



EFFECT OF PRANAYAMA AND MINDFULNESS ON HAPPINESS, AND ANGER AMONG WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the happiness and anger of women, evaluated by **Oxford Happiness Questionnaire** and **The Anger questionnaire**. We evaluated 30 women, between the ages of 30 and 40 years, with control diagnosed of any physical health disorders or neurological disorders, any medication or treatment which alters the functions of the nervous system. Results of the t-test show that mean **happiness** differs before practice of Pranayama and mindfulness ($M = 03.68$, $SD = 0.63$) and after practice of Pranayama and mindfulness ($M = 4.75$, $SD = 0.45$) at the .05 level of significance ($t = 6.101$, $df = 29$, $n = 30$, $p < .05$). Results of the t-test show that mean **level of Anger** differs before practice of Pranayama and mindfulness ($M = 39.23$, $SD = 9.50$) and after practice of Pranayama and mindfulness ($M = 23.33$, $SD = 9.86$) at the .05 level of significance ($t = 3.518$, $df = 29$, $n = 30$, $p < .05$). It shows that practice of Pranayama and mindfulness helps women in removing of obstacles that hamper the happiness reduce anger and improves the perspective of their life.

Key words: Executive Functions; adolescent girls; yogic Intervention

Modern man considers 'happiness' as the gauge of a meaningful and successful life. From Plato through Sigmund Freud, to the present generation Psychologists, extensively enquired on the topic. The present pioneers of psychological researchers are still in search of meaning of life and how happiness is achieved. Psychologists suggest a number of ways in how happiness is fostered. Positive psychology is the scientific study of the "good life", or the positive aspects of the human experience that make life worth living (Seligman et al. 2000). It focuses on both individual and societal well-being.

Many factors are expected to contribute happiness in man. Genetics as well as developmental and other environmental factors influence happiness. Various psychological constructs like achievement, effective parenting, peer influences and many other behavioural practices influence happiness. Even the practice of gratitude is responsible for happiness. The majority of empirical studies (Sansone & Sansone, 2010) indicate that there is an association between gratitude and a sense of overall well being. India accommodates multiple cultures and human lives are highly influenced by religious practices and rituals. Yoga is a way of life in India and many other parts of the world, which has been developed by saints, and said to contribute a successful and happy life.

The present study is aimed to examine the effect of pranayama and mindfulness practices on the wellbeing. The study particularly analyses its effects of pranayama and mindfulness on psychological variables of happiness and anger among women.

Yoga is a system of physical exercise and mental/emotional focus that incorporates components of the mind (cognitive and meditative concentration) and the body (postures and breathing exercises). While the goal of yoga historically has been to create a spiritual state of unity, it is also practiced to produce physical and emotional wellbeing. Many Researches suggests that yoga can improve mood (Streeter et al., 2010). The proper insight about yoga let the person free from bondages of reactions in his lifespan. Mindfulness includes practices that enhance the focused attention and self-awareness. The most widely used definition of mindfulness consists of both awareness and acceptance (awareness without judgment). Acceptance means to embrace what happens within the mind and body, moment to moment, just as it is, allowing an individual to interpret a situation accurately (Neff, 2012). Mindfulness includes the awareness of suffering, and acceptance is willingness to move toward and experience suffering (Neff, 2012).

Neuropsychological evidences of benefits of Yoga and Mindfulness Many studies show evidences for the effectiveness of Meditation in disorders of affect, anxiety and attention. The combined evidence from neurobiological and clinical studies seems promising about the advantages of yoga and mindfulness practices. Rubia (2009) suggested a more thorough understanding of the neurobiological mechanisms of action and clinical effectiveness of the different Meditative practices is needed before Meditative practices can be leveraged in the prevention and intervention of mental illness Structural Brain Changes: Neuropsychological imaging studies have demonstrated that mindfulness can induce neuroplastic changes in various areas of the brain (including the anterior cingulate cortex, insula, default mode network structures, left hippocampus, temporo-parietal junction, and fronto-limbic network (Holzel et al., 2011). The structural brain changes linked to mindfulness (and related forms of meditation) are typically associated with (i) increased learning and memory capacity (Holzel et al., 2011), (ii) improved self-regulatory efficacy and (iii) greater interceptive awareness (i.e., increased sensitivity to sensations that originate in the body as well as associated subjective awareness of the physical self as a sentient being (Lazar et al., 2005). Reduced Autonomic Arousal: Mindfulness and yoga related meditative techniques have been shown to increase output in the vagus nerve – a primary cranial nerve responsible for regulating heart and breathing rate (Telles et al., 2013). In turn, reduced autonomic arousal is associated with increased relaxation response, including across both somatic and psychological relaxation indices (Khanna & Greeson, 2013). Perceptual Shift: Practising mindfulness and yoga is believed to create a perceptual shift in the way individuals respond and relate to thoughts, feelings, and sensory stimuli (e.g., sounds, sights, smells, pain, etc.) Jerath et al., 2012). Greater Situational Awareness: Mindfulness can help individuals better understand and connect with the physical and social environment in which they find themselves. More specifically, it can induce what has been termed the phenomena feedback effect that involves the mindfulness practitioner entering into a form of effortless communication with the present moment (Shonin & Van Gordon, 2015).

