

Shabdha Brahman: Yogic Mantra-Oriented Sound Consciousness Experience for the Wellbeing of Humankind



Randika Perera¹

Abstract

Contemporary wellness seekers utilize the various practices of yoga to promote well-being. As a mind-body intervention, yogic approaches to physical postures, breathing practices, and meditation have enriched the quality of secular and sacred living. However, apart from these practices in ancient India, its theological orientation has introduced a transcendental experience of *Shabdha Brahman* towards prosperity under a voice and speech-oriented application known as *mantra*. Considering the significance this study is majorly oriented towards exploring the seeds of the mantra yoga practice according to the concept of *Shabdha Brahman* and its consciousness experience contribution to the promotion of wellbeing of mankind. The study was done using the qualitative methodology and primary data was collected through religious text and interviews. Secondary data was also evaluated and analysis was done with the thematic method. The ancient Vedic tradition has utilized the mantra yoga practice as a ritualistic practice related to sacrifices or *yajnas*. Later this practice developed as a transcendental practice of experience for the *Shabdha Brahman*. The mantra yoga practice majorly focuses on driving individual sound and speech in four levels and directing individuals towards a walking state to the transcend experience. This practice of mantra yoga practice majorly utilizes the Sanskrit mantra of *Bija*, *Saguna*, and *Nirguna* mantra. According to Vedic science, the Sanskrit language can stimulate the energy points of the subtle body. Therefore, these mantra yoga practices generate a vibrational energy and purify the individual mind body, and soul. Contemporary sound and vocal-oriented practice have been combined with the music and aesthetic approach and utilized as the entertainment practice. Thus, mantra-orientated sound yoga practice and the experience of *Shabda Brahma* developed and promoted individual well-being from a scientific and therapeutic perspective in the present world.

Keywords

Mantra Yoga, *Shabdha Brahman*, Sound Consciousness, Wellbeing, Yoga

¹ Department of Indigenous Health Sciences, Faculty of Indigenous Health Sciences and Technology, Gampaha Wickramarachchi University of Indigenous Medicine, Sri Lanka, randika@gwu.ac.lk



Introduction

The Vedic civilization is founded on the philosophical, cultural, ritualistic, and religious practices of ancient India. Seeds of the yoga philosophy and practice have been rooted in the Vedic rituals and religious liberation pathway of *mokshopaya* (Heehs, 2002). Throughout the ancient era to the present, yoga has developed as an ancient science, art, philosophy, and practice to elevate the human being from the ordinary consciousness to the experience of supreme consciousness for the well-being of secular living and cessation of misery for the achievement of sacred realization. To fulfill the goals of yoga, ancient seers have introduced several technologies and through the adaptation of those practices, an individual can move towards the experience of the supreme nature (McCrary, 2013). According to the Vedic teachings, the supreme state is known as the *Brahman*, and among the various practices of yoga, the sound-related approach is utilized to experience *Brahma*. This consciousness of *Brahma* is referred to as the *Shabdha Brahman*. The practice of sound or nada yoga employs two approaches to facilitate the experience the *Brahman*: the use of external sounds, which helps in focusing the mind and connecting with higher consciousness, and the experience of internal sounds, often achieved through meditation, leading to a direct encounter with *Brahman*. They are known as the *Mantra* and *Kirtan* recitation (Paul, 2010). The practice of *kirtan* directs to the seeker towards consciousness with devotion or emotional purity and *mantra* practices through continuous recitation of the Sanskrit *mantra* directs the individual toward the consciousness. The significant feature of this practice is that it is not bound to the ancient period and contemporary mantra-orientated sound-related yoga practice is utilized for the enrichment of individual consciousness and well-being promotion (Das, 2018). However, scholars have explored the scientific foundation of the mantra-oriented sound yoga practice although they were inadequate in the synthesis of the Vedic philosophy of sound and mantra yoga practice and examining the association between sound and consciousness originated through the mantra yoga for human well-being according to the contemporary utility of sound yoga. Therefore, the research question of this study is driven by whether the mantra-oriented sound yoga or nada yoga practice enriches the human consciousness and it makes influences on well-being promotion. The research objective of the study is to explore the mantra-oriented sound yoga practice seeded and evolved in the Vedic tradition and spectrum of the mantra yoga

practice. Then, this study evaluated the contemporary nature and utility of the mantra yoga-oriented sound practice and its influence on the development of the well-being of humankind.

