Review of Literature

We present in the next chapter the details about their form phases described in texts of yoga and spiritual lore. Later in chapter 3 a thorough review of scientific literature is presented leading to the Aim and objectives of this study in chapter 4 followed by Methods, Results, and Discussions in chapters 5, 6 & 7 respectively ending with an Appraisal in chapter 8.

2.1 BACKGROUND

There are large numbers of techniques of meditation which are being used by many yoga masters all over the globe. For examples, zazen, Tai Chi Chuan meditation, Yoga nidrā, Prekñā Meditation, Vipassanā Meditation. However a few of them have been scientifically reviewed such as TM, CM, OM Vipassanā, Mindfulness etc. Other do not have proper research data and conclusions.

In the traditional texts [the Pataïjali’s Yoga Sūtras (Taimni, 1961) and Bhagavad Gétā (Bhaktivedānta Svāmē Prabhupāda, 1998)] it has been described that when awake and in the absence of a specific task the mind is very
distractible (caïcalatâ), and has to be taken through the stages of ‘streamlining the thoughts’ (concentration or ekâgratâ), and one-pointed concentration (focusing or dhâraëä), before reaching the meditative state (defocused, effortless single thought state or dhyâna). Symbolism has a place in spirituality. In shamanic traditions “perceptual-cognitive-symbolic” characteristic of ordinary states of consciousness and another source of information processing, called “direct-intuitive-nonlocal,” characteristic of nonordinary states of consciousness is required to be introduced for interpretation. The first one is capable of modeling via symbolism and is more culturally bound due to its psycholinguistic features. The second one lacks symbolism; therefore, the first one has more transcultural similarity, though culture-specific transliteration may occur.

Among many symbols used, OM is one of the fundamental symbols used in the yoga tradition. OM is the name or symbol of God (Éçvara, Brahman) Kaöha Upaniñat (Cinmayänanda Svämé, 2002). OM covers the whole threefold experience of man. It is the combination of three letters, namely, A, U, and M. Japa Yoga A comprehensive treatise on Mantra-Çästra (Çivänanda Svämé, 2005). “A” represents the physical plain. “U” represents the mental and astral plain, the world of intelligent spirits, and all heavens. “M” represents the whole deep-sleep state, which is unknown even in our wakeful state Mäëöükya Upaniñat (Cinmayänanda Svämé, 1984). This concept has been well described in various Indian scriptures. In Mäëöükya Upaniñat, it has been described that OM is the syllable of the past, the present and the future. From the original sound, OM, all things become manifest as its extension embodiments.
Māëòükya Upaniñat (Cinmayänanda Svämé, 1984). The analogy in Muëòaka Upaniñad describes that OM is the bow; the soul is the arrow; and Brahman is the target. The target is attained by an unerring man. One should become one with the target just like an arrow. This is to become one with the imperishable by eliminating the ideas of the body, ego, präëa, hence being the self with nothing less than union with the Absolute Muëòaka Upaniñad (Gambhiränanda Svämé, 1995).

Çvetäçvatara Upaniñat describes that OM is like the fire which though potentially present in firewood is not seen until two sticks are rubbed against each other. The self is like that fire; it is realized by constant awareness of the sacred syllable OM. Let the body be the stick that is rubbed and OM be the stick that is rubbed against. Then the real nature is realized which is hidden within, just as fire in a sense hidden in the wood. Çvetäçvatara Upaniñat with the comentary of Çaikaräcärya (Gambhiränanda Svämé, 1986).

Pataïjali’s Yoga Sùtras (PYS) is one of the classical yoga texts in which the explanation about OM is well defined Pataïjali’s Yoga Sùtras (Taimni, 1961) In PYS there is a single direct mention about Praëava (OM). Praëava is virtually Ëçvara or OM, where Ëçvara is the word denoting God. Even though there is only one mention about OM in PYS, the definition of Ëçvara and the attributes are given in PYS Chapter I, Verses 24-26.

Bhagavad Gétä describes Kåñëa’s instructions to Arjuna just before the great war on the battlefield of Kurukñetra (Bhagavad Gétä Madhusudhan Sarasvaté, Gambhiränanda Svämé, 1998).
**OM** is the central element in Kāñëa’s exposition of spiritual life and practice, speaking from his perspective as the infinite being, enumerating his major manifestations and embodiments. The meaning is that **OM** is nothing less than the supreme consciousness; so there can be nothing greater or a subject more important than **OM**. This is illustrated as “One who is engaged in the practice of concentration, uttering the monosyllable **OM** (the *Brahman* or consciousness) who remembers it always, he attains the supreme goal *Bhagavad Gétä* Madhusudhan Sarasvaté, Gambhiränanda Svämé, 1998).

In Summary: the sacred syllable **OM** is the primordial sound from which all other sounds and creation emerge. It underlies all phonetic creations. The utterance of **OM**, consisting of the three letters *A*, *U*, and *M*, covers the whole process of articulation. It is like the sound of a gong that gradually tapers to a point and merges in silence. One, who attains **OM**, merges with the Absolute.

**OTHER MEDIATIONS**

**Transcendental Meditation (TM)**

Transcendental meditation (TM) is based on the traditional yogic principles. In TM the meditator sits in a comfortable position silently closing the eyes and repeats a specific *mantra* mentally from time to time to go beyond thought level. This technique is preached and practiced by *Mahaâñi* Mahesh Yogi. This is less rigorous and demanding discipline, apparently easily learned, and hence widely practiced. The TM is defined as ‘turning the attention inwards towards the subtler levels of a thought until the mind transcends the experience of the subtle state of thought and arrives at the source of the thought’.

**Täntric meditation**

In this technique the meditator has to repeat a sacred *mantra* given by the *guru*,
with intense concentration. This meditation is practiced and propagated by the Änanda Märga organization. The technique consists of two important steps. First, the meditators sit in comfortable relaxed position and withdraw the attention inwards by ignoring the external stimuli and paying attention to their breathing. Then they silently repeat the two lettered personal mantra with their breathing.

**Brahmakumärés Räja yoga meditation**

This meditation technique is preached and practiced by Brahmakumärés Éçvaréya Viçvavidyälaya. During this meditation, aspirants sit in a comfortable position with their eyes open, and with effortless gaze fixed on a jyoti (light – representing supreme consciousness). At same time they actively generate positive thoughts about the Universal force pervading all over, as light and peace.

**Zen Meditation**

Zazen- Zen meditation is a fundamental part of both the Soto and Rinzai Sects of Zen Buddhism. The aim in this form of meditation is the ultimate state of enlightenment called Satori. This technique involves concentration. There are three types in this type of meditation. In the first type, the meditator concentrates on his breathing, counting the breaths or without counting. In second type of meditation the meditator has to solve koans or say non-logical riddles. In third type of meditation the meditator just sits and breathes in a prescribed manner without any aids or concentrating on his breath.

**Vipassanā Meditation**

Vipassanā, which means to see things as they really are, is one of the ancient
techniques of meditation. It was rediscovered by Gautama Buddha more than 2500 years ago. In *vipassanā* meditation the meditator, sitting in a comfortable position, initially observes his own breathing and thereafter observes sensations and feelings in various part of the body with an attitude of witness. *Vipassanā* is a way of self-transformation through self-observation. It focuses on the subtle interconnection between mind and body, which can be experienced directly by disciplined attention to the physical sensations that form the life of the body, and that continuously interconnect and condition the life of the mind. It is this observation-based, self-exploratory journey to the common root of mind and body that dissolves mental impurity, resulting in a balanced mind full of love and compassion.

**Prekñā Meditation**

This is also an ancient meditation technique practiced in Jainism. *Prekñā* means to perceive and realize the subtlest aspects of one's own self, 'to see the Self'. *Prekñā* is derived from the *Saàskāta* word "*Pra + ikñā*" which means to observe carefully. Basically it sums up the perception of body, psychic centers, breath and observation of mind. In *Prekñā Dhyāna* no thought is forcefully stopped. Instead the art of merely observing the thought process without forming any reaction or attachment is developed. By doing so thoughts themselves cease to appear.

**Yoga nidrā**

*Yoga-nidrā* (yogic psychic sleep) is a meditative technique, derived from ancient *Tantra* popularized by Bihar School of Yoga (BSY). *Yoga-nidrā* is described as a systematic method of inducing complete physical, mental and emotional relaxation, while maintaining awareness at deeper levels. *Yoga-nidrā*
is performed in çavāsana and it consists of progressive relaxation and rotation of awareness all over body, resolve, and visualization of some images of nature and tāntric abstract symbols.

**Cyclic Meditation**

Cyclic meditation (CM) is a ‘moving’ meditation technique devised to address the needs and problems of modern man (Nagendra, Nagrathana, 2001). Many people find it difficult to relax and get into a meditative state if asked to sit with their eyes closed while others feel drowsy and even fall asleep. Cyclic meditation involves a combination of gentle yogic stretching and relaxation. It is based on the principles culled from classical yogic texts like Māēōūkya Upaniñat (Chinmayänanda, 1984) and Yoga Sūtras of Pataïjali. This technique is developed and propagated by Svāmé Vivekänanda Yoga Anusandhāna Saāsthāna and is widely used as an effective therapeutic measure and technique of stress management. It is called so, because it consist the measures of ‘relaxation’ and ‘stimulation’ in cyclic order. This technique includes the practice of certain yoga postures interspersed with relaxation while supine, thus achieving a combination of both ‘stimulating’ and ‘relaxation’ practices.

Yoga teachings consider the syllable OM to be the force behind all thoughts. Either chanting or thinking about OM is anecdotally reported to cause a quiet mental state. The word ‘meditation’ is more associated with healing and relaxation (Adhéçwaränanda, 2004). It was believed earlier that meditation was meant for spiritual aspirants alone. Now, with the availability of simple methods and with the better understanding of deeper meaning, meditation has become very popular among all categories of people. Scientific
and medical evidence has proved its benefits, but still there remains a need to further explore it.

