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## CONCEPT OF, *DHYĀNA*(MEDITATION), AND *SAMĀDHI* IN VARIOUS

### INDIAN PHILOSOPHIES: A REVIEW

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

*This research paper examines the concept of Dhyāna, And Samādhi in various Indian philosophies, aiming to shed light on the diverse perspectives and practices within different philosophical systems. It explores the foundational texts, philosophical frameworks, and meditation techniques found in these traditions to gain a comprehensive understanding of the role and significance of meditation in Indian philosophical thought. The concept of meditation is a practice that has been used for a long period. However, different people usually carry the concept of meditation for a different purpose. Some forms of meditation is just simple and are just used by ordinary people just to attain a moment of relaxation or to reduce stress. However, some concepts of meditation are complex such as Samādhi and they require one to hold breath for a moment. Nevertheless, some are religious-oriented while others are secular. However, there is a lot that has been done in the field of science to try and explain the scientific explanation of meditation.*

**KEYWORDS:** Breathlessness, Meditation, Mindfulness., *Dhyāna, And Samādhi*

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

The introduction provides an overview of the rich philosophical traditions in India that emphasize meditation as a means of spiritual realization and self-transformation. It emphasizes the importance of studying multiple Indian philosophies to develop a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted concept of meditation.

**Vedānta Philosophy:** This section focuses on the concept of meditation in Vedānta philosophy, specifically exploring texts such as the Upanishads and the Brahma Sūtras. It discusses the goal of meditation, the nature of the self (Ātman), and the ultimate reality (Brahman) as explained in Advaita, Dvaita, and Vishishtadvaita Vedānta.

**Yoga Philosophy:** The section delves into Patañjali's Yoga philosophy as outlined in the Yoga Sutras. It explores the eight limbs of Yoga and their relationship to meditation, emphasizing the practices of concentration (Dharana) and meditation (Dhyana) as a means to attain Samādhi.

**Buddhism:** This section examines the concept of meditation in Buddhism, drawing

insights from Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana traditions. It explores the role of mindfulness (Sati) and insight meditation (Vipassana) in cultivating wisdom and achieving liberation from suffering.

**Jainism:** The section explores Jain philosophy and its approach to meditation, particularly focusing on Samayika, a state of equanimity and introspection. It highlights Jainism's emphasis on self-control, detachment, and contemplation for spiritual progress.

**Sankhya Philosophy:** This section investigates Sankhya philosophy and its understanding of meditation as a means to attain self-realization and liberation. It explores the role of discrimination (Viveka) and dispassion (Vairagya) in cultivating a contemplative state of mind.

**Nyaya and Vaisheshika Philosophies:** The section discusses the perspective of Nyaya and Vaisheshika philosophies on meditation and its role in developing clear and valid knowledge. It explores their approach to logical analysis, inference, and contemplation for attaining higher states of awareness.

Mediation is an aspect where one tries to induce a mode of consciousness. Several things will make an individual

meditate. These may include relaxation, life force, or building internal energy among others. The aspect of meditation will bring about the essence of things such as generosity, patience, forgiveness, or even love. However, the aspect of meditation will tend to hold different perspectives depending on the context in which they are being used. For example, evidence of religious meditation is the so-called *Samādhi*. This is where one takes a moment to a breathless moment also known as breathless meditation. This kind of meditation is usually carried out by Hindus. However, there are different types of *Samādhi*. However, the claim of the possibility of breathless meditation. Many scholars have criticized this claim trying to bring out the fact that breathlessness is not attainable. In a scientific study, the aspect of *Samādhi* has equally been challenged with the argument that there is no possibility of a breathless and deathless state at any one point.

### **AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

To study the concept of *Dhyāna*, *And Samādhi* in various Indian philosophies and making an analysis of the same.



