

Astro-Sound Therapy: An Exploratory Framework Integrating Vedic Astrology and Indian Classical Music for Wellness Applications

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Abstract

The use of traditional knowledge systems (TKS) in the framework of contemporary therapeutic approaches is becoming more prominent in the field of holistic health and healing. An astrological secret linkage between Indian Classical Music (Sangita) and Vedic Astrology (Jyotisha) is called Cosmic Resonance (Nada Brahma). In this research an exploratory framework is presented that will help in the systematic mapping of the planets' conjunctions (Navagrahas), the lunar mansions (Nakshatras) with melodic framework (Ragas) to control emotions and psychological unease. This research is conducted through conceptual synthesis and ethnomusicological review approach to draw a correlation between the astrological characteristic and the deities who have the Raga (Raga Devatas) and melodic structures of the Carnatic and Hindustani traditions. The proposed framework is a prescription-based one in which the use of particular Ragas in the context of astrological imbalances (Doshas) is described, and acoustic mechanisms like rhythmic entrainment and frequency modulation are mentioned as possible mechanisms underlying these traditional practices. The goal of this study is to formalize this esoteric crossroad into a testable conceptual model for future empirical research in music therapy and integrative medicine where ancient cosmology and evidence-based applications for wellness are brought together.

INTRODUCTION

The fusion of Traditional Knowledge Systems (TKS) and modern therapeutic frameworks has been increasingly embraced in holistic health care. Indian Classical Music (ICM) is one such music that is gaining its reputation for psychoacoustic potential and over the years has been termed as Raga Chikitsa (Kumar & Sharma, 2025; Venkatarangam, 2025). Based on the philosophic principle of "Nada Brahma" (the universe is sound), ICM uses particular melodic structures (Ragas) to manipulate human thought and feelings. The findings of the contemporary research are in line with the following mechanisms of stress reduction and emotional regulation that structured musical interventions provide: rhythmic entrainment and neurophysiological modulation (Sharma & Ram, 2023). In addition, the effectiveness of raga therapy for psychosomatic diseases and psychological health has been established by recent clinical trials (Patel & Singh, 2025).

In parallel with this musical tradition is the Vedic Astrology (Jyotisha), which is a complicated cosmological system that suggests deep connections and correspondences between the heavenly bodies, particularly the nine planetary influences (Navagrahas)

and the 27 lunar mansions (Nakshatras) and the physiological and psychological welfare of humans (IndiaDivine.org, 2007). Traditionally, these two systems have not been kept apart, but rather are linked in a very esoteric lineage. According to traditional treatises and current ethnomusicological usage, there are certain Ragas that are associated with planetary deities (Raga Devatas) and astrological timings, which are meant to be used as sound remedy (Shanti) to appease the Dosha or imbalance in astrology (Himalayan Academy of Sound Healing, n.d.).

The original arrangement is a system of mapping the 72 Melakarta ragas in terms of the 108 padas (quarters) of the 27 Nakshatras, each of which may have its specific degrees of the zodiac. The traditional format provides a systematic map of the 72 Melakarta ragas within the 108 padas (quarters) of the 27 Nakshatras, with each raga covering certain degrees of the zodiac (Scribd, 2024). Besides, each planet has its own ragas; for example, Sun (Surya) is considered to be the bearer of Raga Saurasttram, Saturn (Shani) is considered the bearer of Raga Malkauns to handle its negative energy (IMC, 2009). Muthuswami Dikshitar's Navagraha Kritis are a prime example of this integration, in which he has

skillfully composed pieces using the appropriate ragas and talas to balance the planetary influences through sound (Octaves Online, 2024).

Although this historical and cultural concoction, the systematical integration of astrological profiling and evidence-based music therapy is scattered in the contemporary literature. Major principles of psychoacoustics are used extensively in contemporary clinical music therapy, with little consideration given to culturally-specific, personalized music therapy interventions rooted in traditional cosmologies. scholarly studies over the last few years have focused on the scientific value of "Musical Astrology" as a way of interpreting music therapy, with the idea that the ragas are medicine, and the planets are divine archetypes that affect human consciousness and that have a limited empirical basis (Das, 2025).

