



Deva Pūjan, Dāna, and Saṅgatikaraṇa as Drivers of Social Inclusion and Psycho-spiritual Well-being

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Abstract. The Yagya (Vedic Sacrificial offering) is rooted in Indian Knowledge systems. By integrating Vedic ritual and wisdom with ideologies of social welfare, it promotes psychological well-being and social inclusion. Yagya, also known as Yajña, is a multifaceted discipline with a subtle science at its core. It is sometimes thought of as just a ritual. This paper explores the triadic conception of Yagya as a practice: Deva-Pūjan (divine worship), Dāna (selfless offering), and Saṅgatikaraṇa (harmonious connection) as factors that promote societal integration and psycho-spiritual well-being. The Primary Vedic texts are analysed qualitatively, and the relevant findings of contemporary research on the same are integrated. The triadic construct works at the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and community levels. Mantra recitation and contemplative focus improve emotional regulation and promote psycho-physiological resilience. The symbolic act of offering samagri (Herbal oblation) into the fire symbolises the intentional renunciation of ego-centric tendencies. Collective participation in Yagya enhances prosocial orientation, eventually fostering a sense of belonging, empathy, and mutual trust. Yagya's philosophical underpinnings place strong emphasis on service and action oriented toward human welfare. This study shows that the Yagya framework offers an indigenous paradigm that harmonises individual development with ecological and community well-being by combining contemplative practice with social duty. When it comes to enhancing social cohesion, resilience, and inclusion, the Yagya stands as an effective and pragmatic Vedic Practice.

Keywords. Yagya, Psycho-spiritual well-being, Vedic Philosophy, Social Inclusion

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Introduction

The present era has begun seeking solutions to its contemporary challenges in Indian Knowledge systems, the Vedic texts, and classical philosophies. The reason for this is not merely its spiritual orientation, but also the scientific and practical approach it provides for the betterment of human life and the upliftment of one's personality in all dimensions. The traditional practices like yoga and therapeutic methods are widely explored nowadays to address the increasing level of stress, psychological imbalances, insecurities, health issues, lack of social cohesion, trust, increased feeling of loneliness and fragmentation in societies. Yagya is another such ancient practice that is not well researched in mainstream scholarly literature but has the potential to become significant due to its substantial effectiveness. In our most ancient texts, the Vedas, Yagya is the most prominent and extensively discussed topic. The Yagya practices and mantras are described in the Rigveda and Yajurveda. The mantras, the sound energy of Yagya, occupy a significant amount of the remaining two, the Samaveda and Atharvaveda [1]. This Vedic ritual involves offerings into agni, the sacred fire, using samidha, specific kinds of wood such as peepal, mango, etc. The offerings of ghee (clarified butter), Hawan Samagri (herbal Oblation), grains, specific roots, seeds, and sweet or other herbs, if required, are made along with collective rhythmic chanting of distinct Vedic mantras [2]. Yagya functions not solely as a religious or spiritual rite but also as a significant, culturally and scientifically rooted practice for promoting compassion, cooperation, health, social inclusion, harmony, values, and ethos. Ayurvedic and Vedic literature describe countless benefits of Yagya, like resolving various environmental issues to preserve ecological balance, mitigating the natural disasters, fostering spiritual advancement, maintaining social and political equilibrium, and preventing and treating illnesses and disorders [3].

Yagya Meaning and Concept in Classical Text

The word 'Yagya' has its Sanskrit root as 'yaj', which means 'to offer (oblations)', 'to worship/honour', 'to sacrifice'. The literal meaning of the word can be understood as an act of sacrificial offering and ritual, often intended for divine communion and for collective welfare. All the activities of this entire creation are centred on the axis of 'Yagya'. Our Ancient wise sages have called this Yagya the 'Bhuvanasya Naabhi' (nucleus/centre of the universe) [4] and as the foundation or basis of the creation of

the world[5]. While explaining the meaning of the word Yagya, his holiness Gurudev (Pt. Shri Ram Sharma Acharya) says that the real Yagya is to make the whole life Yagya-like. According to the verse 3.9 of Bhagwat Gita [6] 'yajñārthāt karmaṇo 'nyatra loko 'yam karma-bandhanaḥ', "he writes that the life of deeds done for the welfare of others, which is a "Yagyamaya jeevan", is the best [7]. Yagya has been a prominent practice alongside Gurukuls' spiritual teachings, and it is pivotal, as evidenced by scientific investigations in ancient India [8].