SCOPE FOR THE STUDY: Meditation has been of mystic importance since its discovery. Subjective experiences of various meditators have shown to uplift the practitioner from a lower state of physical existence to the realms of reality and absolute consciousness. Since then meditation has been a subject of higher interest for various researchers. Every study carried out to discover the effects of meditation gives a new direction and unveils a novel question. What is the effect of meditation? What are the mechanisms occurring during meditation? There continues to be a constant quest for understanding meditation as it reveals varied facts based on the type, duration and depth of its practice. These variations in its effects keep the constant need for studying it in all its aspects.

2. 2 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

i) To summarize the work already done on mediation from text of ancient Indian lore.

ii) To compile authentic information on Caïcalatä, Ekägratä, Dhäraëä and Dhyäna from classical yogéc and spiritual literature.

ii) To explore the concept of OM meditation from different classical & yogéc texts and the usefulness of above aspects in OM meditation

2.3 SOURCES AND METHODS

2.3.1 Sources
This literary research was based on the information collected from the following ancient Indian traditional scriptures and yoga literature which includes:

A. Classical yoga text: (i) Patañjali yoga sūtras, Vyāsa bhāña on Patañjali yoga sūtras (ii) Yoga Vāsiñöha (iii) Bhagavad gétä, (iv) Haöha yoga pradépikä, (v) Gheraëöa saahétä and (vi) Çiva saahétä.


C. Brahmasūtras.

D. Prakaraëa Granthis like Åtmabodha and Vivekacüôämaëi.

E. Texts written by persons recognized as spiritual leaders and visionaries like Çri Rämakåñëa Paramahaäsä, Svämë Vivekänanda and Svämë Adhéçwaränanda.

2.3.2 Methods

The classical and authentic information was derived from the verses and the commentaries and descriptions about concept of OM meditation and its components (caïcalatä, ekägratä, dhäraëä & dhyäna) and its usefulness from the above mentioned sources. The information was first
systematically compiled and then sorted out according to the defined structure of the sections. The original çlokas in saàskåta transliteration in the standard international codes and meaning will be presented first. Then the special features of the çlokas will be explained based on the relevant commentaries on them. The relevant references are cited in the body of the text as well as in the reference section.

2.4. CONCEPT OF MEDITATION

The English word meditation comes from the Latin root word meditari, which derives from the same root as the word meaning ‘to heal’. Its Saàskåta derivation 'medhā' means wisdom. The practice of meditation sets in motion, a process that leads to the restoration of one’s - physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. The English connotation of the word ‘meditation’ is therefore’ more associated with healing and relaxation (Adhéçwaränanda, 2004). It was believed earlier that meditation was meant for spiritual aspirants alone. Now, with the availability of simple methods and with the better understanding of deeper meaning, it has become very popular among all categories of people. Published scientific and medical evidence has proved its benefits, but it still needs to be much understood.

Meditation is the freedom from thought, a state of no-mind. It is a state of pure consciousness with no contents. It is the activation of natural 'seeing' activity, of the 'Self' or Consciousness. It is the finest way to increase one's personal energy by getting connected to the Source.

It is a surprise for the scientist, doctors as well as in the common group that meditation can cure different types of diseases as well as it is becoming a tool for
healthy leaving. Different types of research have been done in this subject and it is continuing. Since west shows the mystic powers of different yogés who went there to serve this world the research in yoga and meditation becoming a major point of study. Even many yogés and scientist came together to form a common ground to propagate yoga and meditation.

Difference among the Dhyāna, Upāsanā, Tapas and Niddhyāsana.

Dhyāna is uninterrupted, spontaneous flow of the mind towards the chosen object. Upāsanā is a prescribed method for approaching a Deity or God or getting close to a deity/deities. Upāsanā can be described as a systematic practice of a prescribed method of worship for pleasing and winning the attention of the deity. A devotee would consult the scriptures, or a person who knows them thoroughly, to get a prescribed form of worship (Upāsanā) for his/her deity of choice (Éñöa Devatā) and follow it faithfully to the best of his/her abilities. Tapas referring to a focused effort leading towards bodily purification and spiritual enlightenment. Through tapas, a yogi or spiritual seeker can "burn off" or prevent accumulation of negative energies, clearing a path toward spiritual evolution. Tapas may be the striving for nirvana, or mokña. It may also be striving for perfection in a particular sport, field of knowledge or work. Tapasyā may also be undertaken as penance, to liberate oneself from the consequences of a sin or sinful activities, or karma. In other words ‘tapas’ is the act of burning-through the fire of direct cognition of the knowledge that Brahman is the truth and the universe, a myth the seed of the deep-rooted desire to attain the powers of Brahā etc
(Nirālamba Upaniñat—Narayana Svāmē, 2003). As Pataijali defined, tapaù is to reach to the perfection of the sense-organs and body after destruction of impurity. Niddhyäsana is Fixing the mind firmly on Brahman, the point of Contemplation, restraining the sense organs in their respective centre’s, holding the body steady and giving up all thoughts of maintenance, identifying with Brahman, and being tuned to it, continuously drink the bliss of Brahman in your Self. Of what use are other things? They are entirely false, empty.

Contemplation is Enquiry into Self, Leading to experience of non duality, Transcending Man’s creation, the discovery of freedom to devalue thoughts, a process of re-absorption into the Self, Disappearance of small self in Self (Like waves in a ocean, Transcending Man’s creation) Contemplation is the discovery of freedom to devalue thoughts.

In a scientific point of view the general concept defines:

Meditation offers a fascinating window into human consciousness, psychology and experience; the relationship between the mental state and body physiology; emotional and cognitive processing and the biological correlates of religious experience (Newberg & Iverson, 2003). In the last thirty-five years there have been scientific studies examining physiological changes induced by the process. However, it has been mentioned that even detailed reports were not complete as they did not define the method of meditation or they presented a general definition, often inaccurate and inadequate (Cardoso, de Souza, Camano, & Leite, 2004).

Occidental context, the word meditation is used to describe practices that self-regulate the body and mind thereby affecting mental events by engaging a specific
attentional set. Regulation of attention is the central and common factor across many divergent methods (Davidson & Gollman, 1977).

2.4.1 OBJECTS OF MEDITATION

Meditation involves three factors (tripuōi) i.e., meditator, the object of meditation and the process of meditation. The object of focus is generally sacred and can be personal or neutral, concrete or abstract, a word or an idea, an image or a symbol, a divine form or personality.

The Yoga Sūtras of Pataïjali mention the following as the possible objects of meditation: (i) the effulgent or radiant light which is beyond all sorrow (jyotiñmati), (ii) the heart of an illuminated being (vētarāgé) who is free from all passion and attachment (iii) the subtler dimensions and knowledge of sleep and dream state or (iv) anything (yathābhimata) that is spiritually uplifting. Such a thing may be a place, some scenery, an idea or any other thing that would evoke concentration of mind (Adhéçwarānanda, 2004).

The texts on Haöha yoga say the object of concentration can be outside the body like a jyoti or bindu in case of träōaka, sun (sūrya) and moon (candra) or can be inside the body like breath, movement of prāēa, sensations of processes in the body, various cakras or even the mind (genesis of thoughts) itself (Muktibodhānanda, 2003).
According to the tradition of *Vedānta* following objects are preferred for meditation: (i) a divine form, (ii) an Incarnation of God, (iii) the divine Lord as inmost Self of Supreme Teacher, (iv) *Virāöa Puruña* or the Cosmic Personality, (v) the sacred word *AUM*, (vi) *Gāyatré mantra*, or the sacred prayer of the Vedas (vii) the meaning of any of the four *mahāvākyas*, or great Vedic saying or (Viii) the meaning of a sacred text, word or mystic syllable (*Adhéçwaränanda*, 2004).

2.4.2 FOUR COMPONENTS IN THE WAKING STATE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Fig. 1 Schematic representation of phases of wakeful consciousness

(*Caicalatä, Ekágratä, Dhāraëä* and *Dhyäna*)
Illustrated phases and general concept of ‘OM’ meditation

1. Random Thoughts
   *(Caïcalatä)*

2. Stream Lined Thoughts
   *(Ekägratä)*

3. Focusing on a ‘Single Thought’
   *(Dhäraëä)*

4. Effortless ‘Single Thought’!
   *(Dhyäna)*

2.4.2A *Caïcalatä* (Random thoughts):

Specific to meditation, it has been described that in the absence of a specific task the mind is very distractible (*caïcalatä*) with an outward attention (*paraiga-cetanä*). Another classical text on yoga (*The holy Bhagavad Gétä, Bhaktivedänta, 1998*) describes the characteristics of *caïcalatä* state of the mind (one of the four states in the waking state of consciousness) and the continuous practice (of yoga) (*abhyäsa*) and non-attachment (*vairägya*) as the solution.

The *Bhagavad Gétä* is presented the hurdles and its solution for meditation, in the form of a conversation between Arjuna and Lord Kåñëa.

Arjuna says:

*Caïcalam hi manaù kåñëa pramäthi balavaddåòham Tasyäham nigraham manye váyoriva suduñkaram.*
Review of Literature

(Bhagavad Gétã, Ch: 6 V:

34) The mind verily is, O Kâñëa, restless, turbulent, strong and obstinate. I deem it as hard to control as the wind.

Lord Kâñëa answers:

As<zy< mhabahae mnae ÊinRçh< clMa!, A_yasen tu kaENtey vEraGye{a c gêyte .
Asaàçayaà mahâbâho mano durnigrahaà calam’
Abhyâsena tu kaunteya vairâgyeëa ca gâhyate.

(Bhagavad Gétã, Ch: 6 V:

35) Doubtless, O mighty-armed, the mind is restless and hard to control; but by practice and non-attachment, O son of Kûntî! It can be controlled.

The mind in the caïcalatã state has to be taken through the stages of ‘streamlining the thoughts’ (ekâgratã), and one-pointed concentration (dhâraëã), before reaching the meditative state: a defocused, effortless, single-thought state (dhyâna) (Cinmayânanda, 1984).

