



STUDY OF *DHYANA* ACCORDING TO *YOGIC* LITERATURE – A REVIEW

MINAL B. BELSARE^{1*} VIDYA WASNIK² SUMEETA S. JAIN³

^{1*} MD Scholar, Department of Swasthritta, Government Ayurved College, Nagpur, Maharashtra, INDIA

² Associate Professor, Department of Swasthritta, Government Ayurved College, Nagpur, Maharashtra, INDIA

³ Professor and HOD, Department of Swasthritta, Government Ayurved College, Nagpur, Maharashtra, INDIA

Corresponding Email id: minalbelsare777@gmail.com Access this article online: www.jahm.co.in

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ABSTRACT:

Yoga is the ultimate act of harmony between one's physical existence and spiritual conscience. In the *Vedas*, "*Yoga*" was used to designate a union or connection between various objects. These practices Of *Yoga* aim to control and perfect both the physiological and the psychological processes and functions. *Dhyana* is taken up in *Yoga* practices and is means to *Samadhi*. The concept of *Dhyana* is described in various traditions. *Dhyana* is a practice performs with peace, balance & separation with the aim of monitoring the ingoing & outgoing ideas from the mind. *Dhyana* overpower one's thinking, mental and spiritual obstruction, fears, nervousness, stress, and depression by realizing the causes and become capable of managing them. When one's brain and body get stressed because of outer world then it is necessary to concentrate on inner world. Hindu meditation practices help our mind to get rid out of unwanted thoughts and to attain a state of calmness and peace. This review is genuine attempt for highlighting the concept of *Dhyana* According to various Hindu *Yogic* Text. So that one can understand the concept, techniques and benefits of *Dhyana*. Hopefully it will be beneficial for practitioner of *Yoga* and learners of *Yoga* for future scope.

Keywords: *Dhyana*, Meditation, *Yogic Granthas*, *Yoga*

INTRODUCTION

Dhyana is state of mind to remain fixed on a certain internal or external location. It is flowing of unbroken current, towards that point. Dhyana is continuous flow like a flow of water in a river. The word Dhyana is generally translated as meditation. Dhyana has been encouraged in various religious text. Along with Hindu Ancient text it also described in Jainism and Buddhism. In Hinduism the basic objective Of Dhyana is to attain oneness of the practitioner's spirit (Atman) omnipresent and nondual almighty (Paramatma or Brahman). This state of one's self is called Moksha in Hinduism.^[1] Clear references of Yoga and Dhyana are found in ancient Indian scriptures like Vedas,^[2] Upanishads,^[3] and Bhagwat-Gita.^[4] In the Hindu method of meditation, there is a series of rules that must be followed in the yoga process to successfully practice meditation. In Buddhism *Dhyana* is considered as part of the path towards *Nirvana*.^[1] The most important form is insight meditation "*Vipashyana*".^[1] *Vipashyana* Meditation aims at the highest spiritual goals of total Liberation and full enlightenment.^[5] The Jain approach to *Dhyana* is purely psychological. There are references to Preksha in Jain Canons. The world *Preksha* which

means to perceive and Dhyana is deep concentration on one point.^[6] It takes us from the gross physical world to the subtle world of soul.

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.^[7] To Nourish the body one gives it food, water, warmth, exercise. Similarity it is absolutely necessary to provide to one's mind nourishment beyond the action and inaction. Without nourishment, the mind cannot be healthy, pure and sound. For this nourishment Dhyana (meditation) is necessary. Dhyana is the study of deep concentration, calmness and tranquillity of the mind. It is the study of attaining complete control over one's mind. Dhyana takes the consciousness beyond conscious, sub conscious & unconscious states to super consciousness.^[8] In today's era due to increased in competition, mental and spiritual harmony is getting impacted. To overcome emotions like Fear, anger, depression, anxiety there is need to practice the Dhyana, for that the prerequisite is to study the concept, technics, benefits of Dhyana. This review is genuine attempt for highlighting the Concept of Dhyana According Yogic Text.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

1. To Review the concept of Dhyana according Yogic text
2. To understand the concept, techniques, benefits of Dhyana.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Various Ancient Yogic Text were reviewed like Bhagvat-gita, Shiv Samhita, Vashisth Samhita, Gherand Samhita, Hathyog Pradipika.

Various National, International Journals were reviewed.