Yagya - The philosophy and the Science

The concept of Yagya can be contemplated and examined at two levels: the philosophical aspect and its scientific underpinnings and effects at the physical or subtle levels. The philosophical insights and lessons one could draw from the Yagya as a progression are compassion, purity, sharing values and resources, cohesiveness, wisdom, and uplifting oneself and others together for the good. This message is being delivered not only through the literal sense or merely the process of the ritual, but is reflected in all the ways nature operates; the endless progression of water in different forms, the greens bestowing assets and nourishment, the sun, providing the heat, light and energy as life sustenance force, rivers sustaining ecosystem, they all must inspire human beings who are most significant creation of nature. The same message can be derived from the Vedic ceremonial practices, which assuredly include Agni (the sacred fire). This Yagyagni encourages us to inculcate qualities like being active, emulable, a light bearer, to shape and inspire those who come into contact with us, to show generosity and hold warmth to keep high in spirits, in thoughts and dignity. Scientifically, people may argue that when wood and other substances are burned, they must produce carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, and other greenhouse gases. However, the fact is that there is a significant difference in the fumes produced when fuels or waste are burned compared to when Yagya is performed. On one side, the combustion of fuels and other materials and potentially harmful gases and even hazardous micro pollutants, whereas in Yagya, the samidha or woods which are used, the samagri or herbal oblation along with cow's pure ghee, when offered to the sacred fire, it all gets Subtle to release beneficial Healing fumes infused with the powerful vibration of mantras, spiritual energy and collective prayers. Case studies show decreases in PM2.5, PM10, and CO₂ after performing Yagya within residences [9]. Thus, in turn, it not only purifies the environment but also creates a powerful, subtle life force field. Multiple evidence-based stud-

ies provide insights into the effectiveness of Yagya for human beings and the nature of the Yagya in which they are part.

The Yagya's Triadic Process Devapūjan (Worshipping the divine) and being virtuous

Worshipping God is connected to the emotions and the soul, and it connects us with a supreme power. However, mistaking it as merely a faith-based practice or religious rituals will not help understand the essence it holds for life and the benefits it can bestow on one's personality, Devapūjan, which is made up of two words, one is 'Deva', meaning 'deity', or 'God' and 'pūjan' means to worship with reverence and devotion. Looking beyond the traditional deity worship, Devapūjan has a deeper meaning. Everyone wants to develop their personality, enriched with superior qualities, and to rid themselves of lower emotions; here is the way to be nourished and attain higher goods through Devapūjan. In the verse 3.11 of Bhagwad geeta this idea is mentioned:

Devān bhāvayatānena te devā bhāvayantu va h |
Parasparam bhāvayantaḥ śreyaḥ param avāpsyatha || [10].

"Through this Yagya (sacrificial act), one is nurturing the deva or Gods; may those gods in turn nurture you. In this way, by mutual sustenance, by nourishing each other, the practitioner will attain the highest good [11].

Now, the question may arise, how can a human being nurture deities? The answer to this is understanding who these addressed as deva or deities are, Vedic deities, as classified into thirty-three, are described in the Sanskrit verse/passage from the Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad (3.9.2)

Sa hovāca, mahimāna eva eṣāṃ ete, trayastrimśat tveva devā iti;
katame te trayastrimśad iti; aṣṭau vasavaḥ, ekādaśa rudrāḥ, dvādaśa ādityāḥ |
te ekatrimśat, indraś caiva prajāpatiś ca trayastrimśāv iti ||