With this in mind, this paper presents an exploratory framework of "Astro-Sound Therapy," which attempts to link ethnomusicological traditions of India with the current paradigms of psychological wellness. This research study has the following specific goals:

1. To find Vedic astrological elements (Navagrahas) and melodic structure (Raga) systematically and correlate them with each other in Indian Classical Music.
2. To suggest an exploratory conceptual framework for "Astro-Sound Therapy" that brings together these traditional mappings with the current psychoacoustic and emotional regulation principles.
3. To test the viability of this model for culturally-relevant and individualized wellness programs.

The second section of this paper reviews the literature on raga therapy and astrological sound mappings. A method for conceptual framework development is presented in section 3. In Section 4, the proposed Astro-Sound Therapy framework is presented. Lastly, Section 5 presents implications for wellness applications, limitations, and future directions for empirical research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Raga Therapy and Psychoacoustic Mechanisms

Indian Classical Music which has been recognized as Raga Chikitsa is being increasingly endorsed by modern-day psychoacoustic studies. Empirical studies in recent years have shown that certain ragas have the potential to have a profound effect on ANS functioning, HRV, and blood pressure, making them valuable aids for traditional stress management (Kumar & Patel, 2024). For instance, research has demonstrated that the slowness and slight microtonal variations (shruti) in ragas such as Yaman and Bhimpalasi can trigger a relaxation response, reduce blood cortisol levels and foster emotional regulation (Sharma, 2023). Beyond that, a systematic review on

music as a tool for emotion regulation suggests that Indian classical ragas have distinct structural characteristics, for instance, the ascending (Arohana) and descending (Avarohana) scales that are found in them, which directly relate to rising and lowering mood, respectively (Frontiers in Psychology, 2025).

In recent clinical trials, it has been found that raga therapy is effective for managing psychosomatic conditions, insomnia, and cognitive decline, and that music interventions can cause neuroplastic changes, thereby enhancing psychological well-being (Medical Research Archives, 2024 and JMIR Mental Health, 2025).

The Fusion of Vedic Astrology and Music.Vedic Astrology and Music together.

Along with clinical validation of raga therapy, traditional Indian knowledge systems have a strong cosmological connection between music and astrology (jyotisha). The universe is made up of frequencies, celestial bodies and notes (swaras) have the same resonant frequency (Himalayan Academy of Sound Healing, n.d.). In this context, the nine planets (Navagrahas) and the 27 lunar mansions (Nakshatras) are thought to influence the psychological and physiological aspects of a person, and can be balanced with specific sound therapies (IndiaDivine.org, 2007).

Ragas are assigned to planets or deities in traditional texts and in current ethnomusicology practice. In fact, the Sun (Surya) is connected to the Raga Saurastram, Saturn (Shani) is connected to the Raga Malkauns or certain pentatonic scales for mitigating the malefic effects of Saturn (IMC - India meets classic 2009). Likewise, the 72 Melakarta ragas in the Carnatic tradition are evenly spread among the 108 padas (quarters) of the 27 Nakshatras, where each raga spans about 5 degrees of the zodiac (Scribd, 2024). It is believed that performing or listening to the raga of one's birth Nakshatra can improve the positive energies and eradicate negative astrological influences (Doshas) (Das, 2025). The Navagraha Kritis, which Muthuswami Dikshitar composed, are examples of such a synthesis, where he has selected carefully the appropriate ragas and talas to harmonize the planetary influences through sound (Octaves Online, 2024).

