

Role of Shat-Chakra Meditation in Stress Regulation

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Abstract: Stress is a growing psychosomatic concern in modern society, affecting mental health, productivity, and overall well-being. While several stress-management strategies exist, many have limitations such as side effects, cost, or limited accessibility. Shat-Chakra Meditation, rooted in ancient yogic and tantric traditions, focuses on harmonizing the seven energy centers of the body and offers a holistic, non-pharmacological approach to stress reduction. This paper reviews classical yogic literature and contemporary perspectives to explore the role of Shat-Chakra Meditation in regulating psychological and physiological stress responses. The findings suggest that chakra meditation promotes autonomic balance, emotional stability, and mental clarity, indicating its potential as an effective complementary intervention for stress management.

Keywords: Shat-Chakra Meditation, Stress Management, Mental Health, Yogic Practices, Mind–Body Balance

1. INTRODUCTION

Stress has emerged as one of the most prevalent challenges of modern life, significantly impacting physical health, emotional stability, and quality of life. Conventional stress-management approaches such as medication and counseling often prove costly, time-consuming, or associated with adverse effects. As a result, there is an increasing interest in holistic mind–body practices.

Shat-Chakra Meditation is a traditional yogic practice that involves focused awareness on the seven chakras—Mūlādhāra, Svādhiṣṭhāna, Maṇipūra, Anāhata, Viśuddha, Ājñā, and Sahasrāra—situated along the spinal axis. These chakras are believed to regulate physiological, emotional, and psychological functions. From a modern scientific viewpoint, chakra meditation may be understood as a psychophysiological intervention that enhances relaxation, balances the autonomic nervous system, and reduces stress-related responses.

Despite growing popularity, empirical research on chakra meditation remains limited compared to mindfulness or transcendental meditation. This study attempts to bridge this gap by examining the relevance of Shat-Chakra Meditation in stress reduction.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Importance of Meditation

Meditation is a mental discipline that enhances self-awareness, emotional regulation, and relaxation. Scientific studies indicate that regular meditation reduces cortisol levels, activates the parasympathetic nervous system, improves cardiovascular health, and enhances emotional resilience. In educational and occupational settings, meditation improves concentration, productivity, and interpersonal harmony.

Patañjali defines yoga as “योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः॥ *Yogaḥ citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ*”—the cessation of mental fluctuations. Among the eight limbs of Ashtāṅga Yoga, **Dhyāna (meditation)** plays a central role in attaining mental stillness and stress reduction, making it highly relevant in contemporary mental health management.

Concept of Chakras

Chakras are subtle energy centers that influence physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Yogic texts describe them as dormant centers that awaken through disciplined practices such as prāṇāyāma, dhyāna, bandha, and mantra. Balanced chakras facilitate free flow of prāṇa, leading to harmony and psychological stability.

Mental Health and Stress

The World Health Organization defines mental health as a state in which individuals realize their abilities, cope with normal stresses, and function productively. Stress, defined as mental tension arising from challenging situations, can be acute, chronic, or positive (eustress). Chronic stress, in particular, contributes to anxiety, depression, and psychosomatic disorders.

Recent WHO reports indicate that 10–12% of India’s population experiences common mental health disorders, with stress being a major contributor to workplace productivity loss.

3. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Aim:

To evaluate the effectiveness of Shat-Chakra Meditation in reducing stress.

Objectives:

1. To study the influence of chakra meditation on psychological and physiological stress responses.
2. To understand the relationship between chakra activation and stress regulation.
3. To assess Shat-Chakra Meditation as a holistic approach to mental health management.

4. METHODOLOGY

- Review of classical yogic texts: Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā, Gheraṇḍa Saṁhitā, Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali, Ajapa Japa and Chidākāśa Dhāraṇā, Light on Yoga.
- Review of secondary sources from academic databases such as Google Scholar and Research Gate.

5. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chakra meditation is a traditional yogic technique that focuses on the activation, balance, and harmonization of the body's subtle energy centers, referred to as chakras (from the Sanskrit word cakra, meaning "wheel" or "circle").

Classical yogic literature describes chakra meditation as a technique for awakening and balancing the seven chakras through visualization, prāṇāyāma, and bīja mantras. When the chakras are in harmony, energy flows freely through the suṣumṇā nāḍī (psychic energy channel), leading to inner peace and higher consciousness.

Modern stress theories describe stress as activation of the HPA axis and sympathetic nervous system. Although meditation is well documented for stress reduction, chakra-based meditation remains under-researched, highlighting the need for further empirical validation.

