

INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH OF INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC FOR HUMAN EMPOWERMENT

Dr. Ruchi Sharma

Post-Doctoral Fellow, UGC, Deptt. of Music, I.N. (PG), Meerut, UP

Reference to this paper
should be made as follows:

Dr. Ruchi Sharma,

INTERDISCIPLINARY
APPROACH OF INDIAN
CLASSICAL MUSIC FOR
HUMAN
EMPOWERMENT,

Artistic Narration 2018,
Vol. IX, No.1, pp.42-49

[http://anubooks.com/
?page_id=485](http://anubooks.com/?page_id=485)

Abstract

The term interdisciplinary approach means combining of two or more academic disciplines into one by identifying the overlapping areas in these different sub sets. It has been observed that the interdisciplinary approach of study has its own advantages as it tends to identify the common areas of study thereby increasing the understanding of these subjects individually as well as compositely. The biggest advantage of this sort of study is that it tends to increase the horizon of the learner and makes the study more holistic and complete. Since music as an art has its relations with different streams of science and art both it has helped not only music as subject but rather explored a number of possibilities that range from bringing peace and tranquility in the society to treatment of a number of diseases that were earlier considered to be incurable. Since the horizon of this interdisciplinary approach is wide a modest attempt has been made to study the interdisciplinary implications of music with sociology and psychology for human empowerment in different perspectives.

Key Words: *Indian, Classical, Music, Empowerment.*

Introduction

Indian classical music is a type of Asian music which has two major traditions or classifications that is north Indian classical music called the Hindustani music and south Indian music called as Carnatic music. When compared to its western counterparts who tend to be deterministic the Indian classical music allows more improvisation and personalization. Indian classical music is based on the ragas, which are scales and melodies that provide the foundation for a performance. Thus, each performance of a raga is different. The main difference with western classical music is that the Indian ragas are not “composed” by a composer, but were created via a lengthy evolutionary process over the centuries. Thus they do not represent mind of the composer but a universal idea of the world. They transmit not personal but impersonal emotion. Hindustani music emphasizes improvisation and exploring all aspects of a raga, while Carnatic performances tend to be short and composition-based. However the two systems have more in common than differences. Hindustani (north Indian) ragas are allotted to specific seasons and time. Many of these ragas are of the same scale while some share the same melodic theme. There are thousands of ragas although six of them are considered fundamental named bhairav, Malkauns, Hindol, Dipak, Megh and Shree. The main instrument of the ragas is sitar although historically vina was at least considered equally important. Carnatic (Southern Indian) ragas constitute one of the oldest systems of music in the world. They are based on seven rhythmic cycles and 72 fundamental ragas. The founder of the Karnataka school is considered to be PurandaraDasa (1494). Carnatic music is mostly vocal and devotional in nature, and played with different instruments than Hindustani music (such as the mridangam drum, the ghatam clay pot, the vina sitar as opposed to sitar, sarod, tambura and tabla). The fundamental format of Carnatic songs is the “kriti”, which are usually set in the style of a raga (the raga serves as the melodic foundation). Carnatic music is mostly vocal and devotional in nature, and played with different instruments than Hindustani music. The origins of the classical music of India are found in the Vedic literature of Hinduism and the ancient Natyashastra, the classic Sanskrit text on performance arts by Bharata Muni. The 13th century Sanskrit text Sangita-Ratnakara of Sarangadeva is regarded as the definitive text by both the Hindustani music and the Carnatic music traditions. Indian classical music has two foundational elements, raga and tala. The raga forms the material of a melodic structure, while the tala measures the time cycle. The raga gives an artist a palette to build the melody from sounds, while the tala provides them with a creative context for musical inventiveness using time. There is no concept of congruence in Indian classical music

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tends to identify the common areas of study thereby increasing the understanding of these individual subjects of study individually as well as compositely. The biggest advantage of this sort of study is that it tends to increase the horizon of the learner and makes the study more holistic and complete. As the world is growing complex we see a number of disciplines today that are thinking across boundaries as new needs and profession emerge. Music as an interdisciplinary art which has its roots in all disciplines of art and science. Music combines well with other subject. Music exists in relation to many different ideas and media, and within a whole variety of contexts, which is part of what makes studying it so interesting. Most obviously, when we listen to a song, there is a relationship between music and words, which, in academic terms, brings Music into contact with the study of literature. Similarly the music can be combined with different subjects of science and art and this study tries to identify the relationship of music with psychology and sociology.

