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Indian Ragas for treating health problems

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ABSTRACT

Music is a universal language. It influences all levels of human existence. It is a medium for communication, which can be both a pleasant and healing experience. Modern science and medicine are now rediscovering the healing powers of music. And various ragas in Hindustani & Karnataka treating persons with special needs in mental and physical health, rehabilitation and special education is gaining ground. It is a great ancient holistic medical science of India. The whole subject of music medical therapy is now getting attention from all across the world. In this paper we are presenting how a different raga affects the human body.

Keywords: Indian ragas, Curing health diseases

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Introduction:

Raga, we all know is the sequence of selected notes (swaras) that lend appropriate 'mood' or emotion in a selective combination. Depending on their nature, a raga could induce or intensify joy or sorrow, violence or peace and it is this quality which forms the basis for musical application. Thus, a whole range of emotions and their nuances could be captured and communicated within certain rhythms and melodies. Playing, performing and even listening to appropriate ragas can work as a medicine. (Bagchi, 2003) Various ragas have since been recognized to have definite impact on certain ailments. (Sairam, 2004b).

Historic References on Raga Chikitsa

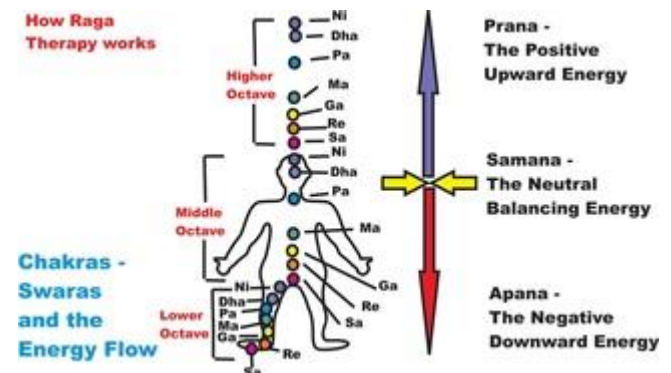
The ancient Hindus had relied on music for its curative role: the chanting and toning involved in Veda mantras in praise of God have been used from time immemorial as a cure for several disharmonies in the individual as well as his environment. Several sects of 'bhakti' such as Chaitanya sampradaya, Vallabha sampradaya have all accorded priority to music. Historical records too indicate that one Haridas Swami who was the guru of the famous musician in Akbar's time, Tan Sen is credited with the recovery of one of the queens of the Emperor with a selected raga.

The ancient system of Nada Yoga, which dates back to the time of Tantras, has fully acknowledged the impact of music on body and mind and put into practice the vibrations emanating from sounds to uplift one's level of consciousness. It is the Indian genius that recognized that ragas are not just mere commodities of entertainment but the vibrations in their resonance could synchronize with one's moods and health.

A Raga must be played or sung to a patient keeping in mind his/her physical nature of vata, pitta or kapha. The time assigned to the Raga during the day or night is also important. Moreover, it is to be seen whether the time of

the day or night is naturally suited to vata, pitta and kapha.

How does the system of Raga therapy actually work? A Raga is the sequence of selected notes (swaras) that lend appropriate 'mood' or emotion in a selective combination. It's a yoga system through the medium of sonorous sounds. Depending on its nature, a raga could induce or intensify joy or sorrow, violence or peace, and it is this quality which forms the basis for musical application. Thus, a whole range of emotions and their nuances could be captured and communicated within certain melodies. Playing, performing and even listening to appropriate ragas can work as a medicine.



There are three kinds of energy acting in our body: Prana, Apana and Samana.

Prana, the positive energy, acts upward. In our body, it moves blood, hormones and every thing upwards, including our breath. In our mind, it gives love, hope and other positive emotions. Apana, the negative energy, acts downward. In our body, it moves food, blood, hormones and every thing downwards, including our breath. In our mind, it gives hatred, despair and other negative emotions. Samana, the neutral energy, balances both Prana and Apana. In our body, it balances blood, hormones and every thing, including our breath. In our mind, it gives balance, detachment and other neutral emotions. Swara 'Pa' stimulates Samana and restores balance and coordination in our body and mind. Dha, Ni and upper octave swaras stimulate Prana. Ma, Ga, Re and lower octave swaras stimulate Apana. Apana, though

negative, removes urine, semen etc and helps excretory and reproductive systems of our body. In our mind too, Apana helps us by feeling the complete range of emotions and thus gain a control over or get rid of them. Prana and Apana acting in opposite directions, restore equilibrium in our body and mind and thus in our life.