SHAT CHAKRAS:

मूलाधारे चतुर्दलं स्वाधिष्ठाने षड्दलम् ।

मणिपूरे दशदलमनाहते द्वादशारकम् ॥

विशुद्धौ षोडशदलमाज्ञायां द्विदलं स्मृतम् ॥

(A verse from the tantric text **Ṣaṭcakra-Nirūpaṇa** – by Pūrṇānanda Yati- 16th century CE)

CHAKRA	TATTV (ELEMENT)	LOCATION	BHĀ (SEED MANTRA)	MANTRA (MUL MANTRA)	PRANA (VAIRI)	COLOR
ROOT- MULACHAKRA	Earth	Base of spine	Lam	Lam Grounding, survival, basic needs, stability, safety, connection	Apana	Red
DIJIBH SWADHISTHAN	Water	Between naval and genital	Vam	Om Creativity, sexuality, pleasure, emotion, flow	Apana	Orange
MANIPUR MANIPUR	Fire	navel, white plexus	Ram	Om Willpower, determination, ego, vitality, transformation, individuality	Samsara	Yellow
ANANT ANANT	Air	Heart	Yam	Om Love, selfless compassion, peace, balance, inner freedom, connection	Prana	Green
THROAT VISHUDHA	Ether	Throat	Ham	Om Self-expression, communication, clarity, purification	Udana	Blue
AGRA VISHUDHA	All elements in pure state	Above and Between brows	Aum	Om Enlightenment, wisdom, transcendence, universal consciousness, unity	Udana/All	Indigo
DIJIBH VISHUDHA	none	Top of the head	None	Om Transcendence, self-realization, truth, connection to source, inner divinity, grace	None	White

Mūlādhāra Chakra (Root Chakra)

Location: Base of the spinal column

Bija Mantra: Lam

Element: Earth

Function: Foundation, stability, grounding, and survival instincts



The Mūlādhāra Chakra is symbolized as a red lotus with four petals situated at the base of the spine. It is regarded as the seat of the Brahma-bīja (Lam) and the resting place of dormant

Kuṇḍalinī Śakti. This chakra forms the energetic foundation of the human system, governing physical security and psychological stability.

Effects of Imbalance:

- Heightened fear, anxiety, and insecurity
- Restlessness and lack of grounding
- Physical disturbances such as lower back pain, constipation, and fatigue
- Emotional experiences of disconnection and instability

Svādhiṣṭhāna Chakra (Sacral Chakra)

Location: Below the navel

Bīja Mantra: Vam

Element: Water

Function: Creativity, pleasure, emotional expression, and vitality



Situated above the Mūlādhāra Chakra, the Svādhiṣṭhāna Chakra is traditionally depicted as a six-petalled lotus of vermillion color. It embodies the water element and is associated with the Vam bīja mantra, symbolizing fluidity, adaptability, and emotional movement. This chakra governs creative energy, sensory enjoyment, and emotional balance.

Effects of Imbalance:

- Emotional instability, guilt, or excessive dependence on others
- Suppressed or exaggerated sexual impulses
- Physical disturbances related to the reproductive system, kidneys, or bladder
- Emotional manifestations such as mood swings and diminished joy

Maṇipūra Chakra (Solar Plexus Chakra)

Location: Navel region

Bīja Mantra: Ram

Element: Fire

Function: Personal power, will, transformation, and vitality



The Maṇipūra Chakra is symbolized as a ten-petalled lotus of radiant golden color situated in the navel region. It embodies the fire element and is associated with the Ram bīja mantra. This chakra governs digestion, metabolism, self-confidence, and the capacity for purposeful action, serving as the center of inner strength and transformation.

Effects of Imbalance:

- Low self-esteem, anger, or aggressive tendencies
- Digestive disturbances such as acidity or ulcers
- Excessive need for control or lack of direction
- Emotional manifestations including frustration and helplessness

Anāhata Chakra (Heart Chakra)

Location: Center of the chest

Bīja Mantra: Yam

Element: Air

Function: Love, compassion, emotional balance, and harmony



The Anāhata Chakra is represented as a twelve-petalled lotus located at the heart center. It is associated with the air element and the Yam bīja mantra, symbolizing openness, balance, and unconditional love. This chakra acts as a bridge between the lower physical chakras and the higher spiritual centers, governing emotional integration, empathy, and harmonious relationships.

Effects of Imbalance:

- Feelings of loneliness, grief, jealousy, or emotional withdrawal
- Difficulty in forming or sustaining emotional connections
- Physical issues related to the heart, lungs, or respiratory system
- Emotional challenges such as lack of forgiveness or compassion

Viśuddha Chakra (Throat Chakra)

Location: Throat region

Bīja Mantra: Ham

Element: Ether (Ākāśa / Space)

Function: Communication, purity, self-expression, and clarity



The Viśuddha Chakra is symbolized as a luminous sixteen-petalled lotus located in the throat region. Associated with the Ham bīja mantra, it represents the ether (space) element and serves as the center of sound, purity, and truthful expression. This chakra governs communication, creativity, and the ability to articulate thoughts and emotions with clarity and authenticity.

Effects of Imbalance:

- Difficulty in self-expression, fear of speaking, or excessive verbalization
- Physical disturbances such as throat infections, thyroid dysfunction, or jaw tension

- Emotional manifestations including suppressed emotions, lack of authenticity, or dishonesty

Ājñā Chakra (Third Eye Chakra)

Location: Between the eyebrows

Bija Mantra: Om / Aum

Element: Mind (Manas)

Function: Intuition, insight, awareness, and higher perception



The Ājñā Chakra is symbolized as a two-petalled lotus of pure white light located between the eyebrows. It is associated with the sacred sound Om, which represents universal consciousness and inner awareness. This chakra governs intuition, mental clarity, perception, and the integration of intellect with higher wisdom.