Increase in Self-Awareness: Mindfulness can augment self-awareness that, in-turn, is understood to improve ability to identify and label negative mood states and thinking patterns (Gillespie et al., 2012). . Deficits in emotional regulation are particularly pertinent in sexual offenders.. It is argued that the effective control of emotional states may be helped through the adoption of a group of meditational practices, known as mindfulness techniques, which have emerged from Buddhist philosophy. The techniques involve slow, deep breathing and have been shown to affect vagal modulation of the heart and the functioning of specific neural circuits which are critically involved in emotional regulation. Buddhist teachings suggest that addiction to selfhood can be overcome by a treatment process involving phases of (i) becoming aware of the imputed self, (ii) deconstructing the imputed self, and (iii) reconstructing a dynamic and non-dual self (Shonin, E. et al., 2012).

PRANAYAMA

Pranayama is an ancient breath technique that originates from yogic practices in India. It involves controlling your breath in different styles and lengths. It has more recently gained popularity in the western world because of the many health benefits that come from a pranayama practice.

The fourth limb. Pranayama is typically practiced alongside yoga. It is known as the fourth anga, or limb, of yoga. Pranayama is regarded as a science. It's believed that you can control the power of your mind through regulating your breath.

The word pranayama comes from two separate words: prana and ayama. Prana translates to breath, while ayama has many different meanings including expansion, length, and rising.

In yogic beliefs, it is thought that you can control your inner force, also known as prana, through a pranayama practice. In yoga, prana also represents the physical forces of light, heat, magnetism, and energy. These meanings center on the ability that a pranayama practice has to develop breath control and improve mental well-being. A strong pranayama breath is also believed to help detoxify your body.

Three phases. A pranayama cycle has three phases:

Puraka, or inhalation

Kumbhaka, or retention

Rechaka, or exhalation

Types of Pranayama

Pranayama practices have both slow and fast variations. While there are many different types of pranayama practices, some popular ones are:

Bhastrika pranayama, or bellow breath, is used to boost energy levels.

Kapal Bhati pranayama, or skull shining technique, is practiced for energy clearing and its detoxifying effects on the body.

Nadi Shodhan pranayama, or alternate nostril technique, is believed to center your mind by joining the right and left sides of your brain.

Bhramari pranayama, or bee breath, is used to help calm the mind and racing thoughts.

Cognitive function. Both slow and fast kinds of pranayama can help improve your cognitive functions. Studies show that fast pranayama in particular can help to improve auditory and sensory- motor skills.

Mindfulness. Much like the more popular forms of yoga, pranayama can increase mindfulness. Its meditative method of breath focus and awareness can aid your ability to live in the present moment.

Stress and emotional regulation. Pranayama's ability to improve mindfulness has also been found to lower stress and aggression among students taking particularly stressful exams. Pranayama's focus on breathing and relaxation may alter the levels of stress molecules.