The people at the core of this treatment would be the music therapist, the client, the clinical facility whether at home or in a hospital, and music providers. Music therapists interact with their clients and the use of music. They assess their clients and create a clinical plan for treatment in coordination with the team and client goals. This is what determines the course of clinical sessions. A music therapist works within a client-centered, goal-directed framework.

The seven basic swaras (musical notes) of the musical octave have a one-to-one correspondence with these chakras (nuclei of subtle energy). The lower most (in the kava equina region along the erect endocrine column), viz., the Muladhara Chakra is associated with the swara "sa"; that means, the practice of chanting this particular musical note will have impact on awakening or activation of this particular chakra. Similarly, the chakras successively upwards in this direction namely, the Swadhisthana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddha, Agya and the top-most Sahastrara Chakra... have correspondence respectively with the swaras "re", "ga" "ma", "pa", "dha" and "ni". Significantly, the order of the compositions of these swaras in the "aroha" (ascending) and "avaroha" (descending) patterns of the Shastric musical tunes also match with the top-down (from Sahastrara to Muladhara) and bottom-up (from Muladhara to Sahastrara) directions of the flow of energy. Ancient Indian music has devised a special therapy based on the 72 ragas. It is appropriate to define Raga at this point. Raga is neither melody alone, not notes; neither scale nor mode. It's an ensemble of all these. According to an ancient Indian text,

Swara Shastra, the seventy-two melakarta ragas (parent ragas) control seventy-two important nerves in the body. It is believed that a person who sings/performs a raga bound to the raga specifications (lakshanas) and with purity in pitch (swara shuddi) will have complete control on the corresponding nerve. To quote a few, for those who suffer from hypertension, ragas such as Ahirbhairav and Todi are prescribed. To control anger and bring down violence within oneself, Carnatic ragas like Punnagavarali, Sahana and so on, come handy. Not only psychological, but the somatic or physiological impact of ragas have come to light in recent research. For instance, stomach-related disorders are said to be cured with some Hindustani ragas such as Deepak (acidity) and Jaunpuri (constipation) and Malkauns or Hindolam (intestinal gas and fever). Simple iterative musical rhythms with low pitched swaras, as in bhajans are capable of relaxation, as observed with the alpha-levels of the brain waves. They may also lead to favourable hormonal changes in the system.

Chakras, Qualities, Musical notes and Ragas

The following chart will show you the correlation of various energy centers to musical notes and ragas.

Similarly Everyday two cycles of change pass through our body, each bringing a Vata, Pitta, or Kapha predominance.

The approximate times of these cycles are as follows:

First cycle

- 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. – Kapha
- 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. – Pitta
- 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. – Vata

Second cycle

- 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. – Kapha
- 10 p.m. to 2 p.m. – Pitta
- 2 a.m. to 6 p.m. – Vata

Energy center / Chakra	Gross expression and presence in our body	Associated Qualities at subtle level	Indian note	Western note	Associated Ragas
Mooladhara	Pelvic plexus, Prostrate, Coccyx	Innocence, wisdom	Sa – Shadjam	C	Hindol, Shyam Kalyan, Hansdhwani / Hamsadhwani
Swadishthana	Aortic plexus – Liver, Kidney, Spleen, Pancreas, Uterus	Pure Knowledge, Creativity	Left Swadishthan – Komal Rishabh (Hindustani) or Shuddha Rishabham (Carnatic)	C#, D	Gujri Todi, Yaman / Subha Pantuvarali
			Center and Right Swadishthan – Shuddha Rishabh (Hindustani)		
			Chathusruthi Rishabham (Carnatic)		
Nabhi	Solar Plexus, Stomach, Liver	Homely aspects, creative action, Satisfaction, Wealth, Power of Attention	Left Nabhi – Komal Gandhar (Hindustani)	D#, E	Malkauns, Abhogi, Bhimpalas (Hindustani), Bhimpalas, Hindolam
			Shuddha Gandharam (Carnatic)		
			Center, Right Nabhi – Shuddha Gandhar (Hindustani)		
			Sadharana Gandhara (Carnatic)		
Anahat	Cardiac Plexus, Heart	Sense of security, fearlessness, Responsible behavior	Left, Center Anahat – Shuddha Madhyam (Hindustani and Carnatic)	F, F#	Bhairav, Ahir Bhairav, Durga (Hindustani) Chakravaham, Mayamaalavagowla, Durga
			Right Anahat – Teevra Madhyam / Prati Madhyamam		
Vishuddhi	Cervical Throat Plexus,	Diplomacy, Collectivity, Respect for others	Pancham	G	Jayjaywanti, Desh (Hindustani), Dwijavanti, Desh (Carnatic)
Agnya	Optic Chiasma	Forgiveness, Resurrection	Right Agnya – Komal Dhaivat (Hindustani)	G#, A	
			Shuddha Gandharam (Carnatic)		Bhup (Hindustani), Bageshri, Mohanam
			Left, Center Agnya – Shuddha Daivat (Hindustani)		
			Antara Gandharam (Carnatic)		
Sahasrara	Limbic area, crown of the head	Collective consciousness, Integration	Komal and Shuddha Nishad (Hindustani)	A#, B	Darbari, Bhairavi (Hindustani) Darbari Kanada, Sindhu Bhairavi (Carnatic)
			Shuddha and Kakali Nishadam (Carnatic)		

