

An Empirical Study on Efficacy of Meditation on Anxiety

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ABSTRACT: *The aim of the present study was to assess effect of Meditation on anxiety. For this purpose 25 subjects were selected through random sampling. All subjects were urban educated male of 40 to 50 age range. The social and economic status treated as control variable in the study. In this study SCAT (Sinha's comprehensive anxiety test) has been used to obtain scores on Anxiety. The t-test has been employed to analyze the data. Results revealed that Meditation decrease the level of Anxiety,*

KEY WORDS- *Meditation, ANXIETY*

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Anxiety is an emotion characterized by an unpleasant state of inner turmoil, often accompanied by nervous behaviour such as pacing back and forth, somatic complaints, and rumination (Seligman et al., 2014). It is the subjectively unpleasant feelings of dread over anticipated events, such as the feeling of imminent death as reported by Davison (2008). APA (2013) mentioned that Anxiety is not the same as fear, which is a response to a real or perceived immediate threat, whereas anxiety is the expectation of future threat. Bouras & Holt (2007) explained the nature of anxiety. They write that Anxiety is a feeling of uneasiness and worry, usually generalized and unfocused as an overreaction to a situation that is only subjectively seen as menacing. It is often accompanied by muscular tension, restlessness, fatigue and problems in concentration. Anxiety can be appropriate, but when experienced regularly the individual may suffer from an anxiety disorder (APA,2013).

Barker (2003) mentioned that People facing anxiety may withdraw from situations which have provoked anxiety in the past. There are various types of anxiety. Existential anxiety can occur when a person faces angst, an existential crisis, or nihilistic feelings. People can also face mathematical anxiety, somatic anxiety, stage fright, or test anxiety. Social anxiety and stranger anxiety are caused when people are apprehensive around strangers or other people in general. Furthermore, Tasta et al (2013) stated that anxiety has been linked with physical symptoms such as IBS and can heighten other mental health illnesses such as OCD and panic disorder. The first step in the management of a person with anxiety symptoms is to evaluate the possible presence of an underlying medical cause, whose recognition is essential in order to decide its correct treatment. Anxiety symptoms may be masking an organic disease, or appear associated or as a result of a medical disorder (Tasta et al ,2013).

Anxiety can be either a short term "state" or a long term "trait". Whereas trait anxiety represents worrying about future events, anxiety disorders are a group of mental disorders characterized by feelings of anxiety and fear (APA,2013) Anxiety disorders are partly genetic but may also be due to drug use, including alcohol, caffeine, and benzodiazepines (which are often prescribed to treat anxiety), as well as withdrawal from drugs of abuse. They often occur with other mental disorders, particularly bipolar disorder, eating disorders, major depressive disorder, or certain personality disorders. Common treatment options include lifestyle changes, medication, and therapy. Metacognitive therapy seeks to rid anxiety through reducing worry, which is seen as a consequence of metacognitive beliefs (Adrian, 2013).

In modern era, there are several options of treatment available but indigenous psychotherapy is one of the most successful treatment option because of these treatment options has no limitation such as addiction (as seen in psycho-pharmacological treatment),rare relapse rate (as seen in psychotherapy) and many more. Meditation is the one of best in these categories of treatment but in some research it was found that meditation as not effective treatment of anxiety as psychotherapy.

Meditation has been practiced since antiquity in numerous religious traditions and beliefs. Since the 19th century, it has spread from its origins to other cultures where it is commonly practiced in private and business life. **Meditation** can be defined as a practice where an individual uses a technique, such as focusing their mind on a particular object, thought or activity, to achieve a mentally clear and emotionally calm state (Merriam-Webster Dictionary;2017). Additionally Roger Walsh & Shauna L. Shapiro (2006)^a States that Meditation refers to a family of self-regulation practices that focus on training attention and awareness in order to bring mental processes under greater voluntary control and thereby foster general mental well-being and development and/or specific capacities such as calm, clarity, and concentration.

Goalman (1988), Walsh & Shapiro (2006)^b, Cahn & Polich (2006), R. Jevning; R. K. Wallace; M. Beidebach (1992) found that meditation has been defined and characterized in a variety of ways; many of these emphasize the role of **attention**. Scientific review by Luts et al (2007) has proposed that researchers attempt to more clearly define the type of meditation being practiced in order that the results of their studies be made clearer.