Dhyan :

The word Dhyana has been derived from the Sanskrit word 'Dhi', which means to

contemplate, reflect, think or be occupied in thought. It is not an expressive subject, but an experiencing art where the consciousness of the aspirant is diffused evenly within and without the body, without fading or showing signs of division.^[9]

The History of Yoga Can Be Divided Into 5 Categories^[10]-

- Vedic period
- Pre-classical period
- Classical period
- Yoga in Medieval Times
- Yoga in Modern Times

Table: 1 History Of Yoga

S. no	Period	Sages and Scriptures
1.	<i>Vedic</i>	<i>Vedas</i> - the oldest scriptures in the world. <i>Rigveda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, Atharva Veda</i>
2.	Pre-classical (around 5000 B.C.)	Bhagavad-Gita by Krishana
3.	Classical (around 2nd century B.C.)	Patanjali wrote Yoga Sutra, Yoga in Budhism Yoga in Jainism
4.	Medieval Times	Matseyendranatha, Gorakshanatha wrote Goraksha Samhita, Goraksha Gitā and Yoga Cintamaṇi, Haṭha Yoga Pradipika by Svātmaṛama, Gheraṇḍa Samhitā, Haṭharatnaval by Śrinivasa Yogī
5.	Modern Times	Aurobindo, Ramakrisana Paramahaṁsa, Swami Vivekananda

Concept / Definition of Dhyana:

Dhyana origin is found in the Upanishads of the Vedas. The Chandogya Upanishad states that meditation (Dhyana) is greater than intelligence or thought (chitta).^[11] Whatever great thing is known to men is known through meditation...the whole earth, middle space, the heaven, waters and even mountains are engaged in Dhyana. The Kausitaki Upanishad mainly uses the term “Dhyana” in the context of “thought” in relationship to consciousness.^[11] The Mundaka Upanishad asks to meditate on the self as Om by giving the example of chariot wheel . This indicates the contemplative course of the worshipper whereby the senses and mind are withdrawn from external wanderings and attention is focused at one’s centre.^[11]

The Svetasvatara Upanishad State that meditation leads the worshipper to a direct realisation of Brahman. It also states that meditation Brings about perfect union with Brahman. Svetasvatara Upanishad describes the process of meditation on the syllable Om.^[11] Maitri Upanishad enjoins the worshipper to meditate on the Sun (âditya) by continuous utterance of “Om”.^[11] The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad defines meditation as “having become calm and concentrated, one perceives the self (atman) within oneself”.^[1]

Krishna explains Dhyana Yoga in 6 chapter of Bhagvatgita. Krishana says that, the Yogi should practise Yoga to purify the heart by controlling his mind, senses and activities and fixing the mind on one point.^[4] Sage Patanjali in Patanjali Yog Sutras describes the Dhyana in Vibhutipada as 7th limb among the eight.^[12] It is preceding step to Samadhi (Salvation). Sage Patanjali explains, The binding of the perceiving consciousness to a certain region is *Dharana* and a prolonged holding of the perceiving consciousness in that region is *Dhyana*(contemplation).^[13]

Swami Swatmram in Hathyog Pradipika in Samadhi Upadesh describes, the concept of concentrating the mind on Nadanusandhan. Nadanusandhana leads to samadhi.^[14] Gherand samhita describes sixth limb out of seven, as Dhyana aiming at direct perception of self.^[15] According to Vasistha, Dhyana (meditation) is understanding the Nature of the self by mind.^[16]

Place For Dhyana: ^[4] ^[17]

One should find a solitary corner and clean spot free from pebbles, fires, wind, dust, dampness, and disturbing noises. Seat should be firm. Place should not be dirty, smelly. Not tall, Not low, not hole should be there. Where the scenery is charming and pleasing to the eyes and where there are bowers, caves, good

water places. One can use Animal Skin, Kusa Grass one over the other for sitting.

Postures For Dhyana :-

1. Padmasana^[18]
2. Sidhasana^[19]
3. Svastikasana^[20]
4. Comfortable position (Sukhasana) – with body, head, and neck firmly in a straight line.^[4]

Types of Dhyana :-

Fourth chapter of Vasistha Samhita describes the Saguna and Nirguna Dhyana^[21]

Nirguna meditation is only one and the Saguna meditation have five-types.

- 1) Nirguna Dhyana/ Having No form/ Abstract^[21] :- Attribute-less meditation .
Self unitement with that Brahman, such feeling is the Nirguna Dhyana. Untouched by (either) gross (or) subtle space, invisible, Beyond taste and smell, beyond any source of knowledge and similes.
- 2) Saguna Dhyana/ Having Form^[22]:-
Meditation with attributes.

The master of all deities and residing in the hearts of all beings, experiencing in the selfone's identity with him is supposed to be the Sagun Dhyana.

Following are types of Sagun Dhyana.