Raga and Ritu (Seasons)

There are Ragas associated with the rainy season, Varsha (Raga Megha and Raga Malhar), the autumn season, Basant (Raga Basant) and the spring season (Raga Bahar). Seasonal Ragas can be sung and played any time of the day and night during the season allotted to them. The obligation of time in case of such melodies is relaxed. *Vasanta Ritu*

(*Spring Season*). In this season, increased kapha is liquified by the heat of sun which causes diminished agni (digestive activity) causing diseases *Grishma Ritu (Summer Season)* In this season, Sunrays become powerful. Kapha decreases vata increases day by day *Sharat Ritu (Autumn Season)* Sudden exposed to sunlight after cold season aggravates pita.

Dosha	Accumulation	Vitiation	Diminution
Kapha	Shishir	Vasant	Grishma
Pitta	Grishma	Varsha	Sharad
Vata	Varsha	Sharad	Hemant

Raga and Ritu (Seasons) Association

Raga	Ritu
Bhairav	Shishir
Hindol	Vasant
Deepak	Grishma
Megh	Varsha
Malkans	Sharad
Shree	Hemant

Music can play an effective role in helping us lead better, fruitful lives. Listening to specific kinds of music at specific times of the day has been shown to be helpful in maintaining good health. Indian music, with its many Ragas, is

known to be particularly therapeutic value. The curative power of music emanates from the resonance of certain ragas on hormonal and glandular functions which produce secretions that keep the body balanced and infection free.

Ahir Bhairav	Indigestion Rheumatic, Arthritis Hypertension
Asavari	to build confidence – Low BP
Bageshri	insomnia
Basant Bahar	Gall Stones (Cholecystitis)
Bhairavi	Rheumatic Arthritis Sinusitis, encourages detachment
Bhim palas	Anxiety, Hypertension
Chandrakauns	Anorexia - Heart Ailments
Darbari	Sedative - Easing Tension
Darbari Kanada	Headache Asthama
Deepak	Indigestion, Anorexia Hyperacidity, Gall Stones (Cholecystitis)
Gujari Todi	Cough
Gunakali	Rheumatic Arthritis, Constipation, Headache, Piles or Hemorrhoids
Hindol	Rheumatic Arthritis, Backache Hypertension

Jaunpuri	Constipation
Jaijawanti	Rheumatic Arthritis, Diarrhoea Headache
Kafi	Sleep disorders
Kausi Kanada	Hypertension Common Cold
Kedar	Headache, Common Cold Cough, Asthma
Khamaj	Sleep disorders
Madhuvanti	Piles or Hemorrhoids
Malkauns	Intestinal Gas - Low BP
Marwa	Indigestion Hyperacidity
Nat Bhairav	Indigestion, Rheumatic Arthritis, Colitis
Puriya	Colitis, Anaemia Hypertension
Puriya Dhanashri	Anaemia
Ramkali	Colitis Piles or Hemore... OEeu
Shree	Anorexia, Common Cold Cough, Asthma
Shudh Sarang	Anorexia Gall Stones (Cholecystitia)
Shyam Kalyan	Cough, Asthma
Sohani	Headache
Yaman	Rheumatic Arthritis
Tilak Kamod, Hansadhwani, Kalavati, Durga	Relaxation & Easing Tension, Pleasing, effect on Nerves.
Bihag	Sonorous sleep
Bhupal Todi	High Blood Pressure

Madhuri Sharma et al.(2011) significant that the Music therapy showed that it may be considered as a useful adjunct to conventional treatment in management of the metabolic syndrome. This study advocates music therapy to establish it from a general well being concepts to a neuroscience guided model.