Xyaytae iv;yan! pu<s> s¼Ste;Upjayte, s¼at! sÂayte kam> kamat!
3aexae=iÉjayte.2 .62.
3aexadœ Évit s<maeh> s<maehat! Sm&itivœm>, Sm&itæ<zadœ buïnazæ
buiïnazat! â[Zyit.2 .63.
Smâtibhraàçâd buddhinäço buddhinäçät praëaçyatì.
(Cinmayânanda, 2001, Ch: 2

V: 62, 63)

Desire leads to generation of more thoughts; repetition of thoughts and experience makes deeper impressions converting them into emotions. Punishing the mind through self-torture and mortification would merely repress the desires, driving them underground (subconscious). Trying to transform the mind by changing our environment would be futile because wherever we go, our mind with all its habitual tendencies goes with us. Thus mind never becomes controlled automatically; it must be controlled consciously. The only alternative, according to the yoga is to slowdown the mind and face it by control and regulation.

Meditation provides the systematic method to control and regulate the caïcalã mind.

AivìaNtnma> iSwTva pàCD iptr< tda,
s<sarafMbrimd< kwm_yuidit< mune.5.
Aviçräntamanäù sthitvä papraccha piataraà tadä|
Saásåräöambaramidaà kaçhamabhyuditiaà mune||5||
(Yoga Väsiñöha Ch: II. 5. E.Y.V)

With a restless mind, he then asked his father, “Sage! How did this show of worldly existence arise?

Évta=Pyë; @vawR %´> zaôe;u y> ūt>,
TvÄae iviammañæeit kw< cetae vd àÉae.16.

“The same fact which is heard of in the scriptures has been uttered by you also. How does the mind attain tranquillity? Tell that yourself.”

Janaka said:

AvyuiCDÚicdaTmEk> pumanStlh netrt!,
Svs<kLpvzat! bÏae in>s»Lpí muCyte.17.

“Aiù, there is here but one Self who is of the nature of undivided Consciousness. There is nothing else. He is bound by his own thoughts; free ideation, he is liberated.

Note: The word used for ‘thought’ and ‘ideation’ in this verse is ‘Saìkalpa’. It also means: will, intention, wish and imagination. All these terms indicate the functions of the internal instrument of perception, designated by the common word ‘mind’.

2.4.2B Ekägratä (Concentration)

Meditation is generally understood as deep concentration on any object. In that sense, everyone meditates, because concentration is indispensable not only for survival but also for success in any walk of life. It is through concentration one can see, hear, work or understand anything. Concentration is the way to gain knowledge about any subject. Through concentration the mind acquires the quality of a lens and can penetrate deeply into an object, external or internal, and perceive its’ real nature. However, practically it is observed and experienced that concentration is tiring, it drains the energy. One cannot concentrate for long. After some time spent in concentration one feels fatigue and stressed because concentration involves intense effort.
In *Saāśkāta, ekāgratā* (moving in one direction) means concentration (Apte 1992), the channelizing of all the mental energies in a single direction. Normally our mind exists in the state of *caīcalatā* (continuously moving) wherein it moves in all directions, jumps (as it were) from one object to another object randomly. The mind in this phase is unstable, turbulent and restless (Cinmayānanda, 2001, Ch: 6 V: 34). It flows in all directions according to its likes and dislikes and its patterns. The haphazard flow of thoughts is called as *caīcalatā*. Streamlining these scattered energies of the mind in one direction is *ekāgratā*. However, this process requires voluntary control and effort. For example, reading a book, watching a movie, driving a car all require different degrees of effort. Thus, in concentration mind is directed on a single subject or direction, but there exist multiple thoughts. All these thoughts are interconnected to one another to form a meaningful or logical chain.

(Bhagavad Gētā, Ch: 6 V: 12)

Seating in one place, making the mind one-pointed and restraining the thinking faculty and the senses, one should practice yoga for self-purification.

The wise man who, by means of concentration on the Self, realizes that ancient, effulgent One, who is hard to be seen, un-manifest, hidden, and who dwells in the *buddhi* and rests in the body – he, indeed, leaves joy and sorrow far behind.

2.4.2C *Dhāraēā*
Dhāraṇā is a continuation of the process of sensory inhibition or withdrawal called as pratyāhāra. Dhāraṇā is the ‘holding of the mind in a motionless state’, as the Tri-çikhi-Brahmaëa- upaniñat defines this advanced practice (Feuerstein, 2001). Dhāraṇā the fifth limb of the Pataïjalī ‘s eightfold path is focusing of attention to a given locus (deça), which may be a particular part of the body (such as cakra) or an external object that is internalized (such as the image of a deity).

The Saàskåta word dhāraṇā stems from the verbal root dhå (Apte, 1992), meaning ‘to hold, to fix’. What is being held is one’s attention, which is fixed on an internalized object and the underlying process is called dhāraṇā. According to sage Pataïjali, dezbnixiĂSy xarja. Deçabandhaçcittasya dhāraṇā. (PSY- Ch: 3.V: 1; Prabhavänanda, 2002).

‘Fixing of mind on a specific object (or a spot, internal or external) is dhāraṇā’ Concentration is the confining of the mind within a limited mental area object of concentration.

Fig.2
The main tasks in the dhāraëä phase are: (i) keeping the mind continuously engaged in consideration of an object and bringing it back as soon as the connection is lost, (ii) reducing the frequency of such interruptions and (ii) complete focusing with sharply defined mental images, by increasing the degree of alertness and power of attention. It is the holding of the mind to some particular object. (When the mind holds on to some object, either in the body or outside the body, and keeps itself in that state, it has attained dhāraëä concentration). An unbroken flow of knowledge about that object is dhyanä. When the mind tries to think of one object, to hold itself to one particular spot, such as the top of the head, or the heart, and succeeds in receiving sensations only through that part of the body, and no other part, it has attained dhāraëä: and when the mind succeeds in keeping itself in that state for some time, it has attained dhyāna.

Mind steady, eye semi-open, gaze fixed on the nose tip, the moon (ida) and sun (piëgalä) suspended, without any movement (physical or mental), that one attains the form of light (jyoti) which is endless and is complete, radiant, the Supreme.

Meditation is the spontaneous result of concentration of the mind. Dhyāna or meditation occurs when the mind stops oscillating off the point of concentration, when
the witness, witnessed, and process of witnessing alone remain. Dhyāna is ekāgra or one-pointedness of mind, when the våttis or mental movements are confined to the process and the object of concentration.

Deze nabhicakranāsagrādau cittasya bandho viñayantaraparihāre āa
Yat sthirēkaraēaā sā cittasya dhāraēa ātyucyate.
(Sukhānanda natha, 1992).

The mental flux could be halted on navel center, tip of the nose or any place as sanctioned by scriptures. Stabilizing the mental flux without disturbance from any corner is termed as dhāraēaā.

This (dhāraēaā) is supposed to be practiced by the yogē, who has gone through the previous five limbs, and desirious of attaining Samādhi. Hence directing or stabilizing all mental forces on a particular base or object is known as çuddha-dhāraēaā.

Thus’ dhāraēaā not only involves concentration but takes to the next step of focused attention. Dhāraēaā consists of focusing on a relevant thing and
withdrawal from irrelevant. In the process of perception, mind not only aligns with external sense organs (*jīnendriyas*) but also tunes with earlier experiences. 

*Ekāgratā* is analytical focusing where as *dhāraēā* is a non-analytical focusing. Hence *dhāraēā* also involves a component of remembering i.e., repeated continuous recollection of the object and not allowing the mind to get distracted (Nagendra, Svāmy, & Mohan, 2003). Thus’ in *dhāraēā* mind is confined (*bandha*) to a single object with single thought. Hence *dhāraēā* requires voluntary control, persistent effort and training (*abhyaśa*).

The *Saāskāta* word *dhyāna* means continuous dwelling of mind on a single object. When *dhāraēā* becomes effortless and continuous it takes the form of *dhyāna*. Often this is translated as meditation. Nevertheless, the word meditation is also used to denote concentration and *dhāraēā*. In this thesis, meditation means *dhyāna*.

---

**Fig. 3.**
‘Meditation is uninterrupted, spontaneous flow of the mind towards the chosen object’.

2.4.2D Dhyāna (meditation)

Uninterrupted concentration on the object of concentration (Pratyayaikatānata) is the distinguishing feature between the dhāraṇā and dhyāna. This continuity is regarded as the measure of concentration and the total control over the mind. The attainment of ‘Dhyāna Avasthā’ shows that
the mind is ready for the last limb (Aïga) (Samādhi) and the beginning of the higher states of yoga.

Dhāraëā naturally leads to the state of meditative absorption, in which the internalized object or locus fills the entire space of consciousness. Just as the one-pointedness of attention is the mechanism of dhāraëā, ‘one-flowing-ness’ (ekatānatā) is the underlying process of meditation accompanied by a peaceful, calm disposition. There is no loss of lucidity, but on the contrary, the sense of wakefulness is intensified, even though there is no or little awareness of the external environment.

The psychology of meditation is to cultivate a single thought. A restless mind is like a lake, constantly agitated by the winds of desires, creating thought–waves of diverse intensities. Because of this constant agitation, our true Self at the bottom of the lake cannot be perceived. When, to counter all those many thought–waves, a single thought is consciously cultivated by the repeated and uninterrupted practice of meditation, it develops into a huge wave that swallows up all the diverse ripples and makes the mind transparent and calm. The mind in meditation takes the form of this single thought-wave. The five characteristic features of meditation (dhyāna) are (i) single thought, (ii) effortlessness, (iii) awareness, (iv) slowness and (v) expansiveness. This can be called as defocusing. Meditation is a fine method for learning the secrets of the outer and inner worlds. Meditation is a technique of withdrawing the mind so that it receives rest and rejuvenation. The initial purpose of meditation is to intercept the flux of ordinary mental activity (cīṭṭa vātti), which is cause for caïcalatā (Feuerstein, 2001).
The modifications of the *kleñas* are reducible through meditation *Sāïkhyā Yoga* (Bahadur, 1988):

*Cessation of desire is meditation.*

It has been stated that knowledge alone can confer liberation. The author goes on to say how such knowledge can be obtained. When by meditation the mind is untarnished by external objects the impediments in the way of knowledge are removed.

