

Megan Flynn
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Exploring 40Hz Binaural Beat and Instrument Preference

Abstract

This advanced sound therapy study examines the transformative effects of a 10-minute sound meditation featuring 40Hz binaural beats, designed to entrain Alpha brainwaves. Layered with healing instruments, the composition was created to resonate universally—regardless of age, gender, or meditation experience. Thirty-five participants provided qualitative and quantitative feedback both before and after the session. Their responses revealed powerful therapeutic outcomes, including enhanced relaxation, mental clarity, and emotional ease—demonstrating the ability of 40Hz binaural beats and carefully selected instruments to facilitate deep states of well-being.

Introduction

Sound healing is increasingly recognized as a powerful tool for mental, emotional, and physical wellness. One specific method—binaural beats—involves playing two slightly different frequencies in each ear, allowing the brain to perceive a third, internal beat. In this study, we explored the 40Hz range, a frequency associated with Gamma brainwaves, to determine its effects when integrated into a binaural beat aimed at producing Alpha entrainment. Alpha waves are known to promote relaxation, creativity, and light meditation, while 40Hz Gamma waves support focus, memory, and heightened perception.

The purpose of this project was twofold: to explore how 40Hz binaural beats influence states of relaxation and mental clarity, and to evaluate listener preferences for various sound healing instruments layered within the meditation experience.

Methodology

The sound meditation composition was produced using a 40Hz binaural beat tuned into Alpha brainwaves and layered with instruments commonly used in sound healing. This included an ambient soundscape, chimes, bowls, a gong, flute, didgeridoo, and a female voice creating an ethereal experience.

The binaural beat was crafted by using 40 Hz in one ear and 48 Hz in the other, resulting in a beat frequency of 8Hz. The two frequencies, 40Hz and 48Hz, are Gamma waves associated with heightened cognitive function, focus, memory retention and states of heightened awareness. The brain interprets the difference tone of 8Hz, which falls into the Alpha Brainwave range, which is associated with relaxation, light meditation, creativity, and a calm yet alert state. The potential applications of this binaural beat include a relaxed but focused meditation encouraging a state of calm awareness and cognitive balancing with combining elements of Gamma's alertness with Alpha's relaxation.

A total of 35 participants from different backgrounds and a whole spectrum of ages from under 18 to over 65 participated in the research project. Participants completed a pre-session survey to understand preferences and demographics, then listened to the audio track and followed up with a post session survey to measure the impact of 40Hz and instrument combinations. Additionally, the listeners rated how they felt on a scale from 1-10 before and after the sound session. The survey also included an open ended comment at the end regarding their personal experience.

Results

The sound research survey included feedback from an almost equal amount of beginner versus experienced meditators and an overwhelming amount of respondents said they enjoyed and would listen to this type of meditation music again.

The two Gamma frequencies created an Alpha binaural beat which resulted in brain entrainment for stress relief while allowing for light concentration. Many cited reduced anxiety and improved clarity, others found the frequency neutral and one was annoyed. The majority of participants reported increased relaxation, and a notable number experienced mental focus. Physical sensations such as the release of tension, tingling, floating, lightness and buzzing around the crown of the head were noted. Emotional responses included serenity, self-compassion and moments of clarity.

Layered soundscapes were generally preferred over single-instrument arrangements. The preference of instruments favored the crystal and tibetan singing bowls, chimes and flutes to be the most soothing and healing. The human voice and didgeridoo received mixed feedback, with some finding them powerful and others noting that they were distracting from the meditative experience.

Conclusion

This study supports what many ancient traditions and modern studies suggest: that sound—when tuned to the body and brain's natural frequencies—can be profoundly healing. The combination of 40Hz Gamma waves and Alpha-frequency entrainment created an ideal environment for relaxed yet focused meditation. Instruments like bowls, chimes, and flutes emerged as universal favorites for inducing a sense of peace and inner stillness.

The mixed feedback on human voice and didgeridoo reinforces the personalized nature of sound healing: what soothes one person may challenge another. These findings highlight the importance of creating adaptable sound meditations that can cater to varying listener preferences.

While the sample size was modest, the results are encouraging and warrant further research—particularly into how specific frequencies and instruments may be optimized for different age groups, emotional states, or neurological conditions.