

Significance Of Sahaja Yoga Meditation In Reducing Stress

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ABSTRACT

Background of Study: The Indian school education system is textbook- oriented that focuses on rote memorization of lessons and demands long hours of systematic study every day. The elaborate study routines that are expected by high school students span from the morning to till late evening hours, leaving little time for socialization, recreation, play games and sports by full strength.

Objective of Study: The present study was conducted with a view to see the effect of Sahaja Yoga meditation on stress among school children.

Materials and Method: Non-equivalent control group design was used for this experiment. The participants were 8th grade students from a school located in Proddatur. The students were randomly assigned to control and experimental groups. Experimental group received the treatment of Sahaja Yoga meditation program for 6 weeks, whereas the control group did not receive any treatment. Both groups were free to do their daily routine activities. Stress was assessed using a questionnaire before and after 6 weeks of Sahaja Yoga meditation standard statistical technique t-test to conclude the investigation. **Results:** The results of the study showed a significant difference in professional stress ($p < 0.05$) after 6 weeks of Sahaja Yoga meditation program.

INTRODUCTION:

The elaborate study routines, expected of high school students, span from morning till late evening hours, leaving little time for socialization, recreation, play games and sports with full zest and strength. These factors lead to stress among young students. Stress is anything that brings mental and emotional pressure leading to fear, anxiety, worry, apprehensions, anger, and the like. The body responds in a prompt, speedy, and inefficient way. On the World Suicide Prevention Day, observed on September 10, 2016, the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences had conducted a study on the growing number of suicides in India among school and college going students. The study revealed that about 11% of college students and about 7% 8% of high- school students have attempted suicide. The survey comprised 1500 school and college students. Such cases show a rising level of stress in students of India (Nair, 2016).

Today's education is competitive, stressful, and hectic to the students. Most parents expect exceptionally good academic results from their children. Such a pressure of parents makes students very busy in self-study, tuition classes, and completing home works. Indian school education system is text- book oriented that focuses on rote memorization of lessons and demands long hours of systematic study. In addition, examination pressure also causes stress in students. It is evident that physical education and sports do help reduce stress in school students. Physical education in India, being often a neglected part of education and many schools across the country not

being equipped with adequate means, the scenario of sports and physical education, on the whole is dismal. There are, however, very few schools that have managed to strike balance between professional and physical fitness.

According to medical professionals, 90%-95% of illnesses in modern era can be attributed to psychological reasons. Ninety-eight percent headaches are stress related. Stress also manifests itself into many other physical ailments such as indigestion, acidity, and life-killer ailments such as heart attacks. The World Health Organization, 2012 reports about 1 million suicides in 2010, which accounts for about 14/100,000 in a global population of 7 billion.

Meditation practice enables an individual to overcome stress and makes him/her capable of attaining good performance in school and also helps face other life-related problems. Hence, the objective of this study was to see the effect of Sahaja Yoga Meditation on professional stress among school children.

MATERIALS AND METHOD:

As the target population of the present experiment were school girls of standard VIII, a purposive sampling method was used (Best & Kahn, 2008). With the help of purposive sampling method, divisions "A" and "B" of standard VIII of Municipal High School, Predator in Kadapa Dist., A.P. were selected for the experiment. Thirteen girls in division 'A' and fifteen girls in division 'B' were present during the entire experimental period of 6 weeks. Procedure:

The present investigation is based on cause-and-effect relationship theory (Campbel & Stanley, 1963); the independent variable was Sahaja Yoga meditation program whereas dependent variable was academic stress of school girls. Sahaja Yoga meditation program was prepared with the help of experts in the field. On the basis of lottery method of randomization, selected participants were divided into experimental and control groups. Experimental group received training of Sahaja Yoga meditation daily in the morning at 08:00 - 09:00 a.m. for 6 weeks, whereas the control group did not receive any training.

