



## Music As A Social Emotional Therapy Media For Mentally Retarded Children At Yayasan Pembinaan Anak Cacat (YPAC) Semarang

**Bagus Wicaksono**✉

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

**Suharto**

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify and describe the music used as social-emotional therapy for mentally retarded children at YPAC Semarang and its application. This research uses a qualitative approach. Technique of data collection through observation, interview and documentation. The validity of the data was checked by triangulation, data sources, adequacy of references, and extension of participation. Data analysis was carried out using an interactive data analysis model which was taken through the process of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions/verification. The results showed that the music used as a medium for emotional social therapy was divided into two, namely music whose sound source came from the body and music whose sound source came from musical instruments. Both are divided into pitchless music and pitched music. The application of music as a medium of emotional social therapy is carried out through several stages, namely, In the first therapeutic process, students are not directly given material about music. The next stage of therapy refers to the psychomotor domain, and the next stage, after the students are considered capable, teacher begins to teach simple musical instruments to students.

✉Corresponding author:

E-mail: baguswicaksono@students.unnes.ac.id

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## INTRODUCING

Human life actually cannot be separated from art, because art is a product of human creativity, taste and intention which contains aesthetic value considering that every human being basically likes beauty. The form of beautiful feeling that is contained in the human soul is born through the medium of communication tools into a form that can be captured by the senses of the listener (sound art), sight (fine art) or born through the medium of motion (dance and drama arts).

Of the various functions of music, some people enjoy music only as a medium of entertainment without understanding the other benefits that music brings. Music is not only a medium of entertainment with a void of meaning, but music can also be used for interests that have a human dimension, one of which is as a medium for therapy or healing.

Therefore, music is no stranger to being used as a medium for therapy or healing. This is because music encompasses a combination of rhythm, rhythm, harmony, and melody that has special powers that are able to transcend human thoughts, emotions and physical health.

So far music therapy has become part of health, music therapy is defined as a treatment or treatment activity that uses music as a medium to maintain, improve, develop mental, physical and emotional health in someone who has a disease or experiences certain disorders. Music therapy is material that can affect a person's condition both physically and mentally. Music stimulates the growth of brain functions such as memory functions, learning, listening, speaking, as well as intellect analysis and awareness functions (Satiadarma, 2002).

Music therapy utilizes the power of music to help a person organize himself so that they are able to find a way out, experience change and finally recover from the disorder they are suffering from. In the times, music therapy has been widely used in the world of health, one of which is in medical rehabilitation services for children with special needs at Yayasan Pembinaan Anak Cacat (YPAC) Semarang.

Mental retardation is another term to replace the word "extraordinary child" which indicates a special disorder. Mentally retarded children have different characteristics from one another. Mental retardation or mental retardation is a condition where the development of a person's mental intelligence experiences obstacles so that they do not reach the optimal development stage (Somantri, 2007).

In addition, mental retardation is a condition where the level of intelligence development is below normal from birth or childhood, usually there is less overall mental development (dalami, 2009). Mental retardation or mentally retarded is a term used to refer to children or people who have below average intellectual abilities, there is a disturbance in subnormal intellectual functioning through psychological tests carried out with intelligence level tests or Intelligence Quotient (IQ) in which children will have an IQ below 70 (Smart, 2010).

Music therapy is important for children with disabilities, because music therapy exercises can help the development of sufferers who are constructive, encouraging, growing self-confidence, as well as forming the personality of sufferers to become individuals who are optimistic, never give up and can accept the facts of life as they are. Many children with special

needs feel pessimistic, low self-esteem, or don't get enough attention and affection from their environment, resulting in a feeling or the notion that they can't do anything about it. By playing music, it is hoped that it can stimulate and attract children with special needs to follow the rhythm which in turn creates a relaxed, happy atmosphere which in turn makes positive changes. Not only that, music therapy also stimulates intellectual function, increases the individual's ability to evoke positive or comfortable memories that allow cognitive recovery in new ways, induces or stimulates states that require deep thought and more concentration, creates controlled situations to stimulate problematic experiences, and others (Gutiérrez & Camarena, 2015).

