

NĀDAYOGA AND KĪRTANA AS A THERAPY IN MAINTENANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALING

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ABSTRACT

Bharat i.e., India is a great land of different arts and sciences which develops gigantic branches of knowledge. One of the beautiful things in the human mind is the capacity of Imagination, that is, the manifestation of the thought process. It is so similar to see, to listen, to feel, to go through inside the mind. All this is to connect the own energy with supreme source of consciousness & knowledge, it is Meditation on the self. The Meditative art have different dimensions like Āyurveda, Music, Yoga, and many more, all these branches have a lot of possibilities as a 'Therapy' to heal an individual or a society. Nādayoga and Kīrtana are basic part of human life from the time immemorial that used knowingly and unknowingly both. Everyone has lots of travel journey in which bundles of incidents arises in the form of pleasant voice of mind, to remember and go through the continuous recalling the Ísvara. All this process is called as Nādayoga and Kīrtana.

Keywords: Nādayoga, Kīrtana, Music, Yoga, Āyurveda, Therapy

INTRODUCTION

The possibility of life in the world is that topic on which no one can say in a prudent way, just because most of the arts and science of life are based on the actions of heart not on the brain. Life of Human is very interesting in the different platforms where Karmas dominates powerfully; Karmas are the main medium of interpretation of emotions and feelings. Language is a formal way of fortitude, gratitude and attitude in the whole world; in Bharat there are 22 languages enlisted in the Constitution but in the bottom line there are hundreds of languages exist in the Bharat i.e., India. Kīrtana is one of the most common religious and spiritual practices in all over the Indian regions viz. South India, North India, North-East India and others.

In all the religions, whenever anyone is in any kind of suffering or pain generally go the spiritual places from the time immemorial. The goal is to develop a strong path of strength, devotion, harmony and love; somewhere such types of religious congregations are generally practice in groups in all over the world. Especially in India, there are number of cultures in the different communities, geographical areas and Religious Mandālī (fraternities). The sound based practices to memorize the Ísvara, God, Almighty or something higher energy are called by different names viz. Kīrtana or Nāma Jap or Saṁkīrtana or Bhajana or Qavvālī or many more.

The response system of Human brain is based on the receiving and sending the messages from the daily interactions. Solving an equation, feeling hungry, laughing - the neural processes needed for each of these activities occur in different parts of the brain.¹ There are

various features of human brain which includes brain waves, hormone levels, blood intake and many more. All these factors are directly responsible for the behavior in the daily life e.g., an EEG measures the brain waves like Delta, Theta, Alpha, Beta and Gamma are shown the mechanism of the brain. In other words, it can be said as coordination level of body and mind can be easily understood by such investigations; Human emotions like Happiness, Sorrow, Grief, Pain, Pleasure and Love can be checked by these methods.

| Characteristics of 5 Brain Waves ² | | |
|---|-----------|---|
| Frequency band | Frequency | Brain states |
| Gamma (γ) | >35 Hz | Concentration |
| Beta (β) | 12–35 Hz | Anxiety dominant, active, external attention, relaxed |
| Alpha (α) | 8–12 Hz | Very relaxed, passive attention |
| Theta (θ) | 4–8 Hz | Deeply relaxed, inward focused |
| Delta (δ) | 0.5–4 Hz | Sleep |

In this matter, it is very obvious to look into the matter of levels of hormones like Dopamine (feel good hormone), Serotonin (Mood Control Hormone), Oxytocin (love hormone) and Endorphins (body's natural painkillers). Neurotransmitters are the chemical substances that neurons use to communicate with other neurons, muscle fibers, and glands.

There is a beautiful point of view of Kīrtana from the different sciences of India viz.

- **Ayurveda** – Ayurveda is an important element of Indian lifestyle, which narrates as a complete science of life including Doṣa (Vāta, Pitta and Kapha), Dhātu (Rasa, Rakta, Māṃsa, Medya, Asthi, Majjā and Śukra) and Mala (Sveda, Mūtra and Purīṣa). These three major functions of living human body determine all the physical and mental processes. Daivavyāpāśraya Cikitsā is synonymous of 'Spiritual Therapy' in Ayurveda which is completely for mental problems; where psychic factors and somatic factors both exist. This branch is dealt with the unknown and unseen circumstances of human body and mind which are completely beyond the projection of thinking capacity of humans. Such branch produces confidence & strength in one side and on the other side, it eliminate fear and behavior of pessimism.