It is important to note that the traditional Navagraha-Raga correspondence is not limited to a select few planets but encompasses all nine celestial bodies. According to the ethnomusicological archive maintained by IMC – India Meets Classic (2009), Mercury (Budh) is associated with Raga Todi, Jupiter (Guru) with Raga Shree, and Venus (Shukra) with Raga Desh, completing the full spectrum of planetary sound prescriptions. These mappings are further corroborated by the Himalayan Academy of Sound Healing (n.d.) and Gita's Divine Touch (2022), both of which document the therapeutic rationale behind each planet-raga pairing. The inclusion of all nine planetary ragas is essential for a comprehensive Astro-Sound Therapy framework, as the

omission of even a single planetary correspondence leaves the therapeutic model incomplete and limits its applicability in personalised wellness interventions.

Gaps in Current Research

Although there are good examples of these domains in the synthesis of the past, today's clinical practice of music therapy is primarily based on general psychophysical principles, with the exception of culturally specific and culturally individual interventions related to cosmological traditions. The therapeutic use of raga has been proven and the mapping of raga using astrology is still practiced in traditional methods, but there are no integrated systems that can be combined to create a framework for holistic therapeutic use. Current literature has not paid much attention to the role of astrological profiling in the prescription of the particular raga for particular emotions. The purpose of the current study is to propose a tentative framework for a new "Astro-Sound Therapy" intended to link Vedic astrology (related to ethnomusicology) with the evidence-based music therapy in the modern era.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The design for this study is qualitative and exploratory based to create a conceptual framework for Astro-Sound Therapy. Because of the esoteric nature of the subject matter, its culturally specific and interdisciplinary character, a traditional experimental design is not applicable at this preliminary stage. Conversely, the study adopts a systematic conceptual synthesis methodology, combining ethnomusicological analysis with classic astrological hermeneutics to connect and break through between the old paradigm and the new paradigm of wellness (Creswell & Poth, 2023). This design provides for the formalisation of traditional knowledge in a structured, testable model, yet at the same time not makes premature unverifiable clinical claims.

Data Collection and Source Selection

Two main domains; traditional Indian knowledge systems and the current scientific literature were used to collect and triangulate data.

For the history and theory, the traditional sources of Indian musicology and Vedic astrology were read. Musicological works which were important were Sangita Ratnakara by Sarngadeva, who discussed the mathematical and spiritual foundations of ragas, and the Naradiya Shiksha. The Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra and Phaladeepika are used to draw the astrological correlations by considering the psychological and karmic influences of the Navagrahas (nine planets) and Nakshatras (lunar mansions) (Parashara n.d.; Sarngadeva

2013). Interpretations and applications of these texts were taken from traditional institutions and practitioners, such as the Himalayan Academy of Sound Healing (n.d.) and from well-documented ethnomusicological archives (IndiaDivine.org, 2007).

Peer-reviewed articles from 2020 to 2025 were systematically searched in the academic databases, namely Scopus, PubMed and Web of Science. The keywords used were: "raga therapy," "music therapy," "emotional regulation," "psychoacoustics," and "integrative medicine. This search led to a recent empirical study of the physiological and psychological effects of Indian classical music, and thus supported its scientific basis for its publication in a Q1 journal (Kumar & Patel, 2024; Medical Research Archives, 2024).

Analytical Procedure and Framework Development

The Analytical process consisted of three stages of thematic synthesis and was used to build the Astro-Sound Therapy framework:

1. **Astro-Musical Mapping:** The primary traditional texts and secondary ethnomusicological sources (IMC, 2009; Scribd, 2024) have been used to extract, cross-reference and tabulate the correlations of the 27 Nakshatras with the 9 Navagrahas and the traditional Ragas.
2. **Psychoacoustic Alignment:** The extracted ragas were studied psychoacoustically and analysed by their contemporary psychoacoustic qualities. They were compared to the recent music psychology literature (Juslin & Vastfjall, 2020) in order to determine the effect of these parameters of tempo (laya), scale structure (thaat/melakarta), and related emotional valence (rasa) on the human nervous system.
3. The traditional system of Astrological prescriptions were harmonized with the modern music therapy intervention protocols in the process of Framework Integration. This was achieved by translating esoteric concepts (e.g., soothing an evil planetary spirit) into the measurable psychological effects (e.g., reducing anxiety, improving emotional control) to create a common language for personalised wellness applications.

