

W. A. Sewwandi Anusewandi

University of Kelaniya, Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Music for Elders: A Case Study in an Elderly Home

Elders are persons 60 or more years old, who currently count for 12.3% of the population in Sri Lanka. The elderly population in the country is growing significantly, from 4.3% in 1973 to 11.5% in 2022. Until their retirement, the elders maintain dignified and energetic life and care for their families, fulfill responsibilities, and lead independent lives. The elderly age is the stage at which they expect care, love, and dignity from their loved ones. Until recent decades, the elders have commonly lived with their nuclear families, but with recent social changes, busy lifestyles, and families living abroad seeking better lives, the elders increasingly have no choice but to live in elderly homes. The age that needs more care, love, security, and happiness, remains lonely in such homes. This study focuses on how elders feel in elderly homes and how music contributes to their lives. A case study focusing on a selected elderly home setting in the Gampaha district will try to answer the question whether music helps their mental health and wellbeing in the new environment. The theoretical frame of this pilot study lies in the sub-field of ethnomusicology called applied ethnomusicology. Taking Kenneth Brummel-Smith (Alzheimer's disease), Alicia Ann Clair (Dementia), and Theresa A. Allison's research studies into consideration, this case study uses qualitative research methodology.

Bio

Anuradha Sewwandi has a B.A. honours degree from the University of Kelaniya and is currently a music teacher at the Sumedha College in Gampaha, Sri Lanka. She specializes in Western music, violin, and classical singing and is a member of the Gustav Mahler Orchestra Society of Colombo. She has published research papers as a part of undergraduate research symposiums.