Present scholars and researchers have recognized that sound-oriented mantra yoga practice has the potential to make changes in brain waves and enrich human consciousness. However, their attention has been driven less on exploring the enrichment of the consciousness process according to the Vedic viewpoint and present practice (Hersey, 2013). Vedic religion and culture have given recognition to sound theology and focused on making the purity of consciousness for the well-being promotion secular to a sacred level. Further, mantra yoga practice also has a philosophical and a scientific foundation. The theories related to this phenomenon have been majorly explained in the ancient Vedic literature and seers related to the yoga practice. The spectrum of the mantra yoga practice has evolved in the Vedic civilization and later it has transformed in many perspectives according the contemporary era. Presently, yoga practitioners and psychic seekers have developed this mantra yoga as an aesthetic and meditative approach. The present utility of the mantra yoga practice enriches the human consciousness and helps to develop human health in physical, mental emotional, and spiritual aspects.

Methodology

This study is a qualitative study and primary and secondary sources were examined from the data collection. The primary sources were the Vedic and yoga philosophy texts related to the mantra of yoga philosophy and practice. Through the evaluation of the primary sources, the expected outcome was recognized as the philosophical or theoretical foundation of the mantra yoga practice. The second primary data collection method was focused group interviewing. This interview mainly focused on collecting information related to the mantra yoga practice. The group consisted of the yoga teacher. Secondary data were collected through the material related to mantra yoga philosophy and practice. The data analysis method was the thematic analysis method and data were presented under five themes namely, Sound Yoga in Vedic Religion and Culture, Mantra Yoga and Sound Consciousness, Spectrum of Mantra Yoga Practice, Contemporary Practice of Mantra Yoga, Mantra Yoga Consciousness; and Wellbeing.

Results and Discussion

The practice of yoga originated and developed in India and contemporarily this has evolved as a mind-body practice and intervention. For the development of human well-being, ancient seers

have introduced several paths of yoga which are known as Raja Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga, and Jnana Yoga. Yoga utilizes several technologies and paths to overcome the miseries and sorrows of human existence. These practices can be recognized as the *Asana* (physical posture), *Pranayama* (breathing practice), *Mudra and Bandha* (Psychic energy manipulation), and *Dhyana* (meditation practice). These yoga practices enrich human physical, mental, social, and spiritual health in an evidence-based manner. However, apart from the mentioned yoga practices, another dimension of yoga practice was formulated in the Vedic period. This is known as the sound yoga or the theological sound yoga practice. From the ancient era to the present, this has been transformed due to various perspectives, and presently this consciousness experience is utilized as a sound-oriented therapeutic intervention. The above-mentioned dimensions are discussed in five themes of follow:

Sound Yoga in Vedic Religion and Culture

The Vedic religion is theological and accepts the divinity of the creator. Teachings and practices of the Vedic religion are majorly elaborated under the literature of *samhitha*. The text of the *Chathur Veda*, *Rig Veda*, *Yajurveda*, *Sama Veda*, and *Atharava Veda* majorly elaborated on the religion and religious practices in Vedic society (Dalal, 2014). However, the evolution of the Vedic period and literature has further evolved with the period of the *Brahmana*, *Aranyaka*, and *Upanishad*. Therefore the Vedic religion is a collective doctrine of all these traditions. According to the text of the *Chathurveda*, it highlights the respective society's belief in the number of gods and one respective god becomes superior due to the available cultural and social factors (Doniger, 2010). During the Vedic period, a major religious activity was performing fire rituals or conducting the *yajnas* and *homas* as a sacred offering to the gods. Throughout these practices, they perform *homapuja* as a ritualistic activity. As a part of the ritual, they recite the mantra to complete their sacrifices. This is evidentially proven in the content of the *Yajur Veda* and *Sama Veda* (Vanamali, 2015). The teachings of the *Yajur Veda* explain the procedures that need to be followed in the *yajna* and fire ritual, and the *Sama Veda* highlights the mantra and sound recited towards the gods. Later, the concept of God transformed into monotheism and the ultimate objective was to achieve the supreme person who is known as the *Brahma*. This tradition has been formulated in the period of the *Upanishad* (Radhakrishnan, 1992). The ultimate goal of the *Upanishad* was the union with the *Brahma* or *paramatman*. The unique feature of the Vedic religion and culture was that they introduced a pragmatic path for the experience of the *Brahma* or the supreme nature. During the *Samhita* period, this union was established through various practices such as the fire ritual and *yajna*.

