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SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS OF AUM MANTRA IN KNOWING SELF

*Manish Kumar Dwivedi ** Prof S. K. Singh

*Institute of Management Studies, Banaras Hindu University

** Former Dean & Head, Institute of Management Studies, Banaras Hindu University

Abstract

The aim of the study is to evaluate scientifically the significance of AUM in knowing self. The focus of the study is to improve the well-being by increasing in focus, concentration, steadiness and enhanced peace and calm, removed stress from the body and get rid off from the diseases. The article also reveals the anatomy and physiology of AUM in understanding the different structure that explains their significance in day to day life. The paper is conceptual and descriptive in nature in which different dimensions of significance of AUM has been explored. It has been found that chanting of AUM mantra on regular basis restores the balance of the body at physical, mental, emotional and spiritual level. It also establishes the connection with the divine energy that would develop intuition, enhance creativity, increase energy level in the body and increase performance at the workplace. It brings clarity in mind, increases self-awareness, greater ability to be associated with the world, selflessly serving others and being open for positive thoughts, simultaneously negative thoughts are swept away that heals the body on a cellular level, with more energy, strength and focus. It also investigates the impact of sound AUM on nervous system and therefore serves as energy booster for human being under stress. It acts a brain stabilizer which recovers the body without medication.

Key Words- AUM, peace, spiritual, stress, brain stabilizer
INTRODUCTION

Aum (ॐ) is a sacred sound and spiritual symbol in Hindu religion. It refers to Atman (soul, self within) and Brahman (ultimate reality, entirety of the universe, truth, divine, supreme spirit, cosmic principles, knowledge). The symbol AUM consist of three syllable namely the letters A, U, M and when written has a crescent dot on its top. The letter ‘A’ symbolises the conscious state, the letter ‘U’ the dream state and the letter ‘M’ dreamless sleep state of the mind and spirit. The entire symbol, together with the crescent and the dot, stands for the forth state, which combines all these states and transcends them. The letters correspond to the three tenses past, present and future, while the entire symbol stands for the Creator who transcends the limitation of time. They stand for the three Gunas or qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas while the whole symbol represents a gunatita, one who has transcends and gone beyond the pull of the Gunas. Aum represents both the unmanifest (nirguna) and manifest (saguna) aspects of God. That is why it is called Pranava, that means it pervades throughout the life and run through OM prana or breath. The A, U, M represents the triad of Divinity namely Brahma- the creator, Vishnu- the maintainer and Shiva- the destroyer of the Universe. They also symbolises three Vedas and the three stages of life (birth, life and death).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Rig Veda 1.164.39, only AUM knowers sit in peace and concord, AUM is the name of supreme Lord. According to Chandogya Upanishads, the essence of all beings is the earth. The essence of the earth is water. The essence of water is plant. The essence of plant is is man. The essence of man is speech. The essence of speech is Rig Veda. The essence of Rig Veda is Sama Veda. The essence of Sama Veda is AUM. According to Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, the AUM comes from the disappearance of the obstacles and AUM is supreme name of God. According to Mundaka Upanishad, AUM is the bridge to immorality. The syllable is the means to knowing the self and Brahman which is used to introspect and reflect the personality of the self. From the Kathopnishad, whosoever knows all this syllable obtains all that he desires. According to Mandukya Upanishad, “AUM is a bow, the arrow is the self and Brahman (Absolute Reality) is said to be the mark. According to Manu Smriti 11.266, the threefold knowledge is based on the AUMKARA, it (AUM) is another triple Veda, he knows that AUM is truly learned in the Veda. According to Brihadaranyaha Upanishad, “through
AUM, one knows what is to be known. One can achieve peace and tranquillity by the resonance sound of AUM. According to Sveta-svatara Upanishad, the self has to be seized in the body by means of syllable AUM. By making one’s body the lower friction stick and the syllable AUM the upper friction stick, by practising the friction of Meditation one may see the hidden God as it were. Katha Upanishad characterises knowledge and Wisdom as the pursuit of achieving goodness in life. The Maitrayania Upanishad in sixth Prapathakas (lesson) describe the meaning and significance of Om. The text asserts that Om represents Brahman-Atman. The three roots of the syllable, states the Maitri Upanishad, are A + U + M. The sound is the body of Soul, and it repeatedly manifests in three: as gender-endowed body - feminine, masculine, neuter; as light-endowed body- Agni, Vaya and Aditya; as deity-endowed body - Brahma, Rudra and Vishnu; as mouth-endowed body - Garhapatya, Dakshinagni and Ahavaniy as knowledge-endowed body - Rig, Saman and Yajur as world-endowed body - Bhûr, Bhuvaḥ and Svaḥ; as time-endowed body - Past, Present and Future; as heat-endowed body - Breath, Fire and Sun; as growth-endowed body - Food, Water and Moon; as thought-endowed body - intellect, mind and psyche. Brahman exists in two forms - the material form, and the immaterial formless. The material form is changing, unreal. The immaterial formless isn't changing, real. The immortal formless is truth, the truth is the Brahman, the Brahman is the light, the light is the Sun which is the syllable Om as the Self. The world is Om, its light is Sun, and the Sun is also the light of the syllable Om, asserts the Upanishad. Meditating on Om, is acknowledging and meditating on the Brahman-Atman (Soul, Self)

Scholars like Max Muller recommend AUM as a tool for meditation that may range from artificial and senseless to highest concepts of the cause of the Universe, Essence of life, Brahman, Atman and Self- knowledge. The meaning of syllable AUM is described in the Vedas, Udgitha (song of the universe), the infinite all encompassing the whole world, the truth, the ultimate reality, the essence of life, the Brahman, the Atman, the vehicle of deepest knowledge and Self- knowledge.

