

## MUSIC TEACHER AND THE EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED CHILD IN NIGERIA.

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### Abstract

*Emotional disturbed child in Nigeria has suffered a lot, especially in the hands of those who are to take care of their educational needs. They suffered because some care givers or teachers are not knowledgeable enough to handle them. This work discussed about the emotional disturbed child, their behavior, characteristics, how they relate and behave in the music class. It was discovered that the emotional disturbed child can be hyper active, excessive fear of anxiety, perform below average, withdrawn etc. This work concludes that when music is successfully planned and carried out considering this kind of children, it keep them on check and balance and they can perform favourably well in class with other children.*

### Keywords

**Music, Teacher,  
Emotionally, Child,  
Nigeria.**

### 1. Introduction

Music plays an important part in the emotionally disturbed child or children. It helps in their emotional and aesthetic growth of the child in respective of their mental and physical limitation. According to Rozmajzl and Alexander (1999) “successful induction the music classroom depends on a combination of variables that must be addressed before proper learning can take place”. When these areas are address music will be included or successful in their classroom.

Generally, people looked at the emotionally “disturbed child as those who do not do well in school or fall below grade. Emotionally disturbed children have an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellect, sensory, or health factors” he went further to say that “they may be unable to develop and keep appropriate, satisfactory social relationships with family, peers and adults in the school system. <https://www.verywellfamily.com> (2<sup>nd</sup> Sept. 2019)”

The emotionally disturb child sometimes look disturbed and withdrawn from others in class. These children are usually restless; although they are just like other child they attend the same music classes with their mates. “Each of these children has unique needs and abilities some of which are being met through special education”. Campbell and Kassner C.S (2006 pg 395).

### Emotionally Disturbed Child/Children

Music can be used as a therapy for the emotionally disturbed child “with proper planning of musical therapy program structured for the success of each individual”. <https://www.veryfamliy.com>.

### Characteristics of the Emotional Disturbed Child

There are some behaviors that are found in emotional disturbed children.

- They are usually hyper active that is they usually dump from one place to another; they pay less attention in class that means they have a short attention span.
- They are usually aggressive, usually fighting in class.
- Withdrawal with others, excessive fear or anxiety. [www.verywellfamily.com](http://www.verywellfamily.com)
- They usually behave immune, poor coping skills is a problem.
- They perform below academically.

Some children as they grow they can also exhibit some of this behavior, but when it continued for a long time we begin to see them as emotionally disturbed child. Individuals with Disabilities Education Acts (IDEAS) defines emotional disturbance as follows:

“... A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and a marked degree that adversely affects a child’s educational performance

- a) *An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.*
- b) *An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.*
- c) *Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstance.*
- d) *A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.*
- e) *A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems”.*

[www.parentcenterhub.org3/9/19](http://www.parentcenterhub.org3/9/19)

### **Emotional Disturbed Child in the Classroom**

When music is successfully planned and carried out considering this kind of children, it keeps them in check and balance.

Generally, the teacher should be sensitive and understand the student who exhibits these styles. The teacher should be able to do the following:

1. *Teacher should be open and honest from the onset with the student.*
2. *The teacher should discuss with the class members the challenges they have in the society. It will help to develop a positive attitude and also a sense of responsibility.*
3. *Films and filmstrips should be organized for the students.*
4. *Similarities should be emphasis instead of differences.*
5. *The teacher should be able to speak if he or she needs one.*

### **Children with Behavior Disorders**

Teachers often describe children with behavior disorders as being rowdy, aggressive and disruptive. Some children with this are also intelligent.

Music teachers as well as class room teachers should be able to recognize some behavior in children that has to do with attention disorder and students that find it difficult to pay attention in class. Some of them may have problem. The criteria for this student’s according to Rozmajzl & Campbell (2006)

1. *Often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat.*
2. *Has difficulty sitting still when required to do so.*
3. *Easily distracted.*
4. *Has difficulty waiting a turn.*
5. *Often burst out answers before being recognized.*
6. *Has difficulty finish an assignment.*
7. *Has difficulty paying attention.*
8. *Often shifts one uncompleted activity to another.*
9. *Has difficulty playing quietly.*
10. *Often walks excessively.*
11. *Often interrupts others.*
12. *Often does not seem to listen to what is being said.*
13. *Often loses things necessary to complete a task.*
14. *Often involves self in physical dangerous activities without considering possible consequences.*
15. *Is usually quite intelligent.*
16. *Usually succeeds in school and other life activities.*