However, towards the latter part of the Vedic period, seers introduced the path of yoga and the remaining Vedic practices. Under the various approaches, the Vedic religion introduced a sound-oriented path for the experience of the Brahman. This is known as the *Shabda Brahman* (Muni, 2001). If an individual is willing to experience Brahman through sound-oriented practice the experience and supreme nature have been defined as *Shabda Brahman*. The Vedic religion and culture have introduced two dimensions of sound. These are known as the *ahatha nada* and *anahatha nada* (Biagi & BalaYogi, 2023). *Nada* or sound can be originated through the human voice or physical object. The word *nada* is a combination of the syllables of *na* and *da*. The syllable *na* stands for the *prana* or life force and *da* stands for the *agni*, fire or the intelligence force. This explanation highlights that the word *nada* or Vedic sound means individual potential of life force and pure intelligence (Shumsky, 2006). The Vedic sound of *ahatha* means the sound that originated or is physically created. The human sound experience created through force with an audible frequency can be recognized as the *ahatha nada*. The sound approach of *anahatha nada* means cosmic sound generated through the mantra or repetitions of Sanskrit verse directed towards the sound of the universe or silence. The experience of god or *sabda brahman* is experienced through the *anahatha nada* since the external sound can be only experienced through the cosmic sound. The Vedic culture and religion have introduced the pragmatic sound-orientated practice to experience of the *anahatha nada*. The early periods of the Vedic culture have performed several *yajanas* as part of their daily route. These *yajans* are known as *Manushya Yajna*, *Devata Yajna*, *Pitr Yajna*, and *Brahma Yajna*. Through the *yajna*, the enrolled person performs rituals and make their sacrifices in various forms, and spells or repetition of the words of the Sanskrit mantra and generate the experience of vibration from the subtle level to the cosmic level and activate the cosmic energy (Prakash & Arya, 2017). Therefore, Vedic culture and religion have recognized the sound-oriented practice of mantra recitation as essential for achieving the supreme nature of Vedic spirituality. Building on this foundation, the practice of mantra yoga has evolved, leading to the experience of *Shabda Brahman* through the sound-oriented traditions of the Vedic heritage.

Mantra Yoga and Sound Consciousness

The major goals of yoga practice are to free the individual mind from the modifications that occur in the mind and to purify the mind for the achievement of self-realization. All the yoga practices are majorly directed towards achieving this goal and practice is developed according to this need. The practice of mantra yoga is also majorly directed toward achieving these goals

and it can be recognized through the word *mantra*. The word *mantra* is derived from two Sanskrit syllables of *man* and *tra*. The word *man* idealizes the mind or intellectual and *tra* means, to protect, go cross, and to free (Jones & Ryan, 2006). Therefore, the mantra can be recognized as a yoga practice that creates a union among the mind, body, and soul from the waking to the transcended stage. The sound of the mantra yoga practice directs the individual to the experience of the *ahata* to *anahata* nada. This consciousness experience is described in the Vedic literature as below (Paul, 2010);



