



The Effect Of ASMR Meditation On Stress Reduction Among B.Lib. Students After Semester Examination.

Arpna Agarwal, Dr. Manvir Singh, Dr. Sarah Basu

Arpna Agarwal
Research Scholar (Education)
M.J.P.R.U.
Bareilly (U.P.)

Dr. Manvir Singh
Assistant Professor
Department of Education
Bareilly College, Bareilly
(U.P.)

Dr. Sarah Basu
Associate Professor
Department of M.Ed
Bareilly College, Bareilly
(U.P.)

Abstract

Examination-related stress is a common phenomenon among undergraduate students and often results in heightened anxiety, mental fatigue, and emotional exhaustion. In recent years, Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR) meditation has emerged as a novel relaxation technique that utilizes soothing auditory stimuli to promote calmness and psychological well-being. The present study aimed to explore the perceived effects of ASMR meditation on stress reduction among Bachelor of Library and Information Science (B.Lib) students immediately after a semester examination. A descriptive survey design was employed, and a sample of 50 students participated in a guided ASMR meditation session followed by the administration of a self-constructed Likert scale questionnaire titled *ASMR Meditation Experience and Stress Reduction Questionnaire*, consisting of 15 items. The ASMR session incorporated gentle whispering, buzzing wind sounds, soft flute music, flowing waterfall sounds, and chirping of birds to induce relaxation. Findings revealed that 88 % of respondents experienced a noticeable reduction in overall stress levels, while nearly 80% reported feeling mentally lighter and emotionally relaxed after the session. A majority of students also indicated reduced anxiety, enhanced present-moment awareness, physical relaxation, and feelings of safety and comfort. The study concludes that ASMR meditation is an

effective, accessible, and non-invasive intervention for reducing post-examination stress among undergraduate students.

Keywords: ASMR Meditation, stress reduction, examination anxiety, auditory relaxation, student well-being

Introduction

Stress and anxiety are increasingly prevalent among students in higher education, particularly during examination periods. Academic stress has been associated with a wide range of negative outcomes, including impaired concentration, emotional instability, sleep disturbances, and reduced academic performance. Scholars have linked academic stress with negative emotional states, including increased anxiety, cognitive fatigue, and impaired concentration (Smith & Jones, 2018). Immediately after examinations, students often experience residual tension, mental exhaustion, and anticipatory anxiety regarding results. Addressing this post-examination stress is essential for promoting emotional balance and psychological well-being among students.

Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR) is a sensory-emotional phenomenon characterized by a calming, pleasurable sensation often described as a tingling feeling that begins on the scalp and spreads down the neck and spine. This response is typically triggered by gentle auditory and visual stimuli such as whispering, slow hand movements, tapping, brushing sounds, and soft personal attention cues. ASMR is a sensory response where specific audio-visual stimuli, like whispering or repetitive sounds, produce pleasurable tingling sensations in the head and body (Poerio et al., 2018).

Recent imaging and psychophysiological research has begun to explore the variability of neural responses associated with ASMR stimuli, suggesting potential links between ASMR exposure and modulation of stress-related processes, though results remain heterogeneous (Weber et al., 2025). In recent years, ASMR has gained popularity as a digital relaxation tool, particularly through online platforms offering ASMR videos and guided audio experiences. Another recent study found that engagement with ASMR videos correlated with reduced anxiety levels in university populations, highlighting ASMR's potential as an accessible anxiety-reduction tool (Askaree, Muhammad & Nazeer, 2025). Additionally, research on the emotional and physiological impact of ASMR sound features shows that certain sound profiles can significantly enhance relaxation and positive affective responses, supported by heart rate variability and EEG measures (Kim et al., 2024). These findings provide preliminary support for ASMR's applicability in stress reduction, particularly when integrated into guided meditation.