Anxiety. Pranayama can significantly lower anxiety levels and any negative feelings associated with it. Regular pranayama practice can help with anxiety. It can also improve areas of mental focus that are often affected by it such as awareness and attention. Just one session can help you to noticeably reduce anxiety.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness are meditation techniques that derives from Buddhist practices, as old as a 2600- year. Although contemplative techniques similar to mindfulness feature in many of the world's religious and spiritual traditions, the type of mindfulness employed in mental health settings is largely based on the Buddhist model. Mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) are at a pivotal point in their future development. Spurred on by an ever-increasing number of studies and breadth of clinical application, the value of such approaches may appear self-evident. The public health impact of MBIs can be enhanced significantly by situating the work in a broader framework of clinical psychological science (Desmidian, S and Segal, 2015). All the method of mindfulness can say in one word as "be here and now". One study showed that mindfulness meditation improved psychological wellbeing and reduced psychological symptoms of stress related problems, illness and anxiety (Carmody, J .et al. 2008). These include observing (attending to or noticing internal and external stimuli, such as sensations, emotions, cognitions, sights, sounds, and smells), describing (noting or mentally labelling these stimuli with words), acting with awareness (attending to one's current actions, as opposed to behaving automatically or absent-mindedly), non-judging of inner experience (refraining from evaluation of one's sensations, cognitions, and emotions) and non-reactivity to inner experience (allowing thoughts and feelings to come and go, without attention getting caught up in them)(Carmody

and Baer, 2007) Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy helped prevent depression recurrence as effectively as maintenance antidepressant medication did. The study also found that MBCT had a larger effect on people with histories of more severe childhood abuse, which has been associated with a greater risk of relapse, than on participants overall (Lu, S. 2015).

Relation of Yoga and mindfulness with happiness Positive psychology has flourished in the last 5 years. The author reviewed recent developments in the field, including books, meetings, courses, and conferences. They also discuss the newly created classification of character strengths and virtues, a positive complement to the various editions of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (e. g., American Psychiatric Association, 1994), and present some cross-cultural findings that suggest a surprising ubiquity of strengths and virtues. Researchers found the yoga and mindfulness interventions lastingly increased happiness and decreased depressive symptoms. Positive interventions can supplement traditional interventions that relieve suffering and may someday be the practical legacy of positive psychology (Seligman, M. et al 2005)

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Women or mothers are the backbone of a healthy society. The stress or load on women is an issue of deep concern, in all walks of life, either working women or not. Home making, parenting issues, marital stress, and also insecurity and threat from atrocities, frequent rape and violence make the modern woman more stressed than ever. . The stress affects various aspects of human lives, and also stress negatively affects life satisfaction and happiness. For women, the demand of relationship and lifestyle becomes too big, because some women work overtime just trying to cope. Stress also cause a number of feelings such as rejection, depression, which in turn can lead to health problems such as headaches, upset stomach, insomnia, ulcers, high blood pressure, heart-disease, stroke etc... Yoga can be very effective in helping to sort out confused and discordant feelings in women. Today, Yoga is no longer confined to remote ashrams in the Himalayas. Since mental and physical strength is necessary for the women to deal with the demands of the difficult world, yoga is a practice that may bring great personal benefit, in the form of better awareness, understanding, energy, health and general well-being. Yoga is that state where the mind is calm, quiet, serene, and the nervous system is relaxed and our actions become clear and concise. Through Yoga, the body and mental wellbeing can be energized.

METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVES

The present study is aimed at pre-post psychological differences in the pranayama and mindfulness. The specific objectives are

1. To assess the effects of pranayama and mindfulness practice on level of Happiness among women

2. To assess the effects of combined yoga and mindfulness practice on levels of Anger dimensions among women.

Research Design: A series of pre-tests had given to the group. Subsequently, treatment and series of posttests had given to the same samples. Levels of happiness and Anger are measured before and after interventions of 8 weeks intensive program of pranayama and mindfulness practice, supervised by a certified yoga practitioner.

SAMPLE:

The study uses purposive sampling method. The study is conducted on a sample population of 30 respondents of women, aged between 30 years and 40 years. All of them undergone a regular pranayama and mindfulness training organized by a governmental body, under an experienced trainer. They came from different socioeconomic strata, in and around New Delhi. Informed consent has (oral/written) collected from the participants before inducting them as participants.

TESTS/TOOLS

Personal data schedule: The personal data schedule was prepared by the investigator, which describes the socio demographic details of the subjects such as Name, Age, Sex, Place of residence, etc.

Oxford Happiness Questionnaire: Oxford Happiness Questionnaire is a well-developed happiness questionnaire for testing happiness level. The scientific study of happiness requires accurate measurement of the construct that satisfies assumptions of parametric statistics and thus allows both researchers and clinicians to make reliable and valid comparisons with the relevant data sources. The 29-item Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) is a widely-used scale for 35 assessment of personal happiness. While its psychometric properties are acknowledged to be acceptable, it presents scores on an ordinal scale and may thus not discriminate precisely between individual happiness levels. The current study aimed to improve precision and item functioning of the OHQ by applying Rasch analysis to a sample of 281 participants.