तत्र दैव व्यपाश्रयम् - मन्त्रौषधि मणि मंगल बल्युपहार होम नियम

प्रायश्चित्तोपवास स्वस्त्यन प्रणिपात गमनादि

Tatra Daiva Vyapāśrayam - Mantrauśadhi Maṇi Mangala Balyupahāra Homa Niyama
 Prāyaścītopavāsa Svastyana Praṇipāta Gamanādi

Caraka Samhitā Sūtrasthāna³ 11/45

Following are the parts of Daivavyāpaśraya Cikitsā such kind of treatment is done by keeping the Daiva i.e., Íśvara in the centre; such as *Mantra* (Incantation), *Oushadadharna* (Talisman), *Manidharana* (wearing of Jewels), *Mangalakarma* (practicing of auspicious rites), *Bali* (religious sacrifices), *Upaharam* (Oblations), *Homa* (offerings in sacred fire), *Niyama* (Vows), *Prayaschitha* (Atonement), *Upavasam* (fasting), *Swasthyana* (Auspicious hymens), *Pranipatham* (paying obeisance) and *Gamanam* (Pilgrimage).

Recitation of the Viṣṇu Sahastranāma⁴ is helpful in the treatment of fever; this is an example of Mantra Cikitsā mentioned in Daivavyāpaśraya Cikitsā.

ततः रक्षोघ्नैश्च मन्त्रै रक्षां कुर्वीत।

Tataḥ..... Rakṣoghnaishca Mantrai Rakṣāṁ Kurvīta

Suśruta Saṁhitā Sūtrasthāna⁵ 5/17

Also in Sushruta Samhita, it is clearly mentioned, Mantra to be chant for protection from microbes. Such practices are based on words, phrases and syllables are continuously repeated as their essence is dissolved in the consciousness.

One another tool of Daivavyāpaśraya Cikitsā is *Gamanam* i.e., going to Pilgrimage. Whenever anyone have a plan to visit, to roam, to wander in any spiritual place like Kedāranātha; the process which happens automatically inside the mind and body is popularly known as Kīrtana. Such practices are already by the great saints of Ayurveda.

- **Music** – Indian Classical Music system has a widespread tradition of knowledge through different Gharānā of Vocal Music, Instrumental Music and Dance. Such renowned Gharānā preserve and cultivate the Cultural image of India; for which felicitation being provided not only by the society but also by layman always. Music is a *Svara Sāadhanā* which emerges from Sāmaveda; is always a part of Indian lifestyle. Music has a direct connection with the Spirituality which helps the human to sustain with the high caliber in the life. From the beginning of cosmos, human absorbs Music as a tool for the demonstration of thoughts, emotions and feelings. Especially in the Indian Classical Music, when an artist or practitioner starts Riyāza (daily practice of music) initially match the tone of Tānapurā for singing, dancing and instrumental performance; it is very identical to match the frequency of Mind and Body with Ātmā (Soul).
- **Yoga** – Yoga is one of the major centre points of attractive discussion about Cosmos and Human from the time of evolution. Understanding the pattern of mind & body is the core part of Indian thought process. Different streams of Yoga helps an individual to connect with the own Ātmā in a very easy manner viz. Rājayoga, Hathayoga, Kriyāyoga, Layayoga, Karmayoga, Jñānayog, Mantrayoga, Nādayoga and many more.

There are different methods and formats of chanting in Yoga practice which are fully based on the receiving and sending the mental, emotional, and psychological signals to the body & mind. Continuity of Yoga practice reveals the way of focusing the mind and body together by simply doing some practical approach of Kīrtana based on the philosophy of Yoga. Such Yogic practices develops an intuition of seeing inside the body in a powerful way, Kīrtana always acts like a heart-opening activity for an individual resultantly mental healing starts tremendously.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Nādayoga Therapy and Kīrtana therapy are the core part of which governs the science of travelling inside the body and mind through the divine sounds of cosmos. Every word or syllable or alphabet exist in the cosmos have a strong vibration, energy, frequency and power; practicing Meditation on such sounds produces a powerful body and sharp mind. These are the traditional practices of the Indian society through which the access to door of happiness, calmness, tranquility & peace and close the door of over-thinking, mental agony and non-concentration. One another dimension of Nādayoga is Mantrayoga, which is all about to integrate the disturbed consciousness through the repetition of chronologically, arranged some special words, syllables and phrases until the essence evolve.

नास्ति नादात्परो मन्त्रो न देव

Nāsti Nādātparo Mantra Na Deva

Yogaśikhopaniṣad

Nādānusandhāna is the technique described in Yogaśikhopaniṣad for the better awareness of listening of sound produced in the daily activity of a Human. That's why here, Nāda is considered as supreme Mantra because such sound is Universal i.e., existing everywhere.

