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Comparative Evaluation of Concentration, Memory Performance and Perceived Stress among Mantra Japa Practitioners and Non-Practitioners

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Abstract: ***Background**: The practice of mantra chanting, especially in the Indian contemplative schools, has attracted the interest of its putative cognitive and psychological benefits. Nevertheless, few empirical studies have been conducted on specific Tantric mantras like Guru Mantra and Baglamukhi Mantra in particular with comparative designs utilizing broadly practitioners and non-practitioners. **Objective**: The present study aimed to compare the concentration, memory performance, and perceived stress of Tantric mantra practitioners and non-practitioners and to determine the relationships between these variables. **Methodology**: The design used was a quantitative, cross-sectional design which employed a sample of 150 young adults in the age group of 18-30. Purposive sampling was used to sample out participants who were practitioners (n = 75) and non-practitioners (n = 75). The administration of standardised tools was done, such as the Attention Control Scale (ACS), Memory Functioning Scale (MFS), and Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10). Descriptive statistics, independent sample t-tests, and Pearson correlation were used to analyse data. **Results**: The results showed that practitioners showed a much higher concentration and memory score and significantly lower perceived stress than non-practitioners (p < .05). Significant effect sizes were found among variables. Correlation analysis reflected that there were positive relationships between concentration and memory, whereas a negative relationship existed where perception of stress was correlated with both memory variables and concentration. **Conclusion**: The research gives empirical evidence to prove the cognitive and stress-reducing effect of Tantric mantra Jaap. It also emphasizes the importance of considering traditional practices in psychological practice interventions, especially in contexts culturally appropriate to them.*

Keywords: Tantric Mantra, Concentration, Memory Performance, Perceived Stress, Cognitive Functioning, Baglamukhi Maha-mantra, Guru mantra

1. Introduction

The scientific and clinical concern about the role of ancient forms of contemplation in cognitive functioning and psychological health has grown over the past decades. Of these, the chanting of mantras, which has roots in the Indian schools of spirituality, has become an important focus in interdisciplinary research between psychology, neuroscience, and the traditional knowledge systems in the East. Also known as japa, mantra repetition is the rhythmical repetition of sounds or phrases and has traditionally been linked to the attainment of higher states of consciousness. Recent studies, though, are starting to look more at its quantifiable impact on attention, memory, and stress regulation (Jha et al., 2007; Travis and Shear, 2010).

Concentration and memory are cognitive functions required to support academic and everyday activities. Concentration, also known as sustained attention, allows people to sift through distractions and stay focused on the task, and memory aids in the learning process as well as processing the information received. These events are very much sensitive to the psychological stress, which may lead to the inability to regulate attention and memorise the events. The concept of perceived stress, which can be described as the individual's view of life demands and coping capacity, is critical in influencing the mental health and cognitive functions of individuals (Lynch et al., 2018; Raval, 2024). According to Meghala and Pant (2023), the growing academic pressure, social expectations, and technological demands on students in India present the need to implement ready-to-wear and culturally-relevant interventions to reduce stress and cognitive overload among students.

There is emerging evidence to indicate that mantra chanting has a positive effect on neurophysiological and cognitive mechanisms. Electroencephalography studies have reported an increase in alpha and theta brainwaves, indicating relaxed but alert mental states related to better attentional control and neural synchronisation (Srivastava and Reilly, 2024). Also, mantra-based interventions have been shown to have enhanced memory, cognitive flexibility, and emotional regulation, and reduced perceived stress through parasympathetic stimulation (Sharma et al., 2025; Tripathi, 2024).

Irrespective of these developments, the available literature was still deficient in comparative studies on practitioners and non-practitioners especially when using Indian populations. Moreover, Tantric mantras like Guru Mantra, Baglamukhi Mantra, etc., are not thoroughly explored even with the theoretical importance. The current research covers these gaps by providing a discussion on the differences between the concentration, memory, and perceived amounts of stress between practitioners and non-practitioners, adding to the body of work in relation to the integration of the traditional practices into the current psychological science.