- i. Forming and contemplating on a mental image of Nārāyaṇa in the lotus of the heart.
- ii. Forming and contemplating on a mental image of Agni, in the Kanda, within the lotus of the heart and the Supreme Self within its flames and identifying with it.
- iii. Forming and contemplating on a mental image of the lustrous Self like a pillar between the eye-brows.
- iv. Mentally forming and contemplating on a miniature image of the Self in the lotus of the heart located in the circle of the moon being sprinkled all around by the thousands of showers of nectar coming from Sahastrara.
- v. Forming and contemplating on mental image of the orb of the Sun with the conviction that "I am that Self".

According to Gheranda Samhita- Dhyana is said to be of three kinds :^{[9][23]}

- 1) Sthula Dhyana: Contemplating either on the Murthi (image) of one's Guru or of God (Ishta Devata) is known as Sthula Dhyana. The object of Sthula Dhyana can be vividly visualized.
- 2) Jyotirmaya Dhyana: Tejothyana is said to be 100 times superior to Sthula Dhyana. In this Dhyana while the Yogi is meditating, he sees a light and fixes

his mind on that. The light which the Yogi sees is an inner light and not a light outside, which he can perceive. A Yogi who is successful in Bhramari Kumbhaka hears certain inner sounds which blend with the light that he sees and the Yogi's mind is fixed on the blend. Thus, the sound, the light and the knowing mind becomes one.

- 3) Sukshma Dhyana: Sukshma Dhyana is a hundred thousand times superior to Jyotirmaya Dhyana. The object at this Dhyana is Kundalini, the Serpent Power, after it has crossed the region of the eyes. Then it becomes imperceptible.

Where To Meditate :-

At Nasikagra Drishti- Gazing At the Nose and keep the mind fixed in the Self only. ^[4]

At Bhrumadhya Drishti- Gazing between the two eyebrows (Ajna Chakra).^[24]

Shiv Samhita explain contemplation on Shatchakra's with its benefits.^[25]

Muladhara Chakra: Dhyana on Muladhara Chakra Increase in gastric fire, health, agility and omni-science-hood get Manifested.

Svadhithana Chakra:- Dhyana on Svadhithana Chakra leads to free from all the diseases

Manipuraka Chakra :- By contemplating on Manipuraka Chakra all desired are fulfilled,

suffering and diseases gets Destroyed, also evades the death.

Anahat Chakra :- By meditation on Anahat Chakra , seen unseen fruits are obtained. One Obtains unsurpassable knowledge of objects of all the three Periods past, present and future happens to possess Clairaudience and clairvoyance.

Visuddha Chakra :- Contemplation on Visuddha Chakra abandons the external (objects) and moves within inner recesses of the mind.

Ajna Chakra:- All these fruits of the meditation on five Chakras that are spoken are definitely obtained through the meditation of Ajna Chakra only. Yogi indeed becomes eligible for Raja Yoga by virtue of its contemplation.

Sahtrakar Chakra: By meditation of Sahtrakar Chakra, Brahma is brought forth, diminution of demerit takes place and (Atman) does not get embodied again and again.

Physiological Effect of Dhyana Yoga:

Meditation directly affect the mind/brain complex, calms the hypothalamus and calms the emotions, there by shutting off excess sympathetic stimulation. Meditation reduces metabolic cell activity and decreases oxygen, carbon dioxide utilization in the body. Meditation is more effective than sleep in conserving energy. ^[26]

Meditation can change the electrophysiological activity of the brain. During meditation there is an increase in theta high-frequency power and the low alpha frequency in the anterior cerebral regions, as well as a decrease in the activity of the sympathetic system and an increase in the activity of the parasympathetic system. Theta and alpha are independently involved in thought processes during meditation. Effective meditation leads to slowed down synchronous alpha activity in the frontal areas combined with a decrease in the activity of the sympathetic system which, in turn, may lead to the occurrence of theta in the frontal areas and the increase of activity of the parasympathetic system.^[27]

Benefits :-

- During meditation Sattva increases.
- It helps the practitioner to control many physical and mental problems and to achieve the highest level of spiritual experience.
- Dhyana also increases concentration, memory, confidence, clarity of thoughts, and will power, receiving power of brain and decreases the fatigue.^[1]
- New Nerve-currents, new vibrations, new avenues, new grooves, New cells and new channels are formed. The

whole mind and the nervous system are remodeled. One will develop a new Heart, mind, new feelings, new modes.^[16]

- To get self realization Dhyana is necessary. If one practice it continuously, the Vrittis (thoughts) will be pacified, mind gets concentrated, the goal will be achieved. By practicing Dhyana, the distinction between the Dhyata (meditator), Dhyana (act of meditation), Dhyeya (this meditated upon) will be lost and the meditator will be one with the Consciousness and be merged in the Brahman.^[29]