Meditation is perfected by repelling the modifications of the mind. The modifications are real cognition, unreal cognition, imagination, deep sleep and memory. Meditation is accomplished by restraining them. When this is achieved there takes place the immediate intuition of the object of meditation.

*Meditation is accomplished by dhāraëā, āsana and svadharma.*

The author mentions how meditation is accomplished. This is by holding the mind in a particular part of the body (*dhāraëā*), adopting the needful posture (*āsana*), and by performance of the *varēa* duties (*svadharma*), i.e., duties belonging to the stage of life in which one is placed.

Meditation may be a spiritual practice but its effects on the body are definite and physiologically verified. Alpha waves become intense, respiration becomes minimal, consumption of oxygen decreases, blood pressure and temperature drop (*HYP*, Muktibodhānanda 1985).

\[
\text{Pratyāhāra dhāraëā ca dhyānaà bhrúumadhyame harim | yogatattvopaniñat ||} \text{24}||
\]

\[
\text{Pratyāhāra, dhāraëā, Dhyāna the contemplation on Hari in the middle of eyebrows.}
\]

\[
\text{Abhedadarçanaà jìänaà dhyānaà nirviñayaà manaù| Snànaà manomalatyägaù çaucamindriyanígrañãu|} \text{2}||
\]
The cognition of everything as non different from one self of jīāna. Abstracting mind from cancala object in dhyāna. Purifying the mind of its impurities snāna. Bathing. The subjugation of indriyas is saūca. The wise man should observe thus: than he obtains Absolution.

That is called Samādhi in which the chitta, raising above the conception of the contemplator and contemplation, merges gradually into the contemplated, like a light undisturbed by mind the wind.

It should first be heard of from the teacher from the scriptures, then reflected on through and reasoning and then steady firstly meditated upon ‘ thus only is It realized- when these means, viz hearing, reflection and meditation have been gone through. When these three are combined than only true realization of the unity of Brahman is accomplice, not otherwise - by hearing alone.
In nidadhyasana there is an inner search to find the root of thought; to go to the very source from where thought arise. Later as we evolve. We search the source from where all deep rooted vasanas and samskars also emerge. While in dhyana we keep the mind on a simple though effortlessly; there is no search inside. Similarly in nidadhyasana there can be a series of different thoughts as concentration but all directed to phathom Reality. As the teacher assess him to see “That you are”.

1. tÅvmis (tattvamasi), (Chåndogya Upaniñat 6.8.7)
2. AymaTma äü (ayamåtmå brahma), (Måëökya Upaniñat 1.2)
3. Ah< äüaiSm (ahaå brahmåsmi), (Båhadåraëyaka Upaniñat 1.4.10)
4. svR oiLvd< äü (Sarva khalvidaå brahma) (Chåndogya Upaniñat 3.14)

In the present study, the concept of Dhyåna is presented based on the definition given by Mahaåñi Pataïjali .

2.4.3 THE FACETS OF MIND

Generally mind is defined as a flow of thoughts. The conglomeration of thoughts is mind (Nagendra, 2001). This process of thoughts is always ongoing and is related with the information and inputs given by the external organs of perception and the feedback obtained from the earlier memories and impressions. In yogåc understanding, the mind has four functional facets i.e., manas, buddhi, citta and ahaïkåra together called as antaûkaraëa (internal instrument).
Atrābhimānādahamityahaikātiū. Svārthānusandhānaguēena cittam.

The oscillating nature of thoughts is manas (saikalpayikalpatmika), discriminative ability is buddhi (niçcayätmika), stored impressions and patterns is citta (anusandhānätmika) and feeling of ‘I’ ness, the ego is ahaikāra (Cinmayānanda, 2002a, V: 93, 94). This mind oscillates between any of the following five states:

\[ \text{iñçcayätmika, } \text{kñiptaà müòhaà vikñiptamekägraà niruddhamiti} \]

Mind often functions in restless or turbulent way (kñipta), sometimes becomes dull and stupefied (mūòha), sometimes becomes distracted and divided (vikñipta), sometimes becomes concentrated and one pointed (ekägra) and rarely becomes restrained and suspended (niruddha). These are different grounds or fields of functioning of the mind (cittabhūmayaù) (Bangali Baba, 2002). This is presented schematically in Fig. 4.
Figure 4 Cycle of states of mind.

- **Dull** (Mūhaṇ) → Predominance of Tamas
- **Restlessness** (Kṛṣṭa) → Predominance of Rajas and Tamas
- **Scattered, distracted** (Vikṛṣṭa) → Predominance of Rajas and Tamas

**Process Steps:**
- **Release of energy**
- **Perception of object**
- **Experience of happiness or pain**
- **Accumulation & intensification of inner forces**
- **Propelles for action** (Karma kmR)

**States:**
- **Predominance of Tamas**
- **Predominance of Rajas & Sattva**

**Terms:**
- Viñaya bhoga
- Sukh-duṅkha
- Viñaya bodh
- Viñaya bhodha
- Viṣṭaya bhoga
- Viṣṭaya bodh
- Viṣṭaya bhodha
- Raga-deva
- Raga-Ōe

**Transitions:**
- From Dull to Predominance of Tamas
- From Restlessness to Predominance of Rajas and Tamas
- From Scattered, distracted to Predominance of Rajas and Tamas
- From Predominance of Tamas to Experience of happiness or pain
- From Experience of happiness or pain to Perception of object
- From Perception of object to Accumulation & intensification of inner forces
- From Accumulation & intensification of inner forces to Propelles for action (Karma kmR)
- From Propelles for action (Karma kmR) to Predominance of Rajas & Sattva
2.5 CONCEPT OF OM

2.5.1 UPANIÑADS—ÇRUTI PRASTHÄNA: To describe the ultimate reality or Brahman is infinite and difficult to comprehend, so the upaniñads suggest that we take the help of a symbol, OM. Upaniñads had taken great credits to explain why OM is the most appropriate symbol. It says that OM is nothing but so many components put together. For one thing, it comprises three distinct sounds-A, U and M, the whole range of sound is covered by these three sounds, and so OM is called Nāda Brahman, sound Brahman.

I tell you briefly of that goal which of all the Vedas with one propound, which all the austerities speak of, and wishing for which people practice Brahmcarya: it is this, viz OM.

OM is one of the fundamental symbols used in the yoga tradition. OM is the name or symbol of God (Īçvara, Brahman) Kaöha Upaniñat (Cinmayänanda Svämé, 2002). OM covers the whole threefold experience of man. It is the combination of three letters, namely, A, U, and M. Japa Yoga A comprehensive treatise on Mantra-Çäs (Çivänanda Svämé, 2005). “A” represents the physical plane. “U” represents the mental and astral plane, the world of intelligent spirits, and all heavens. “M” represents the whole deep-sleep state, which is unknown even in our wakeful state Mäëöükya Upaniñat (Cinmayänanda Svämé, 1984). This concept has been well described in various Indian scriptures.
In *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣat*,

It has been described that *OM* is the syllable of the past, the present and the future. From the original sound, *OM*, all things become manifest as its extended embodiments *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣat* (Cinmayānanda Svāmē, 1984). The analogy in *Mūṇḍaka Upaniṣat* describes that *OM* is the bow; the soul is the arrow; and *Brahman* is the target. The target is attained by an unerring man. One should become one with the target just like an arrow. This is to become one with the imperishable by eliminating the ideas of the body, ego, *prāṇa*, hence being the self with nothing less than union with the Absolute *Mūṇḍaka Upaniṣat* (Gambhirānanda Svāmē, 1995).

*Çvetāṅvatara Upaniṣat* describes that *OM* is like the fire which though potentially present in firewood is not seen until two sticks are rubbed against each other. The self is like that fire; it is realized by constant awareness of the sacred syllable *OM*. Let the body be the stick...
that is rubbed and *OM* be the stick that is rubbed against. Then the real nature is realized which is hidden within, just as fire in a sense hidden in the wood. *Çvetāçvatara Upaniñat* with the commentary of Çaikarācārya (Gambhirānanda Svāmē, 1986).

### 2.5.2 BHAGAVAD GĒTĀ-SMĀTI PRASTHĀNA

```
& tTsidit indeRzae äū[öiu< Sm&t>,
   äaū[aSten vedaí y)áí ivhta> pura.23.

Om tatsaditi nirdeço brahmaëastrividhaú smátaù|
Brähmaëästena vedäçca yajïäçca vihitáù purá||23||
```

(Ch: 17; V: 23).

*OM* tat and sat this has been declared as the triple appellation of *Brahma*, who is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss. By that were the *Brahmanas* and the Vedas as well as sacrifices created at the cosmic dawn.

```
tSmadaeimTyudaùTy y)dan<s> i²ya>,
   âvtRNte ivxanae á> stt< äuvaïdnam!.24.

Tasmädomityudähåta yajïadänatapauàkriyäù|
Pravartante vidhänoktäù satataä brahmavädinäù||24||
```

(Ch: 17; V: 24).

Therefore’ with the utterance of the holy syllable “AUM” the acts of sacrifice, charity and austerity are commenced; as enjoined in the scriptures by the expounders of the *Brahman*.

*Bhagavad Gétā* describes Kāñëa’s instructions to Arjuna just before the great war on the battlefield of Kurukñetra *Bhagavad Gétā* Madhusudhan Sarasvaté, Gambhirānanda Svāmē, 1998).