It is the dialogue, where the deities or the diverse manifestations of universal forces, the eight Vasus (representing five elements of nature, which are earth, water, fire, wind and other cosmic forces are included) and eleven Rudras (vital and transformative energies), twelve Ādityas (solar energies), along with Indra (Weather/storm God) and Prajapati (lord of creation) are enumerated [12]. By worshipping these deities through Yagya, man acquires various powers [13]. The Yagiya Jeevan (Yagya life) means the refined personality with divine qualities. The real Devapūjan

is that which continuously enhances the Deva-shaktis (divine powers) within oneself, through offering veneration to them [?] . It develops in us the virtue of respecting and saving nature and its elements, which are not just manifested in physical forms but also exist in the subtle. Various Vedic mantras are dedicated to these deities, which are again very scientifically formulated and recited in specific rhythmic patterns for the desired effect. The stream of life-sustaining energies as fundamental sounds, the primordial "Om" aligned with cosmic centre and universal reality (Śabda Brahma and Nāda Brahma) is latently included in the creation and chanting of Vedic mantras. The most prominent and empirically validated of them is the Gayatri mantra, a mantra for holistic well-being and spiritual awakening [15]. These vibrations of every mantra penetrate the cosmic energy field during Yagya, thereby invigorating the practitioners and everything in the surrounding space.

Sangatikaraṇa (Harmonious Association) and Social Inclusion

In our Vedic Scriptures, Yagya is mentioned as the carrier and channel of harmony and compassion. The verse, like a Rīgvedic verse (10/66/2), emphasises that through Yagya, a primordial sacred practice, divine beings attain higher spiritual realms. Dharma, which includes duty, social harmony and righteousness, is attained through Yagya only and should be performed regularly. It instills wisdom, and thus, Yagya is revered in our ancient scriptures and philosophical texts [16].

Many rituals, worship, and religious practices can be practised alone, but Yagya is always performed collectively. Yagya is indeed a symbol of accord, collective harmony and unity. Not only the regular or grand Yagyas but cultural festival rituals like that of Holi are also a communal Vedic fire ceremony which marks the victory of good over evil, prosperity and spiritual renewal, making Yagya a potent Vedic tradition for delivering the importance and favourable outcomes of embodying and exercising selflessness, co-operation and generosity in societies. Joint Responsibility and mutual respect evolve naturally through Yagya.

In India, communication happened through spiritual ceremonies, learned and enlightened people convey the lessons of ethics, moral values, harmony, and constructive transformation to all who join the Yagya. In contemporary times, many progressive ideologies are also shared and propagated by Yagya-based groups to promote the better development of individuals and societies [17].

The energy and power of a group are always stronger than those of an individual. Grand Ashvamedha Yagyas are performed to utilise the collective power of Vedic chanting and yagyani to benefit the whole nation. In the ritual symbolism, as mentioned and explained in the Shatapatha Brahmana, trans.[18] Through the Ashvamedha Yagya, the power and flourishing of the rāṣṭra (nation) transpire; it is not just a political rite but is regarded as a cosmic means of generating prosperity, sustainability, and the expansion of the kingdom.

There are several records of Ashvamedha Yagya being performed, In the Mahabharata, Yudhishtira performed the Ashvamedha Yagya after the Kurukshetra War, it was guided by Maharishi Vyas, [19] and Shri Krishna, to establish social harmony, promote righteous governance, and for kingdom's prosperity [20]. Similarly, in the epic Ramayana, lord Rama is performed the Ashvamedha Yagya to reinstate sovereignty, to promote dharma (moral duties and order) and, and for the well-being of the realm after his coronation.

The fundamental tenet of Yagya is to cultivate an altruistic mind-set and pursue the path of righteous deeds, since the offerings at the Yagyagni serve a shared goal that encourages and promotes everyone's welfare. This attitude, in turn, strengthens compassion and brotherhood. It is needed in the present geopolitical strife and war-like tensions. These benevolent emotions generated through Yagya can also prevent criminal tendencies [21].

Dāna (selfless offering) For the Common Weal

Dāna literally means "charity" or 'giving', or more pertinent, "selfless offering". In the context of Yagya, it is beyond material offerings, Yagya is a symbol of offering and abnegation, while offering the herbal oblation into Yagyagni after every mantra," Svāhā, idaṃ Agnaye, idaṃ na mama" which occurs in the Vājasaneyi Samhitā 3.1 of the Yajurveda, expressing the principle that the oblation is dedicated to the deity and not claimed by the sacrifice the meaning is referring to the Agni, its mentioned that "In him I pay offerings to the Gods" [22], It dissolves the ego along with creating an attitude of sharing, selfless dedication and non-possessiveness. Eventually, it reflects in our behaviour, inspiring us to retain only what is essential and to dedicate our talents, energy, resources, power, knowledge and abilities towards the elevation and welfare of others [23]. Dāna cultivates multiple virtues. It purifies one's heart and mind, builds compassion, harmony, respect, humility and reduces attachment to possessions. Yagya is, in fact,

