This study addressed the question: Does TM practice differ from simple eyes-closed rest? It compared the effects of 10 min eyes-closed rest (sitting) and 10 min Transcendental Meditation (TM) practice on P300 latency and amplitude.

Eleven subjects were tested with an oddball paradigm (80/20) with standards (1000 Hz) and rares (2000 Hz) of 250 msec duration. All stimuli were presented binaurally over headphones at 70 dB SPL once a sec. Three measurements were taken: eyes-closed baseline, after 10 min eyes-closed rest, and after 10 min TM practice. (The order was counterbalanced.) EEG was recorded from Fz, Cz, and Pz referenced to linked mastoids, with a 0.01–30 Hz band pass, digitized at 256 point/sec, and averaged over 30 presentations of the rare stimuli beginning 80 msec pre-stimulus and continuing for 1024 msec. Trials with eye artifacts were not included in the averages.

The group means for latency are presented in Figure 1. There was a significant main effect for condition for P300 latencies (MANOVA: $F(2,9) = 4.49, p = .044$) with significantly shorter latencies after TM practice ($F(1,10) = 8.89, p = .014$) and non-significant increases after eyes-closed rest. Amplitudes at all sites were greater after TM practice, but this was not significant ($F(2,9) = .91$).

Johnson (1986, Psychophysiol., 23, 367–384) suggests that shorter P300 latencies could result from decreased probability or decreased stimulus complexity, or increased information transfer. Because probability and stimulus complexity were held constant, it appears that TM practice, in comparison to eyes-closed rest, could enhance information transfer.

This study found significantly shorter latency of auditory evoked potentials after practice of the Transcendental Meditation Programme, in comparison to after-eyes-closed rest among the same subjects, indicating greater efficiency of information transfer in the brain.—EDITOR

![Graph showing P300 latency at Pz after baseline, 10 min eyes-closed rest, and 10 min TM practice.](image-url)