Benefits of Dhyana by various Yogic

Text are as follows :-

- Gita - Dhyana Required for the perfection of Brahman-realization.^[30]
- Vashisth Samhita - Meditation alone is the high way to salvation.^[31]
- Gherand Samhita - By virtue of Dhyana-yoga the Yogi becomes one with the Atman.^[32]
- Hathyog Pradipika - Sin is destroyed by constant concentration on *Nada*. The finite mind and *Prana* dissolve into the stainless (*Niranjana*).^[33]
- Shiv Samhita - Practising embrosial meditation, one will conquer death within six months, obtains all the

siddhis within a year, A sadhaka never and nowhere plunges into sorrows. As one goes on meditating on the self, so one attains Samadhi^[28]

- Meditation (*Dhyâna*) is the greatest help to spiritual life. In meditation one divests himself of all material conditions and feels his divine nature. The touch of the soul can paint the brightest colour even in the dingiest places; it can cast a fragrance over the vilest thing; it can make the wicked divine and all enmity, all selfishness is effaced.^[35]

DISCUSSION :-

Human mind is fickle, like a butterfly, which flies from here and there and does not wait at one place for long. Speed of our mind may be greater than the speed of light. It is essential to control the mind. But controlling mind is the very difficult task. Dhyana is one of the very effective ways to control the mind.

The term "meditation" is now commonly used for various techniques. These include meditation, concentration, using natural sounds like the ocean, guided meditation, meditative movement practices such as yoga and tai chi, qigong, breathing exercises, mantras, and more. These techniques work on different levels such as senses, mind, intellect, and emotion. According to *Vedic* science, the

true purpose of meditation is to connect oneself to one's deep inner Self. Techniques which achieve that goal serve the true purpose of meditation.^[2]

During the past few decades, awareness of the application of meditation in the healthcare setting has increased. Multiple clinical studies/researches have demonstrated the beneficial effects of meditation on various aspects of health.

A good number of research articles are published on the effect of the transcendental meditation (TM) program on the hormonal levels which showed the level of cortisol and TSH were decreased, whereas there was an increase in growth hormone.^[36] Another Transcendental Meditation Programme study showed significantly increased longevity and less cardiovascular mortality in elderly persons.^[37] Scientists found a significant increase in left ventricular ejection fraction after 12 weeks of practice of pranayama and meditation.^[38] Clinical research on meditation showed the significant reductions in depression scores, systolic blood pressure (SBP), and heart rate,^[39] fasting serum cholesterol levels,^[40] postprandial plasma glucose in type 2 diabetes mellitus,^[41] reduction in respiratory rate which in turn reduces energy expenditure of tidal respiration and increases the breath holding

time Significantly.^[42] The research on Om chanting showed, chanting of OM (5 min) might enhance parasympathetic nervous system activity, promote relaxation, and provide calmness.^[43] Meditation practices have a variety of health benefits and help people improve the quality of lives.

Since, ancient time till today's era meditation plays important role in one's life. Along with many health benefits it is very important for spiritual growth. One can taste the spiritual consciousness by withdrawing the mind from sensual object and fixing it in deep meditation.^[44] One can enjoy the eternal peace with supreme bliss with Dhyana. The power of meditation gets us everything. If you want to get power over nature, you can have it through meditation.

In present article an honest attempt is made, to provide full information about the Dhyana. This article has covered the definition of Dhyana by Upnishad, Bhagavad-Gita, Patanjali Yogsutra, Hath Yoga Pradipika, Gherand Samhita. The article also described place, postures, types, benefits of Dhyana. Dhyana is the only royal road to salvation or Moksha.

Collectively in a single article the information regarding Dhyana by review of Yogic text is made available.

CONCLUSION:-

Dhyana has been given importance since Vedic period. All religion encourage the practice of Dhyana for liberation. Thus it can be concluded that to remain oneself free from negative emotions like anxiety, stress, nervousness, fear, anger, depression, Ego, frustration and to attain the sense of calmness, soundness, one should practice Dhyana Daily. Dhyana maintain physical and mental stillness. Dhyana helps to attain one of the Purusarths (Moksha).

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CITE THIS ARTICLE AS

Minal B. Belsare, Vidya Wasnik, Sumeeta S. Jain. Study of Dhyana according to Yogic Literature – A Review. *J of Ayurveda and Hol Med (JAHM)*. 2023;11(6):140-151

Conflict of interest: None

Source of support: None