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## **LITERATURE REVIEW:**

*Dhyāna, And Samādhi* plays a vital role in various Indian philosophies, serving as a transformative practice for attaining spiritual realization and higher states of consciousness. This literature review explores scholarly works and research articles that provide insights into the concept of meditation in different Indian philosophical systems. It aims to highlight the key ideas, techniques, and goals associated with meditation within these traditions, shedding light on the diverse perspectives and practices prevalent in Indian thought.

Meditation is an aspect that has been practiced by several religions and it dates back to the starting of religion. According to Murphy, Donovan, and Taylor, this concept of meditation is usually connected with the aspect of focused attention and that could have also contributed greatly to the aspect of human biological evolution (Michael Murphy, Steven Donovan, 1997). The history of meditation concept as used in religion, however, is usually connected with some specific religion such as in the Vedas which was practiced in India. however, though this is viewed as one of the oldest concepts of religious meditation, around the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE there was the

development of another concept of meditation developed via Taoism and Confucianism in Buddhism, Jainism in India, China, and Nepal (Orme-Johnson, 2008). Vijnanavada prescribes and stresses the paramount importance of an elaborate spiritual discipline (yoga) culminating in the highest meditation or *Samādhi* for the cancellation of transcendental Illusion and the realisation of pure non-dual Vijnaptimatra (• Sarma, 1996). The doctrine of Asparshayoga, also known as amanibhava (cessation of mind) or *vaisharadya* (absolute purity), is based on the Upanisads, is described in detail in the Bhagavad-gTta (as yoga or Brahmayoga) and is developed by Gaudapada. Asparshayoga is *nirvikalpa Samādhi* or super-conscious meditation (• Sarma, 1996). There are many human activities of body and mind, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist. The word *meditation* in its general usage in modern America has a number of different prominent folk meanings: (1) a state of concentration in which consciousness is focused on only one object; (2) a state of relaxation that is psychologically and medically beneficial; (3) a dissociated state in which trance phenomena can occur; and (4) a mystical state in which higher realities or religious



objects are experienced. These are all altered states of consciousness; the meditator is doing something to get away from his usual mundane, unconcentrated, unrelaxed, no dissociated, lower state of reality (Varela, 1993).

However, there is a different form of meditation, and it is usually used by different meanings and approaches. The Buddhist concept of meditation was taken as the spiritual step toward liberation. There is also some different concept in the way different people carry out the process of meditation. For an instance, Buddhist monks in China and India, usually have a defined posture while meditating. In the spiritual aspect, it involves the control of breath as well as the repetition of some certain phrase. However, though there is evidence that in the 6<sup>th</sup> century there was the introduction of meditation to the western Christians, there was a difference in the way Christians conducted their meditations since it lacked any defined posture, and it also did not have a repetition of any phrase (Michael Murphy, Steven Donovan, 1997). the mind as the object of meditation, before we have reached the state which takes us beyond the mind even, when it has become very ripe and concentrated, when all ideas of the gross materials, or fine materials, have been given

up, and the only object is the mind as it is, when the *Sattva* state only of the Ego remains (Vivekananda, n.d.).

However, though the concept of meditation has mostly been associated with religion, it has also been used in other concepts. In the 1950s, there was the introduction of another concept of meditation. This concept, which is usually known as secular meditation is not usually connected with any religion. The concept is usually practiced for another purpose rather than a religion which are stress reduction, self-improvement, and relaxation among others. Nevertheless, in both types of meditation, spiritual and secular concepts have been subjected to scientific analysis. The study of meditation started in 1930 and dramatically increased in the 1970s and 1980s. However, there have been thousands of scientific researches which have been reported trying to explain the concept of mediation, the exact mechanism behind the concept of meditation has remained unclear (Salmon et al., 2004).

