Effect of Shaktipat Meditation on Anxiety in Relation to the Emotional Intelligence and Age

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Abstract

The present investigation is based on research study undertaken to find out the effect of *Shaktipat* meditation on Anxiety of student- teachers. An experiment was conducted on 152 student-teachers of B. Ed. on the basis of non-randomized control group pre-test post-test design. For data collection, Comprehensive Anxiety Test developed by Sharma et al (1992); Raven's Standard Progressive matrices (revised 2000); and Seven-Fold Emotional Intelligence Scale (SFEIS) developed by Khaira et al (2004) were used. Analysis by ANCOVA revealed that *Shaktipat* Meditation was an effective practice to reduce Anxiety of student- teachers. High, average and low Emotional Intelligence (EI); different age categories (20 to 23; 24 to 27; 28 to32 years) student-teachers had equally benefited from meditation when pre-Anxiety and pre-Non-verbal Intelligence (NVI) were statistically controlled.

Key words: Shaktipat Meditation, Anxiety, Emotional Intelligence, Non-verbal Intelligence

Introduction

Anxiety is a psychological and physiological state characterized by cognitive, somatic, emotional, and behavioral components *(Seligman et al. 2001)*. In psychiatry it is a relatively permanent state of worry and nervousness occurring in a variety of mental disorders, usually accompanied by compulsive. Anxiety energies the person to move, but if the anxiety is not at its proper level it leads the person to emotional disturbance. In such persons it becomes so unmanageable that it may lead to disintegrative adjustment like crime, alcoholism, drug addictions, sex perversion or sometimes suicide. Such unmanageable level of anxiety affects the conscious as well as unconscious mind of person.

Few studies supported that Anxiety is related with EI as Brackett et al. (2003) found that lower emotional intelligence related to negative outcomes, including stress, illegal drugs, alcohol use, deviant behaviour and poor relations with friends. Santesso et al. (2006) found that low emotional intelligence was associated with significantly more externalizing behaviours (i.e. aggression and delinquency), replicating previous work. Gill (2004) stated that the emotional maturity of an individual i.e. self-control, patience, perseverance-sensitivity, interpersonal effectiveness etc. would determine to a great extent an individuals ability to cope with stress.

Ealy (1993) showed that teachers with more teaching experience had lower levels of anxiety; there was no evidence that self-efficacy increased as years of teaching increased and younger teachers

were more inclined to have higher levels of anxiety. *Brook (1995)* exposed that age, emotional intelligence, and ethnicity had little influence on congruence for anxiety or depression. *Pich (2000)* found only statistically significant correlations between state anxiety and age, and self-efficacy and age based on one of the measures for each. *Emmons (2003)* concluded that emotional intelligence, age, computer experience, and all influence computer anxiety. *Disayavanish (1995)* showed the meditation treatment reduced the level of all of the following psychopathological variables: obsessive-compulsive, interpersonal sensitivity, depression, anxiety, hostility, phobic anxiety, paranoid ideation, and psychoticism. *Anderson (1996)* indicated that meditation was an effective intervention to reduce perception of stress and anxiety and aspects of experienced burnout in a heterogeneous group of teachers. *Debra (1998)* revealed that practitioners of the transcendental meditation program had decreased scores on tests of anxiety and mood disturbance. Increased regularity of practice of the transcendental meditation program was associated with a decreased POMS Tension-Anxiety score. *Sagula (1999)* reported that drop-outs were characterized as having higher state anxiety and being in the initial phases of grieving. *Carlisle (2005)* found the efficacy of transcendental meditation in stress reduction, increased positive experiences/behaviours and fewer negative ones, the development of the health, relationships, self-concept, and psychological well being of employees. *Arana (2006)* supported predictions that increase in mindfulness lead to reductions in shyness, social anxiety, and anxiety in general. It explores the alleviation of psychological suffering through the use of the spiritual practice of meditation and the altered states of consciousness associated with this practice. On the basis of above observations the present study with *Shaktipat* meditation was designed.

Shaktipat: A Technique of Meditation

Shaktipat is a technique of meditation. Literally meaning of *Shaktipat* is "establishing power or energy in its actual place". It is fluctuating energy level, which is responsible for varying physical and mental states. The body's energy centres are called *Chakras*. There are seven major *chakras* reside along the spine and the head i.e. *Mooladhara*, *Swadishtan*, *Manipura*, *Anahata*, *Vishuddh*, *Ajna*, *Shahasrara*. Energy flows from the bottom to the top through the inter-mediate chakras. These chakras are affected by different psychological characteristics. Due to gravitational pull of the earth, flow of energy in most of human beings is down ward. Expert helps (by deep breathing techniques) to change the flow of energy, from downward to upward, which brings positive affective psychological changes.

Objectives

1. To study the effect of *Shaktipat* Meditation on anxiety of student-teachers.

2. To study the effect of meditation, EI and their interaction on anxiety by taking pre-anxiety and pre-intelligence as covariates.

3. To study the effect of meditation, age and their interaction on anxiety by taking pre-anxiety and pre-intelligence as covariates.

Material and Method

Participants

For present study B.Ed. students from Lovely Institute of Education, Phagwara, Govt. College of Education, Jalandhar and G.N. College of Education Kapurthala, were selected on voluntarily basis. In Govt. College and G.N. College of Education, only hostellers were approachable for meditation. Age range of students was between 20 to 32 years. Total 152 subjects participated in the present study out of which 92 were in Experimental and 60 in Control group.