the biggest charity that reaches all living and non-living beings. Scientifically, the Yagya-agni becomes the medium of Dāna, where it potentializes and subtilises the oblations as well as the Vedic chants for the universal benefit. It has a positive effect on physical and subtle planes. The traditional Yagya includes offering ghee, herbs, grains, dry fruits and other items into the sacred fire. As the elements vaporise, they become subtler and more effective, reaching innumerable living organisms dissolved in the air without discrimination on any basis, be it creed, caste, identity, form, or beliefs."As the powerful flames of Yagyagni go forth in all directions, may our sin be repented of" [24] The harmonious, healing, and spiritual energy thus reaches all without their recognition, attention, or praise. This very way of charity aligns perfectly with what is known as discreet charity.

Mantra and Yagya for Psychospiritual Well-being

There are two strong energy systems in the physical world: Heat and Sound. In performing Yagya, these two energies, namely, the heat from Yagya's fire and the sound of the Gayatri and other Mantras, are combined to achieve the desired physical, psychological and spiritual benefits. Although yagya is primarily considered a religious ritual, but it is also applied as a herbal smoke therapy that is suggested for mental tranquility. Yagna, when used as a therapy, is known by various names, such as Yagya Chikitsa, Hawan/Homa Therapy, Agnihotra Therapy, Yagyopathy, etc. Yagya is regarded as a potent and all-encompassing traditional treatment. This therapy can help with any kind of illness, whether it be psychosomatic, somatopsychic, mental, or somatic[25].

There are several hymns and mantras in our Vedic Scriptures that have the potential to address psychological issues and disorders. Divine forces are often invoked in these hymns, especially Agni as it is a purifying and strong power that supports healing, mental clarity, and holistic well-being. An early understanding of the interconnectedness of mind, body, and spirit is indicated through these hymns and it also emphasizes rejuvenation and restoration through prayer, ritual, and practices which promote inner balance.

The mantras which are not only vigilantly curated compositions but are true prayers, affirmations and which instill constructive changes through "the Sanskrit effect" as mentioned by Hartzell [27]. There is much recent literature, scientific studies, and experiments that prove that the (Homa) Yagya as therapy is highly effective in controlling various diseases, as it

generates negative ions that enhance happiness levels. For physio-psychological fitness, Homa therapy is a boon [28]. This therapy can significantly manage neurotic disorders. Hawan holds a therapeutic value in the mitigation of anxiety and to fight against psychiatric disorders [29]. Another study concludes that the Hawan component has several effects, including decreasing anxiety, as the underlying process scavenges free radicals and raises antioxidant levels [30]. The experiment on the application of a 30-day intervention of Yagna as a non-medicated approach shows that the level of stress, anxiety, and depression is significantly reduced among participants, showing its remedial impact and effectiveness in cost [31]. Yagya is a holistic approach that uses local ingredients and is simple, economical, and environmentally beneficial. The herbal medicinal fumes penetrate the skin (transcutaneous), the nose, and the lungs (nasal and pulmonary) for total well-being [32]. As stated in a study by Fatouh [33], intranasal solid lipid nanoparticles provide an effective strategy for bypassing hepatic first-pass metabolism and directly delivering drugs to the brain. Similarly, the chemical transformation of herbal oblations into vapours or colloidal forms releases medicinal phytochemicals that affect the hormonal axis and many endogenous body chemicals

[34]. For specific diseases, combinations of various Ayurvedic herbs and samagri (oblation) are being formulated and compounded prudently for that disease; for general purposes, they are combined in a 3:1 ratio, for example, 30 g of disease-specific samagri and 10 g of common-purpose Hawan samagri [35]. The seven major chakras along the spinal cord help maintain this energetic continuum. By minimising entropy, Agnihotra Yagya is suggested to moderate and balance the entire chakra system along the spinal cord, including the seven power centres, which facilitate the full energy continuum [36].