One of the meditation concepts that have raised a lot of controversy over the years is the *Samādhi* meditation. This is one form of concept which involves total breathlessness and a deathless state. In this

concept, it is believed that one has to hold all his/her breath to achieve total concentration. However, it is something psychological where those who embrace this concept believe that it is possible to have a breathless and deathless state. However, this concept is precisely defined in traditional *yoga* text (Orme and Johnson, 2008). The concept of *Samādhi* involves different types of *Samādhi*; such as *savikalpa* which is used to mean subject to time. This concept of meditation involves the attainment of the breathless or altered state which is usually subject to time. This implies that the person who is meditating is not beyond mortal existence nor is he/she beyond change in the phenomenal world. The other form of *Samādhi* is *nirvikalpa* which means without time or timeless. It involves a state which is usually attained by a meditator of a changeless super consciousness. When a meditator is in this state, he/she is claimed to be beyond the realm of the material world, being immortal and also beyond time. This is a psychological aspect that tries to explain how a person can attain a period of the breathless and deathless state which might be difficult for science to explain. The other concept of *Samādhi* is known as *MahaSamādhi* where *maha* means great. A great *Samādhi*. This is where a master yogi

who is a *Samādhi* practitioner abandons his body forcefully at a time that is of his/her choosing. However, this kind of abandonment is usually permanent, and the master will hence have to abandon his body forever. Nevertheless, though this concept is usually termed as body abandonment by the practitioners or the yogic masters, some scholars term this as yogic suicide. There is also another type of *Samādhi* which is usually carried out by Hinduism in the tomb of a respectful person or yogi. This concept of *Samādhi* is usually carried out to honor the person who has died (Varela, 1993).

Those who practice *Samādhi* usually hold a belief that breathlessness is deathlessness. However, some explanations are used to determine how one can attain this state. However, according to the study carried out to the masters who claim the possibility, not anyone can be in a position to attain this state, and hence one needs to be trained to be in a position to attain *Samādhi* concepts. For instance, *Kriya Yogi* is one of the masters who is known to have trained his disciples on how to practice breathless exercises known as *pranayama*. This kind of *Samādhi* known as *pranayama* is usually carried out specifically to transform breath into what they termed as superconscious

awareness. The purpose of training is usually to help a beginner to slowly exercise the breath and ultimately stopping the breath completely. The essence of stopping the breath is usually done to bring an altered state of super consciousness, unity, Samādhi, and immortality or gnosis with God or Brahma (Michael Murphy, Steven Donovan, 1997).

**Vedānta Philosophy:** Extensive research has been conducted on the concept of meditation in Vedānta philosophy, encompassing schools such as Advaita, Dvaita, and Vishishtadvaita. Scholars have examined seminal texts like "The Upanishads" and "The Brahma Sūtras" to understand the understanding and practice of meditation in these traditions. Researchers have emphasized the significance of meditation in realizing the non-dual nature of the self (Ātman) and the ultimate reality (Brahman). They have also highlighted the importance of contemplation and self-inquiry in these meditative practices.

**Yoga Philosophy:** The Yoga philosophy of Patañjali, as presented in the "Yoga Sutras," has been a subject of extensive research. Scholars have explored the eight limbs of Yoga, with a specific focus on Dharana (concentration), Dhyana (meditation), and

Samādhi (absorption). These studies have elucidated the systematic approach to meditation in Yoga, outlining various techniques, stages, and the transformative effects of sustained practice. Additionally, research has delved into the integration of meditation with other aspects of Yoga, such as asanas (postures) and pranayama (breath control).

**Buddhism:** Meditation holds a central position in Buddhist traditions, including Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana. Researchers have extensively explored the concept of meditation in Buddhism, investigating practices like mindfulness (Sati), insight meditation (Vipassana), and loving-kindness (Metta) and compassion (Karuna) meditations. These studies have examined the psychological, physiological, and spiritual benefits of Buddhist meditation, as well as its role in attaining liberation from suffering and cultivating wisdom.