2. Review of Literature

The available literature is quite supportive in terms of evidence of psychological and cognitive advantages of mantra meditation and chanting among different populations

and in various environments. Evidence, including that of Gupta et al. (2021), demonstrates the significant impact that well-organized mantra meditation and yoga intervention has in reducing the perceived stress and in increasing the physiological regulation, and, in particular, in terms of greater parasympathetic response. In the same direction, Meghala and Pant (2023) have discovered that short-term mantra chanting enhances memory performance among adolescents through the improvement of attention and reduction of anxiety. Even more, technologically sophisticated methods, including virtual reality-based intervention by Ameta et al. (2023), emphasize the progress in the fields of attention, working memory, and emotional well-being, which hints at the flexibility of mantra practices in contemporary settings. According to research conducted by Baboo and Jain (2024), the various modalities of chanting have different cognitive effects, with loud chanting having a more pronounced effect on mindfulness and silent chanting having a greater effect on short-term memory. The studies by Raval (2024) and Sharma et al. (2025), in spite of methodological limitations of some studies, consistently demonstrate the role of mantra meditation in enhancing emotional regulation, resilience, and overall mental health. The effectiveness of chanting in enhancing concentration among school students is supported by experimental evidence by Suryawanshi et al. (2024), which was further supported by neurophysiological evidence that indicates a decrease in amygdala activation.

Nevertheless, against this increasing body of evidence, a critical research gap remains within the research of Tantric mantras, especially the Guru Mantra and the Baglamukhi Mantra. The majority of available research concentrates on more general or widely practised forms of Tantric practice, such as Om chanting or Gayatri mantra, without paying sufficient attention to the unique psycho-spiritual processes inherent in Tantric traditions. Also, rigorous comparative designs have not been done with practitioners or non-practitioners, which curtails causal interpretations.

Also, there are very scanty studies that incorporate cognitive assessment methods with psychophysiological measures in culturally authentic Indian settings. It is an uncharted territory as far as the role of Guru–disciple transmission, being one of the basic elements of Tantric practice, is concerned. As such, it is evident that there is a need to conduct systematic and empirically sound research to explore cognitive, psychological, and neurophysiological implications of Tantric mantra practices as a systematic scientific investigation.

3. Research Gap (Tantric Mantras: Guru Mantra and Baglamukhi Mantra)

The current research is aimed at filling in the research gaps identified in the Tantric mantra practices literature, especially in the Guru Mantra or Baglamukhi Mantra. It takes a comparative design method by exploring variations in practitioners and non-practitioners in advance of overcoming the shortcomings of previous pre-post designs. The research incorporates standardised scales of concentration, memory, and perceived stress to produce a complete measurement of cognitive and psychological performance. It also puts the investigation into a real Indian cultural setting and recognizes the contribution of the traditional practices. Through this, this study provides empirical evidence of the Tantric mantra chanting cognitive and stress-regulatory effects.

4. Research Problem

The researchers discuss the problem of growing stress and decreasing cognitive efficiency among students through the Tantra mantras work. It will compare the practitioners and non-practitioners based on the standardised measures of concentration, memory, and perceived stress with the aim of crossing the gap between the traditional knowledge system of India and modern empirical psychological research on cognitive and emotional functioning.

5. Research Questions

a) Does the practice of Tantric mantra jaap (Guru and Baglamukhi mantra) influence **concentration levels** among individuals?
b) Is there a significant difference in **memory performance** between mantra practitioners and non-practitioners?
c) Does mantra jaap practice significantly influence **perceived stress levels** among individuals?
d) What is the relationship between concentration, memory performance, and perceived stress among participants?

6. Objectives of the Study

a) To assess and compare the level of **concentration** among mantra jaap practitioners and non-practitioners.
b) To evaluate and compare **memory performance** among mantra jaap practitioners and non-practitioners.
c) To measure and compare **perceived stress levels** among mantra jaap practitioners and non-practitioners.
d) To examine the relationship between concentration, memory performance, and perceived stress among participants.

7. Hypotheses

a) There is no significant difference in **concentration levels** between mantra practitioners and non-practitioners.
b) There is no significant difference in **memory performance** between mantra practitioners and non-practitioners.
c) There is no significant difference in **perceived stress levels** between mantra practitioners and non-practitioners.
d) There is no significant relationship between concentration, memory performance, and perceived stress among participants.

8. Methodology

8.1 Research Design

The research was done using a quantitative design with a cross-sectional design to obtain differences in cognitive and psychological functioning between Tantric mantra practitioners and non-practitioners. This design allowed comparison of group differences in concentration, memory, and perceived stress without manipulation of variables to ensure ecological validity in the natural context.

8.2 Variables

The independent variable was Tantric mantra jaap practise (Guru and Baglamukhi). The dependent variables were concentration, memory, and perceived stress. Age and gender were considered as control variables.

8.3 Sample

One hundred fifty and zero youths (18-30 years) took part. The sample was divided between 75 practitioners who regularly performed the Guru and Baglamukhi mantra for at least 30 minutes a day for at least two months, and 75 non-practitioners who had no history of performing the Guru or Baglamukhi mantra. Purposive sampling was used. The psychiatric cases, the current treatment, and other types of meditation were eliminated.