*OM* is the central element in Kāñëa's exposition of spiritual life and practice, speaking from his perspective as the infinite being, enumerating his major manifestations and embodiments. The meaning is that *OM* is nothing less than the supreme consciousness; so there can be nothing greater or a subject more important than *OM*. This is illustrated as “One who is engaged in the practice of concentration,
uttering the monosyllable *OM* (the *Brahman* or consciousness) who remembers it always, he attains the supreme goal *Bhagavad Gétä* Madhusudhan Sarasvaté, Gambhiränanda Svämé, 1998).

In Summary: the sacred syllable *OM* is the primordial sound from which all other sounds and creation emerge. It underlies all phonetic creations. The utterance of *OM*, consisting of the three letters *A*, *U*, and *M*, covers the whole process of articulation. It is like the sound of a gong that gradually tapers to a point and merges in silence. One who attains *OM*, merges with the Absolute.

2.5.3 BRAHMASÜTRA–NYÄYA PRASTHÄNA

*Brahmasütra* is the exposition primarily of the *Upaniñats*. It is an attempt to systematize and reconcile the various strands of the *upaniñats* which form the background of Vedanta philosophy. The *sütra* are arranged in four chapters, each subdivided into four parts or quarters (*päda*).

$\text{Ekñatikarmavyapadeçät} ||13||$

(Vidyänanda svämé, *Brahmasütra* Ch: I; Part III; V: 13)

*Ekñatikarma* can be interpreted: Anyone, who meditate on the Supreme Puruña (Āgveda. 10. 90. 1) with the syllable ‘*OM*’ as possessed of three *mäträs*, becomes illumined like the sun.” the word *Puruña* is used for God as well as the individual soul.

$\text{Çya[amev cEvmupNyas> àii.6.}$

*Trayäëåmeva caivamupanyäsaù praçnaçca ||6||*  
(Vidyänanda svämé,*Brahmasütra* Ch: I; Part IV; V: 6)
Yamācārya replied to Naciketā the Supreme Lord whom all penances and austerities, including Brahmcarya, are performed, I tell you in brief- that is ‘OM’.

2.5.4 PATAĬJALĪ’S YOGA SŪTRAS

PataĬjali’s Yoga Sūtras (PYS) is one of the classical yoga texts in which the explanation about *OM* is well-defined. PataĬjali’s Yoga Sūtras (Taimni, 1961). In PYS there is a single direct mention about *Praëava* (*OM*).

That is:

\[ \text{tSy vack} > \text{à[v] > Tasya vācakaù praëavaù} \quad (\text{Ch: I; V: 27}). \]

This literally means that *praëava* is virtually Ėçvara or *OM*, where Ėçvara is the word denoting God. Even though there is only one mention about *OM* in PYS, the definition of Ėçvara and the attributes are given in PYS Chapter I, Verses 24-26. In Sūtras 24, it is said:

\[ \text{~ezkmRivpakazyErpram&ò} > \text{pué;ivze; Sñr>.24.} \]

\[ \text{Kleçakarmavipäkäçayairaparämåñöaù Puruña viçeña éçvaraù||24||} \quad (\text{Ch: I; V: 24}). \]

This means that God is unique, untouched by affliction, acts and their consequences. In Sūtras 25 it is said

\[ \text{tÇ iniritzy< svR}bIjm!.25. \]

Tatra niratiçayaà sarvajïabéjam||25|| \quad (Ch: I; V: 25)

This means that in God there is the root for endless omniscience. This description is taken further in Sūtras 26.

\[ \text{pUveR;amip gué> kalenavnCDedat!26.} \]

Pürveñämapi guruù kālenānavacchedät||26|| \quad (Ch: I; V: 26).

This means that since Ėçvara is not limited by time, He is the original guru or the guru of the earliest guru.

Since PYS has described *praëava* (*OM*) as Ėçvara, it is interesting to note that Sūtras 28 describes what sādhana requires for Ėçvara realization. Sūtra: 28 states
This means that mental repetition of \( OM \) (although \( OM \) is not specifically mentioned) should be carried out while dwelling on its meaning ‘Four Chapters on Freedom’ (Satyānanda Sarasvatē Svāmē, 1976.)

2.6 CONCEPT OF \( OM \) MEDITATION

While the goal of all meditation techniques remains the same, the types of mediation vary because of the different approaches used by different systems of thought. The meditation techniques mentioned in different traditional scriptures could be broadly classified (Sukhānanda natha, 1992) as (a) Meditation on concrete (\( dhyāna \) on \( sākāra \) saṅgūṭa \( vastu \) object): (i) Meditation on sound (\( çabda \)) i.e. on certain \( mantra \), \( bēja \) akñara (syllable in seed form) in form of \( japa \) meditation (silent repetition of \( mantra \) \( OM \)) or meditation on inner sounds (\( OM \) \( nāda \)), (ii) Meditation on form (\( rūpa \)) i.e., on specific ideal or image of \( OM \) or deity (iñöadevatā), tāntric codified shapes called \( yantras \) or neutral symbol like flame or light (\( jyoti \)), and (iii) \( OM \) meditation on inner objects like breath, movement of \( prāēa \), \( cakras \), genesis of thoughts, or sense of ‘I’. (b) Meditation on abstract (\( OM \) \( dhyāna \) on \( nirākāra \) nirguṇa object or idea): (i) Meditation on meaning of \( upaniñadic \) statements of universal truths called as \( mahāvākyas \) like \( Ah< \) āūaiSm (\( ahaà brahmāsmi \)), tÅvmis (\( tattvamasi \)), AymaTma āū (\( ayamātmā brahma \)) and à}an< āū (\( prajñānaà brahma \)).

The scriptural texts of yoga and spirituality mention following statements about \( OM \) meditation.
Review of Literature

2.6A Praṇopaniṣat

Satyakāma, son of Čibi, asked him, “O venerable sir, which world does he really win thereby, who among men, intently meditates on OM in that wonderful way till death?” To him he said:

O Satyakāma, this very Brahma, that is (known as) the inferior and superior, is but this OM. Therefore’ the illumined soul attains either of the two through this one means alone.

\[ OM \textit{kāto smarā} \] (Écāvāsyā Upaniṣat, V: 17)

O’ devout worshipper, meditate on ‘OM’

\[ \textit{Atha hainaā çāibyaū satyakāmaū papraccha |} \]
\[ Sa yo ha vai tadbhagavanmanuñyeñu prāyaēäsentamoikāramabhidhyāyēta |} \]
\[ katamaā váva sa tena lokaā jayatēti |} \]
\[ tasmai sa hovāca ||} \]

(Praṇopaniṣat, V.01)

(Praṇopaniṣat, V.02)
A Meditation on OM

Review of Literature

Shiva

1. Should he meditate on OM as consisting of one letter he becomes enlightened even by that and attains a human birth on the earth. The Åk mantra lead him to the human birth. Being endued there with self-control, continence, and faith he experiences greatness. Even sādhaka may not know all the letters by which OM is constituted, still meditating on OM, he attains an excellent goal, human birth on the earth. Being a prominent Brähma with self-control, continence and faith experiences greatness, without any deviation from Yoga.

2. Now again, if he meditates on OM with the help of the second letter, he becomes identified with the mind. By the Yajur mantras he is lifted to the intermediate space, the world of the Moon. Having experienced greatness in the lunar world, he turns round again.

3. Again, any one who meditates on the supreme Puruña with the help of this very syllable OM, as possessed of three letters, becomes unified in the Sun, consisting of light. As a snake becomes freed from its slough, exactly in a similar way, he becomes freed from sin, and he is lifted up to the world of Brahmā (Hiraëyagarbha) by the Sāma mantras. From this total mass of creatures (that is Hiraëyagarbha) he sees the supreme Puruña that penetrates every being and is higher than the higher One (viz Hiraëyagarbha). Bearing on this, there occur two verses:

(Praçnopaniñat, V.03)

(Praçnopaniñat, V.04)

(Praçnopaniñat, V.05)
The three letters (by themselves) are within the range of death. But if they are closely joined, one to another, are not divergently applied to different objects, and are applied to the three courses of action – external, internal, and intermediate – that are properly resorted to, then the man of enlightenment does not shake (i.e. remains undisturbed). For whom it is know that the death is encompassed by three letters, cannot possibly be deflected, since the puruṇa in the waking, dream & sleep states, together with the states, has been seen by him as identical with the three letters and as identical with OM. Thus a man, who is enlightened has become the Self of all and one with OM, therefore from where can he deviate and to where?

The intelligent know this world that is attainable by the Āk mantras, the intermediate space achievable by the Yajur mantras, and that which is reached by the Sāma mantras. The enlightened man attains that (threefold) world through OM alone; and through OM as an aid, he reaches that also which is the supreme Reality that is quiet and beyond old age, death, and fear. Yogėc teachings consider the syllable ‘OM’ to be the force behind all thoughts. Either chanting or thinking about ‘OM’ is supposed to cause a quiet mental state. OM is the primordial sound from which all other sounds and creation emerge. In OM meditation the
meditator first concentrates on an OM picture and then mentally chants mantra ‘OM’ effortlessly and finally expands to an all-pervasive level and goes for blissful silence.

Meditation is also defined as concentration (continuous thinking) and some times as contemplation (repetitive thinking). Whereas’ in yogic understanding meditation is not mere concentration but it is more than concentration. Therefore’ it is essential to distinguish the meaning of meditation.

2.6B Kaöha Upaniñat

This letter (OM), indeed, is the (inferior) Brahman (Hiranyakagarbha); and this letter is, indeed, the supreme Brahman. Anybody, who, (while) meditating on this letter, wants any of the two, to him comes that.

2.6C Muëøaka upaniñat

Muëøaka upaniñat—(Gamabhiränada, 1995, 2. 2. 6)
Where the arteries of the body are brought together like the spokes in the center of a wheel, within it (this self, moves about) becoming manifold. Meditate on Om as the Self. May you be successful in crossing over to the farther shore of darkness.

Within that (heart) in which are fixed the arteries like the spokes on the hub of a chariot wheel, moves this aforesaid Self by becoming multiformed. Meditate on the Self thus, with the help of Om. May you be free from hindrances in going to the other shore beyond darkness. Knowing him alone, one goes beyond death; there is no other path to proceed by. As the imperishable Self is hard to grasp, it is being presented over & over again so as to make it easily compensable.

