

Impact of Meditation on the Personality of College Going Students

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ABSTRACT

Meditation is a mind body practice. The desired purpose of each meditation technique is to channel our awareness into a more positive by totally transforming one's state of mind. To meditate is to turn inwards, to concentrate on the inner self. Meditation allows all this activity to settle down, and often results in the mind becoming more peaceful, calm and focused. In essence, meditation allows the awareness to become rejuvenated. Hence the present study was taken up to study the impact of meditation on personality of college going students. The study was carried out in Lucknow on the college going students from various institutions using multistage random sampling technique. A total of 120 college going students were selected from various institutions. Dimensional personality inventory(DPI) by Singh and Singh (2002) was used to assess the personality differences. Research revealed that meditation has significant impact on personality of college going students. The multifaceted stress of college going students with responsibilities at various areas may be the reason for their weaker mental health. Proper appropriation and meditation may be the best remedies for the improvement among college going students.

Keywords: Meditation; Personality; College going students

INTRODUCTION

Today's age is known as age of information & technology as well as of power. The whole world is coming together through the internet, television and telephone as well as mobiles. These things are becoming essential parts of our daily life. The internet is identifying as a super highway of the information process such as obtaining and transforming the information through various sources. Emails, SMS, Website, Webpage whatsapp and Download are the words that are extremely used in our daily life. The internet has made it possible for people all over the world to communicate with one another effectively and inexpensively. No human being

has remained unaffected by the information technology. Today mobile and television also affects our life positively and negatively also. Today so many options have appeared to people as well as students to change their personality traits quickly. All these things are not bad but the students could not understand the proper purpose and use of these particular things respectively.

Hence, various college students have been playing with the mobile handset, video games either at home or shops. Some college students are becoming addict of the video games and mobile also.. Basically these things are tools;

their applicability depended on purpose of the users. So many college students are suffering from the different stressors. In short, today tremendous opportunities are available to raise imbalance in the personality of college students. Due to above reasons their academic performance seems to be decreasing speedily. Majority of college students are experiencing frustration and confusion in taking decisions while passing through their college life. Meditation technique provides knowledge to us about our mind and body phenomena. Meditation means the objectively observation of one's own respiration. The focus of meditation technique is on observation of natural respiration to make our mind sharp and peaceful. A good student is one who does not harm others by mental, vocal or actions, who help others, who has mastery over the study skills and respect to others. Meditation provides an appropriate opportunity for the students to be aware about their mind and body phenomena with all hidden abilities and understood their complexities. Thus, the main objective of the present research was to investigate the effect of meditation on increasing concentration thereby resulting personality changes of college students. **(N.S. Dongare 2012)**

Meditation is a very effective method of relaxation. Thousands of years ago, Patanjali, an Indian sage & legends, described the process by which the capacity to meditate is actualized. It is called it "self realization" since, in the state of meditation; experienced an absolute awareness of one "self." The idea of meditation is to focus your thoughts on one thing relaxing for a sustained period of time. It gives body time to relax and recuperate and clear away toxins that may have built up through stress and mental or physical activity. Meditation slows breathing,

reduces blood pressure, helps muscle relax, reduces anxiety etc.

The term meditation is derived from the Latin word *meditatum*, meaning to ponder **(Bailey, 1773)**. Meditation can be defined as "a family of practices that train attention in order to heighten awareness and bring mental processes under greater voluntary control" **(Walsh, 1983)**. Since western civilization has been introduced to eastern meditative practice, meditation has become increasingly integrated with traditional psychotherapies for use in clinical settings **(Kabat-Zinn, et al. 1986 & Shapiro, 1982)**.

Personality development is the development of the organized pattern of behavior and attitude that makes a person distinctive **(Allik et al., 2004)**. Personality development occurs by the on-going interaction of temperament, character, and environment. Personality is what makes a person a unique person and it is recognizable soon after birth. A child's personality has several components; temperament, environment and character **(Bastar, 2007)**. Temperament is the set of genetically determined traits that determine the child's approach to the World and how the child learns about the World. There are no genes that specify personality traits, but some genes do control the development of the nervous system, which in turn control behavior. A second component of personality comes from adoptive patterns related to a child's specific environment. Temperament, with its dependence on genetic factors, is sometimes referred to as 'nature' while the environmental factors are called 'nurture'.

There is still a controversy as to which factor ranks higher in affecting personality development, all experts agree that child whether school going or not, plays a critical role

in the development of child's personality. Finally, the third component of personality is character the set of emotional, cognitive and behavioral patterns learned from experience that determine how a person thinks, feels, and behaves. A person's character continues to evolve throughout life, although much depends on born traits and early experience. Character is also dependent on a person's moral development. In 1956, psychiatrist, Erik Erikson provided an insightful description as to how personality develops based on his extensive experience in psychotherapy with children and adolescents from low; upper and middle- class backgrounds. The socialization process of an individual consists of eight phases, each one accompanied by a 'psychosocial crisis' that must be solved if the person is to manage the next and subsequent phases (**Bem, 2009 personality theories, encyclopedia of children health**).

