

## OVERVIEW OF MUSIC THERAPY AND INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC

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**Abstract:** Indian classical music has been shown to have a significant impact on the brain, with various studies highlighting its effects on brain activity, emotional responses, and cognitive functions. The study emphasizes the dynamic changes in brain activity during musical experiences, identifying specific brain regions activated during musical experience. The neuro-cognition of emotions in classical music indicates that musical training enhances emotional processing and brain complexity in musicians compared to non-musicians, suggesting that prior exposure to music significantly alters neural responses. The role of music in modern medicine is also supported by its measurable effects on neurological, cardiological, and psychiatric conditions, emphasizing the need for routine adjunctive musical interventions. The use of classical music in therapy can significantly reduce anxiety, stress, and depression, and improve overall well-being.

**Keywords:** Indian Classical Music, Music Therapy, Neural Responses, Raag, Harmony, Melody

### INTRODUCTION

Melody, harmony, and colour are the building blocks of music, which is the art of sound in time and the meaningful expression of concepts and feelings. The fundamental components of music include tones or sounds that either occur in a single line (melody) or in several lines (harmony), as well as the perception of sound moving in time (rhythm).

Plato, the 428–347 BC Greek philosopher, once said that "music gives wings to mind." According to Plato, different musical modes would elicit different feelings. (Tikka and Nizamie, 2014) Use of Music in various alternative therapies has been demonstrated to improve several medical issues. It improves mental, physical, and emotional health. (Sarkar et. al., 2015). Music therapy can be administered in the specific time as morning, evening or as suitability according to listener or audience need. (Gold, 2007) The Old Testament mentions music therapy when King David healed himself with the harp. Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine, believed music could heal. To reduce pain, ancient Egyptian women listened to music while giving birth. The famous Arabic author Ibn Sina wrote extensively about this issue. Indian mythology claims that Thyagaraja's Naa Jeevan Dhara raga revived a corpse. Music is beneficial, according to Richard Browne's 1729 medical treatise *Medicina Musica* (Ulrich G et. al., 2007)

### SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC

Indian classical music has been shown to have a significant impact on the brain, with various studies highlighting its effects on brain activity, emotional responses, and cognitive functions. The study emphasizes the dynamic changes in brain activity in response to live Indian classical music, identifying specific brain regions activated during musical experiences. This study underscores the potential for integrating Indian classical music into music therapy for various cognitive and emotional conditions. Another research by Kunikullaya et al. explores how different ragas affect brain wave frequencies and inter-subject correlation, revealing that ragas like Malkauns and Miyan ki Todi can enhance relaxation and positive emotional memory through increased alpha-beta1 activity (Kunikullaya et al., 2022).

The neuro-cognition of emotions in Indian classical music indicate that musical training enhances emotional processing and brain complexity in musicians compared to non-musicians, suggesting that prior exposure to music significantly alters neural responses (Basu et al., 2022). Indian classical music can be effectively integrated into modern therapeutic practices by leveraging its rich tradition and aligning it with contemporary therapeutic methodologies. Studies by Gangopadhyay & Prasad, 2022 highlight the ancient use of music as a therapeutic tool for various mental and physical health conditions. This traditional knowledge can be utilized in modern settings by incorporating soothing ragas and structured musical compositions into therapy sessions (Gangopadhyay and Prasad, 2022). "India's rich musical heritage has a lot to offer to modern psychiatry" discusses the influence of music on emotions and its potential clinical applications, suggesting that Indian classical music can be used to manage psychiatric conditions due to its immediate calming effects (Sanivarapu, 2015).

Sumathy & Parin, 2018 explores how traditional healing practices like Vedic chanting, Raga Cikitsa, and Garbha Sanskara can be scientifically validated and integrated into clinical practice to address various psychological and physiological conditions (Sumathy and Parin, 2018) The work "From Ancient to Integrative Medicine: Models for Music Therapy" presents a model for integrating music therapy into modern medical treatments by combining Eastern and Western approaches, providing a holistic method to enhance health (Hanser, 2009). Integrating traditional music therapy with modern medical practices offers numerous benefits, enhancing both mental and physical health through a holistic approach. Traditional music therapy, enriched with modern technology, has shown to be effective in reducing stress and improving overall well-being. The article by Oschman, 2018, "Traditional Sound Healing with High-Tech Enrichments" discusses the HUSO system, which combines ancient sound healing techniques with modern acoustic technologies to create therapeutic sounds that help in stress reduction and overall balance (Oschman, 2018). Similarly, "Integration of Traditional and Complementary Medicine into Evidence-Based Clinical Practice" highlights how combining traditional methods with modern evidence-based practices can lead to more individualized and holistic treatments, improving patient outcomes by addressing root causes rather than just alleviating symptoms (Mordeniz, 2019). Additionally, the integration of music therapy within multidisciplinary teams has shown to improve patient engagement and rehabilitation outcomes, as evidenced by the study on older adults in an acute hospital setting (Hayes et al., 2022).