ASMR meditation represents a structured application of ASMR stimuli within a meditative framework. Unlike traditional meditation practices that emphasize breath awareness or silent contemplation, ASMR meditation actively engages the senses through carefully curated sounds. These sounds may include the soft buzzing of wind, gentle flute music, flowing waterfall sounds, chirping of birds, rustling leaves, and low-frequency ambient tones. Saskovets, Saponkova, and Liang (2025) highlighted that calming auditory environments, particularly those including natural sounds such as flowing water or wind, are associated with reductions in stress and improved psychological states. Such auditory elements create a soothing soundscape that promotes relaxation, emotional comfort, and present-moment awareness.

The calming effect of natural sounds has long been recognized in psychological and environmental research. Sounds such as flowing water, wind, and birdsong are known to activate the parasympathetic nervous system, thereby reducing physiological arousal and stress responses. A netnographic analysis by Triani et al. (2025) found that many users report listening to ASMR soundscapes—such as whispering, rainfall, and natural ambience—to manage anxiety and achieve relaxation. When integrated into ASMR meditation, these sounds can enhance the listener's sense of safety, comfort, and emotional grounding. Ueda, Lee, and Chen (2025) found that exposure to ASMR stimuli resulted in higher parasympathetic nervous system activation than exposure to typical nature sounds alone.

Despite the growing popularity of ASMR meditation, empirical research examining its effects within academic contexts, particularly among Indian undergraduate students, remains limited. The present study seeks to address this gap by examining the subjective experiences of B.Lib students who participated in an ASMR meditation session immediately after a semester examination. The study focuses on perceived stress reduction, anxiety reduction, mental calmness, physical relaxation, and overall emotional experience.

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive survey research design to examine students' perceptions and experiences following an ASMR meditation session. This design was deemed appropriate for capturing individual responses related to emotional and psychological states without manipulating variables.

Participants

The sample consisted of 50 students enrolled in the Bachelor of Library and Information Science (B.Lib.) program from Bareilly College. All participants had just completed a semester-end examination. Convenience sampling was used due to the availability of participants at the examination venue. Participation was voluntary, and students were informed about the purpose of the study.

ASMR Meditation Session

The ASMR meditation session was conducted immediately after the examination in a quiet and comfortable setting. Students were instructed to sit comfortably, close their eyes, and listen attentively to the guided ASMR meditation. The session lasted approximately 15–20 minutes and included the following ASMR sound elements:

- Soft whispering and gentle spoken guidance
- Low, continuous buzzing sound of wind
- Slow and calming flute music
- Flowing waterfall sounds creating a sense of rhythmic continuity
- Chirping of birds to evoke a natural and peaceful environment

These sounds were carefully selected to create a multi-layered auditory experience that encouraged relaxation, emotional safety, and present-moment focus. These auditory elements were chosen based on evidence suggesting that natural and rhythmic sounds can promote parasympathetic activity and relaxation (Kim et al., 2024).

Research Instrument

Data were collected using a self-developed instrument titled ASMR Meditation Experience and Stress Reduction Questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 15 items measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree (1)* to *Strongly Agree (5)*. The items assessed:

- Perceived stress reduction
- Anxiety and tension levels
- Mental calmness and clarity
- Physical relaxation
- Emotional comfort and safety
- Focus and awareness during meditation

Data Collection Procedure

Immediately after the meditation session, participants were asked to complete the questionnaire. Anonymity was maintained to ensure honest responses. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, primarily percentages, to summarize response trends.

Results and Discussion

Outcome variable	Positive response %	Interpretation
Stress reduction	88%	Very high reduction in stress
Mental lightness	80%	High cognitive relaxation
Emotional comfort	78%	Strong Sense of safety and comfort
Physical relaxation	76%	Noticeable bodily relaxation
Reduced anxiety	82%	Significant decrease in anxious thoughts
Present moment focus	74%	Improved mindfulness and focus

Overall Stress Reduction

Analysis of responses revealed that 88% of students reported a noticeable reduction in overall stress after the ASMR meditation session, consistent with previous literature demonstrating anxiety reduction following ASMR engagement (Askaree et al., 2025). The soothing combination of whispering, wind buzzing, and waterfall sounds appeared to calm the students' nervous systems and alleviate exam-related stress.

