rhythm instruments will develop children's cognitive, affective and psychomotor features.

Finally, music educators are expected to be interested in and sensitive to this area. It mustn't be forgotten that research and training are required for therapy, but the gap in the area should be taken into account and, encouraging those in education faculties who are interested in the area, the necessary studies should be conducted to train them appropriately. Studies of experts in therapy on this area should be followed and educators should be encouraged to participate in seminars on the subject. It is hoped that they will thus serve their field better. It is also suggested that in-service training for music educators in the schools of the Ministry of National Education on the matter should contribute to the quality of their service.

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