

Review Article

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AYURVEDA PERSPECTIVE ON CONCEPT OF *MANTRA*:

A MECHANISTIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The civilization of Indian culture and classical science of ancient India encompasses many rituals or practices for maintaining good physical, mental and spiritual health. The practice of *Mantra* or “chant holistic words” is one such ritual which helps to strengthen internal as well as external power. The *Mantra* imparts strength through their energy which comes in the form of sound or vibration. The process of Resonance and reverberation influences geometry of cell in individual when fruitful frequency achieved during mantra chanting. Considering importance of power of *Mantra* present article explains the mechanism of *Mantra*.

Keywords: *Ayurveda, Vibration, Mantra, Chhand, Reverberation*

INTRODUCTION

The natural or ancient science of India not only emphasized uses of medicine or *Yoga* practices for maintaining well being but the mythological system of India also presented importance of *Mantra*. The *Mantra* drives internal energy from their frequent vibration and constant reverberation. The working of *Mantra* resembles word *Anahat Nada* which vibrates internally in consciousness¹. The historical development of *Vedic* system of India witnessed evolution of *Mantra* which works around sound vibration thus called non-materialistic medicine². The Indian as well as global population strongly believe in power of *Mantra*, in this regard a study was conducted in 2017 and this study observed that 16.3 % of women and 11.8 % of men in America practices *Mantra* meditation³.

Ayurveda mentioned *Mantra* meditation as *Daivvyapashrya chikitsa* in which sounds based energy vibrates and resonates throughout the whole body ⁴. *Mantra* prescribed by *Devrishis* & ordained by *Brahmarishi*, it is believed that *Mantra* transferred from *Rishis* to their disciple as continual process of development⁵. *Mantra* has its specialty that despite being divine, it posses speech and gives a sense of its existense⁶. The major factors which can alter impact of *Mantra* depicted in **Figure 1**.