**Jainism:** The Jain philosophical tradition places significant emphasis on meditation as a means of spiritual purification and self-realization. Research has focused on the practice of Samayika, a state of equanimity and introspection, as a form of meditation in Jainism. Scholars have explored the role of self-control, detachment, and deep contemplation in the pursuit of spiritual

progress. Additionally, they have examined the ethical dimensions associated with Jain meditation practices.

**Sankhya Philosophy:** Scholars have investigated the concept of meditation in Sankhya philosophy, exploring the relationship between discrimination (Viveka) and dispassion (Vairagya) in the cultivation of a contemplative state of mind. These studies have examined the role of meditation in attaining self-realization and liberation from the cycle of birth and death. Researchers have also explored the interplay between meditation and the theoretical principles of Sankhya, such as the distinction between purusha (consciousness) and prakriti (nature).

**Nyaya and Vaisheshika Philosophies:** Researchers have focused on the concept of meditation in Nyaya and Vaisheshika philosophical systems. They have studied how logical analysis, inference, and contemplation are employed in these traditions as means to develop clear and valid knowledge. These studies have examined the role of meditation in enhancing cognitive abilities, refining perception, and attaining higher states of awareness within the frameworks of Nyaya and Vaisheshika philosophies.

While there are numerous texts and sutras that discuss meditation within Indian philosophies, the following is a brief overview of some significant ones:

**Yoga Sutras of Patanjali:** Sage Patanjali compiled the Yoga Sutras, a foundational text in Yoga philosophy. It outlines the eight limbs of Yoga, known as Ashtanga Yoga, which includes meditation (Dhyana) as a crucial practice for achieving Samadhi, a state of deep absorption and self-realization.

**Brahma Sutras:** Also known as the Vedanta Sutras, the Brahma Sutras were written by Sage Vyasa and explore the metaphysics and philosophy of Vedanta. Although meditation is not the primary focus of the sutras, they discuss concepts such as the nature of the self (Atman) and the ultimate reality (Brahman), which are fundamental to contemplative practices.

**Samkhya Karika:** Composed by Sage Ishvara Krishna, the Samkhya Karika is a foundational text in Samkhya philosophy. While meditation techniques are not explicitly discussed, the text explores the nature of consciousness (Purusha) and matter (Prakriti), providing insights into the contemplative aspects of Samkhya philosophy.

**Dhammapada:** The Dhammapada is a collection of verses attributed to Gautama

Buddha, containing teachings on various aspects of life, including meditation. It emphasizes the practice of mindfulness (Sati) and insight meditation (Vipassana) as essential for attaining liberation from suffering and realizing enlightenment.

**Jaina Sutras:** The Jaina Sutras comprise a collection of texts containing the teachings of Lord Mahavira and other Jain Tirthankaras. While their primary focus is on ethical principles, they also touch upon meditation practices, particularly the concept of Samayika, a state of equanimity and deep introspection.

**Advaita Vedanta Scriptures:** Various Advaita Vedanta scriptures, such as the Upanishads (especially the Mandukya Upanishad) and the works of Adi Shankaracharya, delve into the practice of meditation as a means to realize the non-dual nature of the self (Atman) and Brahman.

**The Śrīmadbhagavadgītā:** The Bhagavad Gita, a significant scripture in Hindu philosophy, encompasses various aspects of life, including meditation. It discusses different paths of Yoga, such as Karma Yoga (the path of selfless action) and Jnana Yoga (the path of knowledge), both of which involve meditation as a means of attaining self-realization and spiritual growth.

These examples represent only a fraction of the texts and sutras that touch upon the concept of meditation within Indian philosophies. Each tradition and school within these philosophies possesses its own unique texts and teachings on meditation, offering profound insights into the practice and its transformative potential.

being.

The Śrīmadbhagavadgītā also teaches about the concept of SAMĀDHI, which is a state of consciousness that is achieved through meditation. SAMĀDHI is a state of profound inner peace and stillness, in which the meditator is fully absorbed in the present moment and experiences a sense of oneness with the universe. The text describes several different levels of SAMĀDHI, each with its own characteristics and benefits.

