

Impact of Lockdown on Human Psychology and Relief through Raaga Therapy—Therapeutic Effect of Raag Yaman during Covid Pandemic

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Abstract

Music is a divine power that we humans are blessed. Blessed if we can sing, blessed if we can hear, blessed even if we can enjoy. Music as a form of therapy is also a blessing. Such therapies are free of cost without any side effects and can be taken in multiple doses throughout the day. Music (or more precisely Raag) basically should be of a kind that one can enjoy and can relate naturally. In this novel coronavirus break down it's important for us to understand how we should control ourselves and develop a sense of resilience and wellbeing while staying back at home. Psychologically, creatively we can fight this Covid 19 stress musically (Misra & Shastri, 2014).

Keywords

Covid, Music Therapy, Pandemic, Psychology, Raaga Yaman, Therapeutic Effect

1. Introduction

Let's understand what all problem we might be facing and could face during lockdown which is still in uncertain phase to be revoked. This lockdown is certainly tough for everyone unbiased of any age group, city, country or profession. This lockdown is extra harsh specially for those who are over thinkers who constantly needs distractions not to feel sad and lonely. The time is tough for housewives, where they have no domestic help (Welch, Biasutti, MacRitchie, McPherson, & Himonides, 2020). Time is tough for kids as they need physical activity and fresh air to exhaust their energy. This phase is also tough for senior citizens or older people who must confined themselves in the house restricting their evening walks or laughing group meetings. Time is tough for all professional whether IT sector

person, academician, or an artist where you continuously have to maintain your visibility, because out of sight and you're out of mind. And this all scenario is causing a state of anxiety stress and depression at times. To fight this coronavirus the first step is to stop the state of panic amongst the citizens.

2. List of Stress during COVID 19

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones. Fear of contamination.
- Low mood, Difficulty in concentrating.
- Anxiety or overwhelming fear, Negative Thinking.
- Virus related worries and insecurity, Self-verbalization that does not always reflect reality.
- Feeling of discouragement, insecurity, sadness anger etc., Fear of being enclosed.
- Loss of pleasure, Overthinking.

According to famous musicologist Oliver Sacks, “Music can lift us out of depression or move us to tears; it is a remedy or tonic, orange juice for the ear. But for many music is even more. It can provide access even when no medication can, to movement, to speech, to life. For them music is not a luxury but a necessity”. These words are so true to the current situation of coronavirus outbreak throughout the world. Few things to analyze yourself with before we can use music as a tool for coping from stress and anxiety.

1) Don't always listen to your mind. Be mindful; Stay Calm.

2) Don't try to ignore physical symptoms of stress. Sometimes we make ourselves more unwell through panic and anxiety. In the moments of panics, you should try to take few moments of breaths. Sit down and count your breathing in and out for 10 secs to relax yourself.

3) Keep a record of your worries—Right the things you can control and the things you cannot. This way you'll be able to generalize the seriousness of your thought process and unnecessary anxiety pressure.

4) Only consume what you can handle—If you are trying to cope from health or stress stop your exposure to the news and daily updates. Time to clean up your social media.

5) Take practical steps—Stay connected to your support networks. In the time of stress, it could be easy to self-isolate but it's crucial to maintain human interaction to maintain your anxiety levels. Keep strong connections, this will help you supported and surrounded by positivity.

6) Avoid speculation and focus of facts—it's easy to get speculation hyped specially when social media is so popular in our society.

3. Dealing with Mental Exhaustion

The below table gives the brief overview of the ways to deal with mental exhaustion through various musical mediums.

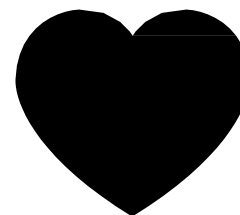
More time for music practice and creativity.

Achieving goals that gives us satisfaction about being an artist, that is creating something without demand, not for anyone else but for self satisfaction.

Just spread music through the medium of online platform. Art brings peace. Make yourself at peace and others as well.

Become altruistic with your art form.

Art is prayer. Artist is closest to the divine element of nature. Make your prayer using your art. Spread positivity.