Figure 1: Four Stages of Sound

The Vedic mantra yoga practice is associated with speech sound and the consciousness experience in successive phrases. Individual recitation of the mantra yoga is firstly linked with the state of *vaikhari*. The stage of *vaikhari* is the individual recitation of the mantra and the ability to experience speech and sound or articulation of sound in the ordinary human experience. The chanting seeker continues to engage in the mantra yoga practice and they will move toward the second stage or the experience of the *madhyama*. The second stage of *madhyama* is known as the mantra recitation experience whereby an individual develops the ability to generate images or ideations regarding the mantra they recite. These two levels represent the experience of the *ahata* sound. The stages of the *Prashyanti* and *Para* represent the *Anahata* stage and the supreme consciousness experience is related to the *shabda brahman* (Rao, 2018). The continued practice of the mantra recitation directs individuals to the deep sleep stages and develops internal vision. Further, in this stage, individuals go beyond the ordinary sensory experience. The highest stage of the sound experience is known as the *para* and the individual can experience the divinity or exposure to the cosmic beyond the ordinary experience and the manifestation of the Brahma occurs. This ultimate experience is known as the *turiya* or *Shabda Brahman*. The consciousness experience can be recognized as the dreamless sleep or stillness of mind will be generated and unconsciousness will be purified. Moreover, the cessation of the modification of the mind will be enabled in this stage with the experience of *Shabha Brahman* (Dey, 1990). In addition, this experience is known as the

beginning and endless process and the absorption of the power of the deity through the power of sound. Therefore, the *Shabda Brahman* can be recognized as an experience of the supreme consciousness and divinity which originated from the use of sound and speech. The mantra yoga practice is utilized as the pragmatic approach to the experience of supreme sound divinity. This process is not adequate for spiritual health it develops the physical strength and mental purification of the individual through the mantra-oriented sound practice (Radha, 2005).

Spectrum of Mantra Yoga Practice

The major sound-related yoga practice can be recognized as mantra yoga. Mantra can be recognized as a combination of Sanskrit words and phrases that are chanted, whispered, or silently recited as a powerful meditation and therapeutic tool. Further, the practice of the mantra is directed towards the stillness of the mind and the experience of deeper consciousness. The ancient Vedic civilization utilized the practice of mantra practice for the fulfillment of the various goals of human life. To the fulfillment of the goals of spirituality, secular living, health and wellness, and economic prosperity individuals have utilized the practice of mantra (Frawley, 2010). However, the practice related to the *Shabda Brahman* is associated with the mantra related to the *moksha* or spirituality. The foundation of the mantra practice can be recognized from two perspectives and each mantra represents the six limbs and is associated with the *mantra purusha*. The six limbs of the mantra are seer (*rishi*), deity (*devata*), seed (*bija*), energy (*shakti*), meter (*chanda*), Kilaka (*lock*). Every mantra has been created by the seers or rishi in their deep exploration of meditation. The mantra represents the energy of the specific deity and consists of the Sanskrit sound of *bija* and energy is associated with the mantra. Further, to direct the seeker for the proper use of the mantra the Vedic technology has introduced the techniques of *chanda* and *kilaka* for the effective use of the mantra (Swami, 2017). The most unique feature of the mantra yoga practice is the use of the Sanskrit language (Lowitz & Datta, 2009). Recent, research has highlighted the significant feature of the mantra is the use of the Sanskrit language because scholars have recognized that the Sanskrit mantra has the ability to make a change and positive impact on the human brain waves (Gao et.al, 2017). This is more explained under the concept of the *mantra purusha*. According to the concept of the *mantra purusha* through the recitation of the Sanskrit mantra individuals can stimulate the gross and subtle body made-up through the sound (Frawley, 2010). The mantra recitation process sound vibrates the body of sound and changes the frequencies of the entire three types of bodies. From a pragmatic perspective, the major mantra is recognized as the practice of OM. OM has transformed into a significant practice because the Vedic tradition has

