



## A REVIEW OF LITERATURE OF PRANAYAMA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BHRAMARI PRANAYAMA

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### INTRODUCTION

Pranayam is generally defined as breath control. Although this interpretation may seem correct in view of the practices involved, it does not convey the full meaning of the term. The word Pranayam is comprised of two roots: 'prana' plus 'ayama'.

Prana means 'vital energy' or 'life force'. It is the force which exists in all things, whether animate or inanimate. Although closely related to the air we breathe, it is more subtle than air or oxygen. Therefore, Pranayama should not be considered as breathing exercises aimed at introducing extra oxygen into the lungs. Pranayama utilizes breathing to influence the flow of prana in the nadis or energy channels of the pranamaya kosha or energy body.

The word yama means 'control' and is used to denote various rules or codes of conduct. However, this is not the word which is joined to prana to form Pranayama; the correct word is 'ayama' which has far more implications. Ayama is defined as 'extension' or 'expansion'. Thus, the word Pranayama means 'extension or expansion of the dimension of prana'. The techniques of Pranayama provide the method whereby the life force can be activated and regulated in order to go beyond one's normal boundaries or limitations and attain a higher state of vibratory energy and awareness.

### CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Pranayama practices establish a healthy body by removing blockages in the pranamaya kosha, enabling increased absorption and retention of prana. The spiritual seeker requires tranquillity of mind as an essential prelude to spiritual practice. To this end, many pranayana techniques utilize kumbhaka, breath retention, to establish control over the flow of prana, calming the mind and controlling the thought process. Once the mind has been stilled and prana flows freely in the nadis and chakras, the doorway to the evolution of consciousness opens, leading the aspirant into higher dimensions of spiritual experience. In The Science of Pranayama, Swami Sivananda writes, "There is an

intimate connection between the breath, nerve currents and control of the inner prana or vital forces. Prana becomes visible on the physical plane as motion and action, and on the mental plane as thought. Pranayama is the means by which a yogi tries to realize within his individual body the whole cosmic nature, and attempts to attain perfection by attaining all the powers of the universe.

### BHRAMARI PRANAYAMA

Information about Pranayama in general and Bhramari Pranayama in specific can be found in the two yogic texts of reference, viz. Hath Yoga Pradipika and Patanjali Yoga Sutra. These texts describe in detail the procedures, effects, and uses of various Pranayamas, the various steps involved in performing a particular Pranayama.

According to Upanisads, prana is the principle of life and consciousness. It is equated with real self (Atma). Prana is the breath of life of all beings in the universe. Prana is usually translated as breath. If breathing stops, so does life. Ancient Indian sages knew that all functions of the body were performed by five types of vital energy (prana-vayus). Bhramari relieves stress and cerebral tension, and so helps in alleviating anger, anxiety and insomnia, increasing the healing capacity of the body. It strengthens and improves the voice.

Bhramari induces a meditative state by harmonizing the mind and directing the awareness inward. The vibration of the humming sound creates a soothing effect on the mind and nervous system.

The word Bhramari means "Bee". The practice is so called because a sound is made which imitates the sound

of a humming bee. Inhale swiftly, creating the sound of a male bee. It is a method of harmonizing the mind and directing awareness inwards. Breath out slowly while softly making the sound of a female black bee. This is followed by kumbhaka. This is Bhramari Pranayama for which there are many reasons, the most profound Whether or not we imitate a bee successfully is of that one is engrossing impressive concrete that express itself in the resonance dissolving its significance. Humming sound is important which goes along with intense inward visualization. When nadis are pure muscle are relaxed, the humming breathing carry with it the sense. Kumbhaka is followed, go along with an astonishing, perched, potentially filled peace. Exhalation follows the best ever route timewise thus humming turn out to be an incident. The vibrations turn out to be a rushing noise that fills the entire ambiance.

A deep relationship between pattern of respiration and status of mind is present. It is a common experience that in angry status of mind, rate and rhythm of respiration is increased. Similarly in depressed mood again change in rate & rhythm of respiration is observed. This shows that status of mind changes the respiration. This relationship principle can be used in opposite direction too, that is by changing rate and rhythm of respiration, status of mind can be changed. By practicing Pranayama the ability to perceive, to know the reality, is intensified. The mind is trained and made capable for the process of Dharana.

So long as breathing is continued and the air is moving in and out of the body, the mind remains unstable. When the breath is stopped, the activity of the mind is also controlled and it becomes standstill. Thus, by Pranayama a practitioner attains a complete motionless state of Citta (concentration). Since the mind becomes steady and peaceful after the practice of Pranayama, it becomes suitable and capable to be concentrated on one object at a time. Such one pointed ness" is a pre-requisite of Dharana while helps in good grasping and ultimately good retention capacity.

By Bhramari, Ajna Cakra is activated, which help in activation of all the other Cakras. The movement of Nadis is regulated so, the prana helps in controlling the Manasa Vikaras like Krodha, Bhaya, Cinta etc. also maintains the normal function of Buddhi. During the practice of Bhramari all the sensory organs (except skin) are to be closed with the fingers. This leads the detachment between Indriyas to its yasu is which further diverts the Manas towards Indriya yas (Cintya) a Visnirapeks. This is a very important stage in the process of memory i.e. Medha The M recitation in Bhramari activates the Manas and its function of Cintya, Vicarya, Uhya, kalpa. Dhyeya and Sam It helps in controlling the functions of the Indriyas and help in Tarka and Hitahita Vicara which is the function of Buddhi. Bhramari Pranayama relieves stress and cerebral tension, alleviating anger, anxiety and insomnia, and reducing blood pressure. Bhramari causes the whole brain to

vibrate. Vibration of the cerebral cortex sends impulses to the hypothalamus which has the capacity to control the pituitary gland (the master of all glands). The hypothalamus also sends impulses to the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. This helps tune the whole neuroendocrinal system to function in a harmonious and synchronized way. Paroxysmal Gamma waves produced in brain during the Bhramari Pranayama which is connected with positive feelings, approach of contentment and acts as a natural antidepressant (Vialatte et al., 2009). With Bhramari Pranayama, the parasympathetic nervous system are activated by the pressing of eyeballs due to vagus stimulus. Parasympathetic nervous system is linked with a peaceful and composed status of body and mind. Compression of Ocular nerve in Bhramari pranayama has been clarified in the application of vagus nerve stimulus and the limbic system. Combination extract of Ginkgo biloba and Bhramari Pranayama have affirmative effects on tinnitus (Pandey et al., 2010). Bhramari pranayama facilities a self-induced sound remedy and is a treatment for tinnitus and ocular compression.

Slow, deep and more normal breathing is related with parasympathetic activity in fact leads to a condition explained as calm and tranquil. Pranayama can produce favorable modifications in emotional condition. Bhramari Pranayama offer a mixture of acoustic cure to create a drop in central nervous system proficient by motivating the auditory cortex for tinnitus aid, and to also stimulate parasympathetic nervous system, thus supporting a less negative emotional reaction.

Bhramari Pranayama produce Paroxysmal Gamma brain waves which is related with constructive thoughts, outlook of contentment and acts as a natural antidepressant (Vialatte et al., 2009). Bhramari pranayama has been able to confirm as a combined therapy for tinnitus along with other therapies.

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