4. Selection of Music According to Situation

To have benefit out of something it's important to understand firstly the nature and secondly how that can be used according to you. Similar is the case of music. Like books have positive or negative impact, music too has same impact on every individual. It's important to channelize and develop synchronization of your current emotions with the music you select to listen. Few points given below in context to current pandemic situation to select the music that keeps individual away from stress.

- When mentally exhausted avoid listening to slow pace or sad music.
- To keep yourself motivated listen to the fast beat songs
- Your wake-up alarm at the moment should not be harsh or loud but soft instrumental pieces like sitar, soft guitar, piano.
- Afternoon music during self-isolation/quarantine, should be of medium tempo with positive words.
- Make sure which ever song you listen it must have positive words or messages. As repeating of words unconsciously goes to our
- Subconscious mind and acts accordingly.
- You might love to hear sad songs (that's perfectly fine as choice of music entirely depends on individual's music inclination) but at the moment try to avoid listening specifically at the afternoon when your brain and body is tired and during night when your body and brain needs rest.
- Important to meditate at least for 20 minutes in evening with the sound present in the environment or in the nature,
- It could be chirping of birds, the breeze or rustling of leaves.

- Music as background music, while cleaning the house. or even cooking can make you feel like someone is always there.
- Listening to music has great effects for coping.
- The soothing power of music is well established. It has a unique link to our emotions, so can be an extremely effective stress.
- Management tool.
- Try to be more creative during this time of quarantine/lockdown. Singing (or shouting) along can also be a great release of tension, and karaoke is very enjoyable for some extroverts! Calming music before bedtime promotes peace and relaxation and helps to induce sleep.

5. Therapeutic Impact of Raag Yaman

The raag yaman is traditionally performed in the evening but is considered suitable to be played at any time of the day. Raag Yaman is one of the huge and at the same time the versatile raag in Indian Classical Music. Indian classical music training often begins with Raag Yaman because it is considered a key to all the other Raags. It is said to purify and open the heart and this open heart is ready to receive knowledge and has a desire penetrate deeper into the mystery of music (Richard & Gary, 2011). In Raag Yaman you'll not only find the classical pieces but also semi classical pieces like spiritual songs (bhajans), ghazals , poetry , geet and huge collections of film songs too.

Best time to listen to Raaga yaman is bed time, or the any time of the day when you are feeling depressed, sad or discouraged. Night is best to listen as that hour of the day you are totally exhausted and ready to accept all the positive vibration of the music to charge you, to clam you and to soothe your mind body and soul.

5.1. Sound Structure of Raag Yaman

Tonic Sa, Major Second Re (Suddh Re), Major Third Shudh Ga, Augmented fourth (Tivra Ma), Fifth Pa, Major Sixth (shuddh Dha) and major seventh (Shuddh Ni). In west we call it as *Lydian Mode*.

5.2. Impact of Raaga Yaman

Tivra Ma creates awareness of unresolved anger, disappointments, and injuries. The *major seventh (Ni)* and *major third (Ga)* are very strong as well and light the fire of longing. Yaman is like an unsolvable Koan, an open question and endless search for the meaning of life.

6. Reason of Why to Listen Raaga Yaman

- Raaga yaman helps support the best physical or mental state for sleep. It can slow the pace of the mind, aid focus, bring comfort, improve mood or help clear mental activity. Raag Yaman is also used to control breathing.
- Raaga Yaman stimulates a secondary experience that facilitates sleep. This

may include an influence on dreaming or giving a sense of security.

- Raaga Yaman block or prevent a focus on disturbing thoughts or sounds. Thoughts include mental reviews of the past day or unwanted future planning. This raaga can also be used to fill unbearable silence.

7. Experimental Results

During Covid 19 lockdown an empirical approach with music therapy was conducted on group of people that includes both the genders between the age group of 20 - 40 years and 50 to 80 years who were stressed and depressed due to drastic change in life.

Firstly through questionnaire we found the kind of problems the group of subjects were facing and then we found through questionnaire, the genres they love and then we conducted a quick test online where group of people sat in front of their computer screen connected with us and heard different songs of the genre they liked based on Kalyan thaat. After the analysis we found that majority of people in both the age groups preferred Yaman based songs. The songs were not just classical (bandish) but also included movie songs, light songs, spiritual prayers and much more.

Figure 1 shows the clear presentation of the raagas preferred in the Kayaln Thaath that helps in physiological and psychological exhaustions.