recognized the OM as the sound of cosmology presenting the creation, preservation, and destruction similar to the *Trimurti* in Hinduism (Rodrigues, 2023). However, according to the mantra yoga practice each mantra consists of a seed or *bija* sound. OM can be recognized as the major seed sound of all the mantras (Beck, 1995). Reciting the mantra OM generates cosmic and vibrational energy, channeling this force from consciousness to the unconscious mind. This can have a positive impact on thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Depending on the principle of the OM the practice of mantra has originated and mantra tradition can be recognized in the *Saguna* and the *Nirguna* mantra (Devananda, 1999). The seeker performs a mantra based on a deity or form known as the *saguna* mantra and the formless mantra is known as the *nirguna* mantra. Through the practice of the *saguna* mantra, the seeker's goal is to generate the qualities of divinity and purify emotions through vibration, and the *nirguna* mantra vibrates the individual and enhances the experience of consciousness (Radha, 2005). A few examples of the *Saguna mantra* are given below:

			
OM Namah Shivaya	OM Namo Narayan	OM Gam Ganapataye Namah	OM Hanumate Namah

Figure 2: The *Saguna* Mantras in the Mantra Yoga Practice

The practice of the *saguna* mantra is mainly directed towards the manifestation of the energy of *Sakti* in the individual through speech sound and visualization for the awakening of the consciousness. Further, this practice performs as a meditation or a *dhyana* approach on the affective transformation. However, the second form of the mantra practice is *nirguna* or formless mantra practice is free from the form or deity performing the Sanskrit verse repetitively in the mantra yoga practices. *Gayatri Mantra*, *Chakra bija mantra*, *So ham*, and *maha mrityunjaya mantra* can be recognized as the *nirguna mantra*. The continuous practice of the *nirguna* mantra yoga practice generates and attracts cosmic energy rather than the deity energy throughout the sound and vocals (Aiyasamy, 2019). Moreover, the practice of mantra is performed as the *Japa Yoga*. Japa means continuous repetitions of the Sanskrit mantra. This continuous sound generation process of the japa or repetition makes the experience of sound

from the state of the *vaikhari* to the *para*. The practice is performed through three aspects, and those are known as *vaihkari*, *upamasu*, and *manasikara* (Sivananda, 1972). This sound-generating process generates the sound in the waking state to the mental visualization state. Moreover, breathing or the pranayama practice of also essential for generating the *pranic* energy with the mantra yoga practice. Thus, the spectrums of mantra yoga generate the sounds through the vocals in the human-to-cosmic experience with the utility of the numerous approaches of mantra yoga.

Contemporary Practice of Mantra Yoga

Contemporary the practice of mantra yoga has combined with the *bhakti yoga* tradition and offered as a non-religious aesthetic practice for the transcendental experience. This experience is combined with the approach of the *kirtan* or call response approach. The practice of *kirtan* is combined with the mantra and continues repeating the mantra with the use of musical instruments (Girish, 2016). On most occasions, these musical instruments are Eastern music instruments. The world's most renowned mantra yoga singers are Krishna Das, Deva Premlal, and other meditation and relaxation music healers and composers (Krishna Das Music, 2023). Further mantra-orient music festivals are conducted around the world and individuals participate in the events and experience the consciousness as a sonic community. Throughout the aesthetic presentation of the mantra, an individual may experience the vibration and the blessing of the deity. Further, these experiences will be richer with the participation of the participation of peers because they also enroll in the musical experience and generate more vibration in the individual. Therapeutically this will help individuals free from distractions and move towards the emptiness in the mind and deeper relaxation (Paul, 2010). This relaxation experience is a similar experience to the *shabda brahman* because the nature of the *shabdha brahman* is a transcended experience of emptiness and relaxation. This transcended experience developed through the vibration. Since, as earlier mentioned the individual subtle body energy points can be stimulated through the Sanskrit mantra recitation. According to the concept of *mantra purusha*, 16 sounds are associated with the head and senses, 25 sounds with trunk and limbs, and nine sounds with tissues. These mantra points are related to the prime marmas or sensitive points on the body. Through the mantra recitation sound and the *prana* are associated and Sanskrit mantras stimulate the body throughout the consciousness and are directed toward the consciousness (Frawley, 1999). Then, individuals can generate peace and stillness of the mind. This sound-related experience, Brahma is presently generated through the commercial utility of the mantra yoga practice by the above-mentioned musicians. Moreover, this