**Mandukya Upanishad**

The Mandukya Upanishad describes ‘Om’ as the whole world. The significance of AUM is built on a structure of "fourfold", derived from $A + U + M + "silence"$ (or without an element).
1) **Aum as all states of time**

In verse 1, the Upanishad stated that time is threefold: the past, the present and the future, that these three are "Aum". The four fourth of time is that which transcends time, that too is "Aum" expressed.

2) **Aum as all states of Atman**

In verse 2 of Upanishad, everything is Brahman, but Brahman is Atman (the Soul, Self), and that the Atman is fourfold. Johnston summarizes these four states of Self, respectively, as seeking the physical, seeking inner thought, seeking the causes and spiritual consciousness, and the fourth state is realizing oneness with the Self, the Eternal.

3) **Aum as all states of consciousness**

In verses 3 to 6, the Mandukya Upanishad states four states of consciousness: wakeful, dream, deep sleep and the state of ekatma (being one with Self, the oneness of Self). These four are $A + U + M + "\text{without an element}"$ respectively.

4) **Aum as all of knowledge**

In verses 9 to 12, the Mandukya Upanishad explains the fourfold etymological roots of the syllable "Aum". The first element of "Aum" is $A$, means $Apti$ (obtaining, reaching) or from $Adimatva$ (being first). The second element is $U$, which is from $Utkarsa$ (exaltation) or from $Udbhayatva$ (intermediateness). The third element is $M$, from $Miti$ (erecting, constructing) or from $Mi Minati$, or $apiti$ (annihilation). The fourth is without an element, without development, beyond the expanse of universe. In this way, states the Upanishad, the syllable Om is indeed the Atman (the self).

**Physiology of AUM**

Chanting AUM creates a vibration within ourselves that attunes sympathy with the cosmic vibration which induced us to think universally. The momentary silence between each chant becomes palpable. Mind moves between the opposites of sound and silence until, at last, it ceases the sound. In the silence, the single thought—Om—is quenched; there is no thought. This is the state of trance, where the mind and the intellect are transcended as the individual self merges with the Infinite Self in the pious moment of realization. It is a moment when the petty worldly affairs are lost in the desire for the universal. Such is the immeasurable power of AUM.

OM is the first sound, first thought, Brahman and God. AUM is Pranav (Prana+ Va = Life breath + Sakti or energy) because it sustains breath or life (Prana= breath) and flows with the expelled breath. AUM consists of three words, A stands for waking state, U for dream sleep
and M for deep sleep. The silent interval between two AUM is Turiya state, the fouth state.

Turiya is spiritual Transcendental consciousness. Tutriya is meant for knowing self.

There are four levels of consciousness. The four states are:

1: **Waking state** - perception mode (Gross Body)

2: **Dream sleep** - mode of images and imagination (Subtle Body)

3: **Dreamless Sleep / Deep Sleep** - Mode of Self or conceptualization - (Causal Body)

4: **Turiya** - Beyond-Deep-Sleep State- Transcendent, spiritual, pure consciousness. (Non-Dual State).

Another way of saying 1: Wakefulness 2: REM Sleep, Rapid Eye Movement Sleep 4: NREM Sleep -Non Rapid Eye Movement Sleep 4: TURIYA.

In all these states, ego and consciousness are the main factors by their presence or absence. Ego or ahankaara is the dominant mode in the wakeful state. Consciousness in all three states is homogenous. In deep sleep, there is no perception; that negative perception indicates that there must have been prior experience of events, which were missed during sleep; that knowing of negative perception in deep sleep indicates active consciousness.

1: **Waking State**: A of the A U M. The 1st Sound- A- Indriyas, prana, manas, buddhi, ahankaara (Ego) - Citta are all operative in the wakeful state. Accordingly, the consciousness is projected outwards. The Self (1st part) enjoys the gross matter.

2: **The Dream Sleep**: U of A U M. The 2nd Sound, U- The consciousness is turned inside. The ego is still operative as per Ramana. The Self (2nd part) is dreaming and enjoys subtle objects.