यत्र कुत्रापि वा नादे लगति प्रथमं मनः।

तत्र तत्र स्थिरीभूत्वा तेन सार्धं विलीयते॥

Yatra Kutrāpi Vā Nāde Lagati Prathamam Manaḥ|

Tatra Tatra Sthirībhūtvā Tena Sārdham Vilīyate||

Nādabindu Upaniṣad⁶ Verse No. 38

As per the important classical text of Yoga, named Nādabindu Upaniṣad, any practitioner of Nādayoga needs to go with the flow of mind either it is gross Nāda or subtle Nāda. Just practicing continuously as the mind gets the state of meditation then dissolves the mind into such Nāda; it can be done through Yoga practice and Music practice both of these sciences of meditation.

In the divine Ṛgveda, there are 4 types of Vāṇī viz. Parā Paśyanti Madhyamā and Vaikharī are the four successive phases from which sounds pass through before anyone can hear it or it becomes audible. These are four consecutive stages of transformations of sound; by these four stages, it is easy to learn about the origination or utterance of a word from the mouth. In Sanskrit, these are called Vāṇī or Vāk.

चत्वारि वाक् परिमिता पदानि तानि विदुर्ब्राह्मणा ये मनीषिणः।

गुहा त्रीणि निहिता नेङ्गयन्ति तुरीयं वाचो मनुष्या वदन्ति॥

Catvāri Vāk Parimitā Padāni Tāni Vidubrāhmaṇā Ye Manīṣiṇaḥ|

Guhā Trīṇi Nihitā Neṅgayanti Turīyaṁ Vāco Manuṣyā Vadanti||

Ṛgveda 1/164/45

RELIGION BASED KĪRTANA STYLES

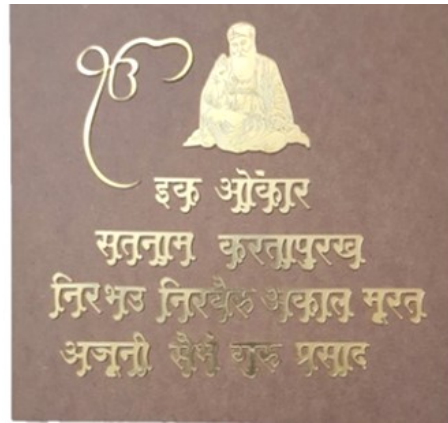
- **Hinduism** – There are 33 *Koṭi* (categories) of Devatā in Hinduism, it does not mean with 33 crore names, these 33 are major contributors and regulators of Human life as different part of nature—these make thirty-three gods. The number 33 comes from the number of Vedic gods explained by Yājñavalkya in 2nd verse of 9th Brahman of 3rd chapter Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.⁷ These Devatā are as follows: 12 (Āditya) + 11 (Rudra) + 8 (Vāsu) + 2 (Aśvini Kumār viz. Indra and Prajāpati).



Courtesy - <https://indictales.com/2022/05/17/33-koti-devi-devta/>

The Hindu tradition of practice have a deep cultural perspective of lifestyle, in which chanting the names of Divine forms such as Rama, Shiva, Krishana, Kali, Durgā, Lakṣmī, Pārvatī, Saraswati, and many more. There are 12 Jyotirlinga, 4 Dhāma and 51 Śaktipīṭha in the different states of India; all such are the major centers of Saguṇa (having form) and Nirguṇa (formless) kind of worship.

- **Sikhism** –The highly respectable part of Sikhism is GURU-BANI, a collection of poetry of Sikh Gurus⁸, which have different branches of knowledge and different methods of approaching the AKAAL POORAKH or Nirakaar Parmātmā i.e., formless type of ultimate reality. In Sikh religion, Guru Nanak Dev suggested ways to enrich the feelings and emotions through the 3 practices of *Naam Jap* (recitation of Paramātmā), *Kirat* (perform Kīrtana) and *Vand Chakna* (take meal by sharing). The *Sangat* is regularly practiced in the Gurudvārā in the form of group practice of enlightenment.



Courtesy - <https://resinera.in/products/ek-omkar-mantra-mdf-board-set>

- **Buddhism** – In the Tibetan Buddhism, Practitioners chosen as special place, who seeks to beyond the spiritual mountains of Himalayas. Tibet, which is also known as the land of snow, is a fascinating country, especially to an outsider, having massive mountains on the south, west, and north, ranging in height from six to eight thousand meters above sea level along the Himalaya and Karakorum.