Reduction in Anxiety and Tension

82% participants indicated that their feelings of tension decreased during the meditation. The gentle flute music and rhythmic flow of waterfall sounds helped reduce restlessness and anxious thoughts. Many students reported that worries related to exam performance diminished while listening to the ASMR guidance.

Mental Lightness and Emotional Relief

Around 80% of respondents reported feeling mentally lighter after the session. Students described a sense of emotional release and relief, suggesting that ASMR meditation helped clear mental clutter accumulated during examination stress.

Feelings of Safety and Comfort

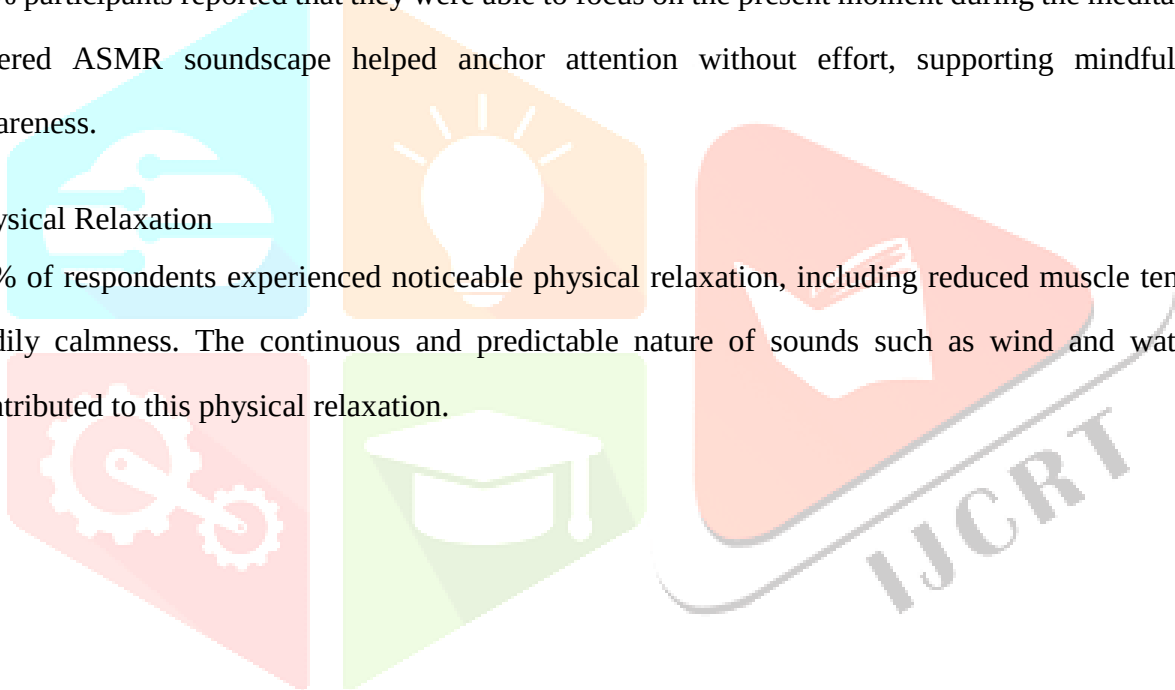
78% of students responded positively to items related to emotional safety and comfort. The soft-spoken guidance combined with natural sounds such as chirping birds and flowing water created a nurturing and non-threatening environment, which enhanced emotional security.