Instruments

Comprehensive Anxiety Test prepared by Sharma et al (1992) Raven's Standard Progressive matrices (revised 2000), and Seven-Fold Emotional Intelligence Scale (SFEIS) developed by Khera et al (2004) were used to collect data.

Experimental Design

The present study was experimental in nature. It was based on the lines of non-randomized control group pre-test post-test design.

Procedure

Students, who voluntarily offered themselves to practice Meditation, were divided (randomly) into two groups i.e. experimental and control groups, from each College. Before the start of the experiment, anxiety test was administered to collect pre-anxiety and intelligence scores. The experimental group students were practiced *Shaktipat* Meditation for three months (105 sittings i.e. first five days 4 sittings and rest days one sittings daily) at the rate of one hour per sitting under the supervision, direction & guidance of the expert (Mata Yog Amrit Ji from Amritdham Meditation Center,

Hoshiarpur). In Both Colleges Meditation was practiced through *ShaktiPat Vidhi* only. At the end of the treatment the Anxiety Test was administered separately to the student of both experimental and control groups. Scoring of all the tools were done as directed in their respective manuals.

Results

Table 1: Group and Test wise Mean and Standard Deviation of Scores on Anxiety

Group	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Control	39.58	16.03	38.37	16.62
Experimental	36.86	14.47	28.92	13.38

Table 2: Summary of 2x3x3 Factorial Design of ANCOVA for Anxiety by taking Pre-Anxiety and pre-NVI as Covariates

Source of Variance	SSyx	df	MSSyx	Fyx	Sig.
Treatment	2378.56	1	2378.56	14.66	0.001
EI	330.99	2	165.50	1.02	0.36
Age	427.69	2	213.84	1.32	0.27
Treatment x EI	48.82	2	24.41	0.15	0.86
Treatment x Age	10.82	2	5.41	0.03	0.97
EI x Age	370.81	4	92.70	0.57	0.68
Treatment x EI x Age	185.19	4	46.30	0.29	0.89
Error	21418.21	132	162.26		
Total	197875.00	152			

Table 2 reveals that the adjusted F value for Meditation is 14.659, which is significant at 0.001 level with *df* 1/132. It indicates that adjusted mean score of Anxiety of experimental group and control group differ significantly when pre-Anxiety and pre-NVI were considered as covariates. In the light of this null hypothesis that there is no significant effect of *Shaktipat* Meditation on Anxiety, is rejected. Further, the adjusted mean score of anxiety of the experimental group

(28.977) is lower than that of the control group (35.935). It reflects that meditation practiced to experimental group was found to be significantly effective to reduce the Anxiety level of student teacher when both groups matched with respect to pre-Anxiety and pre-NVI. Effect-size estimates was 1.00 for Anxiety level. Cohen (1969) indicated that an effect size of .80 should be considered large for most statistical tests in psychological research.

The adjusted F value for EI is 1.020, for age is 1.318, for interaction between meditation and EI is 0.150, for interaction between meditation and age is 0.033, for interaction between EI and Age is 0.571, for interaction between meditation, EI and Age is 0.285 which are not significant.

Discussion

Shaktipat Meditation helps an individual to make mind silent. This silence of mind is helpful to reduce 'disturbed state of mind' and enhanced relaxation *(Kjellander, 1994; Stewart, 1995; and Telles et al., 1993).* In the present study it was found that Shaktipat Meditation was an effective technique to reduce anxiety of student-teachers when pre-anxiety and pre-NVI were taken as covariates Anxiety reduction as effect of meditation was reported by most of the previous studies as *Singh et al. (2007), Tamborrino (2001), Gaur (1994), Disayavanish (1995), Anderson (1996), Debra (1998), Sagula (1999), Stevens (2000), Carlisle (2005), Arana (2006)* and many others.

There was no significant effect of EI on Anxiety when pre-Anxiety and pre-NVI were taken as covariates. It means that student-teachers with

High, average and low EI had Equal level of Anxiety. Anxiety was found to be independent of age when pre-anxiety and pre-non-verbal intelligence were considered as covariates. It is recognizable that results with all statistically controlled variables are matching; hence, it may vigilantly conclude that age did not influence anxiety of student-teachers. It denotes that different age-groups (20 to 23; 24 to 27; and 28 to 32 years) of student-teachers had Equal level of anxiety. Compatible to this finding, *Craven (2000), Tamborrino (2001) and Velazquez-Zamora, (2001)* divulged that anxiety was not significantly correlated with age. Differing to these *Brook (1995), Emmons (2003) and Pich (2000)* discovered positive correlation between age and various types of anxiety that is higher the subject's age, the higher the subject's anxiety. Reverse to these *Ealy (1993)* divulged that age was negatively related to anxiety. Reason of inconsistency between present and previous findings may be difference in sample size. Secondly, age range of sample of present and previous studies is varying. The most of the previous studies (except studies regarding effect of meditation) were survey or descriptive studies which involve large sample. As the present study was experimental in nature, that is why, sample was relatively small. The findings in the present study should peruse in this light.

There was no significant effect of interaction between meditation and EI; between meditation and age; between EI and age; and between meditation, EI and Age on Anxiety when pre-Anxiety and pre-NVI were taken as covariates. It

means that both high, average and low EI; different age categories (20 to 23; 24 to 27; 28 to 32 years); and student-teachers of age categories 20 to 23 years with high, average and low EI, student-teachers of age categories 24 to 27 years with high, average and low EI, and student-teachers of age categories 28 to 32 years with high, average and low EI gained Equal benefits of Shaktipat Meditation when pre-Anxiety and pre-NVI were statistically controlled. Consistency of the result suggested that Meditation should a part of education.

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