8.4 Tools

The standardised measures used in collecting data consisted of the Attention Control Scale (ACS) to measure concentration, the Memory Functioning Scale (MFS) to measure memory, and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10) to measure stress. Participants were documented in a demographic sheet.

8.5 Procedure

Informed consent and ethical approval were provided. Data were gathered through online and offline means based on standardised instructions, and with confidentiality and anonymity.

8.6 Statistical Analysis

Analysis of the differences in groups and the correlation between variables was performed with the means of descriptive statistics (mean, SD), t-tests based on the independent samples, and Pearson correlation.

8.7 Ethical Considerations

Practices were voluntary, confidential, and not invasive and followed general ethical standards.

9. Results

The findings of the current research study point to the significant distinctions between Tantric mantra managers and non-managers in their cognitive and psychological variables. Table 1 demonstrates that the sample (N=150) was organically balanced in terms of the number of male and female participants working as practitioners and non-practitioners.

In terms of concentration, Table 2 indicates that practitioners scored much higher (Mean = 68.23, SD = 6.53) than non-practitioners (Mean = 43.25, SD = 2.45). The t-test of independent samples showed that there was a statistically significant difference (t = 4.23, df = 148, p =. 002) with a large effect size (Cohen d = 0.78). This implies that an improved attentional control is linked to regular mantra practice.

In the same respect, Table 3 shows that practitioners had better memory performance (Mean = 72.35, SD = 6.98) compared to non-practitioners (Mean = 58.36, SD = 3.25). The level of difference was statistically significant (t = 6.32, df = 148, p = .012), with the effect size being strong (d = 0.74), which means all these changes resulted in improved cognitive processing by the practitioners.

Regarding a perceived stress level, Table 4 indicates that practitioners reported lower levels of perceived stress (Mean = 12.10, SD = 1.01) when compared to non-practitioners (Mean = 38.87, SD = 4.51). The difference was statistically significant (t = 8.21, df = 148, p =.024), with a large effect size (d = 0.77), indicating the stress-reducing effect of mantra chants.

Additionally, Table 5 presents Pearson's correlation analysis, indicating a strong positive relationship between concentration and memory (r = 0.789, p < .01), and significant negative correlations between perceived stress and both concentration (r = -0.678, p < .05) and memory (r = -0.750, p < .05). These results indicate that better thinking abilities relate to reduced stress. Generally, the findings indicate the usefulness of Tantric mantra meditation in improving cognitive functions and minimizing stress.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Participants(N=150)

Variable	Gender	N	%
Practitioner	Male	38	51.00
	Female	37	49.00
Non-Practitioner	Male	38	51.00
	Female	37	49.00

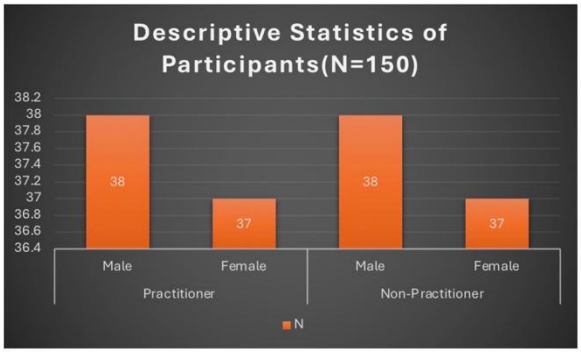


Figure 1: Descriptive Statistics of Participants(N=150)

Table 2: Independent Sample t-test Statistics(N=150)

Variable	Group	N	Mean±SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d	Sig.
Concentration	Practitioner	75	68.23±6.53	4.23	148	.002*	0.78	Sig. p<.05
	Non-Practitioner	75	43.25±2.45	1.34				

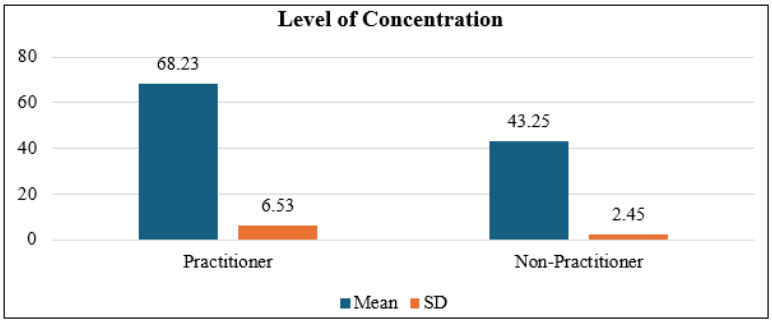


Figure 2: Comparison among the participants' level of Concentration (N=150)