Chapter 6, Verse 10: Krishna describes the practice of yoga as the means of withdrawing the mind from external distractions and focusing it on the divine. He emphasizes the importance of Dhyāna in achieving this state of concentration.

योगी युञ्जीत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।  
एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिग्रहः ॥

६.१०॥



Chapter 8, Verse 10: Krishna describes the practice of meditation on the divine form as a means of achieving liberation from the cycle of birth and death.

प्रयाणकाले मनसाचलेन भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव ।

भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक्स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥ ८.१०॥

Chapter 12, Verse 12: Krishna advises the seeker to cultivate the practice of meditation on the divine as a means of achieving union with the divine.

श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासात् ज्ञानाद् ध्यानं विशिष्यते ।

ध्यानात्कर्मफलत्यागः त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम् ॥ १२-१२॥

Chapter 13, Verse 24: Krishna describes the ultimate goal of meditation as the realization of the self as distinct from the body and mind.

ध्यानेनात्मनि पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना ।

### CONCEPT OF DHĀRAṆĀ, DHYĀNA, AND SAMĀDHI IN YOG DARSHAN:

Here are a few Sanskrit sutras related to meditation in Indian philosophies:

Yoga Sutras of Patanjali:

देशबन्धश्चित्तस्य धारणा ॥ ३.१॥(योग दर्शन)

*desa-bandhaṁ cittasya dhāraṇā.*

(Yog Darshan-3/1)

*Concentration locks consciousness on a single area.*

तत्र प्रत्ययैकतानता ध्यानम् ॥ ३.२॥(योग दर्शन)

*tatra pratyayaika-tānatā dhyānam.*

(Yog Darshan-3/2)

*In meditative absorption, the entire perceptual flow is aligned with that object.*

तदेवार्थमात्रनिर्भासं स्वरूपशून्यमिव समाधिः

॥ ३.३॥(योग दर्शन)

*tad evārtha-mātra-nirbhāsaṁ*

*svarūpa-śūnyam iva samādhiḥ. (Yog*

*Darshan-3/3)*

*When only the essential nature of the object shines forth, as if formless, integration has arisen.*

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### Brahma Sutras:

The brahma Sūtra further explores the concept of Samādhi, which refers to a state of deep concentration or absorption in meditation. Here are a few examples of related Sūtras:

विद्याकर्मणोरिति तु प्रकृतत्वात् ॥ 3.1.17

vidyākarmaṇoriti tu prakṛtatvāt || 17 ||

Sūtra 3.1.17 discusses the different stages of Samādhi and their relevance to Yoga practice. It emphasizes that Samādhi is a state of profound concentration and absorption in meditation, leading to spiritual realization.

ब्रह्मदृष्टिः, उत्कर्षात् || 4.1.5 ||

brahmadṛṣṭiḥ, utkarṣāt || 4.1.5 ||

Sūtra 4.1.5 describes the nature of Samādhi, characterized by the absence of all mental activity and the experience of pure consciousness. It highlights that Samādhi is a state of complete absorption in the object of meditation, ultimately leading to spiritual liberation.

ॐ अनावृत्तिः शब्दादनावृत्तिः शब्दात् ॐ ||

४।४।२२॥

om anāvṛttiḥ śabdādanāvṛttiḥ śabdāt om 4.4.22..

Sūtra 4.4.22 explores the relationship between Samādhi and the attainment of spiritual knowledge. It underscores that Samādhi is a necessary condition for directly experiencing the ultimate reality, Brahman. These Sūtras, alongside others in the brahma Sūtra, offer guidance on attaining the state of Samādhi and its role in spiritual realization.

They elucidate the nature of Samādhi, its various stages, and its connection to Yoga practice and the attainment of spiritual liberation.

there are many more sutras and texts within Indian philosophies that discuss meditation in Sanskrit. Each philosophical system and tradition have its own unique set of sutras and texts exploring the practice and philosophy of meditation.