To the wheel of the chariot there are many spokes attached to the hub of the wheel. In the same way, many arteries are connected to the heart. The great Self, manifesting itself in many forms (such as anger, hatred, etc.) in that heart, moves inside. Meditate on that Self as Om in order to go beyond darkness. Here in the Upaniñat again it is discussed how the universe is related to Brahman. This time the Upaniñat gives the example of a wheel on a chariot. There are many spokes in a chariot wheel, and all these spokes are attached to a hub. First there is hub, and from that all the spokes radiate. If there is no hub, the spokes cannot be there. Similarly, Brahman supports the entire universe. The spokes are compared in this verse to the arteries connected with our heart. They appear separate, but they all converge at the heart.
Then how to meditate on OM? It must be a bright, shining, effulgent OM. Consider the Self within as that OM. Those who practise meditations know they have to imagine that the form they are meditating on is shining and luminous. It is very difficult at the beginning to meditate on Brahman, because Brahman has no form. So the upaniñat says to meditate on OM, as is the symbol of Brahman. Later you can dispense with OM. When you feel you are on with Brahman, you do not need to meditate on a form. But to begin with, the upaniñat says to meditate on the Self within as that effulgent OM. If you continue to meditate this way, you will go beyond darkness and ignorance, tamașau. The teacher is here blessing the student that he may attain this state.

OM is the bow; the soul is the arrow; and Brahman is called its target. It is to be hit by an unerring man. One should become one with It just like an arrow. This is to become one with the imperishable by eliminating the ideas of the body, ego, prāe etc being the Self.

2.6D Chāṇḍogya upaniñat

All this is Brahman. From it the universe comes forth, in It the universe merges, and in It the universe breathes. Therefore’ a man should meditate on Brahman with a calm mind.
Let one meditate That as adoration ; desires pay adoration to him. Let one contemplate That as the supreme, he becomes possessed of the supreme. Let one contemplate That as Brahman’s destructive agent, one’s hateful rivals perish as also those rivals whom he does not like . He who is here in the person and he who is yonder in the Sun, He is one.

2.6E Öàìttiréya upaniñat

OM. The knower of Brahman attains their Suprime (the Higest). In reference to that is the following hymn recited: “Brahman is Truth, knowledge and Infinity. He is who knows it is as existing hidden in the heart, the transcendent Akasa (Parama Akasa) realises all this desires along with the Omniscient Brahman.” Though a man may perform penance standing on one leg for a thousand years, it will not, in the least, be equal to one-sixteenth part of concentrated meditation.

2.6F Bhagawat Gétā
Keeping the trunk, head and neck straight and steady sitting firmly, one should look at the tip of the nose, without looking in other directions.

(AsaNaTma ivgERuce iSwt),

s<yMy m½Åæ yu’ Aaslt mTpr>.6.14.
Praçãntátmã vigatbhérbrhmacãrivrate sthitaù.
Manaù saàyamya maccitto yukta āséta matparàù.

A majestically calm, fearless, and a confirmed celebate should withdraw his senses and sit carefully fixing his mind upon Me

yuÅjˆÚev< sdaTman< yaegl inytmans>,

Yuïjannevaà sadàtmànaà yogé niyatamànasaù.
Çàntià nirväëaparamàa matsàsthàmàdhigacchati

Uyjhm6In this manner, constantly meditating with controlled mind, the yogé, emancipated and eternally peaceful, attains Me

tÇEkaç< mn> k«Tva yticÅeiNÖyi®y>,

%pivZyasne yuÅJya*aegmaTmivzülye. 6.12.
Tatraikâgraà manaù kåtvå yatacittdnyakriyaù.
Upaviçyäsane yuïjyådyogamàtmaviçuddhaye.
(Tapasyànanda, 2002, Ch: 6 V: 12).

Sitting on that seat he should concentrate the mind, control the senses and thoughts, and practise yoga for self-purification.

yuÁjlt à[ve cet> à[vae äü inÉRym!,
à[ve inTyyuKtSy n Éy< iv*te Kvict!.

Yuïjêta praëave cetaù praëavo brahma nirbhayam |
Praëave nityayutkasya na bhayaà vidyate kvacit ||
(Gauòapåda Kãrikã, V: 25)

One should concentrate one’s mind on OM, (for) Om is Brahman, beyond fear. For a man, ever fixed in Brahman, there can be no fear anywhere.
In Āgama Prakaraṇa it is said that concentrate the mind on praēava (OM).

Yuījēta praēave cetaù – unite the mind with praēava, with OM. Fix your mind on OM and meditate on that Om as Brahman, as your own self. Brahman is infinite, without any form without any quality, so how can you meditate on it? It is very difficult, but not impossible. You can imagine a bright, luminous OM in the heart. Remember that OM is nothing but Brahman, the Self, and you are that Self. That Self is also the Self of everyone. Praēave nitya-yuktasya - you must always be conscious that you are OM, that you are Brahman. Keep this in mind always.

If you can meditate like this then you will have no fear. Then where is fear? When we think there are two, when we have sense of duality. I see you and thing you are different from me. May be you are superior to me and so you may defeat me. With duality comes this fear, conflict, and competition. But if I do not see duality, if I see the one Self everywhere, then what is there to be afraid of? I cannot be afraid of my own Self. I am everywhere- in you, in me, in everyone.

Praēavaā héçvaraā vidyāt sarvasya hádi saāsthitam |
Sarvavyāpinamoikāraa matvā dhéro na çocati ||

(Gauòapäda Kārikā, V: 28)

One should know OM, to be God seated in the hearts of all. Meditating on the all-pervasive Om, the intelligent man grieves no more. Know this praēava to be Éçvara, the Lord. Instead of saying Brahman, Gauòapäda is using the word Éçvara here. Éçvara, the Lord who controls, is in the heart of everyone. He is the common indwelling Spirit of us all. This praēava, OM, is all-pervasive (sarvavyāpi). Knowing this, that OM is that all-pervasive Brahman and that you are one with that Brahman, the wise person
(dhéra) does not grieve (na \coco{cati}). When you have this knowledge you are wise. Then there is no more sorrow for you, no more pleasure and pain. You go beyond all dualities. We suffer because of our ignorance. When we have knowledge of the unity of everything, then there is no more suffering.

The wise man should hold his body steady, with the three (upper) parts erect, turn his senses, with the help of the mind, toward the heart, and by means of the raft of Brahman; cross the fearful torrents of the world.

\textit{\textbf{Cvetäçvatara upaniñat}} — (Gamabhiränanda, 1986, Ch: 2 V: 8)

\textit{\textbf{Cvetäçvatara upaniñat}}— describes that \textit{OM} is fire though potentially present in firewood is not seen until one stick is rubbed against another. The Self is like that fire; it is realized by constant awareness of the sacred syllable \textit{OM}. Let your body be the stick that is rubbed and \textit{OM} be the stick that is rubbed against (meditation). Then the real nature is realized which is hidden within, just as fire in a sense hidden in the wood.
That Brahman shines forth, vast, self-luminous, inconceivable, and subtler than the subtle. He is far beyond what is far and yet here very near at hand. Verily, He is seen here, dwelling in the cave of the heart of conscious beings.

2.6G Črémad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa (Tapasyānanda, 1982)

“Do you restrain by all means your fickle mind; my son by your superior intelligence set steady on Me. This is the sum and substance of all yoga.” So spoke the Lord to Üddhava (11.23.61). “The mind that dwells on sense objects gets stuck in them. The mind that remembers Me constantly gets dissolved in Me” says Lord Kāṇeśa to Üddhava. That is the mode of meditation advocated by the Bhāgavat. (11.14). Further from verses numbers 31 to 46 of Bhāgavat Mahāpurāṇa (chapter 14 of sub-chapter 11) it is mentioned, how the devotees should meditate on Lord Kāṇeśa’s personal and impersonal form and with what attributes one should meditate, when asked by Üddhava.

2.6H Yoga Vāsiñōha

(Yoga Vāsiñōha 5.40, 41; Atreya, 1993)
Since liberation is (attained) by such practice, the practice (itself) is the supreme fulfillment. Converging thus in the night, they two (Leela and goddess) became of the form of the space of consciousness by Nirvikalpa Samādhi (or yogic state of absolute consciousness transcending the differentiation of the knower, knowledge and the known and possessed of the bodily form of heavenly beings)

2.6I Haöha Yoga Text

æuvaemRXye izvSwan< mnStÇ ivlyte,  
{atVy< tTp< turyaì tÇ kalae n iv*te. 48.  
Bhruvormadhye çivasthānaà manastatra viléyate|  
Jïätavyaà tatpadà turyaà tatra kālo na vidyate || 48 ||  
(Muktibodhänanda, Ch: IV, V: 48)

The external point of the eyebrow centre is actually the trigger point of concentration arousing the ājīā cakra or guru cakra. If this cakra is awakened by the kuëòaliné çakti the experience is altogether beyond the scope of the five lower elements. It is the centre of consciousness. Its béja mantra is ‘OM’.

In Haöha yoga meditation, more specifically kuëòaliné meditation, the divine power that lies dormant in every human being is aroused and pulled upward through the cakras, the psychic centers of the body. At the top of the head, the seat of the highest consciousness the union of the individual and absolute consciousness takes place. This is expressed symbolically as the union of Çakti or kuëòaliné with Lord Çiva. During meditation each cakra is visualized as a lotus with a certain number of petals. The mülädhära, svädhiñōhāna, maëipura, anähata, viçuddhi and ājìà cakras have four, six, ten, twelve, sixteen and two petals respectively, while sahasrāra has one thousand. The number of petals is determined by the number and position of nāöës that emanate from the cakras and give it the appearance of a lotus. Hanging downward when kuëòaliné is dormant, the nāöës turn upward with its ascendance. The cakras may be focused upon by chanting of OM, the all inclusive universal sound vibration, in different pitches. When
kuëòaliné is awakened it does not proceed directly to the sahasrāra unless one is an exceptionally pure yogé. It must be moved up from one cakra to another and a great of concentration and patience is required. When the kuëòaliné finally rises from the ājīā to the sahasrāra union take place and this is called liberation. In summary, Haöha yoga itself (by practicing preliminary practices called äsanas, präëayāmas, kriyās, bandhas mudrās) leads to stages of meditation, while it also prepares one’s body and mind for the practice of meditation (Haöha yoga Muktibodhānanda, 2003).

