



A Review of Traditional and Multicultural Massage Around the World

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ABSTRACT

In this review different types of massage therapies have been found to have helpful benefits on various ailments. Since the ancient and medieval ages, massage has been practiced and performed. It is used all across the globe. As a result, massage provides a variety of cultural and historical experiences. Massage has a variety of techniques because various studies have shown that it has therapeutic and cosmetic benefits. Massage plays an important part in our lives since it relieves stress, which boosts the immune response. People should also be aware that massage can help them lead better lives. This research review aims to analyze and appreciate all types of massage in different races and cultures around the world. This study intends to raise awareness of the benefits that each style of massage offers.

Introduction

The massage practice is defined as pressing, rubbing, and manipulating the tissues, muscles, tendons, and ligaments. Massage techniques are commonly utilized with hands, elbows, knees, forearms, or specialized devices. The purpose of massage is generally to treat the body against pain and stress. In other cases, such as in Balinese and Ayurvedic massage, it is believed that massage helps a person's mind and well-being. While in Oriental massages, such as the Chinese, Korean, and Japanese massage styles. It is believed that the *Qi*, or the vital energy of the human body, is influenced by the movement, rhythm, and style of massage a masseur/ masseuse uses. A more scientific approach is applied in the case of the Swedish, deep tissue massage. In this type of massage, a masseur utilizes his common knowledge of the anatomy of a human being for him to target a certain area of the body. Lastly, Polynesian islanders believed that massage helps a person's vitality and his *mana* or spiritual well-being [1,3].

The practice of massage in today's modern world is utilized both for its therapeutic and for enhancing a person's physical characteristics. Commonly used techniques are myofascial release, trigger point therapy, compression, cross-fiber, petrissage, and effleurage. The Myofascial release technique is utilized primarily for the easing of tensed muscles. Trigger point therapy, commonly known as acupuncture, is used to access vital *Qi* points. While the cross-fiber massage helps regain the strength of overstretched muscle fiber due to intense workouts or recent muscle cramps. This technique is especially utilized for professional athletes [21-24].

Other massage techniques such as petrissage and effleurage stimulate the heart and are specially conducted for patients with recurring cardiovascular conditions such as hypertension, cardiomyopathy, and pulmonary thrombosis. [1,2,4]

Methodology

This review article aims to analyze and discuss the benefits of every sort of multicultural massage practiced around the world. The study is a qualitative review paper focusing on the multicultural practices of traditional massage all throughout the world. We conducted this research to raise awareness and appreciation for the benefits of all traditional massages worldwide. This review article also aims to provide supplementary information on the various massage approaches used by alternative medicine practitioners. We used information from reputable medical literature

publishers such as Pubmed, Cochrane, and Global Health. The journals and articles that are used in this study were greatly analyzed and discussed by the author/s. The search terms and keywords included: Different Massage Therapy, Massage Therapy Worldwide, Cultural Massage, Traditional Massage Treatment, Various Massage Styles, and many others. The publication year of the studies we chose had no limitations, and the timeframe for this review article ranged from March to May 2022.

Therapeutic Massage

Massage is the pressing, stroking, and manipulation of tissues, muscles, tendons, and ligaments. Hands, elbows, knees, forearms, and other specialized devices are widely used in massage treatments. Massage is often used to relieve pain and tension in the body. Different cultures, such as Balinese and Ayurvedic massage, believe that massage benefits people's psyche and physical well-being. Oriental massage styles include Chinese, Korean, and Japanese massage techniques. The movement, rhythm, and type of massage used by a masseur/masseuse alter the human body's Qi or vital energy [1,6,16].

Massage is used for therapeutic and cosmetic purposes in today's environment. The following are some common approaches. Compression, cross-fiber, petrissage, and effleurage are some of the techniques used in myofascial release. Myofascial release is a method that is particularly useful for releasing stiff muscles. Acupuncture points, also known as trigger points, are utilized to reach important Qi locations [16,22,25].

Massage Therapy for Health & Wellness

Wellness massage aims to help you feel fabulous. Health and wellness massage technique applies mechanical vibrations throughout the body. Every minute feels fantastic and is tranquil, soothing, and relaxing. Depending on your preferences, a wellness massage might be whole body or focused on specific regions. Remember that wellness massage is a stress reduction and feel-good therapy, not a remedial massage. It can lower blood pressure, decrease stress, and relax anxiety. Your parasympathetic nervous system is activated by wellness massage, which shuts off your fight/flight reaction. A wellness massage may be what you need whether you're going through a challenging phase in your life or have a persistent build-up of stress [38-40].