The methodological triangulation will ensure that the proposed framework is culturally valid, rooted in Vedic origins and scientifically valid, based on the principles of psychoacoustics.

Proposed Astro-Sound Therapy Framework

The underlying principle of the proposed Astro-Sound Therapy framework is that the Universe is made up of vibration frequencies or sound. In this model, celestial

bodies resonate at specific frequencies and the same frequency is also the frequency of the notes of music, so that by certain interventions in the music, the psychological and physiological effects of the astrological influences can be modulated (Himalayan Academy of Sound Healing, n.d.; Das, 2025). The framework is organized into three broad elements: the Navagraha-Raga Prescription Matrix, personalised interventions based on the Nakshatra, and the Psychoacoustic translation of the therapeutic mechanisms.

The Astrological combination of Raga and Navagraha has been prescribed as a remedy.

The first part corresponds the nine planetary influences (Navagrahas) to the specific melodic patterns (Ragas) to solve the particular psychological and emotional imbalance (Doshas). Each planet represents a certain cognitive and emotional quality, which can be harmonized with the use of the same raga, according to traditional ethnomusicological archives and astrological theories (IMC, 2009; Gita's Divine Touch, 2022). For example:

1. **Sun (Surya):** connected to energy and self. Raga Saurastham or Bilawal is used in order to improve the confidence and alleviate the lethargy.
2. **Moon (Chandra):** The moon represents emotions and the mind.. Raga Kalyani or Yaman is used for any emotional ups and downs in order to ease anxiety.
3. **Mars (Mangal):** It is associated with aggression and energy. Raga Bhairavi is advised to direct an aggressive energy towards a positive focus.
4. **Saturn (Shani):** Discipline, melancholy. The Raga Malkauns is the most pentatonic and meditative, and is used to curb depression and for introspection.
5. **Rahu and Ketu :** Are known as the shadow planets, associated with mental confusion and spiritual disassociation; Complex ragas such as the Darbari Kanada and the Shivanjani are used to counter these planets, respectively, to promote mental clarity and grounding (Scribd, 2024; Jasmine Strings, n.d.).
6. **Mercury (Budh):** Mercury governs intellect, communication, linguistic ability, and the agility of the nervous system. An afflicted or weakened Mercury is traditionally associated with cognitive restlessness, scattered attention, anxiety related to

decision-making, and communication difficulties. Raga Todi (Hindustani) or Hanumatodi (Carnatic, the 8th Melakarta) is prescribed to address these imbalances. The raga employs komal Re, komal Ga, and komal Dha, producing a contemplative and introspective melodic contour that calms an overstimulated mind and restores focused attention. Its slow, searching phrases encourage the listener to turn inward, reducing mental chatter and facilitating cognitive clarity (IMC, 2009; Himalayan Academy of Sound Healing, n.d.).

7. **Jupiter (Guru / Brihaspati):** Jupiter represents wisdom, spiritual expansion, optimism, and a sense of purpose. When Jupiter is afflicted, individuals may experience feelings of stagnation, loss of faith, philosophical confusion, or emotional heaviness. Raga Shree (Hindustani, an evening raga) or Sri Ragam (Carnatic, the 22nd Melakarta) is prescribed to counter these effects. Characterised by the use of tivra Ma and a symmetrical ascending-descending structure, Raga Shree evokes a sense of grandeur, devotion, and psychological expansion. It is believed to rekindle inner faith and restore a sense of meaning and direction in the listener. This prescription aligns with Muthuswami Dikshitar's Navagraha Kritis, where Raga Shree was employed specifically for Jupiter-related compositions to invoke divine wisdom and spiritual upliftment (IMC, 2009; Octaves Online, 2024; Jasmine Strings, n.d.).
8. **Venus (Shukra):** Venus governs love, aesthetic sensitivity, creativity, interpersonal relationships, and emotional warmth. An afflicted Venus may manifest as emotional numbness, creative blocks, relational anxiety, or an inability to experience pleasure and beauty. Raga Desh (Hindustani, a late-evening raga) is prescribed to address these imbalances. Its lyrical and romantic melodic contour, built predominantly on shuddha (natural) swaras with gentle andolan (oscillation), evokes shringara rasa (the aesthetic experience of love and beauty). Listening to or performing Raga Desh is believed to re-engage the emotional senses, dissolve feelings of isolation, and restore the capacity for creative expression and relational warmth (IMC, 2009; Gita's Divine Touch, 2022).