Table 3: Independent Sample t-test Statistics(N=150)

Variable	Group	N	Mean±SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d	Sig.
Memory Performance	Practitioner	75	72.35±6.98	6.32	148	.012*	0.74	Sig. p<.05
	Non-Practitioner	75	58.36±3.25	2.56				

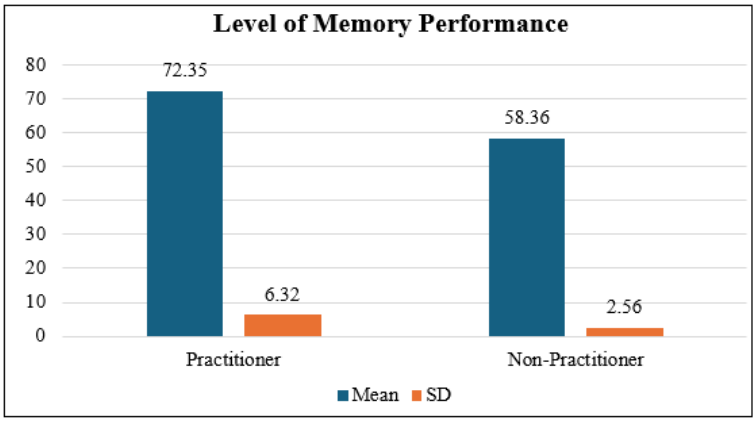


Figure 3: Comparison among the participants' level of Memory Performance (N=150)

Table 4: Independent Sample T test Statistics(N=150)

Variable	Group	N	Mean±SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d	Sig.
Perceived Stress	Practitioner	75	12.10±1.01	8.21	148	.024*	0.77	Sig. p<.05
	Non-Practitioner	75	38.87±4.51	3.28				

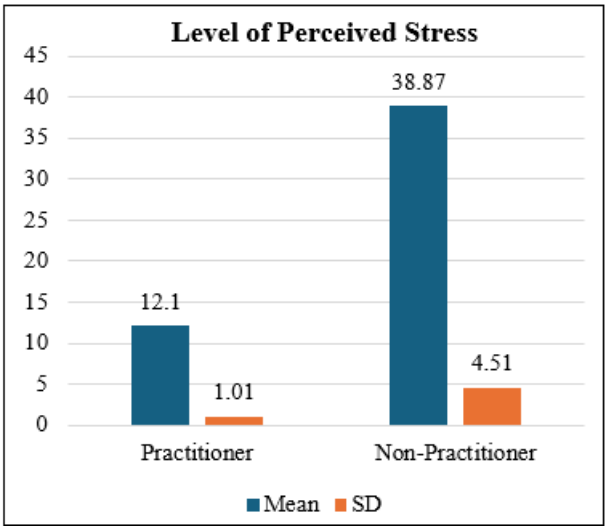


Figure 4: Comparison among the participants' level of Perceived Stress (N=150)

Table 5: Pearson's Correlation Statistics (N=150)

Variable		Concentration	Memory Performance	Perceived Stress
Concentration	r	1	0.789*	-0.678*
	Sig.		.004	.012
Memory Performance	r	0.798*	1	-0.750*
	Sig.	0.021		0.015
Perceived Stress	r	-0.783*	-0.750*	1
	Sig.	0.023	0.015	

10. Dissuasion

The current investigation sought to determine the impacts of Tantric mantra jaap (Guru and Baglamukhi mantra) on focus, memory functioning, and perceived stress, as well as the interplay between the above variables. The oncology results indicate a statistically significant and practically significant difference in mantra practitioners and non-practitioners across all three oncological domains and provide strong empirical support for the psychological benefits of practicing mantra.

Regarding concentration, the findings showed that there were significantly higher concentration levels in mantra practitioners than in the non-practitioners, with an adequately

high effect size (d = 0.78). This observation is in line with the findings of a different study conducted by Suryawanshi et al. (2024), who found that there was improved attentional control when the students practised the Om chanting. Likewise, Ameta et al. (2023) reported an increase in cognitive performance (attention) with the use of mantra meditation in immersive settings. The presented findings are also consistent with the study of Raval (2024), who implied that regular chanting enhances attentional regulation by modulating neural pathways. Non-significantly, however, Srivastava and Reilly (2024) found that, although there are significant behavioural changes in their attention, their EEG-based study found non-significant outcomes. This contradiction is somewhat contradictory in that more robust and well-powered neurocognitive studies are required.