Suharnan (2005), in his book *Cognitive Psychology*, revealed that the transfer of information from sensory memory (sensory memory) to short-term memory which will then be transferred to long-term memory is strongly influenced by concentration. One form of therapy used today is music therapy, besides music can create a pleasant atmosphere, music is known to affect cognitive processes.

The purpose of music therapy in particular is to develop the potentials that exist in sufferers, as well as to function the remaining abilities that exist in sufferers with disabilities. Thus sufferers will grow into children who are confident and feel able to do or move like humans in general. With the provision of music therapy, it is hoped that it can reduce or eliminate the patient's tensions in the social emotional, mental intelligence and physical motor aspects.

According to Faradisi (2012) the use of music as a therapeutic medium has proven to be useful in the

healing process, because it can reduce pain and can make a person's feelings more relaxed. In the medical field, the use of music as a therapeutic medium can be used to improve, maintain, and restore physical and mental, as well as emotional or spiritual health by using certain sounds or rhythms. In the times, music therapy has been widely used in the world of health, one of which is in medical rehabilitation services for children with special needs at the Semarang Disabled Children Development Foundation (YPAC).

YPAC Semarang is a social foundation that specifically deals with children with special needs with class C (mentally impaired) and D (physically impaired). One form of service provided by YPAC Semarang is outpatient treatment of children at the polyclinic for sufferers and their families who require examination/consultation and treatment, both temporary and must come on an ongoing and regular basis, namely: physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, therapy music, self-development, and psychology.

Music therapy is one of the medical rehabilitation services at YPAC Semarang which makes a major contribution in treating mentally retarded children. Music therapy given to mentally retarded children has a positive impact on their development, especially social and emotional. Some examples that can be taken are hyperactive children where they cannot calm down for a long time after following several stages of music therapy, these children can control themselves more so that they are calmer, easier to direct, easier to socialize.

In their daily duties, a music therapist will meet clients with different disabilities with various conditions. In

order to work optimally in providing assistance, music therapists are required to truly understand the limitations experienced by their clients. The therapist must also pay attention to the patient's level of intelligence in the sense of how far the patient's comprehension is in receiving material or orders from the therapist, must also pay attention to how his social-emotional state is whether he is hyperactive, timid, shy or grumpy.

According to Julidar (2012), there are several programs in the music therapy class itself, such as (1) Physical Motor: Programs for sufferers with wilting disorders of the limbs, for example: hands, feet, neck, and speech disorders. The activities taught in range of motion exercises are rhythmic exercises for example clapping hands, clapping thighs, hitting drums, cymbals, gamelan, tambourines, and so on. (2) Social Emotional: A situation where a person's condition is no longer able to control his soul or feelings, emotional tensions arise because he does not have a solution to overcome his obstacles. Emotional examples that often appear in sufferers, for example: irritable, cowardly, and arbitrary. The activities taught are listening to music both from CDs, mp3s, playing the piano, and so on. (3) Mental Intelligence: Disorders of concentration and limited thinking power so that sufferers lack concentration. The activities taught are singing, listening to songs, learning notation/solmization, and learning pitched musical instruments.

This research on music therapy for mentally retarded children is not the only research conducted by the author. There are several references that inspired the writer to conduct this research. These are some examples of

research that has the same relationship with the research taken by the author.

The results of research by Raharjo (2007), Turruqoyyah (2017), Julidar (2012), although there are similarities in the research location, namely YPAC Semarang, the research object is different, namely music as a medium of social therapy for mentally retarded children. In addition, the previous research only explained in general about music as a therapeutic medium, so the researchers wanted to conduct a detailed study of one of the applications of music as a therapeutic medium, namely on social emotional. The application of music as a social therapy medium is very important because it provides many benefits for mentally retarded children.

Music therapy services are very useful as a medium for emotional social therapy for mentally retarded children, because by providing these services it is hoped that they can help the development of sufferers who are constructive, encouraging, growing self-confidence, as well as shaping the personality of sufferers to become individuals who are optimistic, never give up and can accept reality of life with what it is so that sufferers are able to act like people in general. So from that researchers want to find out more about how music can be used in helping mentally retarded children in developing their social-emotional abilities, as well as how the process of implementing music therapy in helping mentally retarded children.