Yoga teachings consider the syllable OM to be the force behind all thoughts. Either chanting or thinking about OM is anecdotally reported to cause a quiet mental state.

Summary

The sacred syllable OM is the primordial sound from which all other sounds and creation emerge. It underlies all phonetic creations. The utterance of OM, consisting of the three letters A, U, and M, covers the whole process of articulation. It is like the sound of a gong that gradually tapers to a point and merges in silence. One who attains OM, merges with the Absolute.

Yoga teachings consider the syllable OM to be the force behind all thoughts. Either chanting or thinking about OM is anecdotally reported to cause a quiet mental state.
2.6 CONCEPT OF OM MEDITATION

2.6.1 TECHNIQUE OF OM MEDITATION

There are different techniques of meditation depending upon the object and the strategy chosen. Despite the difference in objects of focus and techniques of meditation, three key factors have to be present in the practice of any kind of meditation. Those three factors are (i) the object of meditation (locus of focus), (ii) the centre of consciousness (point of awareness) where the mind is held during meditation, and (iii) the method employed to invoke concentration (Adhéçwaränanda, 2004).

The object of meditation can be anything as described earlier, but to practice of OM meditation the object should be only OM internal or external, stable or dynamic. The sacred texts of Yoga and Vedänta maintain that the object of meditation must not be frequently changed. The object of OM meditation is generally held within at a particular center, such as the heart, the forehead, the tip of the nose, or the crown of the head or the seeker may place it outside his body, in-front of him on the ideal. However’ in some meditation techniques the object of concentration and the center of consciousness (awareness) where the mind is held are same. The method employed to invoke concentration is either selected by the seeker or prescribed by the teacher (Guru), and it also must not be changed.

In OM meditation the meditator first concentrates on an OM picture and then mentally chants mantra ‘OM’ effortlessly and finally expands to an all-pervasive level and goes for blissful silence.
With intellect set in firmness, attain quietude little by little (step by step); with the mind fixed on the Self, do not think of anything.

The methodology of yoga is to control and purify the subconscious (region of väsanäs and saàskāras) with the help of conscious effort. Restlessness of body is to be overcome by slow and mindful practice of postures (äsanäs). Irregular breath, an indicator of mental restlessness, is to be made regular by smooth and rhythmic breathing (präëayäma). The out going thoughts and improper tendencies of the mind must be substituted by cultivating of moral and ethical virtues. Meditation helps to gain this control and constant awareness. Meditation begins with concentration and intense focusing on the chosen object and dhyäna happens only when mind becomes effortlessly and continuously one-pointed like the flow of oil poured from one vessel into another. Sage Pataïjali says “meditation is uninterrupted flow of mind on its object. This itself turns into samädhi when the object alone shines and the thought of meditation (and of the meditator) is lost, as it were” (Usharbudh, 1986). That state of mind is niruddha where thoughts do not exist. Meditation is only possible in wakeful state of consciousness. How mind exists in different states of consciousness and can be evolved higher is schematically depicted in Fig. 5
Review of Literature

Sleep (Swa) unconscious state
Dream (Sv) subconscious state
(turiya Swa) Transcendental state of consciousness

Higher levels of samādhi

No mind state
māyā
(inēśa iSwit)

Concentrated state of mind
Ekāgra sthiti

Dull, lethargic, inactive mind
Mūhā sthiti

Restless, turbulent state of mind
Kripta sthiti

Scattered, distracted state of mind
Vikripta sthiti

Concentrated state of mind
(çkaś iSwit)

Wakeful state of consciousness
(jaśi Swa)

Jagrata sthāna

Dull, lethargic, inactive mind
Mūhā sthiti

Caś calatā

Müopa sthiti

Wakeful state of consciousness
(jaśi Swa)

Jagrata sthāna

Caś calatā

Dull, lethargic, inactive mind
Mūhā sthiti

Caś calatā

Dull, lethargic, inactive mind
Mūhā sthiti

Caś calatā

Müopa sthiti

Wakeful state of consciousness
(jaśi Swa)

Jagrata sthāna

Caś calatā

Müopa sthiti

Restless, turbulent state of mind
Kripta sthiti

Scattered, distracted state of mind
Vikripta sthiti

Concentrated state of mind
Ekāgra sthiti

No mind state
māyā
(inēśa iSwit)

Higher levels of samādhi

Dream (Sv) subconscious state

Transcendental state of consciousness (turiya Swa)
2.6.2 THE CONCEPT OF JAPA

Japa is the spiritual practice of repeating a sacred word referring to the Divine. Such a sacred word can be a verse, a short prayer, a phrase, or a mystic syllable. The purpose of the repetition is to bring the mind to a state of devotion and concentration. The practice of japa is as old as religion itself, it is the most concentrated form of prayer. Faith in the purifying and transforming power of such sacred holy names can be called “key words” which has every religious that inspire its followers. Many saints and prophets achieved God-consciousness by chanting or repeating them. When a seeker repeats such a words with faith and fervor, it releases the power of holiness, which fills his mind with devotion and then leads it to concentration, absorption, and illumination. Japa is the easy tool for dhyāna by increasing and decreasing the speed of japa mind can reach to the deeper level of relaxation.

OM is the concentrated prayer of the Vedas that says: “OM” meditate on the effulgence of that Supreme Divine Being, the creator of the world Planes–earth, heaven, and interspaces. May that Divine Being direct our intelligence “OM.” OM is the seed word of all prayer, in which concentrated prayer becomes most condensed. The repetition of OM merges in silence gradually culminates in meditation. To help one maintain a constant remembrance of God, japa has many advantages over other methods. The practice of meditation and ceremonial worship require disciplined will, fixed posture, faith, and effort, but the practice of japa needs only effort.
Even when the repetition of a sacred word is merely mechanical, its healing, transforming, and purifying effect is certain. Since japa does not require any special posture, time, place, formality, or environment, it can be practiced under all circumstances.

2.6.3 STEPS OF OM MEDITATION

The system of yoga teaches the means by which the individual human spirit (jévātmā) can be in communion with the Supreme Universal spirit (paramātmā). It is a systematic approach for an individual to become one with, or attain the highest level of consciousness of which man is capable. Around 200 B.C. the sage Pataïjali evolved eight stages of yoga. These were systematically presented in the yoga sūtras, which consists of 196 aphorisms. The eight stages of yoga are: yama (universal moral commandments), niyama (rules for self-purification), āsanas (postures), prāêayāma (conscious rhythmic regulation of breathing), pratyāhāra (withdrawal and emancipation of the mind from the domination of the senses), dhāraëä (concentration), dhyāna (meditation), and Samādhi (a state in which the aspirant becomes one with the Paramātmā or Universal spirit). The eight stages are meant to follow each other in sequence, with each stage preparing the practitioner for the next stage. These eight limbs can also be practiced independently and are paths to Kaivalya (a state of liberation/freedom and enlightenment).

Specific to meditation, it has been described that in the absence of a specific task the mind is very distractible (caïcalatā), and has to be taken through the stages of ‘streamlining the thoughts’ (ekāgratā), and one-pointed concentration (dhāraëä), before reaching the meditative state (dhyāna) (Cinmayänanda, 1984). The process of meditation thus encompasses ekāgratā,
**dhāraṇā and dhyāna**, where ekāgratā and dhāraṇā are the preliminary steps. All types of meditation techniques whether traditional or modern comprise these steps in varying duration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Key features</th>
<th>Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ekāgratā</strong></td>
<td><strong>Concentration</strong></td>
<td>- Voluntary control</td>
<td>alertness, fatigue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Channelizing the multiple thoughts in one direction</td>
<td>- Intense effort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Analytical focusing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dhāraṇā</strong></td>
<td><strong>Focusing</strong></td>
<td>- Confined repetitions</td>
<td>Sustained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fixing the mind on one single object with single thought</td>
<td>- Withdrawal from irrelevant</td>
<td>attention,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Non-analytical focusing</td>
<td>tiredness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dhyāna</strong></td>
<td><strong>Meditation</strong></td>
<td>- Single thought</td>
<td>Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continuous and spontaneous dwelling of mind on a single object</td>
<td>- Effortless awareness</td>
<td>Silence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Slow expansion</td>
<td>Peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Samādhi</strong></td>
<td><strong>Absorption</strong></td>
<td>- Expansion</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Absorption of subject, object and the process</td>
<td>- Powers</td>
<td>Bliss</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Svāmē Vivekānanda in his book (Vivekānanda, 2001) on Rāja yoga says, when the mind is focused on a specific object uninterruptedly for twelve seconds, one achieves one unit of dhāraṇā. Twelve such successive units of dhāraṇā make one unit of dhyāna, and twelve such successive units of meditation, lead to Samādhi. Samādhi is a state of complete absorption. Sage Pataiñjali says:

\[
\text{tdevawRmaÇinÉaRs< SvêpzUNyimv smaix>.
Tadevārthamātranirbhāsaà svarūpaçunyamiva samādhiù.}
(Taimni, 1961, Ch: 3 V: 3)
\]

The same (contemplation) when there is consciousness only the object of meditation and not of itself (the mind) is Samādhi. The absorption is attained when meditation becomes constant and continuous, and the mind merges in the object of meditation. There exits no tripūri. Samādhi is a quantum jump into next level of consciousness, the realm of knowledge, power and bliss (Nagendra, Svāmy, & Mohan, 2003).