The role of music in modern medicine is also supported by its measurable effects on neurological, cardiological, and psychiatric conditions, emphasizing the need for routine adjunctive musical interventions (Rajendran, 2021). Indian classical music has been shown to be an effective therapeutic tool for mental health. The use of Indian classical music in therapy can significantly reduce anxiety, stress, and depression, and improve overall well-being. A study titled "Effect of Classical Music on Fetus: A Review" supports the therapeutic modulation of stress, anxiety, and depression through traditional tools such as Raga Chikitsa and Vedic chanting, highlighting the holistic benefits of Indian classical music even before birth (Sujatashamkuwar et al., 2022). Another study by Kruthika et al., 2021, "A System for Anxiety Prediction and Treatment Using Indian Classical Music Therapy with the Application of Machine Learning," demonstrates how

integrating Indian classical music with machine learning can effectively predict and treat anxiety, with support vector machines achieving an accuracy of 87.23% (Kruthika et al., 2021) Additionally, in "Music therapy for mental disorder and mental health: the untapped potential of Indian classical music" Hegde, 2017\_underscores the promising results of Indian classical music in evidence-based music therapy for psychiatric conditions. (Hegde, 2017) Another research by Bhatnagar & Arya, 2020, on medical students indicates that listening to Indian classical music significantly reduces salivary cortisol, blood pressure, and heart rate, thereby alleviating stress and anxiety. (Bhatnagar and Arya, 2020).

## **THERAPY WITH RAGA**

Indian music is known for its Raga melodies at various times of day and time. Raga's splendour and musical brilliance peak around this time. Some Ragas are best in the morning, some later in the day, while some don't start until mid. Time and Raga or Raginis are linked since our bodies and minds change daily, eliciting different sensations and moods at different times. Nature makes individuals feel a certain way, and each Raga or Ragini reflects it. Ancient musicologists focused on how notes affected and enhanced human behaviour. Music can make you happy, depressed, or worse. Researchers went deep to find these effects. This paved the way for modern time theories. The daily fluctuations of these elements are predictable. Seasons affect how these three elements respond. The timing of raga performances or listening can affect human health. In Tanjore's Saraswati Mahal Library, Dr. Burnell found Raga Chikitsa while researching ragas' healing effects. "Music is a kind of inarticulate, unfathomable speech which leads us to the edge of the infinite and lets us for a moment gaze in that" he stated. Music is simply sound waves that move through the air and affect our bodies (Thaut, 1989).

According to book by Sarangdev namely Sangeet Ratnakar, music is a power or universal energy manifested in Ragas because a live entity strikes an instrument to generate it. Raga was initially defined by ninth- and tenth-century AD writer Matanga. He says, "raga is that kind of sound composition consisting of melodic movements which has the effect of clearing the hearts of men." Raga stems from folk music, poetry, mystic religious hymns, and classical music. Western music emphasises harmony, but Indian music emphasises melody. Indian music uses raga or Raginis for melody. Kangra Ragnala (M.S. Randhawa). Raga symphonies soothe mind and body (Tang et al, 1994). The way a raga's swars (notes) are articulated, pitched, and toned can cause electromagnetic changes in the body that stimulate, relieve, or heal certain ailments. The Greek Orphic school may have used music therapy. Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle knew music was therapeutic and preventive (You et. al., 2002). Repeating a raga for an ailment creates a sound web. One impulse tenses the affected part's muscles, nerves, and chakras; two impulses relax them.

The musical notes induce blood to flow out of the tissue when it contracts, and when it relaxes, the pressure decreases. Thus, adjacent blood will flow there. Repeating this treatment improves blood and energy flow there. This speeds recuperation. Because auditory nerves have the most widely scattered and connected roots of any physiological nerve, the strokes of the various raga tones transmit energy from the URF to the HEF, affecting the CNS. Heart rate and music rhythm are linked (Silverman, 2003). Music of 70 to 75 beats per minute—the same as a 72-beat heart rate—

calms. Slower rhythms than 72 beats per minute calm the body and mind since the whole system anticipates the music to speed up, restoring energy and relaxing the body. Exciting and revitalising beats are faster than the heart rate. Ragas express diverse feelings in Hindustani and classical music (Pavlicevic et al. 1994). Create a suitable mental setting for the listener before starting the musical treatment. Raga Pooriya Dhansari is sweet, deep, heavy, cloudy, and stable, while Kafi Raga is damp, chilly, relaxing, and deep. Raga Mishra Mand is lovely, energising, and pleasant, while bagashwri is sombre, stable, profound, and serene. Music helps stress, anxiety, and hypertension sufferers relax today. Many people relax with Raga Darbari. Tansen wrote this late- raga for Akbar to rest after a day of court life.