The above stress levels as shown in **Figure 2** were noticed before starting the music therapy sessions. The subjects were extremely stressed out and anxiety prone since the spread of COVID 19 started and lockdown began. When we started online music therapy sessions, they shared that they are not being able to focus and enjoy the song (*Please note that music/songs given to them was in Raag Yaman but in their choice of music. Some prefer album songs, other prefer*

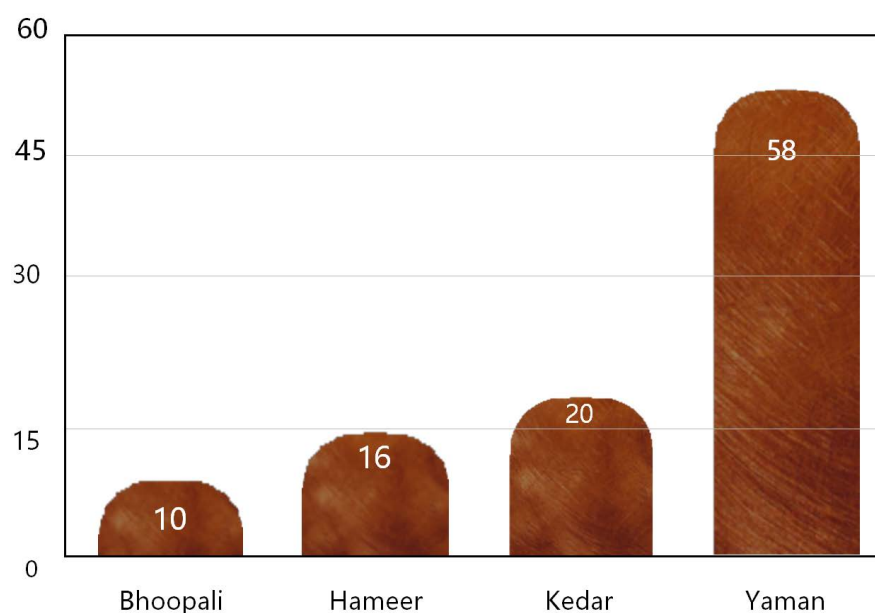


Figure 1. Most raaga preferred in Thaath Kalyan.

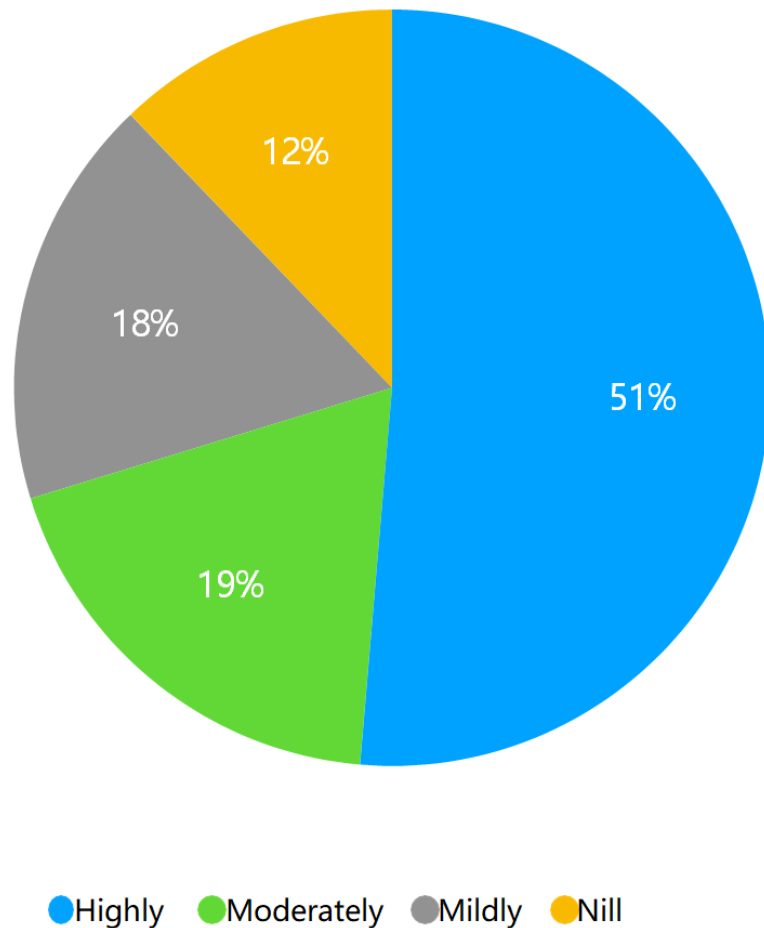


Figure 2. Anxiety and stress level during pandemic Covid-19.