Besides the home environment, a child's school environment too plays a major role in shaping child personality. Once a child starts going to school, he learns how to interact and deal with his peers. He comes to know how to engage in playing according to the rules and regulation. He gets educated, learns how to read, write and communicate effectively. A child's personality is greatly influenced by the way he is treated at school, both by his teachers as well as his peers.

Personality plays an important role in determining not only behavior of an individual but also influences the overall success and prosperity in life. Interest in personality is as old as inclination. For ages, person's situation and interaction has played an important role in the development of an individual's personality. In the context, not only the family environment but also the society and the culture, and education

play an important role in the development of an individual.

OBJECTIVES

To assess the personality differences among college going students due to meditation practices

HYPOTHESIS

Meditation does not have significant impact on personality across various age groups

METHODOLOGY

Research design- Research design is a master plan specifying the methods and procedures guiding researcher to collect to collect and analyze. In the present study **correlational and experimental research design** was used to obtain and analyze the data. Experimental studies are those where the researcher tests the hypothesis of causal relationship between variables.

Locale of the study: - The urban areas of Lucknow were selected for the study as it was convenient for researcher to conduct research. The sample was selected from the identified meditation centers and colleges

Sampling procedure- For selection of the respondents, purposive random sampling technique was adopted. Simple random sample of size n drawn from a population of size N(120) in such a way that every possible sample of size n has the same chance of being selected.

Sample size- A total of 120 samples were selected from Lucknow district. The total sample was divided into two groups experimental and control group. A sample of 60 students were selected from meditation centres

who are continuously practicing meditation since last 3 months and who comprised experimental group and a sample of 60 students were randomly selected from colleges, who do not practice meditation comprised the control group

The personality of the students was assessed using dimensional personality inventory (DPI)

Dimensional personality inventory:-To study the personality of the youth, dimensional personality inventory by **Singh and Singh (2002)** was used.

DESCRIPTION OF PDI

It consists of 60 statements in sample (easy to understand even by Non-depressive, and (5) Erotic instability and emotional instability. each trait is measured by 10 items through three Response alternatives-yes, undecided and no. The 'yes' is scored 2,'undecided' is to be scored 1, whereas 'no' is equal to zero. Total time required for administration is 15 minutes. It is assumed that each of personality traits is normally distributed. Names of the traits given here postulated to the right end of the normal curve and opposite the names are located towards left end of the curve. The areas of dimension personality inventory are described as below-

(1) **activity-passivity trait**- if a person is active, energetic, enthusiast, persistent and busy with ability to concentrate for long duration of on the one hand and passive, dull, inactive, slow and irregular in word deviation with constructive output, delayed reactions in work, willingness to on the other hand. Higher score on this dimension

shows activity trait of on personality whereas lower score tends the passiveness of an individual.

(2) **Enthusiastic and non- enthusiastic trait**- It indicates be happy go lucky, warm heated person, enjoying life, fond of being com of others, social and outgoing, mixing easily in the company of the other, loves enthusiastic and courageous work, open hearted, ability to move per for various functions. This is indicated by the cyclothymiacs temperament higher scores indicates the greater tendency. On the other hand, lower some indicates non enthusiastic trend by expressing deservedness, shyness, in cold keeping aloof, and feeling difficulty to contact other people, slow spoken, participation of various functions and also known as schizothyme personality.

(3) **Assertive – submissive**- It indicates the assertiveness of an individual likely to act as a main role player, independent nature, non- convincing with other's ideas, dominant, whereas submissiveness keeps his ideas to ideas to himself only, not dare to open his mout, fearful to meet and exchange views with other, accept subordination and act as others say, hesitant to oppose other's views. High score indicates the assertiveness trait of personality, whereas low score is near to submissiveness dimension.

(4) **Suspicious- trusting**- High score shows the paranoid tendency of the individual which is reflected in his suspicious nature about others,

apprehensive, having no faith on others, blaming other for all his failures and non- achievement, feeling misconception of people about himself and feels on that others are jealous of him and want to harm, him, whereas low score tends to trusting traits of personality which do not have any such paranoid tendencies, accepting conditions, easy to get on with other, adaptable, cheerful, uncompetitive. A good team worker, an open and tolerant person and usually willing to take a chance with people, realizing own weaknesses and faults.

(5) **Depressive- non depressive-** High score on the personality traits indicates feeling of helplessness, hopelessness, worthlessness, depressed, unwanted, unloved, suicidal ideas, feeling of inferiority, highly frustrated, lack of self-confidence, sad on misdeeds and mistakes done in the past, jealous about their happiness restless and full of thence. Whereas low score tends to- be non-depressive characterized by relaxedness, un frustrated, composed and satisfied.

(6) **Emotional instability and emotional stability-** The high score on the personality trait indicates emotional instability where individual is affected by feelings, emotionally less stable, easily annoyed and upset having low frustration tolerance for unsatisfactory conditions, higher anxious and

worrying, fearful, sensitive, touchy, given to mood swings, depressed and sad whenever confronted with stressful situations, having neurotic symptoms like phobias, sleep disturbances and psychotic disorders, the low score is individual of emotionally stable trait of the personality where person is with full control over his emotional expressions, emotionally mature, stable, realistic about life situations, processing ego strength, high level of Adjustment with emotional problems.