## METHOD

The research method chosen in this research is descriptive qualitative, which is a method that examines the status of human groups, an object, a set of conditions or a system of thought or a class of events in the present. The goal

is to make a systematic and accurate description of the picture or painting regarding the facts, characteristics, and the relationship between the phenomena being investigated (Nazir 1988: 63).

Bogdan and Taylor define qualitative methodology as a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior (Moleong, 2000). This method is intended to describe and describe conditions and phenomena, in this case regarding the application of music as a medium for emotional social therapy for mentally retarded children at YPAC Semarang.

In data collection, researchers conducted observations, interviews and documentation studies. Interviews were conducted with music therapists, students, teachers. Research collects documents in the form of photos, music, and supporting documents. Activities in data analysis include data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing / verification.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted in December 2021 and took place at YPAC Semarang, which is located on Jln. KH. A. Dahlan No. 4 Semarang. YPAC is one of the organizations engaged in social and extraordinary education. YPAC Semarang branch has implemented music therapy as a learning medium for children with special needs. The target of this research is the application of music as a medium for emotional social therapy for children with mental retardation at YPAC Semarang.

Music therapy intervention does not mean just listening to certain music. Music therapy sessions require the observation of a music therapist to

be able to create healing methods that can answer patient needs (Bradt, 2015). This process can take the form of receptive methods such as music-assisted relaxation, or listening to live music played by a therapist. It can also be in the form of a re-creative method, namely playing music previously composed by the patient and therapist, and in the form of an improvisational method in which the patient and therapist improvise music together through instrumental, vocal and also gestures (Pelletier, 2018).

Basically music as a medium of intervention and therapy has three basic characteristics. First, music has an influence on the central nervous system, especially the limbic system and its effects are broadly generalized to include the body, mind, emotions, and mentality. Second, music can be used to reduce or even replace the role of drugs where this can reduce the cost of treatment. And third, the side effects of music therapy are very minimal and can even be ignored so that music therapy can be included as a complementary intervention in the major treatment process (Bernatzky, 2017). There are a number of factors that can influence a person's response to music. These factors include age, gender, cognitive function, anxiety level, interest and closeness to certain types of music, and one's cultural conditions (Standley, 2018).

### **Music is used as a medium for emotional social therapy**

The results showed that the music used as emotional social therapy for children with mental retardation is music that originates from the body and music that originates from musical instruments. Music that comes from the body is divided into two, music that has

no tone and music that has a tone. (1) Music that comes from the body. Music that comes from the body is divided into two, music that has no tone and music that has a tone. In practice teaching bodyless body music is taught through the child's own body parts such as applause, thigh clapping and foot stomping. Meanwhile, body music that is pitched is taught through the mouth. There are several stages carried out in therapy using music that originates from the body, namely the rhythm recognition stage. In the early stages of the emotional social therapy process, mentally retarded children are taught body music that has no tones with simple musical material, namely understanding rhythm. Based on the observation process, the therapist introduces rhythm by inviting mentally retarded children to clap their hands, clap their thighs and stomp their feet together. Furthermore, the therapist provides an understanding of rhythm by adding a count when clapping hands, clapping their thighs or stomping their feet by the therapist exemplifying clapping for 2 counts accompanied by a counting pronunciation then the child is asked to follow what the therapist exemplifies.

The second is the Stage of Mastery and Use of Rhythm. After the child understands rhythm, the next stage is to give practice towards rhythmic sounds and have regular rhythms. For example by clapping which has a rhythm of 2 beats. Exercise like this will make the child feel happy doing it, that way the teacher can invite the child to repeat the activity until the child masters it. Based on the results of observations, after clapping hands can be done well activities can be developed with several variations such as clapping movements combined with thigh clapping and foot

stomping. With clapping movements combined with thigh pats and foot stomping, it can train focus and concentration and make mentally retarded children able to work together with their friends. Of the three movements, a harmonious coordination will be established for a therapeutic purpose.