In Ayurveda, the Chikitsa (Therapy) for psychological issues and disorders includes Daivavyapashraya, Yuktivyapashraya, and Satvavajaya. The Daivavyapashraya Chikitsa, Homa, and Mantra hold such significant importance that they are useful for enhancing spiritual development and for the management and treatment of Adhyatmika Vyadhis (psychosomatic disorders) [37]. Yagyopathy is the revival of Yagya's sacrificial fire in a therapeutic form that can address several problems [38]. It is not merely a prospect; research shows that, in its true essence, when incorporated and adhered to, Yagya has the potential to address and resolve all life-related issues.

	Veda & Reference	Opening Words (Transliteration/ Sanskrit)	Psychological Correlates and Targets
1.	Rigveda (3.62.10) Gayatri Mantra	“tat savitur varenṇyam....”	Addresses durbuddhi: A mantra and Prayer for a righteous Intellect
2.	Shukl Yajurveda 34.1-34.6 (Śivasāṅkalpa Sūkta)	“Yajjāgrato dūramudaiti daivaṃ...”	Reduces Manas-aśānti: (Restlessness of the mind) Stress disorders, lack of mental focus, mental agitation.
3.	Atharvaveda 6.111.1-4 (Unmattamochan Sukt)	“imaṃ me agne puruṣaṃ mumugdhy”	Unmāda: Mania, Psychosis and severe mental disorders
4.	Atharvaveda 6.40.1 (Abhaya Sukt)	“Abhyam dyāvāpṛthivī antarikṣam...”	Bhaya: Anxiety disorders, phobias, and generalized fear.
5.	Atharvaveda 6.43.1 (Manyushaman Sukt)	“Ayaṃ darbho vimanyukaḥ svāya ...”	Anger, Aggression, Hostility
6.	Atharvaveda 6.45.1-6.46.3 (Duswapannashan Sukt)	“Parālopehi manas pāpa kiṃ śastāni śaṃsasi.”	Nightmares and Cognitive Distortions
7.	Atharvaveda 6.64.2 and 6.94.1	“samāno mantraḥ samitiḥ samānī ...”	Cognitive Dissonance Incongruity between mind, Intellect and Chitta (mindstuff/ system)
8.	Atharvaveda 19.57.1	“Yatha kalam yatha shafam...”	Duḥsvapna; Nightmare disorder, PTSD-related sleep disturbances.
9.	Rigveda 10.58.1-10.58.12 Manas-āvatana	“Yat te yamaṃ vaivasvataṃ mano jagāma...”	Dissociation, Depersonalization-derealization disorder, emotional instability, experiential avoidance
10.	Rigveda 1.73.10 (Sharma Acharya, n.d.)	“Etā te agna ucathāni vedho...”	Psychosomatic balance, for good intellect, stable mind and positive emotions.

Table 1: Vedic hymns and mantras with their traditional psychological targets and contemporary clinical correlates.

Discussion and Conclusion

The Vedic Texts and Scriptures, which are said to be the foundational texts of knowledge for all realms of life, mention and highlight most about Yagya and it is indeed a way of life, the present study shows the importance of the triadic framework of Yagya which are Devapūjan, Saṅgatikaraṇa and Dāna, which undoubtedly are such principles that not only supports and drives social inclusion, cultivates compassion, harmony and unity but also is a great means of promoting overall well-being and advanced psycho-spiritual development. This study is qualitative in nature, which brings forth a few major mentions of Yagya and in our Vedic texts for social inclusion and Psycho-spiritual well-being, future research based on experimental and applied approaches can be done in order to develop and validate structured interventions which includes effective disorder specific mantras, well-composed herbal oblations (Yagya samagri) with appropriate ratios and defined procedures to address psychological disorders and related issues. Through such research with controlled conditions, replicability, and outcomes that are measurable and reliable, evidence-based, integrative therapeutic protocols within Indian Knowledge Systems can be built and will be of great relevance in contemporary mental health care.

It is recommended that Yagya be revived and performed in every household and community, and that the underlying principles be integrated into one's behaviour, character, and personality. With the ethos and science of Yagya, the world can evolve into a better, more harmonious place.

A few hymns and mantras of our ancient scriptures are mentioned above in the table, along with an attempt to show parallels between the traditional Vedic psychological conditions described in these texts and their approximate contemporary correlates, such as psychological disorders and related symptoms.

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