Effects of Imbalance:

- Mental confusion, excessive thinking, or lack of clarity and direction
- Physical disturbances such as headaches, visual strain, or insomnia
- Emotional manifestations including anxiety, mistrust, and self-doubt

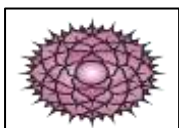
Sahasrāra Chakra (Crown Chakra)

Location: Apex of the head

Bija Mantra: Silence / Aum (in transcendental awareness)

Element: Pure consciousness

Function: Enlightenment, spiritual realization, and divine connection



The Sahasrāra Chakra is symbolized as a radiant thousand-petalled lotus blossoming at the crown of the head. It is regarded as the seat of Brahman, representing supreme bliss, unity, and pure consciousness. This chakra transcends the elements and serves as the highest center of spiritual awareness, integrating the body, mind, and spirit.

Effects of Imbalance:

- Disharmony among physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions
- Feelings of disconnection, meaninglessness, or spiritual confusion

Steps of Chakra Meditation

Chakra meditation is a systematic practice involving focused awareness, regulated breathing, visualization, and mantra repetition to harmonize the seven primary chakras and induce relaxation.

1. **Preparation:** Sit comfortably in a quiet place with the spine erect. Close the eyes, observe the breath, and set an intention for relaxation and energetic balance.
2. **Mūlādhāra :** Focus attention at the base of the spine. Visualize a red light and repeat the bīja mantra Lam seven times to promote grounding and stability.
3. **Svādhiṣṭhāna :** Focus below the navel. Visualize an orange light and chant Vam seven times to enhance creativity and emotional flow.
4. **Maṇipūra:** Focus on the navel region. Visualize a yellow light and repeat Ram seven times to strengthen confidence and vitality.
5. **Anāhata:** Focus at the center of the chest. Visualize a green light and chant Yam seven times to cultivate love and compassion.
6. **Viśuddha:** Focus on the throat. Visualize a blue light and repeat Ham seven times to enhance clarity of expression.
7. **Ājñā :** Focus between the eyebrows. Visualize an indigo light and chant Aum seven times to develop intuition and mental clarity.
8. **Sahasrāra :** Focus at the crown of the head. Visualize white or violet light and silently repeat Om seven times to foster spiritual awareness.

9. **Closure:** Remain still, visualizing all chakras aligned and luminous. Gradually return awareness to the present moment with a sense of gratitude.
10. **Duration and Frequency:** Practice for 7–10 minutes daily, or at least 4–5 times per week. Regularity is essential for effective stress reduction.

6. IMPORTANCE OF SHAT-CHAKRA MEDITATION IN STRESS REDUCTION

Shat-Chakra Meditation contributes to stress reduction by:

- Inducing physiological relaxation and parasympathetic dominance
- Enhancing emotional regulation and compassion
- Improving mental clarity and mindfulness
- Harmonizing prāṇic flow across the chakras

This integrative approach supports both preventive and therapeutic stress management.

7. DISCUSSION

Although meditation has been widely investigated for its impact on mental health, the majority of research has primarily focused on mindfulness meditation, transcendental meditation, and yogic breathing practices. In contrast, empirical evidence examining the effects of Chakra meditation—a traditional yogic practice centered on the activation and balance of the body’s seven energy centers—remains limited and underexplored.

The present study supports the view that Shat-Chakra Meditation is both a scientifically relevant and spiritually significant approach to stress reduction. By integrating regulated breathing, focused attention, and energy flow, it effectively bridges ancient yogic wisdom with contemporary psychological health frameworks. The incorporation of such practices within healthcare and educational settings may enhance mental equilibrium, emotional resilience, and holistic well-being in modern society.

8. CONCLUSION

The present study underscores the potential of Shat-Chakra Meditation as an effective mind–body intervention for stress reduction and enhancement of overall well-being. Rooted in classical yogic philosophy, this practice integrates regulated breathing, visualization, and

focused awareness of the seven chakras to harmonize the flow of prāṇa (vital energy) within the body.

Chakra bīja meditation positively influences the autonomic nervous system by promoting parasympathetic dominance, supports hormonal and cardiovascular regulation, enhances emotional stability and resilience, and improves cognitive control, mindfulness, and self-awareness. Consequently, Shat-Chakra Meditation serves both preventive and therapeutic roles in reducing chronic stress, anxiety, and psychosomatic disturbances.

In the context of modern life—characterized by occupational pressure, academic competition, financial strain, digital overload, and uncertainty—stress has become pervasive across all age groups. This has led to a growing global shift toward holistic, non-pharmacological approaches such as yoga and meditation for sustainable stress management.

Within this framework, Chakra meditation has gained prominence for its capacity to foster inner calm, emotional balance, and holistic health. Shat-Chakra Meditation effectively bridges ancient yogic wisdom with contemporary psychological health needs, offering an accessible and integrative approach to stress management. Its incorporation into educational, clinical, and occupational settings may significantly contribute to mental well-being. Further empirical research is recommended to establish evidence-based validation of its effectiveness in stress reduction.

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