The Anger questionnaire: Extra punitive (Typ1) & Intra punitive (Typ 2) The anger scale was developed by Safarulla (2013), in which there are 24 items in which 12 items each to measure intropunitive and extra punitive anger. The total scale has been used in this scale to get an aggregate of levels of anger. This scale was designed to administer among adult population above the age of 18 years. The extra punitive questionnaire is aimed at the assessing subjective anger level the condition in which who are easily provoked by external or internal anger stimuli. They represent in a way of harming or threatening others. Items related to Intrapunitive Anger dimensionsmeasures the anger behaviours directed toward the self, like self-harming, grinding teeth, that will to internalize the impact of stress that lead to arousal of sympathetic activation of Autonomic nervous system, leading to excessive stress on the person The validity of the each

items were checked by 11 selected experienced psychologists. The items those were agreed by all the 11 psychologists. The reliability co efficient cronbach's Alfa 0.88 for extra punitive and 0.84 for intropunitive scale respectively indicate adequate reliability for the samples of the present study. (Safarulla, 2013).

PROCEDURE:

pranayama and Mindfulness Yoga and Mindfulness meditation training provide to the sample group, with daily 1 hr basis for 8 weeks. This training includes Guided meditations, breathing exercise (pranayama and vipassana), teaching 8 limbs of Ashtanga yoga including postures of yoga (Asanas), and observing 5 senses for stop over thinking process of the mind and rise mindfulness or awareness of the participants. Guided meditation and motivational and awareness-based trainings also given. Relevant questionnaires were given to assess before and after changes.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The current study uses measures of central tendency, ie, Mean, Standard Deviation (SD) correlation statistics are used to find out, if there is any significant difference between before and after of yoga and mindfulness training, T- test is used for the analysis of data.

RESULTS

The first section will summarize the results of the descriptive statistics. Table 1 demonstrates the values of happiness in before and after conditions

Table 1. Levels of happiness in the before and after conditions of pranayama and Mindfulness Practices

	Before		After		Mean Difference	t
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Happiness	03.68	0.63	4.75	0.45	1.07	6.101**

** (P=<0.05)

The mean (M) scores of happiness before undergoing the behavioural package was 03.68, with the standard deviations (SD) of 0.63. After the interventions, the mean score was raised to 4.75 (SD= 0.45) with the mean difference (MD) of 1.07. The t value (6.101) shows statistically significant at both 0.01 and 0.05 levels. Therefore, it is interpreted that, there is improvement in levels of happiness compared to the before condition and the difference is statistically significant. Figure 1 shows the diagrammatic representation.

Table 2. Levels of Anger before and after pranayama and Mindfulness Practices among women

	Before		After			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	t
Anger	39.23	9.50	23.33	9.86	15.9	3.518**

** (P=<0.05)

The mean (M) scores of happiness before undergoing the behavioural package was 39.23, with the standard deviations (SD) of 9.50. After the interventions, the mean score was raised to 23.33 (SD= 9.86) with the mean difference (MD) of 15.9. The t value (3.518) of the test shows statistically significant at both 0.01 and 0.05 levels. Therefore, it is interpreted that, there is significant changes in level of Anger, compared to the before condition. So, the difference is statistically significant. Figure 1 shows the diagrammatic representation.

DISCUSSION

The current study was aimed to examine the effect of pranayama and mindfulness on happiness and anger among women. The finding of the Study shows significant positive changes in happiness and anger level by the use of pranayama and mindfulness practice. The levels of happiness were significantly improving and the levels of Anger were significantly reduced. These techniques may be useful to the psychological issues like depression, anxiety, stress and psychosomatic issues. The age base separate analysis may help to find new multi dimension effects of these combinations in future study. The present interventional package will be helpful in bringing improvements in such conditions and there by enhance overall wellbeing. The study was particularly conducted on women. Women face stress and other security issues in contemporary period. The results of the study can be recommended as a measure of empowerment of women among other programs.

CONCLUSION

The study was aimed to assess the effect of pranayama and mindfulness on happiness, and levels of anger among women. The results found that there is significant improvement in the levels of Happiness and Anger after interventional packages. The results of the present study can further be recommended to researches and interventions of overall psychological well being. It can also be proposed as an women empowerment program.

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