experience can be recognized as the experience of spirituality through sound, music, and dance. From a spiritual perspective, the deities of Hinduism present many energies in the cosmology and human existence. Throughout the recitation of the mantra, the individual wishes to develop the energies in the individual for a better life (Vaughan, 2019). The individual is directed towards a mystical experience through the contemporary mantra yoga practice for the expression of bhakti or devotion. Beyond the sound and music-related experience this contemporary experience of the mantra yoga practice can be recognized as a meditational approach (Dudeja, 2017). The Vedic practice of the mantra in the contemporary era is utilized as an approach to meditation or *dhyana* with the repetition of the mantra and an individual may practice the mantra with the practice of physical posture and breathing practices.

Mantra Yoga Consciousness and Wellbeing

The mantra recitation practice and the experience of the *shabda Brahman* contribute to the development and promotion of human well-being. As discussed above, mantra yoga practice can be recognized as a continuous repetition of the Sanskrit phrase. This yogic practice contributes to individual wellness promotion in various aspects. As per our physical health, continuous recitation of the mantra is associated with the breathing process, and in a mantra yoga practice, this is known as the *prana*. Through this process, individual can enhance the efficiency of their respiratory system. From a psychological perspective, focusing on breathing and cultivating awareness through mantra recitation provides significant benefits for mental health. Proper mantra yoga recitation enables individuals to develop mindfulness and become more aware of their experiences. Continuous practice can also help reduce mind wandering and the flow of constant thoughts (Samajdar & Mukherjee, 2020). Moreover, stress levels decrease, leading to improved attention and focus on daily activities, accompanied by a more positive attitude and mindset. In addition, mental, physical, and transcended aspects throughout the mantra yoga practice individuals are able to make the total silence of the mind through the energetic vibration received from the vocals and sound generated through the mantra. Further, according to the Vedic teachings, individuals can experience the supreme nature of the *Shabda Brahman*. Moreover, through the form-oriented mantra yoga practice of the *saguna mantra* individuals can be in union with the divine personality. As a result of connecting with the individual divinity makes the purity of the emotions and release from the negative emotions (Rani, 2015). The establishment of the proper functions of mentality and emotions enriches the individual experience of the social relationship. When an individual has the ability to maintain a positive relationship ultimately it will be beneficial for the development of social wellbeing.

Therefore, in therapeutic and wellness aspects the experience of the *Shabda Brahman* of the mantra yoga practice individuals able to develop a more positive outlook in their mind body, and soul.

Present scholars have further explored the clinical and therapeutic foundation of mantra yoga from a scientific perspective. According to contemporary research, the practice of mantra recitation majorly interacts with and influences the function of the brain. The repetition of the mantra reduces the unidirectional and whispering cortical activation through the relaxation power of the repetitive speech (Berkovich et.al, 2015). Moreover, the studies that have been performed based on Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) have shown limbic deactivation. The activation of the limbic majorly influences the activation of the hypothalamic pituitary and adrenal glands. The activation of these areas of the brain majorly activates the response related to stress and produces the numerous hormones needed the cope with the stress. This response can be negative and positive and activates the long-lasting pattern of stress. This condition can be controlled through the mantra yoga practice because scientists have explored that through the mantra yoga practice, individuals can deactivate the limbic system or generate a non-stressful situation (Kalyani et.al, 2011). Moreover, another study related to the OM recitation also recognized the positive influence of the mantra yoga practice for a positive change in the function of the brain. According to this study, scientists have recognized that the practice of mantra yoga enhances the function of the parasympathetic nervous system. The general viewpoint function of the parasympathetic nervous system is to provide energy to the physiological function of the body and provide the experience of relaxation and resting. Throughout the mantra yoga practice, this process will be expanded and the consequence of this function is it makes a more relaxing experience and improves the calmness (Inbaraj, 2022). Moreover, the researchers related to yoga and neurology have highlighted, that the practices of yoga increase the volume of the insula and hippocampus increasing activation of prefrontal cortical regions and functional connectivity all the positive responses of the brain (Van et.al, 2020). The consequence of this process is to increase the positive response of the brain and effective behaviors in the day-to-day life. Because the practice of mantra yoga is not limited to a specific practice recently the practice of mantra yoga practice is combined with the other yoga practices of physical posture breathing and meditation, while throughout the aesthetic practice, individuals combine the mantra and perform the practice. Therefore, individuals experience more benefits related to the overall yoga practice. In addition, the practice of mantra yoga practice helps to overcome stress, anxiety, hypertension, and immunity-related diseases.