Figure shows the Om Mani Padme Hum Mantra

Courtesy – Yogapedia (2020) Om Mani Padme Hum
<https://www.yogapedia.com/definition/9112/om-mani-padme-hum>

One of the main examples of Buddhist chant is the six-syllable having a complete philosophy within it, OM MANI PADME HUM, is the most important mantra associated with the Bodhisattva – Avalokiteśvara. In the literal basis, the translation of this 6 syllable mantra is —Behold the jewel in the lotus. The recitation of this mantra gives an emotion of positivity like when any individual goes into a river, as the water touch the individual’s body & body then blessings received in the pure form of billions and billions of sentient beings in the water. One another form of the Spiritual Power of the Buddha⁹ symbolize as ‘AUM’; which practices by the visualization of every exhalation as the syllable AUM, having white color, and inhalation as the syllable HUM, having blue color. The retention period of the breathing as the syllable AH, having red color.

- **Jainism** – In the Jain philosophy, the recitation of NAMOKAR or NAVKAR mantra is consider as one of the best way to please Bhagavāna Mahāvīra and getting his blessings. The *Namokar mantra* worships the qualities and positivity of the *Arihants, Siddhas, Acharyas, Upādhyāya* and *Sadhus*. This mantra gives an idea to worship the virtues instead of worshipping any particular identity or Tīrthamkara. Regularly practicing this mantra either through writing or chanting daily gives the calmness of mind and focused brain which makes the life healthy and wealthy.



Figure shows the divine Navkar Mantra given by Jainism.

Courtesy – Kamdar, H.M. (2021) *Navkar Mantra in the Jain Tradition – Meaning and Purport*

<https://culturalsamvaad.com/navkar-mantra-in-the-jain-tradition-meaning-and-purport/>

- **Islam** – The SŪFĪSM which is very popular as Islamic Sainthood in the traditional practices for joy and happiness in the life. In Sūfism, literal meaning of the word ‘Sūfism’ means with the purity of mind & body. Sūfī is like a mental condition where union of physical, mental & spiritual power with the cosmic power. A practitioner of Sūfism enhances the consciousness through the regular practice as similar to Kīrtana;

because the main importance of Islam in Sūfism is to practice the thought beyond the questioning. A Sūfī mystic Saint Rābiyā¹⁰, in the life of hardship, she unexpectedly attained a state of Fanā i.e., self-realization by which got ability to perform divine miracles because of intimacy with God through this introspection.



Courtesy - <https://www.metaphysics-knowledge.com/religion/all-about-Sūfism/>

Abu Sayees¹¹ said origin of Sūfism is to spread the practice of love & harmony in against of the extremism of Islam. Such Sūfī Saints are deeply involved in the meditation through seclusion and focused in thoughts of Ívara. Sūfism is all about the personal struggle for maintaining the self discipline and self mastery under the conditions of experiencing more and more continuously. In this context of Sūfī path, Qavvālī is often regarded as ideological music of Islam because it has high emotions of inspiration and transformation through the lyrics.

REGION BASED KĪRTANA STYLES

NORTH INDIA

- **Caitanya Mahāprabhu** – A Saint or a Yogi who popularize the path of Saṁkīrtanaa, named Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu, also known as Bhagavāna Gaurāṅgā¹². The most celebrated Vaiṣṇava School of Bhakti Yoga that centers on the higher devotion to Shri Krishna. Caitanya Mahāprabhu, is also regarded as an avatar of Lord Krishna by followers - a Hindu sect known as Gauṇīye Vaiṣṇava.
- **Kabīra** – A great poet, Yogi, philosopher of Nirguṇā Bhakti named Kabīra whose poetry mainly on both Hinduism and Islam, although having a critical voice of certain aspects of both faiths, but most of the people like and love the voice of Kabīra. Some of the verses are included in the compilation of Sikh scriptures known as the *Ādi Granth*.¹³
- **Mīrābāī** – A great lady of Rajasthan who was a Bhakti Saint, a Poet, a Mystic, a Rānī, a Writer of lots of Devotional Songs, famous as Mīrābāī. She expressed the Bhakti as being considered herself as the wife of Śrī Kṛṣṇā; all such songs are completely filled of surrender, Joy and Happiness in the feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇā.