Meditation may be used with the aim of reducing stress, anxiety, depression, and pain, and increasing peace, perception (Dalai Lama) and wellbeing (Goyal et al., 2014; Shaner et al., 2016 and Campos et al., 2016). Meditation is under research to define its possible health (psychological, neurological, and cardiovascular) and other effects.

Hence present study is the trail to investigate the effect of meditation on anxiety.

Hypothesis: There is no effect of Meditation on Anxiety.

Sample: 20 sample were selected though accidental sampling from various psychiatric clinics of Indore city. All participants were educated and belong from average class socio-economic status. The mean of age was calculated 38.5 (In years).

Research Design- Pre-Post research Design was used in the present study.

Tool- SCAT (Sinha's comprehensive anxiety test) developed by Dr.A.K.P.Sinha and Dr.L.N.K.Sinha has been used to obtain scores on Anxiety. This test is based on two type reaction (Yes/No) and having 40 items without any subdivision or category. This test is highly reliable and valid. The reliability by test-retest method of this test was 0.85 and internal consistency reliability was 0.91. Validity coefficient was 0.62 found with the correlation Tailor-Man Anxiety scale and SCAT.

Procedure- Present study was based on pre and post group research design so data was collected two times. All participants were informed about the purpose of the study. After taking written consent study was conducted. 20 minutes meditation (**Mindfulness**) was given to the participants till one month than post score was collected and interpreted it statistically by t-test.

I. RESULT

Hypotheses- There is no effect of Meditation on Anxiety

Test	Mean	S.D	r	S.Ed	t-value	Significant
Pre	29.73	6.30	+0.88	3.04	3.59	At 0.01
Post	18.79	4.95				

df-19

Our null hypothesis has been rejected at 0.01 level of confidence. It indicates that there is a significant effect of meditation on Anxiety. Result revealed that meditation reduce the level of anxiety.

II. DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION:-

As per result of the present study 'Meditation reduces the level of anxiety.' In recent years there has been a steady stream of research showing the power of mindfulness meditation to reduce the level of anxiety. Although till date, the specific mechanisms of how meditation relieves anxiety at a neural level were unknown. Basically anxiety is a cognitive product of our brain which based on our conditioning and exposures with the event. Meditation found effective treatment in management of anxiety and stress as reported in numerous studies. Dwivedi, S.K. (2009) and Kumar, K (2008) found Yognidra (A type of Meditation) reduce the level of anxiety and relapse rates were assessed very minimal.

The cause of low relapse rate may be that mindfulness meditation teaches participants to let thoughts pass by without judgement (Bishop, 2004). It is possible that participants who learned meditation were less likely to ruminate over negative thoughts about the speech and their performance, and treated themselves with more kindness and less self-judgment, an inherent part of the practice (Elizabeth et al.; 2013). Studies of Duggas et al. (2010) and Kabat et al. (1992) also supported our results. The change in perception may be claimed behind the reason of the result of present study. It can be simplified as When a subject practice mindful self-inquiry, you bring kind awareness and acknowledgment to any stressed or anxious feelings in the body and mind and simply allow them to be. This means staying with those feelings without analyzing, suppressing, or encouraging them. Although this may seem scary in and of itself, realize that when you allow yourself to feel and acknowledge your worries, irritations, painful memories, and other difficult thoughts and emotions, this often helps them dissipate. By going with what's happening rather than expending energy fighting or turning away from it, you create the opportunity to gain insight into what's driving your concerns. When Participant begins to understand the underlying causes of your apprehension, freedom and a sense of spaciousness naturally emerge. In essence, this is a process of learning to trust and stay with feelings of discomfort rather than trying to escape from or analyze them. This often leads to a remarkable shift; time and again your feelings will show you everything you need to know about them—and something you need to know for your own well-being.

III. CONCLUSION

These results suggest that Meditation (Mindfulness) may have a beneficial effect on anxiety and may also improve participants' psychoimmunology, but due to a small sample size, the results of the study can't be generalized to the universe.

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