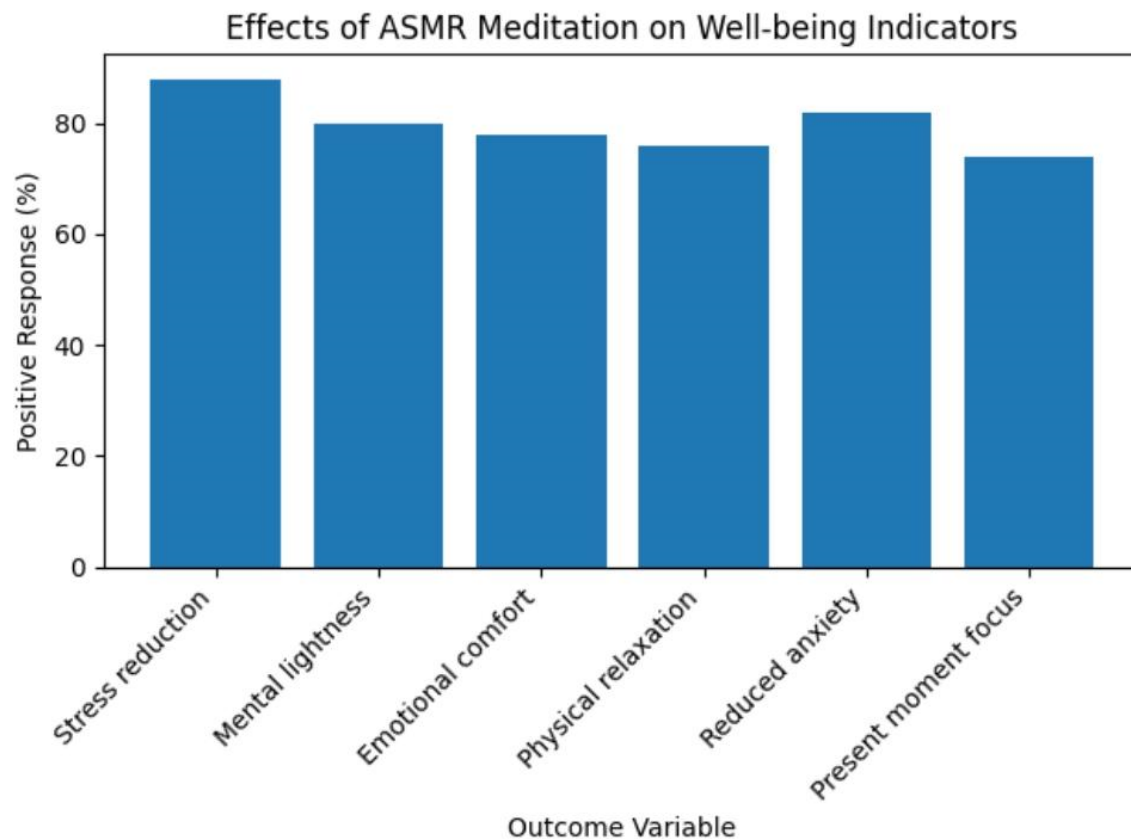
Focus and Present-Moment Awareness

74% participants reported that they were able to focus on the present moment during the meditation. The layered ASMR soundscape helped anchor attention without effort, supporting mindfulness-like awareness.

Physical Relaxation

76% of respondents experienced noticeable physical relaxation, including reduced muscle tension and bodily calmness. The continuous and predictable nature of sounds such as wind and water likely contributed to this physical relaxation.





Conclusion

The findings of the present study indicate that ASMR meditation is an effective and well-received intervention for reducing post-examination stress among B.Lib students. The use of natural and soothing ASMR sounds—including buzzing wind, flute music, waterfall sounds, and chirping of birds—played a significant role in promoting relaxation, emotional comfort, and mental clarity, supporting research showing that certain acoustic features can elicit measurable physiological responses linked to relaxation (Kim et al., 2024).

With a substantial proportion of students reporting reduced stress, anxiety, and tension, ASMR meditation demonstrates strong potential as a supportive mental health strategy in academic settings. Its non-invasive, low-cost, and easily accessible nature makes it particularly suitable for implementation in colleges, libraries, and student support services.

Future research may incorporate experimental designs, larger sample sizes, and physiological measures of stress to further validate these findings. Nevertheless, the present study contributes valuable preliminary evidence supporting the role of ASMR meditation in enhancing student well-being.

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