SOUTH INDIA

- **Tyāgarāja** – Mahātmā Gandhi quoted during his tours of south India as “Wherever I go in South India I hear the songs of Saint Tyāgarāja being sung”¹⁴. On the literary basis, the meaning of the word ‘Tyāgarāja’ is the king of renunciation i.e., Shiva. In south India, Tyāgarāja is considered as the most celebrated Musician Saint,¹⁵ who is a devotee of Rama, having a fluency in Tamil, Telugu, Sanskrit and English. Tyāgarāja mentioned in the list of Bhakti Saints like Jayadeva Poṭṭana Puraṁdaradāsa Bhadrācala Rāmadāsa Caitanya Tulasīdāsa Sūradāsa and Mīrābāī.
- **Basavannā** – In the Lingāyata community of Karnataka, a culturally and spiritually state of south India, there was a spiritual icon, a saint, a poet, a social reformer, or a philosopher who lived in the 12th century, named Basavannā, also famous as Basaveśvara. As per the community there, he had one another name ‘**Bhakti Bhaṇḍārī**’¹⁶ literally it means the treasurer of devotion. Their style of worship is strictly monotheist belief in Linga (Shiva) as the whole and highest one in the cosmos; their language is Kannada instead of Sanskrit.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

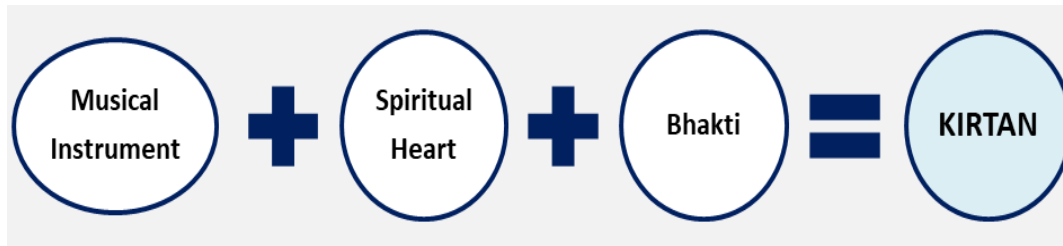
This paper is focus on the foundational description of Nādayoga Therapy and Kīrtana Therapy. The research methodology is both descriptive and analytical.

STUDY AREA

The major area of this paper is to discuss the concepts of mental health related therapy based on the practical portions of Indian sciences like Yoga, Āyurveda and Music. Nādayoga and Kīrtana is one of the Indian techniques which practiced regularly in the different parts of India.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Kīrtana gives the stableness in the mind and body by eradicating the mental fickleness and providing the mental satisfaction. It can be said as Kīrtana stops the chain of continuous unusual thought process happening in the mind. Because Kīrtana is not an intellectual process emerges from discourse or debate, but it is mental connection of divine sounds with the own consciousness. To do so, some musical instruments are required to develop a special aura, a spiritual heart which contain immense amount of Bhakti; all three altogether makes a Kīrtana meaningful and beneficial. Bhakti here, it is a constant psychological tendency of struggling the negation and affirmation; emotion towards the highest consciousness manifest in the form of ultimate peace and calmness. Bhakti is the state of complete union of an individual with the energy of Īśvara.



- Musical Instrument – There are different words which help the body and mind to match the frequency of daily activities with the frequency of sounds produced by musical instruments like Dholaka, Mṛdangama (also known as Kholā in north India, north-east India), Karatāla (also known as Mañjīrā in Central India), Bānsurī (flute) and many more.
- Spiritual Heart – Means Feeling of Pureness with Oneness. This concept is beautifully explained by a Yogi from South India named Bhagavāna Śrī Ramaṇa Mahirṣi viz. the true seat of Consciousness¹⁷ is the heart, not the head, such indication is not about the physical organ locating at the left side of chest but it is the heart at the right. This means about an experience of pure consciousness or it can be said as place of pure spiritual awareness or a sense of being, which is popularly known as ‘Spiritual Heart’.
- Bhakti – It is a very high attitude of devotion and love. Bhakti is a complete and wholesome way to attain self realization and realization of God; it needs no other support or help. Bhakti gives eternal peace and bliss of the highest order.¹⁸

The Meditative art have different dimensions like Āyurveda, Music, Yoga, and many more, all these branches have a lot of possibilities as a ‘Therapy’ to heal an individual or a society. Nādayoga and Kīrtana are basic part of human life from the time immemorial that used knowingly and unknowingly both.

CONCLUSION

In the today’s scenario, mental health is one of the most invisible parts of the society, where attaining a stable mind is still a huge challenge. Instead of this people are struggling to achieve the higher level of concentration in the day to day life works. Nādayoga and Kīrtana are to adjoin with the Ísvara in any form, shape, color, and language. Traditionally, it is practiced in a group having a group leader which gives the direction through the repetition of some words or phrases. In Each and every song can be sing for minutes or hours as per the mental healing of the audiences; all this is not similar to a musical performance just because of applause is not allowed between the songs. The duration of chanting of divine songs increases the duration of mental silence and reduces the duration of mental agony. Such scientific practices are very important to introduce as soon as possible in the syllabus of students through Āyurveda, Music, and Yoga.

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