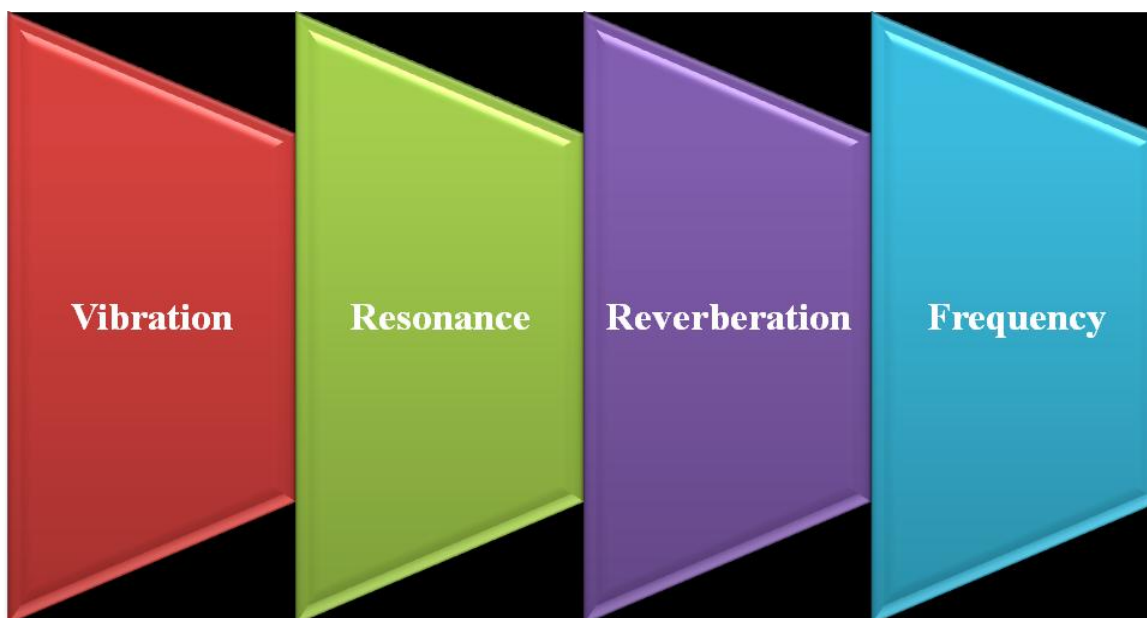


Figure 1: Factors associated with effects of *Mantra*

AIMS AND OBJECTIVE

- A critical review study to evaluate the concept of *Mantra*.
- To get scientific approach in understanding of *Mantra*.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This critical analytical work conducted by using different classical textbooks of Ayurveda along with digital resources. Various studies conducted on *Mantra* were reviewed and concluded.

***Mantra* Etymological Derivation (Vyutpatti)⁷**

According to *Shabdkalpdrum* *Mantra* word originates from '*Mantri Gupt Bhisne*' Dhatu (prefix) to '*Ghaya*' Pratyay (suffix) which means mystery or secrets. Another *Vyutpatti* of *Mantra* is from '*mantri Gupt Bhisne*' Dhatu to '*Ach*' Pratyay which means holy thought.

About *Mantra*⁸

- ❖ A *Mantra* is a sound that is formed from a group of letters and words.
- ❖ *Mantra* meditation provides protection from all the miseries.
- ❖ *Mantra* connects soul to the God.
- ❖ *Mantra* meditation gives the knowledge of element.

1. MECHANISM OF MANTRA AS PER AYURVEDA CLASSICS

As per Ayurveda *Mantras* are invisible and only offers fruitful impact when practices with appropriate frequency.⁹ *Mantra* are capable of healing only with the influence of *Devta* and this type of treatment is known as *Daivvyapashrya* treatment¹⁰.

As per ayurveda one should learn *Mantras* by prohibiting the unethical contact with woman and alcohol. While learning the *Mantra* one should eat small amounts of food, be holy and sleep on the bed of *Kush*. Worship of Gods with smell, garland, gifts and chanting and *Hom* etc. should be done to prove the *Mantra*¹¹.

2. MECHANISM OF MANTRA AS PER OTHER CONCEPTS

❖ Law of Vibration¹²

It States that anything that exist in our universe, broken down into and analyzed in its purest and most basic form, consist of pure energy or light which resonates and

exists as a vibratory frequency or pattern. All matter, thoughts and feelings has its own vibrational frequency.

Science reveals that everything in the universe is ultimately composed of packets of energy; quantized units vibrating at specific frequencies. So, it can be said that everything is moving & nothing in rests. The energy can neither be created nor destroyed but can be changed from one form to another and that matter is nothing but a form of energy. Thus *Mantra* involves sounds, vibrational, resonance and reverberation energy which influences internal strength of person.

Supporting Studies

Masaru Emoto was a Japanese author and pseudo scientist who said that human consciousness has an effect on the molecular structure of water ¹³. His hypothesis is that water could react to positive thoughts and words and that polluted water could be cleaned through prayer and positive visualization.

Emoto's water crystal experiments consisted of exposing water in glasses to different words, pictures or music and then freezing and examining the aesthetic properties of the resulting crystals with microscopic photography. Emoto made the claim that water exposed to positive speech and thoughts would result in visually "pleasing" crystals being formed when that water was frozen and that negative intention would yield "ugly" frozen crystal formations as depicted in **Figure 1**.

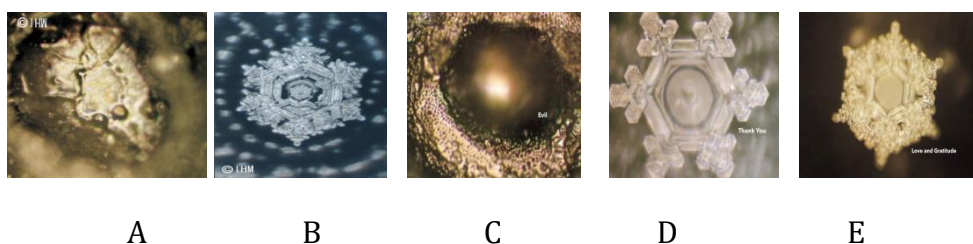


Figure 1: Effect of speech and thoughts on water crystal quality.