2.6.4 REQUISITES OF OM MEDITATION

Posture: The perfect posture for meditation is that in which the spine, the head, the chest, and the neck are kept erect and there is no movement of the body, and the mind remains in a state of equilibrium (Madhusudhan, & Gambhiranda, 1998, Ch: 6 V: 35). However’ OM meditation can also be practiced while body is in slow actions or motion.

Time: Although there is no fixed time for the practice of meditation, the sacred texts mention ‘four timings’ that are most favorable and auspicious. The first of them is time between three and five in the morning (brahmamūhurta). The second is midday, when nature has a tendency to return to calmness and rest. The third is the hour of dusk (godhuli), when day merges into night and nature becomes...
tranquil. And the fourth is midnight, when a deep silence pervades all of nature. Experienced teacher advocate that the time for meditation once chosen, must be observed every day, because there is a cycle or rhythm in the movement of forces, spiritual as well as material (Mokshañanda, 1997).

*Place:* The *Vyāsa Sūtras* state “There is no law of place; wherever the mind is concentrated, meditation should be practiced” (Adhéçwarānanda, 2004). According to sacred texts of *Vedānta*, a mountain, a riverbank, a temple, a place where the practice of meditation has been successfully carried out by many spiritual seekers (*tapobhūmi*) and a solitary place free from distractions (Vivekānanda, 1971).

Let yoga (meditation) be practiced within a cave protected from the high wind, or in a place which is level, pure, and free from pebbles, gravel, and fire, undisturbed by the noise of water or of market –booth, and which is delightful to the mind and not offensive to the eye. *Bhagavad Gētā:* On a clean and pure place neither too high nor too low he spreads kuçagrass, a deerskin and a cloth.

*Direction:* The meditator is advised to sit facing the east, because the earth’s daily rotation is from west to east. By facing the east, one faces the direction of motion (Adhéçwarānanda, 2004).
2.6.5 PROCESS OF OM MEDITATION

In this technique, willpower plays an important role. Through the exercise of willpower, the mind consciously and deliberately cultivates a single thought to the exclusion of all other thoughts. OM Meditation begins with concentration on single OM picture and culminates in absorption in that object. Absorption reveals the subtle nature of the object. By knowing it one is able to know the reality of subtle entities in the universe. This is schematically presented in Fig. 2.6.5.

Fig. 6
Naturally Mind exits in this state

Caicalatä
A State of Mind
(i) Restless, (ii) Turbulent
(iii) Powerful (iv) Obstinate
'Haphazard and random flow of multiple thoughts'

Causes
(i) Ignorance about Self
(ii) Continuous outward flow of mind through senses
(iii) Strong attachment & repulsions

By voluntary control and effort

Concentration of Mind
Ekågra sthiti
Single object - multiple thoughts
Events
Channelization of
(i) organs of action
(ii) organs of perception &
(iii) vital forces in one direction

By will-power and persistent effort, Withdrawal from irrelevant and confining to relevant alone

One pointed focusing of Mind
Dharaëa sthiti
Single object – single thought
Events
(i) Inward channelization of all forces
(ii) Blocking of genesis of new thoughts
(iii) Spotting of knots and blocks of prana

Effortless flow of mind like thread of oil

Spontaneous dwelling of mind on the Object
Dhyäna sthiti
Presence of Tripüöi
Events
(i) Slowing of mental processes
(ii) Release of stress and tension from body
(iii) Release of knots and blocks of prana
(iv) Surfacing of old, buried patterns & issues

Absorption
Samädhi
Absence of Tripüöi

State of great Peace, Bliss and Knowledge

kar[m]
Käraëam
Av‘a
Avidyä
vasna @vm!
s<Skar>
Väsanä evam
Saäskaaru
~ez>
Kleça
ieÁv&A
Cittavåtti
Cittavåtti

@kaéta Ekågratä of
pÂ kmérîNyai]
Palca
Karmendriyaëëi
pÂ jañëNyai]
Palca
Jïänendriyaëëi
pÂ aâa> Palca
Prääëëu

Pratyahära evam Deçabandhau

Events
Abhyäsa evam Vairägya
(A_yas @vm! vEräGy<)

Samädhi is the beginning and not end. Various levels of Samädhi finally lead to Kaivalya / Mokña
2.7 GOAL OF OM MEDITATION

The goal of meditation is complete absorption in the object of meditation (Samādhi), finally leading to communion or union with the Ultimate Reality. Different systems of thoughts and philosophies call it by different names: liberation - Mokṣa, beatific vision of divine – nirvana, awakening, and enlightenment – Kaivalya, Self knowledge or knowledge of Brahman, attaining the Kingdom of Heaven within. Longing for this goal distinguishes a human individual from the subhuman beings says Sri Rāma Kāñēa (Mumukhsānanda, 1998).

The goal of meditation is the cessation of all miseries through the realization of the indwelling Self, or Puruṇa, which is Pure Consciousness. The yoga system maintains that the cause of all miseries is ignorance, which deludes the Self, and entangles It in the world of matter. This entanglement is essentially of the mind, and the remedy lies in disentangling the Self from the world of matter and the world of mind. This is only possible through the knowledge of Reality. The aim of meditation is to find the Reality. Meditation leads to Self realization (Satyānanda, 1992).

The seers of the Vedas mention four goals of life: knowledge of the right and wrong (dharma), worldly prosperity (artha), fulfillment of legitimate desires (kāma) and Self –Knowledge (mokṣa). Self-knowledge is the consummation of all the other goals.
According to *Upaniñads* in this state, the dualities of subject and object, knower and known, seer and seen, all merge in the indescribable expanse of the Absolute. Consciousness of time and space obliterate, and the fetters of causality broken for forever. No sacrifice is too great to achieve this goal; no effort in this venture is ever lost or wasted. All scriptures of Yoga and *Vedānta* emphasize on this goal which is the goal of all goals in human life.

The present thesis focused on the concepts of the four waking states of consciousness (*Caïcalatā, Ekāgratā, Dhāraëā* and *Dhyāna*).

### 2.8 BENEFITS OF ‘OM’ MEDITATION

The benefits of meditation are threefold: physical, psychological and spiritual. Meditation enables the physical and psychic energies to flow into creative, constructive channels instead of burning out in destructive forms. Mind gains the poise, peace, naturalness, serenity, stability of emotions, conservation of energy, and a capacity to bear the frustrations and the ups and downs of the life. For a spiritual aspirant *OM* meditation purifies the heart, steadies the mind, distroys the obstracles, destroys the bondage of birth and death, annihilates attachments (induces *vairāgya*), roots out all desires, makes one fearless, removes delusion, gives supreme peace, develops *prema* (divine love), brings God consciousness, bestows eternal bliss, awakens the *kuëøaliné*. The *japa* of ‘*OM*’ either done mentally or physically has a tremendous influence on the mind. Meditation addresses all the unresolved issues and notions of subconscious. Meditation brings about complete behavioral transformation. A new worldview induces a new quality of consciousness, which leads to change in interpersonal relationships. Meditation teaches to act and not to react (Chao Khun, 1968).
Meditation awakens the dormant powers of the mind. Just as a vast amount of energy is hidden in an atom, so too is there a vast reservoir of energy hidden in the depths of our psyche. The sacred texts of Yoga call this sleeping power of the mind *kuëòaliné* (Muktibodhänanda, 2003). Life becomes blessed when the *kuëòaliné* is awakened. Practitioner attains certain powers known as *siddhés* (Taimni, 1961). Using the power of the mind, human beings have been able to achieve great wonders in the realm of science and technology. It is the same power of the mind that makes impossible things possible in the realm of spirituality. The story of the evolution of life is the story of the manifestation of mental powers. The mind being clear and free from conflicts becomes more effective and efficient. Meditation brings spiritual illumination which liberates the Self from the trappings of the body-mind complex. Meditation is the only way to Self-Knowledge, and Self-Knowledge can put an end to all the sorrows and sufferings of the life.

2.9 LIMITATIONS

1. Too much of meditation done indiscriminately could cause hazards leading to distortion of personality.

2. Psychiatric patients normally are prohibited from the practice of meditation

3. Wrong practice could cause problems

2.10 SUMMARY

Meditation offers a fascinating window into human consciousness, psychology and experience. During meditation a state of mind is reached which is characterized by deep relaxation as well as increased internalized attention.
Meditation is the freedom from thought, a state of no-mind. It is a state of pure consciousness with no contents. It is the activation of natural 'seeing' activity, of the 'Self' or Consciousness. It is the finest way to increase one's personal energy by getting connected to the Source. Meditation is one such technique that helps to purify, control (nirodha) and slowdown (praçamana) the mind and its modifications (våttis) by skill (kauçala) and regular practice (abhyäsa). The process of meditation begins with concentration (ekägratä) and focused attention (dhäraëä) on the chosen object and dhyäna happens only when mind becomes effortlessly and continuously one-pointed like the flow of oil poured from one vessel in to another. Sage Pataïjali says “dhyäna is an uninterrupted, spontaneous flow of mind on its object. This itself turns into samädhi when the object alone shines and the thought of meditation (and of the meditator) is lost, as it were”. The five characteristic features of meditation (dhyäna) are (i) single thought, (ii) effortlessness, (iii) awareness, (iv) slowness and (v) expansiveness (defocusing). Meditation involves three factors i.e., meditator, the object of meditation and the process of meditation (tripuöi). The object of focus is generally sacred and can be personal or neutral, stable or dynamic, concrete or abstract, a word or an idea, an image or a symbol, a divine form or personality.

The concept of OM meditation has been well described in various Indian scriptures as well as Yogéc teachings consider the syllable ‘OM’ to be the force behind all thoughts. OM covers the whole threefold experience of man. It is the combination of three letters viz., A, U, and M. ‘A’ represents the physical plane. ‘U’ represents the mental and astral plane, the world of intelligent spirits, and all heavens. ‘M’ represents the whole deep sleep state, which is unknown even in our wakeful state.