Massage Therapy for Cosmetic Uses

Facial massages are treatments you may undertake with or without a professional. Pressure points on the face, neck, and shoulders are stimulated with this method. Face massages can be done using lotions, oils, cleansing balms, and a face roller or a flat gua sha instrument. Facial massage promotes healthy skin while relaxing the muscles in your face. It helps you look and feel better by resting and revitalizing you. There are several ways to attempt whether you wish to use face massage for relaxation or to cure a specific disease [41-43].

Modern-Day Practice of Massage Therapy

Massage has been practiced for millennia. Today, if you want or need a massage, you can browse around 80 massage treatment styles with various methods. These include squeezing, scouring, or controlling muscles and other delicate tissues with hands and fingers. Even lower arms, elbows, or feet are utilized here and there. Nowadays, people have a massage to address pain in a particular body area and therapeutic well-being. Therapeutic massage restores the delicate tissue of entire body regions to achieve relaxation and rejuvenation in wellbeing [44-46].

Table 1. Types of Massage Around the World

Massage Style	Overview	Therapeutic Effect
Acupressure	It is a traditional Chinese medicine practice that involves treating blocked energy for the <i>Qi</i> or the life force to pass. It is done by applying pressure on the meridian points using the fingertips rather than needles. Chinese researchers conducted a study in the 1980s determining that Endorphins are released during acupressure therapy [18,19].	Cures: Insomnia, headache, motion sickness, muscle tension & pain Reduces stress, menstrual cramps, nausea, and morning sickness. [18,19]
Acupuncture	It is said to be the root origin of all Asian and Oriental Massage.	Cures: Insomnia, headache, motion sickness, muscle tension & pain,

	<p>It is a theory describing that special acupoints lie along the body's meridian wherein the <i>Qi</i> or the life force is passed Through. An illness will occur when a meridian point is blocked or out of balance [20,21].</p>	<p>Reduces stress, menstrual cramps, nausea, and morning sickness. [20,21]</p>
<i>Tui na</i>	<p>It is an ancient Chinese therapeutic massage dating back 5000 years. It is defined as the ancient art of healing using the finger and strength.</p> <p>Practitioners use the hand, elbow, finger, knee, or foot to apply pressure. It is similar to acupressure, wherein the masseur will target specific meridian points to allow the <i>Qi</i> to pass [22,23].</p>	<p>Reduces stress, muscle spasms, gastric disorder, constipation, insomnia, headache, and constipation. [22,23]</p>
<i>Gua sha</i>	<p>An ancient Chinese traditional massage involves scraping the skin using a massage tool to improve blood circulation. It is intended to maximize the flow of the <i>Qi</i> to prevent inflammation and promote healing [24,25].</p>	<p>Reduces the complications due to Hepatitis B, perimenopausal syndrome, and Tourette's disease.</p> <p>Alleviates migraine and neck pain</p> <p>Engorges the breasts for lactating women. [24,25]</p>
<i>Zhi ya</i>	<p>The practice is similar to acupressure but is limited to the patient's hands and feet [24,26].</p>	<p>Improves immunity, strength, cardiovascular health and relaxation, and skin rejuvenation. [24,26]</p>
<i>Namikoshi Shiatsu</i>	<p>Characterized as applying pressure with thumbs and elbows. It is done based on the <i>Qi</i> point of Chinese acupuncture [1,3].</p>	<p>Relieves pain</p> <p>Improves sleep quality and relaxation</p> <p>Decreases depression</p> <p>Headache treatment [1,3]</p>
<i>Anma</i>	<p>The technique is very influential for the modern-day <i>shiatsu</i>. The client is seated in a chair while stretching, manipulation, pressure, and manipulation are applied to the vital <i>Qi</i> energy points [3,15].</p>	<p>Provides immediate relaxation for the entire body.</p> <p>Relieves muscle cramps, improves ease,</p> <p>Regulates Circadian rhythm, and lowers blood pressure levels. [3,15]</p>