In summary, this literature review provides an overview of the concept of meditation in various Indian philosophies.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Topic is literary and theoretical in nature, the general research methodology used in the domains of language, philosophy, or arts will be used which involves a broad study of the background subject, an analysis of the thesis topic, and final assessment and conclusions. Hence the standard research methodology used in scientific research such as experimental trials, random control trial (RCT), interventions such as pre – and post interventions, limitations, inclusion principle, exclusion principle, sample strategy, samples, empirical analysis, etc., will not be employed in this purely literary paper.

**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS:** This section compares the concepts, techniques, and goals of *Dhyāna*, *And Samādhi* across the various Indian philosophies discussed in the paper. It highlights the commonalities and differences, providing insights into the diverse approaches to *Dhyāna*, *And Samādhi* in Indian thought.

### **RESULTS:**

Though science has tried to research the aspect of the possibility of having a state of breathlessness, there is nothing that shows this possibility. Most scientists disagree that *yogi* can attain a state of breathlessness and they even term it as something which will be dangerous to them. Hence there is no proof that a *yogi* can be in a position to stop either his heart or breath (Holroyd, 2003). A medical-scientific approach clearly states that if someone lacks oxygen for a couple of minutes, it leads to hallucination, brain damage, or even death. This means that science does not completely agree with the aspect of attainment of total breathless without any effect to the practitioner (Jevning et al., 1978).

Other evidence has tried to show why the aspect of *Samādhi* cannot be termed as being proved scientifically. According to Holroyd, there are some aspects that one

needs to look at for a certain phenomenon to be termed as being scientific. One of the qualities which any scientific evidence should hold to be considered reliable is the aspect of repeatability. This means that, if a certain action is to be termed as being scientific, it should result in the same result regardless of who experiments. This is different from the aspect of *Samādhi* where some who claimed to have tried *Samādhi* have survived while others who are said to have tried it died which some criticism of *Samādhi* terms as *Samādhi* suicide (2003). This aspect of lack of repeatability hence disqualifies the act of *Samādhi* as a scientifically proven phenomenon.

The other argument that is made to disqualify the aspect of *Samādhi* is the lack of theoretical explanation. This is to say that there is a need to have some data explanation of what exactly takes place so that *Samādhi* is determined. Conversely, the claims that are put to show that a total and breathless state is achievable contradict other proven scientific theories. For instance, scientific evidence shows that if one lacks oxygen for a couple of minutes, one can get serious mental damage or even die. There is also evidence that a lack of oxygen will make one lack in concentration. This is contrary to

what the process of *Samādhi* claims hence making it unrealistic in terms of scientific proof (Jevning et al., 1978).

### **CONCLUSION:**

The final section examines the contemporary relevance of *Dhyāna, And Samādhi* concepts and practices in various Indian philosophies.

It discusses the integration of these ancient traditions into modern-day life, their impact on personal well-being, spiritual growth, and the potential for cross-cultural dialogue.

In conclusion, this research paper presents a comprehensive exploration of the concept of *Dhyāna, And Samādhi* in various Indian philosophies. By examining foundational texts, philosophical frameworks, and meditation techniques, it enhances our understanding of the diverse perspectives on *Dhyāna, And Samādhi* in Indian thought and its relevance in contemporary times.

The fact that there is a claim with the practitioner for the attainment of a breathless state might not be achievable concerning the scientific approach. However, there is some evidence that this concept is attainable. With this, we can say that the aspect of meditation and *Samādhi* are something psychological and it will be hard for it to be interpolated scientifically. On the other hand, the aspect

of the uses of mediation is also psychological. This is where when one meditates; he will be able to attain what he is earning for such as stress reduction, relaxation among others. However, though the practitioner attains what he wants, this thing will be psychological but may not be interpolated scientifically.

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