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IMPACT OF MEDITATION WITH ASANA PRACTICES ON MENTAL SKILLS AND STRESS AMONG MEN STUDENTS

Dr. C. L. JACKSON PAUL DURAI

Director of Physical Education, S. T. Hindu College, Nagercoil, Kanniyakumari, Tamilnadu, India

Abstract: The purpose of the study was to find out the impact of meditation with asana practices on mental skills and stress among men students. To achieve the purpose of this study, twenty (n=20) Men students were randomly selected from ST. Hindu College, Nagercoil, Tamilnadu, India. The age of subject's was ranged from 22 to 26 years. The selected participants were randomly divided into two groups such as Group 'I' underwent meditation and asana practices (n=10) and Group 'II' acted as control group (n-10). Group 'I' meditation and asana practices for five days with one session per day and each session lasted between 45 minutes for six-week period. Group 'II' was not exposed to any specific training but they were participated in regular activities. The data on mental skills and stress were collected and administered by standardized test. The pre and post-tests data were collected on selected criterion variables prior to and immediately after the training programme. The pre and post-test scores were statistically examined by the dependent-'t' test and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) for each and every selected dependent variable separately. It was concluded that the meditation with asana practices group had shown significantly improved in psychological variables like mental skills and stress. However, the control group had not shown any significant improvement on any of the selected variables such as mental skills and stress.

Index Terms – Meditation and Asana Practices, Mental skills, Stress

1. INTRODUCTION

Yoga is a tradition of health and spirituality that evolved over a period of some 5000 years. The principles of yoga practice involve, the adoption and maintenance of psychophysical posture along with controlled breathing techniques it forms the basis of yoga's mind-body integration work [1].

Meditation is a technique of extending our ordinary consciousness to reach higher states of consciousness and there by discovering more about ourselves. When we gain this insight we can change our habits and our deeper, inner personality has a better chance to show through. Our whole life changes for the better. Also meditation is often looked upon as a relaxation technique to be used for treating stress and stress related illnesses [2].

Asanas are an integral part of yoga. Yoga uses the body to exercise and controls the mind so that at a later stage the body and the mind together may harmonize with the soul. The yogasanas affect and penetrate every single cell and tissues making them come to life [3]. "Asana is a systematic physical practice to improve awareness, to develop willpower and to realize self, join traditional consciousness (jeevathma) to super consciousness (permathma) [4]. It plays an important role bringing the therapeutic effects in disease like asthma, diabetes, blood pressure and the like. It tones up glands, visceral muscles, regulate even the involuntary muscles. It increases the hormonal secretions by which it connects the blood composition [5]. It is collection of various stretching exercise and postures to limber up the body, but it is more than that. These techniques lead to one's separation from his physical self. It is a powerful tool for achieving union and healing [6].

Psychology is the newest science, what needs to be trained and taught to well known or understand. It is the service which provides step-by-step process for training the positive mental skills and reducing anxiety that will improve capabilities using the convenience of individual's [7]. The mental training focuses on the positive aspect of athlete's mental performances, physical abilities, and preparation skills [8]. There are four mental training techniques motivational-specific, motivational general, cognitive-specific and cognitive-general. The first two are used to improve motivation and emotional control capacity, respectively [9]. Cognitive-specific and cognitive-general mental training techniques are adopted by athletes in order to maximize the performance of a motor task or solve a situation that occurs in competition, respectively [10].

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Subjects and Procedures

To achieve the purpose of this study, twenty (n=20) Men students were randomly selected from ST. Hindu College, Nagercoil, Tamilnadu, India. The age of subject's was ranged from 22 to 26 years. The selected participants were randomly divided into two groups such as Group 'I' underwent meditation with asana practices (n=10) and Group 'II' acted as control group (n-10). Group 'I' meditation with asana practices for five days with one session per day and each session lasted between 45 minutes for six-week period. Group 'II' was not exposed to any specific training but they were participated in regular activities. The data on mental skills and stress were collected and administered by standardized test. The pre and post-tests data were collected on selected criterion variables prior to and immediately after the training programme.

2.2 Determination of Mental skills and Stress

Hardy and Nelson's mental skill questionnaire (1996) was used. This questionnaire measures six important aspects of the mental side of sport performance. They are imagery ability, mental preparation, self-confidence, anxiety and worry management, concentration ability and relaxation ability. It consists of a number of statements about experiences associated with competitive sport. The subject was asked to read each statement very carefully and then circle the appropriate number to indicate the extent to which one agrees with the statement. The rating was based on six point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The subject was asked to answer honestly to each question in relation to his own sporting experience. In each item add all the 4 numbers which have been circled. The lower score represents weakness level and higher score represents stronger level of mental ability.

To access the stress among the Men students, the investigator adopted standardized scale. The Scale is called Everly & Girnado's psychological stress scale. The scale consists of fourteen items covering such aspects. The items in the scale are designed to study the psychological and behavioural reactions. The scale is intended to measure the stress of the Men students in scores of 4, 3, 2, 1. For the responses, such as, almost always true, usually true, seldom true, never true respectively for the all items. Scores are ranging from 14 to 56. Higher score indicate more psychological stress that obtained by the selected teachers.

2.3 Experimental design and Statistical Procedure

The experimental design used for the present investigation was pre and post randomized group design. For analysing the collected data, the researcher gone through paired sample-'t' test to find out the significant improvement of mean score between pre and post-test of the selected groups. And the researcher chose analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to find out the significance difference between both groups at the 0.05 level of confidence was fixed to test the level of significance difference.