Bharathi p et al.(2012) suggested that the decreased in the body temperature of patients subjected to post chemotherapy music intervention 40 after after minutes of music expos.

Mahesh Chandra Pandey (2012) suggested that the Music is capable of improving happiness, peace, health and concentration. It is however important to know the method and

duration for which Music Therapy is to be administered the first steps towards this is the correct diagnosis of the disease and then the selection of the precise raga that will be helpful.

Balaji deekshitulu P V(2014)asked that the Stress is relied through neither for Possible of Music in Ragaas as inevitable part of physical and mental health for stress busted leg.

Shamsul Haque Nizamie and Sai Krishna Tikka (2014) significant that the music therapy techniques can be more useful in severely disturbed patients and that more receptive approaches can be of better efficacy in milder conditions.

Srilatha Bashetti et al.(2014) Suggested that the Every participant showed a significant

improvement in their level of depression. Hence, it can be concluded that music therapy with Indian classical music definitely has a positive effect on the mind. Music therapy is an upcoming field in health care which deserves attention and adequate research as it proves to show great potential. It is a means of promoting the healthy mental status and preventing depression in a safe and easy manner.

Joyanta Sarkar and Utpal Biswas (2015) studied that the Indian classical Music affects the human body. Each raga has its own nature of human treatment. Each Raga is associated with a definite mood or sentiment that nature arouses in human beings.

Karuna Nagarajan et al.(2015) significant that the combination of notes in Indian Raga Bhupali is said to instill Shringara rasa or the aesthetic mood of Love. The improvement is significant compared to the Pop music that is much preferred by the college students and Silence or No music conditions. It was concluded that Memory scores improved immediately after listening to Indian Raga Bhupali.

Sandeep Kumar Kar et al.(2015) suggested that the Indian classical music therapy effectively reduced the intra operative stress (as revealed by reduced levels of cortisol) and reduced the requirement drugs (Fentanyl, Propofol and Vecuronium) during Cardiopulmonary bypass.

Joyanta Sarkar and Utpal Biswas (2015) finding that the Raga therapy contributions to psychological, psychosocial and academic improvement. It provides practical guidelines to use music to accommodate children with disabilities also high blood pressure patient, pregnancy women, diabetic patient etc.

Jomon CU and Raja A (2015) explain that the Anandabhairavi raga, were equally effective in reducing pre-procedural anxiety. Music therapy may be easily integrated into bedside clinical nursing as well as to a wide range of possible clinical settings that include waiting rooms, critical care unit and various procedure rooms.

In an era that is witnessing increased anxiety and stress in the healthcare delivery system.

Mahesh George (2015) studied that the The potential of vibrational energy and its channelization through the body will be discussed and demonstrated through evidence based practices with an emphasis on nadanusandhana and the Mindsound resonance technique (MSRT). Vedic and Gregorian chants will be demonstrated with application of how they are used for rehabilitation.

Bardekar and Ajay. A. Gurjar (2016) explain that the influence of Indian classical ragas structure on human body while person is listening and experiencing an emotion in it by capturing EEG signals. The brainwave signals database will be collected and analyze. This research work addresses these objectives and aims to present a strong case which will help medical practitioners like psychiatrist, to treat patient by injecting music stimulus.

Sundar Sumathy et al.(2016) suggested that the effects of Indian classical music on body physiology and psychology in both healthy and diseases states, and effect of music therapy on the tridoshas.

Jesna. C.A. et al.(2017) significant that the music therapy is practical, feasible and helpful in maintaining therapeutic environment among children with mental illness. Indian music therapy is unique and cultural and open great scope for further prove and studies. More intensive and improvised music therapy can be conducted among children with mental illness.

Aashish A et al.(2018) significant that the ancient way of alternative medicine i.e. raga therapy, which is a need of the day since current advances in technology and rising workload on human being is accompanied by stress relating to mental disorders. This research focuses on to study the influence of Indian classical ragas structure on human body while person is listening and experiencing an emotion in it by capturing EEG signals.

Conclusion

The Indian Ragas are treating various health problems in human body, it is numerous. Music therapy uses for communication, language, and intellectual development. Music therapy as support, for people who are grieving, going through a crisis time or who are in pain. Modern science and medicine are now rediscovering the healing powers of music. And various ragas in Hindustani & Karnataka treating persons with special needs in mental and physical health, rehabilitation and special education is gaining ground. It is a great ancient holistic medical science of India we presented how Indian classical Music affects the human body. Each raga has its own nature of human treatment. Each Raga is associated with a definite mood or sentiment that nature arouses in human beings.

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