Music & Psychology

Psychology is the science of conduct and mind, including conscious and unconscious phenomena, as well as thought. It is an academic discipline of immense scope and diverse interests that, when taken together; seek an understanding of the emergent properties of brains, and all the variety of epiphenomena they manifest. As a social science it aims to understand individuals and groups by establishing general principles and researching specific cases. Psychologists attempt to understand the role of mental functions individual and social behavior, while also exploring the physiological and biological processes that underlie cognitive functions and behavior. Psychologists explore behavior and mental processes, including perception, cognition, attention, emotion (affect), intelligence, phenomenology, motivation (conation), brain functioning, and personality.

In Indian classical music, *ragas* constitute specific combinations of tonic intervals potentially capable of evoking distinct emotions. A *raga* composition is typically presented in two modes, namely, *alaap* and *gat*. *Alaap* is the note by note delineation of a *raga* bound by a slow tempo, but not bound by a rhythmic cycle. *Gat* on the other hand is rendered at a faster tempo and follows a rhythmic cycle. Findings provide new insights into the emotional response to Indian *ragas* and the impact of tempo, rhythmic regularity and tonality on it. While music has long been associated with emotion, it has also been a subject of interesting debate among philosophers. Consequently, the existence of emotions induced by music has been debated by believers and non-believers referred to as emotivists and cognitivists, respectively. The cognitivists argue that music does not generally evoke emotions in listeners, it merely expresses emotions that are perceived by listeners. In other words, listeners refer to music as happy or sad because the music expresses happiness or sadness, not because the music makes them feel happy or sad. By contrast, emotivists suggest that music actually evokes or induces feelings in listeners. A review of the literature indicates

that a few studies have investigated the proposal that different *ragas* express emotions that are perceived by the listener's. The earliest of these was conducted Balkwill and Thompson (1999) where they asked 30 Western listeners to judge the expression of 12 Hindustani *ragas* intended to express anger, joy, peace, and sadness. They found that despite being culturally unfamiliar, listeners were sensitive to the intended expression of the *ragas*. A recent study by Jeffrey M. Valla, Jacob A. Alappatt, Avantika Mathur, and Nandini C. Singh* reports for the first time emotional responses of North Indian Classical *ragas* when rendered in two distinct presentation modes, namely, *alaap* and *gat*. Specifically, they found that (1) distinct emotional responses are associated with *alaap* and *gat* of a *raga*. (2) Pulse clarity and tempo significantly influenced the emotion experienced in terms of arousal. (3) Major intervals (*shuddhswaras*) are predictive of reported positive valence while minor intervals (*komalswaras*) are predictive of reported negative valence. (4) The minor second is a significant predictor of negative valenced emotional response. The key finding of this study was the experimental verification of the assumption that distinct emotional responses would be associated with *alaap* and *gat* of a *raga*. The results indicate that *ragas* evoke a gamut of responses that range from 'happy' and 'calm' to 'tensed' and 'sad'. In particular, the emotional response to *ragas* (like *Desh* and *Tilak Kamod*) shifts from 'calm/soothing' in the slower arrhythmical *alaap* to 'happy' in the faster rhythmic *gat*. In parallel, the emotional response of 'sad' in the slower arrhythmic phase shifts to 'tensed' in the faster rhythmic phase. An interesting feature was the fact that all *ragas* universally generated a calming effect and anger remained the lowest rated emotion category. In addition, tonality significantly influenced the emotion experienced as the increase in mean frequency of occurrence of minor intervals was associated with 'tensed' emotion whereas increase in mean frequency of occurrence of major intervals was associated with 'happy' emotion. Thus, the results indicated that the tonal distribution patterns determine the underlying mood (*rasa*) of a *raga* and the presence of rhythm changes the level of arousal of emotions experienced. Future work may attempt to extend these findings to larger population in order to delineate influences of culture, familiarity and musical training on emotion experienced.