Conclusion

The historical perceptive on the practice of mantra yoga emphasizes its roots in the purity of *Shabda Brahman*, or the transcendental experience central to Vedic culture and religion. By reciting Sanskrit mantras and cultivating their voice and speech, individuals could elevate their consciousness from the waking state to the *turiya*, or the state of pure consciousness. According to the Vedic region and culture, this is a spiritual practice. However, it has been transformed into a separate practice in yoga and utilized for the betterment of secular living. Ancient traditions have developed several types of mantra practice and contemporary seekers have utilized this mantra practice based on various perspectives. Some individuals utilize the mantra by combining other yoga practices and others as a separate practice. Moreover, at present, mantra recitation has been combined with music and experience as an aesthetic practice. Thus, contemporary mantra yoga practice or experience of consciousness of the *Shabda Brahman* has transformed in diverse perspectives. The consequence of mantra yoga practice enhances individual well-being in physical, mental, emotional social, and spiritual aspects. This health development and well-being, promoted with the mantra yoga practice, has been clinically and scientifically proven by the researchers on the mantra and vocal recitation practice. Therefore, the scientifically grounded practice of vocals and music-oriented mantra yoga, rooted in *Shabdha Brahman*, holds significant health and therapeutic value for promoting well-being in today's challenges.

References

- Aiyasamy, P.K. (2019). *Science of Yoga – A Comprehensive Approach*. Delhi: Notion Press.
- Beck, G. L. (1995). *Sonic Theology*. India: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Berkovich-Ohana, A., Wilf, M., Kahana, R., Arieli, A., & Malach, R. (2015). Repetitive speech elicits widespread deactivation in the human cortex: the "Mantra" effect? *Brain and behavior*, 5(7), e00346. <https://doi.org/10.1002/brb3.346>
- Biagi, D. S. L., Balayogi Bhavanani, A. (2023). *Nada Yoga: The Vibratory Essence of the Yoga of Sound*. United Kingdom: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Dey, S. C. (1990). *The Quest for Music Divine*. India: Ashish Publishing House.
- Devananda, S. V. (1999). *Meditation and Mantras*. India: Motilal Banarsidass.

Dudeja, J. P. (2017). Scientific analysis of mantra-based meditation and its beneficial effects: An overview. *International Journal of Advanced Scientific Technologies in Engineering and Management Sciences*, 3(6), 21-26.

Das, K. (2018). *Chants of a Lifetime: Searching for a Heart of Gold*. United States: Hay House.

Dalal, R. (2014). *The Vedas: An Introduction to Hinduism's Sacred Texts*. India: Penguin Books Limited.

Doniger, W. (2010). *The Hindus: An Alternative History*. United Kingdom: OUP Oxford.

Frawley, D. (2010). *Mantra Yoga and Primal Sound: Secret of Seed (bija) Mantras*. United States: Lotus Press.

Frawley, D. (1999). *Yoga and Ayurveda: Self-Healing and Self Realization*. United States: Lotus Press.

Gao, J., Fan, J., Wu, B. W., Halkias, G. T., Chau, M., Fung, P. C., Chang, C., Zhang, Z., Hung, Y. S., & Sik, H. (2017). Repetitive Religious Chanting Modulates the Late-Stage Brain Response to Fear- and Stress-Provoking Pictures. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7, 2055. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.02055>

Girish. (2016). *Music and Mantras: The Yoga of Mindful Singing for Health, Happiness, and Peace & Prosperity*. United States: Atria/Enliven Books.