3: **Deep Sleep**: M of A U M. The 3rd sound, M. The ego vanishes in this state. The sleeper desires nothing that is usually desires during the waking state. No dreams occur. The Self (the 3rd part) is undifferentiated consciousness, and enjoys bliss, being bliss itself. The lower self is absorbed in the Highest Self. Buddhi is in a potential state, and in a state of suspended animation.
4: **Turiya:** Silence following A U M. The 4th part of the Self. It is undifferentiated. It is without attributes. No ego play here. There is quietness (Santam), Peace and Bliss (Sivam), without-a-second (advaitam). This is the realization. This is absorption. This is beyond Kaivalya - Splendid isolation - and more. This is Samadhi. This is oneness. This is SatChitAnanda. It is beyond time, space and form. It is beyond consciousness. It is the source. The four parts of the Self are compared to the cow's feet. And as said earlier Self is OM.

The four components of Self is the same four components of A U M and Silence. Silence that comes after AUM is the fourth component- Turiya. Now soundless Brahman arrived at. To reiterate: A is the waking state. U is the Dream State. M is Deep Sleep. Turiya is the fourth state. All four components form a unit or syllable or a sound byte of Atman-Brahman - Sound Brahman / Soundless Brahman. AUM-Silence = AUM-Turiya = Dual to Non-dual state. AUM state is a dual state for the self, and Turiya, the fourth dimension inducts the self into a non-dual state. The body become union with Brahman. The Turiya is being – Awareness and non-dual. Brahma Sutra In a swoon it is half attainment (ardha: half; sampattih: attainment) meaning that it is half deep sleep and half death.

**NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF STUDY**

The sound AUM created vibration in the body activates all the Chakras present in the body. It establishes connection with the GOD. The GOD originates from the three words- G means Generative powers, O means Operative powers and D means Destructive powers. AUM represents Brahamans. Brahamans has three qualities- Satya- immortality, Chitta-consciousness and Anand- bliss body. The sound of AUM exerts their influence by means of vibrations. The different syllables have different vibration patterns which affect different parts of the body. Each syllable resonates with certain organ or part of the body. For example, by chanting “aaaaaaa” , one can feel the sensation and resonance of nervous system in the stomach and chest region. Chanting “ooooooo” creates sensations in throat and chest region and resonates with them. Similarly, chanting “mmmmm” resonates with the nasal cavity as well as brain region. When the mantra AUM chant altogether, it sequentially activates the stomach, spinal cord, throat, nasal and brain regions. The energy moves from the abdomen all the way up to the brain, thereby channelizing energy and activating the spinal cord and brain. In this it activates all the Chakras present in the body and benefitted the body physically, mentally and spiritually.
STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Nowadays people has been facing various types of problems related to their health, suffered from various diseases, exhaustive work load, unclear mind and full of stress. As a result the various types of crimes exist in the society. This paper would give valuable insights that would get rid off from these problems by chanting the AUM mantra during the practice of Meditation which would establish connection with the divine energy and restore the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of human being.

(Sourced: www.bhagavadgitausa.com)
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The paper is conceptual and descriptive in nature in which different dimensions of significance of AUM has been explored. The secondary data has been explored from various articles, research papers etc.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In one of the experiments, it has been found that chanting AUM mantra improves concentration, gives peace and steadiness to our mind, reduced mental stress and clears all worldly thoughts. In an experiment conducted by the scientists on the participants who had never chanted AUM mantra were asked to chant it for few minutes and each of their chants were recorded. The time frequency analysis has been carried out exhibits irregular waveforms which indicated unsteadiness in the mind. They were asked to chant the mantra on a regular basis and the time frequency analysis has been done and it has been found that waveforms were improved with regular spacing, had almost perfect symmetry and harmony. The participants witnessed in increased focus, concentration and steadiness in mind and found themselves to be in peace, reduced mental stress and could remain all the time.

Another experiment was conducted to study the effect of AUM mantra on nervous system through consistent practice of chanting AUM manta. The frequency module swing more in initial chanting but after sometimes the mind becomes calm. When the mind becomes calm, the body feel relax, the negative thoughts are dramatically swept away that heals the self on a cellular level. It was observed in the results that the brain gets stabilised, removal of negative thoughts and it acts an energy booster for human being results in reduced stress.

The scientists conducted another pre and post test analysis experiment in which they analysed Magnetic Resonance Imaging Scans (MRI) for investigating the effect of chanting AUM mantra in treating depression and epilepsy. The consistent chanting of AUM manta increases the parasympathetic system results in relaxation response used in the treatment of depression and epilepsy.

IMPLICATION
It has been found that chanting of AUM on regular basis restores the balance of the body at physical, mental, emotional and spiritual level. It also establishes the connection with the divine energy that would develop intuition, enhance creativity, increase energy level in the
body and increase performance at the workplace. It brings clarity in mind, increases self-awareness, greater ability to be associated with the world, selflessly serving others and being open for positive thoughts, simultaneously negative thoughts are swept away that heals the body on a cellular level, with more energy, strength and focus. It also investigates the impact of sound AUM on nervous system and therefore serves as energy booster for human being under stress. It acts a brain stabilizer which recovers the body without medication. knowing self and the benefits incurred in chanting the mantra are improvement in focus, concentration, steadiness and enhanced peace and calm, removed stress from the body and get rid off from the diseases.

**SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

This is a conceptual study that exhibits the benefits incurred by chanting the AUM mantra. The future study can be done empirically to test the validity of the paper.

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