The third is the tone recognition stage. The teacher only introduces number notation (solmization) with the source of the sound from the pitched body, namely the mouth. Based on observations, for emotional social therapy the tone recognition stage is carried out with hand movements resembling wing flapping accompanied by solmization. Movements like this are expected to encourage children to move actively according to the direction of the teacher. In addition to the introduction of tones, children are also taught to sing. (2) Music Derived from Musical Instruments. Musical sounds can be produced or sourced from pitchless musical instruments and pitched musical instruments, this is in accordance with emotional social therapy activities. In therapy activities, the teacher uses the media of non-pitched musical instruments and pitched musical instruments to assist therapy activities.

#### 1) A pitchless musical instrument.

This musical instrument is used to replace music in the body such as applause, thigh clapping and foot stomping. Based on observations in class, the cymbals were sounded to replace the clapping movement, the snare drum was sounded to replace the thigh patting movement, and the bass drum was sounded to replace the foot stomping movement. At this stage the

teacher divides into 3 study groups. The first group is for the bass drum beater, the second group is for the snare drum beater and the third group is for the cymbal beater. In this stage, the teacher adds the melody of the song played by the belira instrument which is also played by the teacher. The addition of songs is intended to increase children's enthusiasm for doing therapy activities. The rhythm pattern can be changed according to the teacher's initiative.

2) Pitched musical instruments.

In therapy activities, mentally retarded children are not taught more about pitched musical instruments, considering the limitations that children have. The teacher only introduces and tells how to use it. The use of musical instruments is adjusted to the child's abilities. Musical instruments such as angklung, pianika, gamelan, and belira. After the child knows the tone, the next step is the tone is applied to the musical instrument provided by the teacher. The tool that is often used is the angklung because there are so many angklungs so that children can hold them one by one. Implementation is done by dividing the group. Children are divided into 8 groups, according to the number of notation numbers. Each child holds 1 angklung for 1 notation. How to play it according to the code or instructions from the teacher. If the teacher says "do", the angklung that is played is the angklung from the first group. If the teacher says "re", the angklung is played by the second group, the same goes for mi, fa, sol, la, si, do. Angklung is played according to what the teacher says. The game can be varied by using simple songs, resulting in playing songs using the angklung instrument. The activity

aims to train children's ability to remember and coordinate between the brain and social.

### **Application of Music as a Social Emotional Therapy Media**

When students are in a music therapy rehabilitation class at YPAC Semarang, the teacher or therapist will see the data or referrals that have been given by the doctor at the beginning of the registration examination. After a student's illness or disorder is known, the teacher or music therapist will provide appropriate rehabilitation services for the student. The first therapy process, students are not directly given material about music. However, students are taught to socialize with their friends, for example by getting acquainted.

Getting to know each of these students aims to train courage and also avoid the embarrassment that the average student has. Furthermore, in the early stages, the therapist first guides students on matters relating to the affective domain (attitude). If the students are seen to have an attitude of starting to dare, the next stage of music therapy is related to cognitive matters (knowledge). It is at this cognitive stage that new students are introduced to music, starting from introduction, understanding, mastery and use. In addition, music can provide positive feelings and improve mood so that it can automatically improve the ability to self-improvement automatically such as pain and anxiety (Forooghy, et al 2015).

### **Learning Components Used in Social Emotional Therapy**

The learning component has an important role in the process of music therapy for children with mental retardation. Likewise for the process of music therapy for children with mental retardation, the learning component has an important role in achieving the goals of therapy. Because the process of music therapy is not only as social emotional therapy but also as a means of learning, especially in the social field of the child.

The first component, namely the purpose of learning music in music therapy is to provide services for those who are deemed necessary to get attention, especially for sufferers at YPAC, who experience obstacles both physical, motor, mental, intelligence and social-emotional.