Both groups were free to do their daily routine activities. Stress Measuring Inventory prepared by Rani & Singh (2008) was used before and after the 6 weeks of Sahaja Yoga meditation program to measure the stress level in the students. Measurement of the stress level in the sample was collected in points as per the guidelines given in the questionnaire. Collected data was analyzed with the help of t-test to conclude the investigation.

Intervention:

Sahaja Yoga meditation program was scheduled by considering the guidelines given by Alpharetta Public Library (2016). Sahaja Yoga is a unique method of meditation based on an experienced called "self-realization" (Kundalini awakening) that can occur within each human being. Sahaja means "spontaneous" and "yoga" translates as "union". Sahaja Yoga meditation was developed by shree Mataji Nirmala Devi in 1970. It involves the awakening of subtle spiritual energy known as Kundalini which lies dormant in the sacrum bone at the base of the spine in three-and-a-half coils. The gentle awakening of this Kundalini energy and the inner journey of self-discovery is known as enlightenment or self-realization.

Mooladhara Chakra, Swadisthan Chakra, Manipur Chakra, Anahata Chakra, Vishuddhi Chakra, Agnya Chakra, and Sahasrara Chakra have different qualities. By healing or balancing these chakras, we awaken and enhance their qualities within us, making us more balanced and integrated. Our enlightened chakras give us joy and peace. In short, Sahaja Yoga meditation technique promotes a more moral, united, integrated, and balanced self.

Chakra meditation, raising Kundalini, Bandhan, balancing left channel, balancing right channel, foot-soaking, use of earth, water, fire, and air elements, and checking vibrations are the meditation techniques of "Sahaja Yoga." Out of these meditation techniques, balancing left, right, parasympathetic energy channels and chakra meditation were administered to the experimental group participants.

RESULTS

The results of this study showed that pretest mean scores of control and experimental groups in academic stress were (121.69+ 6.17) and (126.07 ± 7.04) respectively. Whereas the mean difference was 4.38 points t-value of pretest was 1.73, which is not significant ($p > 0.05$). This reflects that the baseline academic stress of both the groups was similar [Table 1].

The mean scores in academic stress of control and experimental groups were (101.38 5.14) and (126.73+ 4.38) respectively. Whereas the mean difference was 25.35 points. t-value of posttest was 13.65, which is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This result helps to interpret that the Sahaja Yoga meditation program played a significant role to manage academic stress of the school girls in Proddatur, Kadapa Dist.

Table 1: Group-wise mean, standard deviation, t-value, and remarks of academic stress of school girls

Groups	n	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	T	Remarks
Pretest Control	13	121.69	6.17	4.38	1.73	0.05
Experimental Post test	15	126.07	7.04			
Control	13	101.38	5.14	25.35	13.65	0.05
Experimental	15	126/73	4.68			

DISCUSSION:

The results of this study showed significant improvement in academic stress due to the practice of Sahaja Yoga meditation program in school girls of Proddatur. In modern days, meditation is becoming popular throughout the world. Meditation helps in mental peace and thus benefits psychological well-being of a person. Earlier studies claim that Sahaja Yoga meditation improves quality of life, anxiety, and blood pressure (Chung, Brooks, Rai, Balk, & Rai, 2012). Further, Sahaja Yoga meditation is found to be safe and effective strategy for dealing with depressive feelings and occupational stress (Manocha, Black, Sarris, & Stough, 2011) along with improvement in various cognitive domains (Sharma, Das, Mondal, Goswami & Gandhi, 2006). Previous studies also indicate that Sahaja Yoga meditation was effective in asthma, epilepsy, fatigue, and emotional stability (Epstein et al., 2004; Panjwani et al., 2000; Boehm, Ostermann, Milazzo, & Bussing, 2012; Baijal & Srinivasan, 2010; Monochya, Blac, & Wilson, 2012; Reva, Pavlov, Loktev, Korenyok, & Aftanas, 2014). The results of the present study are concurrent with previous findings.

CONCLUSION:

"Sahaja Yoga meditation" program helpful in managing the professional stress of school girls.

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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