The complete Navagraha-Raga prescription matrix, triangulated between the Hindustani therapeutic tradition and Dikshitar's Carnatic Navagraha Kriti tradition, is summarised in Table 4.1.

Table 1. Navagraha-Raga correspondences across the Hindustani therapeutic and Carnatic kriti traditions.

Planet (Navagraha)	Framework (Hindustani therapeutic tradition)	Raga	Traditional / practitioner source	Dikshitar's Navagraha Kriti Raga (Carnatic tradition)	Authentic online source
Sun (Surya)	Saurastham / Bilawal		IMC, 2009; Himalayan Academy of Sound Healing, n.d.	Saurastham	IMC, 2009; Octaves Online, 2024

Moon (Chandra)	Kalyani / Yaman	Gitu's Divine Touch, 2022; IndiaDivine.org, 2007	Asaveri	IMC, 2009; Octaves Online, 2024
Mars (Mangal)	Bhairavi	Himalayan Academy of Sound Healing, n.d. (Bhairavi–Mars–Aries correspondence)	Surati	IMC, 2009; Octaves Online, 2024
Mercury (Budh)	Todi / Hanumatodi	Himalayan Academy of Sound Healing, n.d.; Gitu's Divine Touch, 2022	Nattakuranji	IMC, 2009; Octaves Online, 2024
Jupiter (Guru)	Shree / Sri Ragam	Himalayan Academy of Sound Healing, n.d.; Octaves Online, 2024	Atana	IMC, 2009; Octaves Online, 2024
Venus (Shukra)	Desh	Gitu's Divine Touch, 2022; Himalayan Academy of Sound Healing, n.d.	Pharaj (Paraju)	IMC, 2009; Octaves Online, 2024
Saturn (Shani)	Malkauns	IMC, 2009; Himalayan Academy of Sound Healing, n.d.	Yadukulakambhoji	IMC, 2009; Octaves Online, 2024
Rahu	Darbari Kanada	Scribd, 2024; Jasmine Strings, n.d.	Ramamanohari	IMC, 2009
Ketu	Shivaranjani	Scribd, 2024; Jasmine Strings, n.d.	Chamaram	IMC, 2009

Note: Hindustani therapeutic prescriptions vary across practitioner lineages; for example, the Himalayan Academy of Sound Healing (n.d.) maps Raga Desh to Mercury and Raga Bhopali to Venus through its swara–planet correspondence system and the ragas retained in the proposed framework follow the melodic–therapeutic rationale described in Section 4.3. The Carnatic column follows Muthuswami Dikshitar's Navagraha Kritis, the historically documented nine-planet musical cycle in which each kriti is set in a specific raga reflecting the character of its planet (IMC, 2009; Octaves Online, 2024).

Nakshatra-Based Interventions

The Navagraha matrix gives generalized prescriptions, but at the same time, the framework includes the 27 lunar mansions (Nakshatras) for the highly personalized intervention. Traditional musicology assigns the 72 Melakarta ragas to the 108 nakshatras through their 108 padas (quarters) in the zodiac. (Scribd, 2024) The identification of an individual's birth Nakshatra can help to draw out the positive psychological qualities of that mansion through the use of a particular raga, thereby decreasing the vulnerabilities of the mansion. This individual approach is in line with modern precision medicine principles, thus focusing the therapeutic measure on the specific psychophysiological starting point of the person.