<i>Kobido</i>	Works within the meridian of the face to balance the flow of the <i>Qi</i> . It is performed on the front, scalp, and neck with percussion movement [3,16].	Removes toxins and Facilitates blood circulation. Oxygenates the skin and Helps produce collagen. [3,16]
Korean Hand Massage	Targets specific points on the hand that are believed to be connected to various parts of the body [1,4].	Performs an all-in-one treatment for all body cramps and pain. [1,4]
Aromatherapy Massage	This massage begins with the classic method of activating pressure points and gently stretching the joints, followed by applying a hot herbal compress to the entire body to calm the muscles and enhance the important organs and senses [5,47].	It helps relieve muscular tension, increases bone and joint flexibility, and moisturizes the skin. [47]
<i>Sasak</i>	This massage helps alleviate tiredness by applying pressure similar to Chinese acupressure. <i>Balinese</i> Sasak helps promote relaxation and slows down aging [6,7].	Helps reduce stress, Stimulates the flow of blood and oxygen, Relieves strained muscles, Helps detoxify the body, Nourishes and softens the skin, and Elevates mood [6,7].
<i>UratPijat</i>	Empowers spiritual healing & brings in an energetic balance. Includes gliding pressures all over the body along the routes of muscles, tendons, and energy circuits. While pressure is applied which produces relaxing, energizing, circulatory and energetic effects [6,8].	Overall well-being Relaxation of the body and minds Works on circulatory disorders. Positively affects blood circulation and lymphatics, Revitalizes the body and allows muscle relaxation Makes the skin softer and more supple [6,8].
<i>Boreh</i>	Originated from the Balinese rice farmer, these farmers made <i>boreh</i> using cinnamon, cloves, ginger, rice powder, and other spices, forming an aromatic paste to pass on the head and abdomen to stimulate blood circulation and warm tired muscles after a long workday [6,9].	Increases blood circulation, and Resolves muscle congestion. Cleans pores, and releases toxins [6,9]
<i>Lulur</i>	A unique yogurt called <i>Jammu</i> is poured on the tissue in an aromatic bathtub [8,9].	Leaves the skin looking refreshed and revitalized. Clears skin toxins, and improves

		blood circulation in the tissue. [8,9]
<i>Champissage</i> (Indian Head Massage)	One of the Ayurvedic practices and massage focuses on the head, shoulder, face, and neck. This massage uses a firm and gentle rhythm to release tension [11,12].	Relieves joint problems, headache, chronic neck and shoulder pain [11,12].
<i>Pizhichil</i>	Pouring of warm oil within several inches of the body. At the same time, the masseur spreads the warm oil to promote perspiration and the balancing of <i>Vata Dosha</i> [11,12].	Eases the stiffness of the body, fracture, paralysis, paraplegia, monoplegia, and hemiplegia [11,12].
<i>Njavarkijhi</i>	A particular type of massage is meant to increase the body's sweat after applying medicated oil. Pressure massage is then used with the help of cotton blouses with <i>Njavara</i> rice deep in cow's milk [11,12].	Revitalizes the skin Alleviates stress [11,12].
<i>Shirodhara</i>	A type of head massage wherein the goal is to stimulate the nerves of the scalp after pouring warm oil [11,12].	Relieves mental fatigue, increases focus, clarity, and cure headache [11,12].
<i>Garshana</i>	Involves no oil or herbal powders. It is a process of stimulating the body using raw silk gloves only and without applying any lubricant. Light and vigorous movements form a part of this massage which seeks to eliminate toxins from the body by stimulating the lymphatic system [11,12].	Help promotes skin regeneration. Removes dead skin cells leaving exfoliated skin [11,12].
<i>Udvertana</i>	Aims to increase blood circulation throughout the body and as well as, the removal of toxins. [11,12]	Helps fat metabolism Lowers cholesterol levels. Flushes out harmful toxins and chemicals in the body [11,12].
<i>Abhyangam</i>	Uses full hot oil body massage while applying pressure and motion on vital muscle points [11,12].	Strengthens the muscles, ligaments, and tissues. Revitalizes and awakens wellbeing. [11,12]
<i>Ubtaan and Elakijhi</i>	Involve the use of various herbal or animal-centric materials to create a skin and beauty solution [11,12].	Vitalizes the skin, improves the skin texture, nourishes the body, improves circulation, and improves upon external beauty. [11,12].