Music & Sociology

Sociology is the scientific study of society, including patterns of social relationships, social interaction, and culture. It is a social science that uses various methods of empirical investigation and critical analysis to develop a body of knowledge about social order, acceptance, and change. Many sociologists aim to conduct research that may be applied directly to social policy and welfare, while others focus primarily on refining the theoretical understanding of social processes. Subject matter ranges from the micro-sociology level of individual agency and interaction to the macro level of systems and

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the social structure. As all spheres of human activity are affected by the interplay between social structure and individual agency, sociology has gradually expanded its focus to other subjects, such as health, medical, economy, military and penal institutions, the Internet, education, social capital and the role of social activity in the development of scientific knowledge.

According to our Vedic literature naad is the basic of our music and it is so omnipresent that society cannot remain aloof from it. Society is a concept wherein people live together to fulfill their needs and where in cumulatively they all grow together. Society and individuals are intricately connected with each other and so is music. It is said that everybody knows music and crying. Music brings a new energy in the individual who is dealing with the problems and thereby leading to the growth of the society at large. In all societies specifically the Indian society music is a part and parcel of everyday life which is used to celebrate the festivals, give solace in anxiety, change of seasons, reduce stress and increase productivity of people. According to the Indian ideology it is not only the physical and monetary growth rather emotional and mental peace are also the indicators of the growth of society. It is perceived that music helps in achieving mental solace and brings emotional and mental ability that creates a conducive environment for growth of individuals and society at large. Political, technological, economic growth is useless without cultural stability and growth that gives a new dimension and identity to the society. Music is not only a tool of enjoyment in good times but is helpful in times of distress and war also for increasing the moral of the army. Music in group form also binds the society by an everlasting bond that creates feeling of unison and thereby leading to growth that is lasting and reaches all spheres of society. Even our heritage is secured with the music because of different musical compositions about our god and their preaching have been disseminated with the help of music because we can concentrate greater intensity of feeling in a single musical note than in pages of writing. Music has not only symbolized the condemnation of social evils but also highlighted possibilities of social reforms and change in future. The issues which have thus been taken up relate to communal harmony, national integration, religious and cultural unity, international understanding, spreading consciousness on many issues challenging the society. Music has a meditative quality that increases the focus of individuals and can reveal many things of human world which world and speech cannot. Thus it can be said in the Indian context that classical music and society and sociology thereby have a number of things in common that can be beneficially combined to create a cohesive society and world at large for an inclusive growth.

Conclusion

Interdisciplinary study of music can have far reaching implications for the cohesive development of the individual and society at large. A broad understanding of the different

streams and their beneficial combination with music has delivered in past for creating a more holistic society that lead to a sustainable development. A divisive mindset of supremacy in different streams has to be culminated to come out with out of box solutions for complex problems of the society ranging from simple recreational needs to complex healthcare problems and hostilities of the society.

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Plate no. 5



Plate no. 6



Plate no. 7

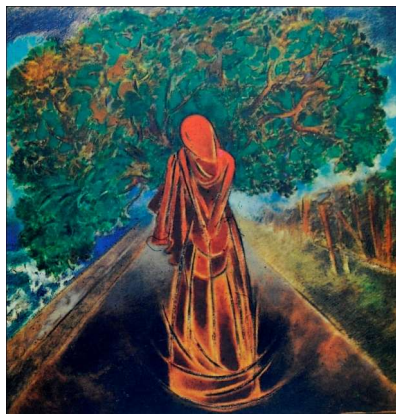


Plate no. 8



Plate no. 9



Plate no. 10



Plate no. 11



Plate no. 12