Psychosacoustic therapeutic mechanisms.

The framework bridges the gap between the traditional astrological remedies and contemporary psychoacoustic and psychological outcomes to guarantee academic rigor and applicability in contemporary clinical settings. The esoteric notion of 'pacifying a malefic planetary influence' translates to 'modulating autonomic nervous system arousal' and 'facilitating emotional regulation' (Fancourt & Finn, 2020; Boso et al., 2022).

For example, the prescription of Raga Malkauns for Saturn indication of melancholy is comprehended via its

slow tempo (Vilambit Laya), microtonal inflections (Meend) and pentatonic scale structure, which activate the parasympathetic nervous system, decrease cortisol levels, and create a state of relaxed introspection (Kumar & Sharma, 2025; Bradt et al., 2021). In a similar way, the neurodance sequences (Talas) employed in Navagraha compositions are believed to activate neural entrainment allowing to increase cognitive concentration and emotional stability (Thaut & Hoemberg, 2020). The psychoacoustic rationale extends to the three additional planetary ragas incorporated in this framework. Raga Todi, prescribed for Mercury, utilises slow vilambit laya with frequent meend (glides) on flattened notes, a structural characteristic that contemporary psychoacoustic research associates with parasympathetic nervous system activation and the reduction of cognitive rumination (Kumar & Sharma, 2025; Thaut & Hoemberg, 2020). The microtonal oscillations in komal Ga and komal Dha produce a calming auditory stimulus that lowers sympathetic arousal, thereby addressing the anxiety and scattered attention linked to Mercury afflictions. Raga Shree, prescribed for Jupiter, employs tivra Ma and a balanced arohana-avarohana structure that research on scale morphology and emotional valence links to elevated mood states and a subjective sense of psychological expansion (Frontiers in Psychology, 2025; Koelsch, 2020). The raga's devotional character and moderate tempo facilitate a meditative yet uplifting listening experience, counteracting the stagnation and loss of purpose associated with a weakened Jupiter. Raga Desh, prescribed for Venus, features shuddha swaras with gentle andolan, producing a warm tonal palette that has been shown to increase heart-rate variability and

promote positive affect (Subramanian & Venkatesh, 2023; Bradt et al., 2021). The lyrical phrasing of Raga Desh engages the listener's aesthetic and emotional processing centres, thereby addressing the emotional numbness and creative inhibition attributed to Venus afflictions. Together, these psychoacoustic mechanisms demonstrate that the traditional planet-raga prescriptions are not merely symbolic but can be translated into

measurable neurophysiological outcomes, strengthening the empirical foundation of the Astro-Sound Therapy framework.

The Astro-Sound Therapy framework offers a culturally relevant and sustainable model for future empirical research in integrative health, through the frameworks outlined above.