Next are students and teachers. Based on data obtained from music therapists, the total number of students in music therapy is 23 children. These children are divided into 2, namely cerebral palsy and mental retardation. Overall they live in the area of Semarang and its surroundings. Music therapy activities for mentally retarded children are held every Tuesday and Thursday at 08.00 - 09.00 WIB. There are 2 teaching staff at Music Therapy who are all very experienced in the field of rehabilitation services, both of whom are permanent employees of YPAC from the medical rehabilitation unit. The first is Mrs. Sri Jarwani, 50 years

old. The second is Mrs. Rushayati who is 48 years old.

The next component is learning materials. Based on the results of interviews with music therapists, the material provided during learning is not theoretical but directly on practice and giving children's songs. The reason the teacher does not provide theory during the learning process is due to the limited intelligence possessed by children with special needs in the category of mental retardation. According to Mrs. Jarwani's statement (interview 16 December 2021), it is difficult for children with mental retardation to grasp theory, therefore learning music in direct music therapy is practical. The giving of children's songs is also adjusted to the child's pleasure. The teacher does not force to give children's songs according to the teacher's choice, but the choice is left to the child.

Furthermore, the method used in applying music as a medium for emotional social therapy for mentally retarded children at YPAC Semarang must be adapted to the activity program and the child's condition. Some of the methods used include:

#### **1) Learning Method.**

Group or Classical This method was chosen for two reasons: first, children feel embarrassed and afraid to do activities alone, therefore they need friends to study together. Second, the number of children is not small, making it difficult to provide individual services, given the time, effort and equipment.



- 2) The objective-practical method. The objective-practical method is a method that is carried out according to the circumstances or conditions of the child, the condition of existing facilities and infrastructure, the condition of the time (during school hours or outside school hours) and is easy to implement (delivering and achieving results that are not too theoretical). Based on the results of observations, this music therapy activity was carried out during school hours, namely 08.00 to 09.00 WIB. The form of activity carried out with this method is to optimize the use of facilities and infrastructure that are adapted to the child's condition.

The therapist provides this method, when the child begins to feel bored with the material provided. The therapist diverts other activities that are eliminating the child's boredom. For example: children are getting bored with playing musical instruments, the therapist diverts the activities of playing musical instruments by singing songs with lesson elements that are easy for children to follow, for example the song "Satu-Satu", memorizing months or days and so on.

- 3) Systematic method and continuity. Systematic and continuity methods are methods that are arranged according to stages, starting from an easy level then progressing to a more difficult level, priority of therapy (disorders that take precedence) and interrelatedness or relationship from the advanced stage to the previous stage (and vice versa).

- 4) Repetition or Repetition.

Therapy activities are carried out not only once, but repeatedly in a case/recovery process. This method is carried out during singing activities accompanied by musical instruments such as those played by the teacher. The combination of playing an instrument and singing there are several variations of the exercise. First, practice singing accompanied by the rhythm of an artificial musical instrument (limbs or other props) that is played alone, the child sings a song accompanied by applause.

Of all the methods used, lecture and demonstration methods are also always used by teachers. The lecture method is only brief and clear, while the demonstration method is used when the teacher gives real examples so that children can easily see, hold, imitate and carry out. In therapy, the demonstration method is used when the teacher gives an example of playing a musical instrument. All of these methods are used by music therapists, but are adapted to the situations and conditions of the students that day.

The next component is the learning media used during the music therapy process. Musical instruments that are already available in the achievement music classrooms such as keyboards, microphones, sound systems, guitars, drums for practice. As for theory, they have not used learning media such as music guidebooks. Basically learning in music therapy is more about practical

exercises, the learning media used for theory are only scores of model songs made by the therapist himself.

The process of learning music in the music therapy room is carried out in 1 special classroom that has been provided. In this room there are also media and learning facilities in the form of musical equipment, namely 1 drum, 1 bass guitar, 1 sound system, 1 sound control, 1 speaker out, 1 keyboard and keyboard stand, microphone. The equipment is still quite good.

The last component is the evaluation for learning in music therapy does not specifically exist. The therapist only gives an assessment in the form of qualitative based on observation to complement the value of the child's self-development in the report card. Evaluation is only done at the end of learning in the form of comments about children's games, and reinforcement such as flattery for children to motivate children to continue learning.

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