Heehs, Peter. (2002). *Indian Religions: A Historical Reader of Spiritual Expression and Experience*. United Kingdom: Hurst.

Hersey, B. (2013). *The Practice of Nada Yoga: Meditation on the Inner Sacred Sound*. United States: Inner Traditions/Bear.

Inbaraj, G., Rao, R. M., Ram, A., Bayari, S. K., Belur, S., Prathyusha, P. V., Sathyaprabha, T. N., & Udupa, K. (2022). Immediate Effects of OM Chanting on Heart Rate Variability Measures Compared Between Experienced and Inexperienced Yoga Practitioners. *International journal of yoga*, 15(1), 52–58. https://doi.org/10.4103/ijoy.ijoy_141_21

Jones, C., Ryan, J. D. (2006). *Encyclopedia of Hinduism*. United States: Facts On File, Incorporated.

Kalyani, B. G., Venkatasubramanian, G., Arasappa, R., Rao, N. P., Kalmady, S. V., Behere, R. V., Rao, H., Vasudev, M. K., & Gangadhar, B. N. (2011). Neurohemodynamic correlates of 'OM' chanting: A pilot functional magnetic resonance imaging study. *International journal of yoga*, 4(1), 3–6. <https://doi.org/10.4103/0973-6131.78171>

Krishna Das Music, (2023, November, 23). Krishna Das Live in London 2022. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7XlAngS2L1Y>

Lowitz, L., Datta, R. (2009). *Sacred Sanskrit Words: For Yoga, Chant, and Meditation*. United States: Stone Bridge Press.

McCrary, M. (2013). *Pick Your Yoga Practice: Exploring and Understanding Different Styles of Yoga*. United States: New World Library.

Muni, S. R. (2001). *Yoga: The Ultimate Spiritual Path*. United States: Llewellyn Publications.

Paul, R. (2010). *The Yoga of Sound: Tapping the Hidden Power of Music and Chant*. United States: New World Library.

Prakash, A. R. O., Arya, R. P. (2017). *Vedic Prayers: Vedic Yajna Vidhi*. India: Indian Foundation for Vedic Science.

Rani, S. (2015). Effect of Kirtan on Emotional Maturity. *International Journal of Yoga and Allied Science*, 4, 128-132.

Radhakrishnan, S. (1992). *The Principal Upanishads*. United Kingdom: Humanity Books.

Rao, M. (2018). *Living Mantra: Mantra, Deity, and Visionary Experience Today*. Germany: Springer International Publishing.

Radha, S. S. (2005). *Mantras: Words of Power*. Canada: Timeless Books.

Rodrigues, H. P. (2023). *Introducing Hinduism*. United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis.

Samajdar, S. S., & Mukherjee, S., (2020). Effect of Gayatri Mantra Chanting on Attention, Memory, Anxiety and Mental State in Young Athletes: A Prospective Study. *International Journal of Current Research in Physiology and Pharmacology*, 4(3), 5–7. <https://doi.org/10.31878/ijcrpp.2020.43.02>

Sivananda, Swami. (1972). *Japa Yoga: Comprehensive Treatise on Mantra Sastra*. Divine Life Society

Swami, O. (2017). *The Ancient Science of Mantras: Wisdom of the Sages*. India: Amazon Digital Services LLC - KDP Print US.

Shumsky, S. G. (2006). *Exploring Chakras: Awaken Your Untapped Energy*. India: New Age Books, India.

Vanamali. (2015). *The Science of the Rishis: The Spiritual and Material Discoveries of the Ancient Sages of India*. United States: Inner Traditions/Bear.

Vaughan-Lee, L. (2019). *Spiritual Power: How It Works*. United States: Golden Sufi Center

Van Aalst, J., Ceccarini, J., Demyttenaere, K., Sunaert, S., & Van Laere, K. (2020). What Has Neuroimaging Taught Us on the Neurobiology of Yoga? A Review. *Frontiers in integrative neuroscience*, 14, 34. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnint.2020.00034>