spiritual, movie songs and so on). They told us that they are feeling distracted due to the thoughts of coronavirus spread. It's the kind of phobia that was making its place in their mind. They even started doubting every single moment of the day as if they can get contaminated by COVID even by touching a glass, a spoon or even if they pick anything fallen on the floor of their house.

After recording the each, we started to keep a track of same on weekly basis. As music also takes time to act upon so we made it sure we will continue this session for 4 week and then will compile the result that will be obtained in the 4th week.

8. Result

The gradual downfall in the levels as shown in **Figure 3** of mental exhaustion/ stress and anxiety was noticed during the empirical approach with Raaga Yaman based songs, that proves that whatever be the genre of the song, but if the fundamental structure of the song is based on Raag Yaman or Kalyan Thaata then it will be proved beneficial during this stress time and can develop the positive thought process. Due to anxiety the subjects who were facing insomnia also told that Raaga Yaman was helpful to induce peaceful sleep.

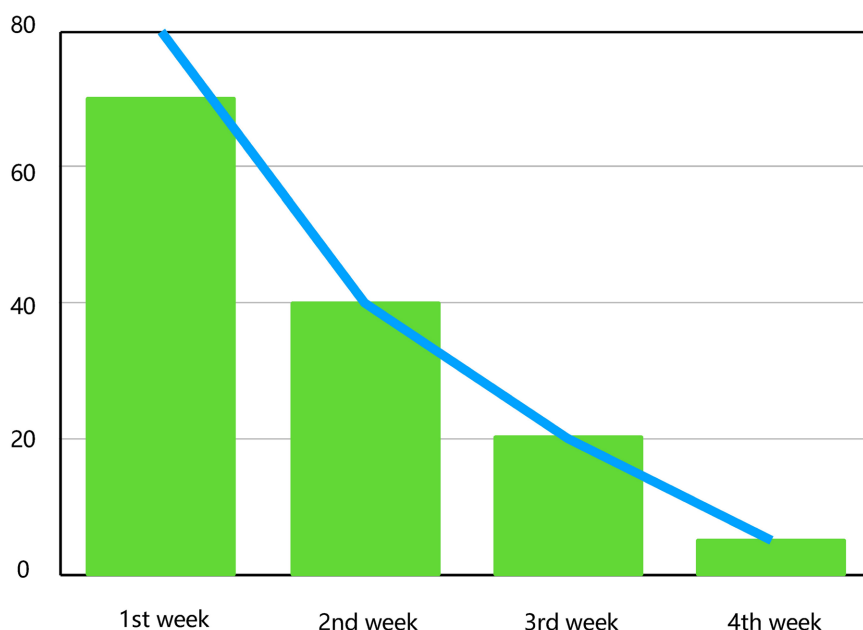


Figure 3. Impact of Raag YAMAN Based songs on anxiety and stress level after 4 weeks of listening in lockdown of coronavirus.

9. Conclusion

When someone is talking about raga therapy or about any raaga, then it does not mean that you must force yourself to listen to any complex classical piece. There are many who **do** not like to listen to classical piece and that's fine. The important thing is you select which ever genre.

You like to listen which could be ghazal, bhajans, movie songs, but you have to make sure that base or structure of that should be of Raaga Yaman, simple! Also, you have to make sure that the song should be soft, does not have negative words and does not convey message of sadness. Generally Raaga Yaman based song conveys the message of love, romance, longing and desire.

“We waste our whole life, preparing for the future, not realizing that the only way to be happy is to embrace each moment.” This situation or this present condition in whatever we are, is going to change. Yes, it's going to change it's going to improve, and this time will never be the same forever. You have to really connect with your thoughts and your feelings at the moment. You need to be positively inclined and full of positive aura. Just breathe in and relax, be positively and musically motivated.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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