Images: *Crystal before prayer (A), Crystal after prayer (B), Crystal after devil speech (C), Crystal after thank you speech (D), Crystal after love and gratitude speech (E).*

Cymatics (study of sound and vibration on the surface of plate, diaphragm or membrane) explained by Hans Jenny (1904-1974); a Swiss physician and natural scientist¹⁵. In his research with the tonoscope, Dr. Jenny noticed that when the vowels of the ancient language of Hebrew and Sanskrit were pronounced the sand took shape of written symbols for these vowels, while modern languages, on the other hand did not generate the same result ¹⁶.

Shadchakra and Cymatics¹⁷

In Yoga science, seven energy centers are mentioned in Human body, such as *Muladhar Chakra*, *Swadhisthan*, *Manipur*, *Anahat Chakra*, *Vishuddha chakra*, *Agya Chakra* and *Sahasrar Chakra* (**Figure 2**). Different awakening *Mantras* have also been given in *Kundalini Yoga*, different symbols and their *Mantras* are given for seven *Chakras* in the body, if cymatics is used on the seven *Mantras* then it forms circle of seven *Chakras*. In this way there are a total of 52 letters of Sanskrit in up to 6 *Chakras* and 52 letters in the last chakras, whose root *Mantra* is OM.



Figure 2: Seven energy centers of human body.

Factors Associated with Mantra Practice ^{18, 19}

- ✚ **Resonance**
- ✚ **Reverberation**
- ✚ **Chhand**
- ✚ **Chhand Rashmiya**

Resonance

A resonance is the sound which is produced by an object when it vibrates at the same rate as the sound waves from another object.

Reverberation

Multiple reflection of sound waves in a confined area so that the sound persists after the source is cut off.

Chhand (Verses)

The word *Chhand* is made from '*Chad*' *Dhatu* (prefix) which means to please. It deals with the rhythmic syllable arrangements in poetic meters. According to Hindi literature composition on a subject related to letters, no. of letters, quantity, count, yeti, speed is called *Chhand* (verses).

Chhand Rashmiya

Chhand rashmiya freely distributing various *Pran rashmiya* from all sides and then it generates force, energy and light after that they capture and activate various substances.

DISCUSSION

It is said in Ayurveda that *Mantra* work with the influence of deities, work with frequency and invisible in nature. As we see above in law of vibration; everything in universe is in motion, vibrating at specific frequencies & element in the human body also possess basic frequency of vibration. When cells and component in our body vibrates properly in their original frequency then this state resembles good health status. Disorder resembles disturbance in the vibration of body element. *Mantra* can correct disorder and synchronizes harmony of body elements thus offers healthy state²⁰.

The Emoto's study suggested that vibration affects properties of water, since human body is also made up of 70% water thus changes in vibration frequency influences harmony of body elements. Ayurveda theory of "*Pancha Mahabhuto ka Bhutanupraves*" suggests that sound possess characteristic quality of *Pancha Mahabhuta*. The sound wave of *Mantra* affects elements of body and helps to maintain good health status. Hans Jenny suggested that chanting of the *Shad Chakra* offers specific geometrical pattern as described by sages many years ago. The specific *Mantra* provides particular benefits to the internal energy through biological *Chakra*.

Specific *Chhand* (verse) is described for *Mantra*; *Chhand* refers to the frequency of the *Mantra* that is equal or approximate to the natural frequency of the body. Sound of *Mantra* stay in body for maximum time and brings healing effect through resonance and maximum oscillation of reverberation.

CONCLUSION

Mantra work with frequency and its frequency is decided by *Chhand*, which is a pattern of vibration. It is concluded that while chanting *Mantra* one should follow correct pronunciation to acquire maximum health and spiritual benefits of *Mantra*. The appropriate resonance and reverberation need to be generated while chanting *Mantra* to maintain good physical as well as mental health.

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