The Asavari family's full-length raga has all seven notes. Animal and bird noises inspired all seven notes. Raga Bhupali and Todi relieve hypertensives. Raga Ahir-Bhairav, which sustains chords, lowers blood pressure naturally. Ragas Malkauns and Asawari relieve hypotension, and Raga Chandrakauns helps cardiac issues. Raga Tilak-Kamod, Hansdhwani, Kalvati, and Durga calm anxieties. Raga Bihag and Bahar help insomniacs sleep well. Raga's are closely linked to various times of the day by the ebb and flow of human emotions, attitudes, and feelings (Gold et. al. 2005).

## UNDERSTANDING THE INDIAN MUSIC FOR THERAPY

The classical music has its significant correlation with seasons, day, and time. A 24-hour period has divided into eight beats called as Prahar each of three-hour. As per Ayurveda each day our bodies undergo changes with Vata, Pitta, or Kapha dominating prakruti. This also interfere with efficacy of music therapy, by affecting mood of listener. Considering Seasons of Rhythm and Harmony one can understand that Raga represents specific seasons like Raga Basant for autumn, Raga Megha and Malhar for spring, and Raga Bahar represents Varsha, the rainy season. Seasonal Ragas should be sung and played 24/7 during their season, tuning for relaxation.

Indian Spring Festival (Vasanta Ritu) having high season temperatures reduce Agni (digestive activity), liquifying extra Kapha and making individuals worse. In summertime (Grishma Ritu), Sunshine is strongest this time of year. Vata rises and Kapha falls daily. While in autumn festival (Sharat Ritu) Sunlight after the cold season worsens Pitta. Music may enhance our lives when used properly. Listening to music throughout the day can help maintain excellent health. Ragas, Indian music, are recognised for soothing. Some ragas restore hormonal and glandular functions, which provide balance and immunity.

- Any Time performing raga

Piloo, Kafi, Mand, Dhani, Bhairavi, Gaud Malhar, Miyan Malhar etc.

- Raag performing preferably in Morning

Ahir Bhairav, Asavari, Bairagi Bhairav, Basant Mukhari, Basant, Bhairav, Bhatiyar, Bhoopali Todi, Bilaskhani Todi, Bilawal, Deshkar, Desi, Gurjari Todi, Hindol, Jaunpuri, Jogiya, Kalingada, Lalit, Nat Bhairav, Sohni, Todi, Vibhas etc.

- Raag performing preferably in Afternoon

Bhimpalasi, Gaud Saarang, Madhuvanti, Madhyamad Sarang, Multani, Patdeep, Poorvi, Shuddh Sarang, Vrindavani Sarang etc.

- Raag performing preferably in Evening

Desh, Hansdhvani, Jana Sammohini, Kamod, Khamaj, Maru Bihag, Marwa, Pahadi, Puriya Dhanashri, Puriya, Sham Kalyan, Shankara, Shree, Shuddh Kalyan, Tilang, Yaman Kalyan, Yaman etc.

- Raag performing preferably in Night

Adana, Bageshri, Bahar, Bihag, Chandani Kedar, Chandrakauns, Charukeshi, Chhayanat, Darbari, Durga, Gorakh Kalyan, Hamir, Jaijaiwanti, Jhinjhoti, Kalavati, Kedar, Kirwani, Malgunji, Malhar, Malkauns, Nand, Raageshri, Shivranjani, Tilak Kamod etc.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the main point of the given text is that Indian classical music, particularly using ragas, has significant therapeutic potential and can be integrated into modern medical and therapeutic practices to improve mental and physical health. The timing and selection of ragas are important in harnessing the healing effects of music, and research supports its effectiveness in reducing stress, anxiety, and depression, as well as improving overall well-being. Music therapy benefits the body in many ways. Music therapy improves language, cognition, and communication. Music therapy can assist persons grieving, in pain, or experiencing loss. Music therapy reduces stress and promotes recovery. This article examined Indian classical music's physiological consequences. Humans interact differently with each raga. Nature inspires many feelings, and each Raga represents a mood.

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