### **Emotional Disturbed Child and Musical Experiences**

The student’s area of development is considered. Appropriate strategies and teaching goals should be employed by the teacher after the need of the child has been identified. “An individual Education Program (IEP) which includes developmental skills in music, helps serve this purpose, An IEP provides the classroom teacher and music teacher with a statement of:

- a) *The present level of educational performance of the mainstream of the child.*
- b) *Annual goals, including short-term instructional objectives.*

- c) *The specific educational services that will be provided to the student, and the extent to which the student will participate in regular educational programs*
- d) *The projected date for initiation and anticipated duration of such services and appropriate objective criteria.*
- e) *Evaluation procedures and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether instructional objectives are being achieved.”*

The musical experiences of the emotionally disturb child should be taken seriously; the music teacher should be knowledgeable and experienced to handle such children.

According to Slavin 1997 in Ugochukwu, B. C. 2018 “music be competent, capable and knowledgeable in the subject music, A special education music teacher is one out of all the teachers of education because he has children with disabilities as learners, she went further to say that the music teacher has to be one who will not only teach but understand the learner.

### **Educating Exceptional Children**

Educational need of every child should be paramount to any government, free education should be made for them, and their family should also have a say in their education. P.S Campbell and Kassner C.S (2006) stated that “individual cautioned plan, be developed for each individual, helping to place him/her in the least restrictive environment for growth.” Such children should not be neglected, the government or curriculum planners should have them in mind, so as to fit in, and support from their teachers will go a long way to help the child.

To indicate a child in disabilities in music, certain things are lay down according to P.S Campbell and C.S Kassner (2006). They are as follows:

1. *Music taps into nonverbal ways of knowing and allows children to express ideas regardless of verbal abilities. At the same time, singing can help children to develop vocabulary and understanding of language.*
2. *Music is multimodal in nature, stimulating the eyes, ears, and muscles along with the mind. Children who have a disability in one sensory area may still participate in music via other senses. The joy of producing sounds and movements draws children actively into the process of music making instead of requiring them to be passive receptors of new ideas.*
3. *Music can be performed at very sophisticated levels by rote. It is not necessary to be able to read music to perform it well. Although an important outcome of a quality music program is the skill of reading music, children who have difficulties with abstracts symbols, such as reading words or translating numbers, can still enjoy success in music.*
4. *Music making is generally a collaborative endeavor. Music is usually made and learned in groups, not alone. This is particularly true of preschool and elementary general music programs. Therefore, children can gain a sense of belonging and commitment to a group, which is important to social development.*
5. *Music, as a performing art, allows for the expression of a wide range of emotions, and it can communicate on very deep levels without the use of words. It stimulates and challenges people to grow aesthetically.*
6. *A single activity in music a classroom can be adapted to a wide range of ability levels.*
7. *Music, as a temporal art, challenges the mind to recognize patterns across time, a skill that often needs to be developed in children with patterning and memory deficits.*

Every child is unique in his/her own way, and their needs and ability is also unique, they need to be placed in a situation or place where they can grow instead of where they can be ignored or look down on.

When the focus is on developing musical skills in children it will create new ideas and the wellbeing of the child. For the music class to be effective, it should be well planned, good communication among everyone, cooperation should be paramount amongst them to achieve a set goal.

### **Emotionally Disturbed Children with Language Disorders**

Some of these emotionally disturbed children have problems in communicating, it is difficult to understand such children when they speak and they find it difficult to express ideas, voice quality is usually poor and they may not be

able to speak fluently. Because music has to do with activities that involve singing, these students tend to improve with time.

### **Emotionally Disturbed Children with Sensory Deficits**

Processing information is usually difficult in these kinds of children. When any of their sense organs is affected it becomes a problem in teaching. And these disabilities in them can hinder their success in the classroom setting.

### **2. Conclusion**

In conclusion, emotionally disturbed children when put together in other children in the classroom, should be given special attention.

When music is planned to meet the need of the emotionally disturbed children, it will go a long way in keeping them in check and balance. Music teachers should plan the music class or develop a program that includes a variety of musical experiences that has to do with sound production, speech or others. The creativity of the music teacher is very important for the fulfillment of the child's need.

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