<p><i>Remedial Massage Therapy</i></p>	<p>Remedial massage is one of Australia's typical forms of massage. It involves using various therapeutic techniques to treat knotted, tight, stiff, or injured muscles.</p> <p>The remedial therapist will analyze and identify which parts of the body need to be treated and then utilize a variety of massage-based treatments to improve muscle function [1,14,27].</p>	<p>Stimulate blood supply</p> <p>Repair damaged tissues</p> <p>Increase blood flow</p> <p>Cure muscle cramps</p> <p>Relieve abdominal pain [13,28]</p>
<p><i>Romiromi Massage</i></p>	<p>Traditional Maori Massage Romiromi Massage is an ancient Maori (New Zealand's indigenous people) massage and healing practice derived from decades of traditional Maori healing universal spiritual teachings.</p> <p>Romiromi Massage is the strongest and most profound of the traditional Maori bodywork therapies, working on a vibrational frequency and cellular level.</p> <p>[1,13,29].</p>	<p>Practitioners try to remove unwanted energies from a person to relieve them of responsibilities and entities that do not belong to them, allowing them to return to a more balanced state of health. After Romiromi, people have reported feeling transformed, uplifted, lighter, revitalized, re-energized, and significant healings of ailments and body dysfunction [14,29].</p>
<p><i>Mirimiri Massage</i></p>	<p>The practitioner's study of the sacred "Waananga Lore" passed down through families by Tohunga (reputable spiritual teacher and practitioner) or tribal elders.</p> <p>Mirimiri is a gentler version of Romiromi, yet it still works deeply on the spiritual layers to balance the body's vibration, remove unwanted energy, and accomplish the same healing results [1,13,29].</p>	<p>Body realignment</p> <p>Clarity for the mind</p> <p>Motivation</p> <p>Pain relief</p> <p>Rejuvenation</p> <p>Relaxation</p> <p>Relief of stress and tension</p> <p>Sense of calmness</p> <p>Therapeutic tension release [14,30]</p>
<p><i>Lomilomi Massage</i></p>	<p>Lomilomi, also known as Hawaiian massage, is suitable for various diseases and increases spiritual vitality and personal power (mana).</p> <p>Lomilomi incorporates various techniques, some of which are comparable to Swedish</p>	<p>Increases blood circulation,</p> <p>Remove toxins,</p> <p>Reducing the chances of stroke</p>

	<p>massage techniques and others to Asian bodywork techniques. [1,13,31].</p>	<p>Relieving pains in the muscle</p> <p>Building up the muscles,</p> <p>Increases the muscle's flexibility and motion</p> <p>Stimulating the lymphatic drainage system,</p> <p>Removes lactic acid build-up</p> <p>Breaks down calcium deposits</p> <p>Boosting Immune response</p> <p>Lowering Blood Pressure [13, 32]</p>
<p><i>Swedish Massage</i></p>	<p>One of the most popular types of massage therapy is the Swedish massage. It can help you relax, increase your vitality, and help you recover from an accident.</p> <p>Long, kneading strokes are paired with rhythmic tapping and joint movement in a Swedish massage [1,14,33].</p>	<p>Relieve pain</p> <p>Relieve stress</p> <p>Muscle tension</p> <p>Stomach problems</p> <p>Lower back pain</p> <p>Can help cancer patients and heart disease patients cope better [14,33].</p>
<p><i>Deep Tissue Massage</i></p>	<p>One of the common massage therapies adopted by the British. Deep tissue massage is a type of massage that focuses on the muscular tissue's most profound levels. In tight regions, therapists utilize a combination of gentle strokes and deep pressure with their fingers, palms, and forearms. Either following or by going over the muscle fibers [14,34].</p>	<p>Back pain</p> <p>Reduce high blood pressure,</p> <p>Relieve pain and stiffness</p> <p>Speed up the healing of muscle strains and sprains</p> <p>Chronic constipation [14,34]</p>

Conclusion

To conclude our research, the practice of massage has been important to the health and wellness of humanity in every culture. Every culture from different continents, such as Europe, Asia, and Oceania, has unique ways and beliefs in practicing physical therapy. Other unique styles of massages, such as the Ayurvedic massages, believe that massage can contribute to the spiritual and physical wellbeing of an individual. Whereas, in the view of Oriental massages, it is believed that the control of *Qi*, or the essence of energy that drives a human body, must be controlled and stimulated to ensure balanced health for an individual. Other massage styles, especially in Europe, are more focused on the scientific bases of human anatomy. An example of this is the famous Swedish Deep Tissue massage focused on metabolizing fat and recovery from an accident. In the Polynesian culture, the approach of massage is more focused on the spiritual and the strength development of the individual. The method of

Romiroi, Mirimiri, and Lomilomi has been notable for the preparation for the battle of early Maori warriors and for the strengthening of the individual's strength and *mana*.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have no conflict of interest

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