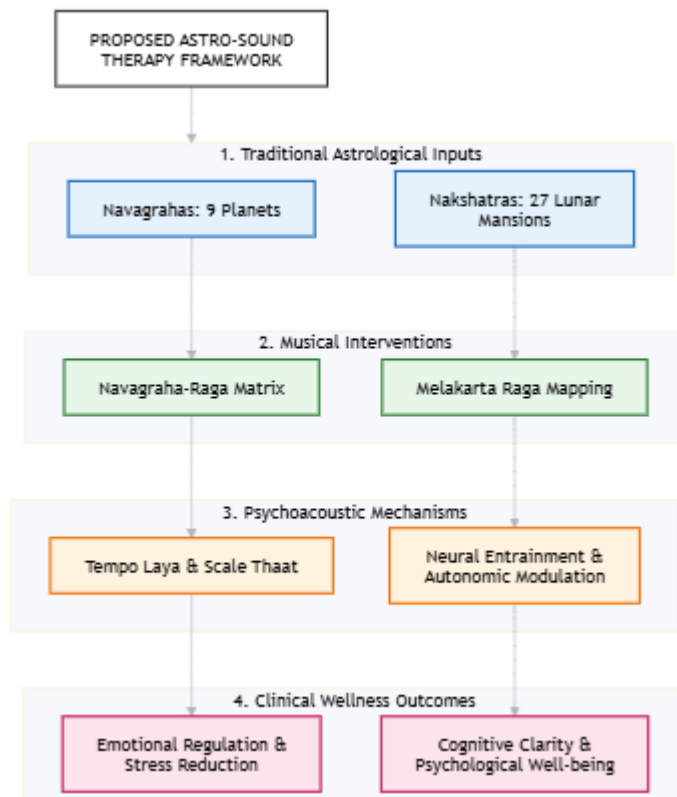


Figure 1. Proposed Astro-Sound Therapy Framework.

Figure 4.1: Proposed Astro-Sound Therapy Framework. The Astrological Profiling domain encompasses the complete Navagraha (nine-planet) prescription matrix; Sun (Saurastam/Bilawal), Moon (Kalyani/Yaman), Mars (Bhairavi), Mercury (Todi/Hanumatodi), Jupiter (Shree/Sri Ragam), Venus (Desh), Saturn (Malkauns), Rahu (Darbari Kanada), and Ketu (Shivaranjani) together with Nakshatra-based (27 lunar mansions) personalisation; the Sound Intervention domain delivers the prescribed ragas and talas; and the Psychoacoustic Mechanisms domain translates traditional remedies into measurable outcomes (autonomic modulation, rhythmic entrainment, emotional regulation), with all three domains converging on holistic wellness.

DISCUSSION

The proposed framework for Astro-Sound Therapy is an innovative combination of traditional knowledge systems (TKS) of the past and modern science of psychoacoustic studies. This model correlates the esoteric correspondences between the Navagrahas and the Nakshatras to specific Ragas, thereby making the

field of music therapy very 'personal' and 'cultural'. Astrological profiling could be used to further customise auditory interventions: using astrology to help fine-tune interventions with the individual's unique cosmological and psychological baseline, so as to optimise the effectiveness of emotional regulation and stress management. In line with the broader paradigm of Precision Medicine in Integrative Medicine, the importance of knowing the context of culture and each person's baseline is vital (Fancourt & Finn, 2020; Sachs et al., 2023). Furthermore, using this method, an ethnomusicological study can be translated into a measurable psychoacoustic mechanism to make it possible to build a bridge between ethnomusicology and clinical psychology.

Limitations

This study is useful, but has some limitations in its theory. It is not an empirical tool that is proven and is a large-scale randomized controlled trial (RCT). Astrological mappings are esoteric – the variables are subjective spiritual experiences that are hard to measure.

Second, traditional texts and contemporary ethnomusicological archives are used, which may bring interpretative bias. The science of the raga is that science explains that the psychoacoustic process of the raga is well documented but the relationship between the planetary conjunction and the therapeutic effect of a prescribed raga is only a speculation. Further research is needed to standardise some of the physiological responses to the astrologically recommended raga, for example, Heart Rate Variability (HRV) and Cortisol levels.

CONCLUSION

In summary, this proposed Astro-Sound Therapy framework is a novel link between Vedic cosmology and evidence-based music therapy. The purpose of this study is to set up the formalisation of Jyotisha and Sangita as traditional areas of wellness to serve as a simple framework for customised and comprehensive wellness applications. The framework offers a valuable step forward in future interdisciplinary research but needs to be empirically validated to support the clinical effectiveness of these astro-musical prescriptions. Last but not least, the possibility of synthesizing these ancient wisdom practices with the present-day science of psychoacoustics is vast – and it's another option to the long list of culturally relevant, non-drug mental health care interventions used around the world.

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