In memory performance, the researchers found that practitioners significantly outperformed their non-practitioners, and the effect size was moderate to large (d = 0.74). These effects are also supported by Meghala and Pant (2023), who showed an increase in short-term memory and recall accuracy in adolescents due to chanting mantras. Similarly to this, Baboo and Jain (2024) found that the various modalities of chanting positively affected memory processes, especially short-term memory. The results are also supported by the systematic review of Sharma et al. (2025), which showed moderate evidence that mantra practice through repetition improves memory functioning. No large studies included in the literature reviewed explicitly contradict these findings, although again Srivastava and Reilly (2024) noted limitations in identifying significant neural correlates.

Considering perceived stress, in the current study, significantly reduced levels of perceived stress were found among practitioners of mantras, and the effect size was large (d = 0.77). This greatly fits the results of Gupta et al. (2021), who found that perceived stress decreased and physiological control (e.g., heart rate variability) improved following mantra meditation. On the same note, Ameta et al. (2023) indicated reduced stress, anxiety, and depression in those participants who experienced mantra-based interventions. The importance of mantra chanting in improving emotional regulation and alleviating psychological distress was also highlighted by Tripathi (2024) and Raval (2024). Such steady replications in all studies reinforce the thesis statement that mantra chants are effective non-pharmacological stress management interventions. There was no significant conflicting data observed in the literature that was reviewed, and it could be concluded that there was a high level of convergence in that area.

Lastly, the correlation analysis showed significant relationships between the concentration, memory performance, and perceived stress. Both variables were also negatively correlated with stress, with concentration and memory being positively correlated. Such results are consistent with already existing cognitive theories and are corroborated by the study of Meghala and Pant (2023), who also observe that a reduced level of anxiety leads to improved attention and memory. Likewise, Ameta et al. (2023) also found integrated gains in cognitive and emotional functioning. These findings are also supported by the theoretical framework that was presented by Dahal et al. (2025): in this work, the authors emphasise the importance of using mantras as a technique to regulate mind-body processes and improve cognitive control.

To sum up, the current study offers a high level of empirical evidence that Tantric mantra jaap is significant in increasing concentration and memory as well as decreasing perceived stress. The results are generally backed up by the available literature, and in a few cases, there were inconsistencies in the neurophysiological evidence. All in all, the research confirms the current surge of interest in the scientifically applicable and psychologically advantageous aspects of mantra meditation.

Overall Summary

All the null hypotheses were rejected, which demonstrates the significant (negative) impact of Tantric mantra jaap on concentration and memory, and the negative (significant) impact on the perception of stress. Also, there are high interrelationships among the variables studied, which facilitate the cognitive and psychological benefits of practicing mantras.

11. Conclusion

The current research was undertaken to investigate the effects of Tantric mantra jaap (Guru and Baglamukhi mantra) on the concentration, memory performance of the participants, and the perception of stress in the young adults, and also to investigate the interrelationship among the variables, be it their concentration, memory, or the perceived stress of the young adults. The results are consistent, offering clear evidence that mantra jaap practice is related to positive cognitive functioning and positive psychological well-being.

The findings indicated that mantra practitioners had very high levels of concentration and memory performance as opposed to those who did not practice. Not only were these differences statistically significant, but they also meant high effect sizes, which implied a high practical significance. This indicates that regular practice of mantra jaap can increase the process of attentional control and memory, which are consistently important to academic and daily functioning. Meanwhile, however, practitioners noted greatly lower perceived stress levels, indicating the perceived stress reduction ability of mantra chanting. These findings were also supported by the correlation analysis that demonstrated that the variables: concentration and memory performance are positively correlated, and perceived stress is negatively correlated with both variables. This means that people who are more concentrated and cognitively efficient are less likely to experience stress. Such associations can be explained by previous psychological theories that stress disrupts cognitive processes, whereas a better state of attention can promote better functioning of memory.

Generally, the study was able to reject all the null hypotheses and confirm that Tantric mantra jaap has a strong effect on the cognitive and psychological outcomes. The findings also respect a critical research gap by offering scientific evidence specifically regarding the Guru mantra and the Baglamukhi mantra, as these two mantras have been known to be significantly understudied in the literature. Finally, the research has emphasized that mantra jaap is an inexpensive,

simple practice, and culturally relevant, which can be incorporated into the contemporary psychological intervention. It has great potential in improving concentration, memory, and stress in young adults. These findings need to be validated using longitudinal and experimental research methods in the future to ensure the findings are well validated and to investigate the underlying neurocognitive processes.

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