3. RESULT AND FINDINGS

The influence of yogic breathing intervention programme on stress were analysed and presented in the below table,

Table I

Means and Dependent-'T'-Test for the Pre and Post Tests on Mental Skills and Stress of Experimental and Control Groups

Criterion variables	Mean	Experimental Group	Control Group
Mental Skills	Pre test	85.69	86.02
	Post test	97.24	86.49
	't'test	11.51*	1.37
Stress	Pre test	41.09	41.37
	Post test	36.28	41.45
	't'test	13.94*	0.92

*Significant at .05 level. (Table value required for significance at .05 level for 't'-test with df 9 is 2.26)

From the table I the dependent-'t'-test values of mental skills test and stress between the pre and post-tests means of experimental group were greater than the table value 2.26 with df 9 at 0.05 level of confidence, it was concluded that the experimental group had significant improvement on mental skills test and stress while compared to control group. The descriptive measures and the results of analysis of covariance on the criterion measures were given in the following tables.

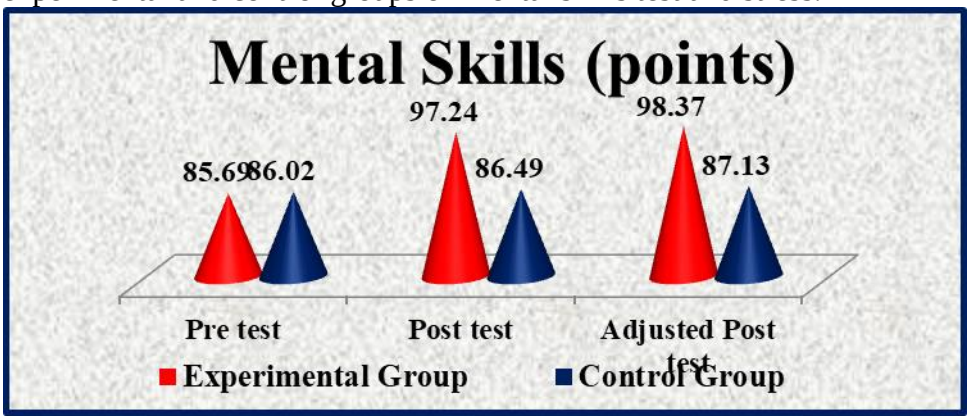
Table – II

Computation of Mean and Analysis of Covariance on Mental Skills and Stress of Experimental and Control Groups

Adjusted Post Mean	Experimental Group	Control Group	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Mental skills	98.37	87.13	BG	288.75	1	288.75	31.25*
			WG	157.08	17	9.24	
Stress	36.09	41.52	BG	27.92	1	27.92	13.49*
			WG	35.19	17	2.07	

* Significant at 0.05 level. Table value for df 1, 17 was 4.45

The above table indicates the adjusted mean value on mental skills test and stress of experimental and control groups were 98.37 & 87.13 and 36.09 & 41.52 respectively. The obtained F-ratio of 31.25 and 13.49 for adjusted mean was greater than the table value 4.45 for the degrees of freedom 1 and 17 required for significance at 0.05 level of confidence. The result of the study indicates that there was a significant difference among experimental and control groups on mental skills test and stress.



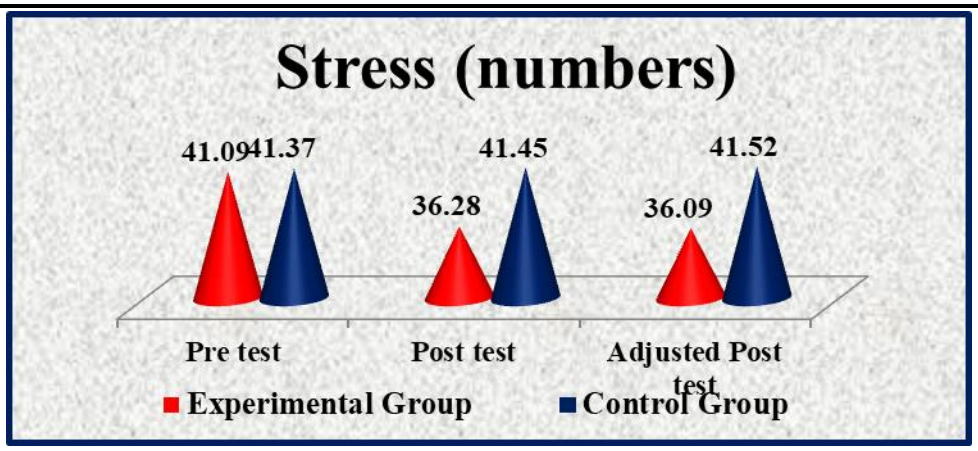


Figure I: Pre Test, Post Test and Adjusted Post Test Mean Values of Experimental Group and Control Group on Mental Skills and Stress.

4. DISCUSSION ON FINDINGS

The result of study indicates that there were significant differences between experimental and control groups on the mental skills and stress due to meditation and asana practices among Men students. The following studies are supported to the result of this investigation such as Anuja, & Arumugam, (2020) conducted the effect of yoga asana with pranayama practices on high and low density lipoprotein among Men type-2 diabetes patients. Bushell, (2020) evaluated the study on meditation and yoga practices as potential adjunctive treatment of SARS-CoV-2 infection and COVID-19. Saatcioglu, (2013) analysed the study on the regulation of gene expression by yoga, meditation and related practices.

5. CONCLUSION

The present study was exposed that significant difference was found in the mean of selected variables such as mental skills and the stress among experimental and control groups. There was significant improvement on the mental skills and the stress due to the effect of meditation and asana practices among Men students. However, the control group had not shown any significant improvement on the mental skills and the stress among the selected Men students. According to the result of this study, the regular meditation and asana practices would help to explore the positive changes on our mental ability.

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