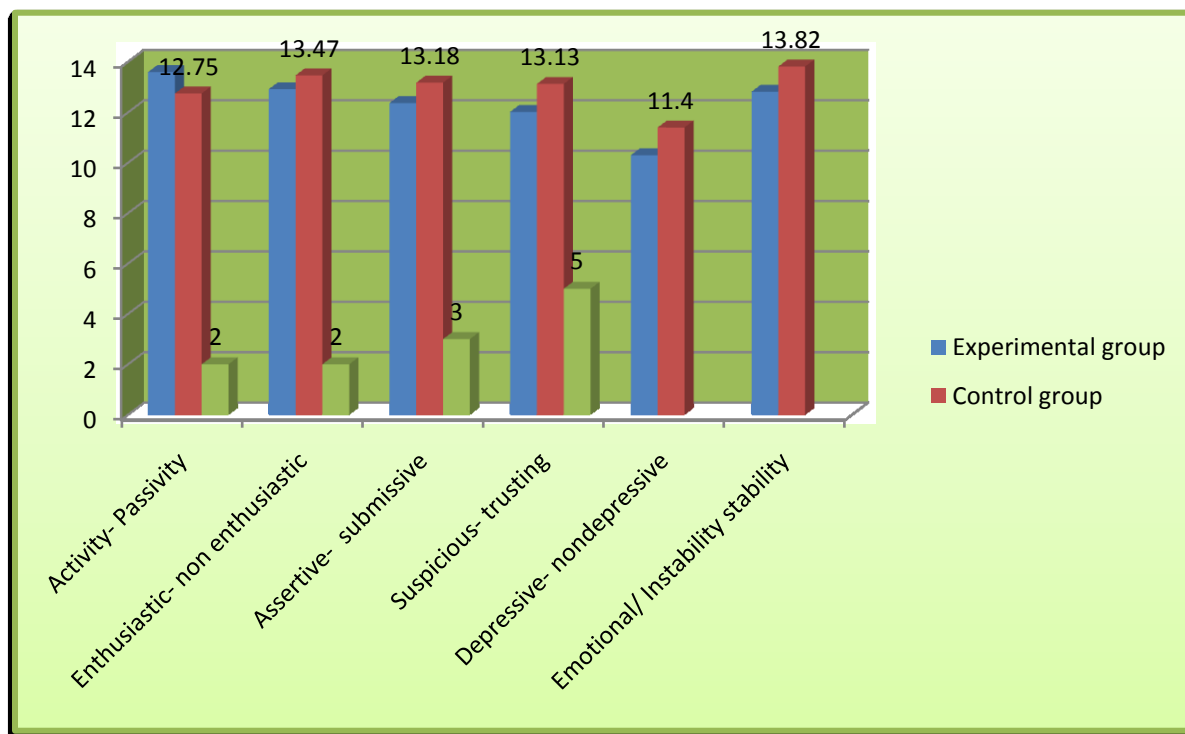
Each yes Response is to be scored as 2, undecided is to be scored as 1, whereas no and unmarked Response is to be scored as zero. All the six Dimensional areas of personality are groups as part, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, each containing 10 students. Thus on each area of personality, score may range from 0 to 20 and thus may be calculated area wise and total score of each part may be obtained at that place and then transfer to scoring table below each part against raw scores column

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS: The statistical analysis of the data was carried out in order to test the hypotheses formulated at initial stage of present study. Various unvariete statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, and 't' tests were used to analyze obtained data.

RESULT

Table .1. Comparison of personality among college going students

S. No.	Personality	Experimental group(N=60)	Control group(N=60)	't'	'p'
1)	Activity- Passivity	13.60±2.60	12.75±2.52	.090	.072
2)	Enthusiastic- non enthusiastic	12.92±2.14	13.47±2.39	.532	.187
3)	Assertive- submissive	12.37±2.94	13.18±3.10	.443	.142
4)	Suspicious- trusting	12.02±3.61	13.13±3.10	.022	.088
5)	Depressive- non depressive	10.30±3.99	11.40±3.36	2.04	.105
6)	Emotional Instability/ stability	12.82±3.86	13.82±3.91	.002	.162



To compare the personality of control and experimental group, male college going students in the age group of (17-20) years were taken a sample. The present study concentrated on studying the personality differences among college going students and a comparison between experimental and control group was also done

The above table No. 1 showing the difference between experimental and control group The above table no. 1 showing the difference between experimental and control group . The personality traits are different. The students in the experimental and control group were found to be active ($\mu=13.60$) non enthusiastic ($\mu=12.92$) submissive ($\mu=12.37$) trusting ($\mu=12.02$) non depressive ($\mu=10.30$) but emotionally instable ($\mu=12.82$) in comparision to the students in the group of experimental and control.

Table. 2. Differences in personality among college going students who practice meditation across age

S. No.	Personality	17-20 years	21-24 years	't'	'p'
1)	Activity- passivity	12.97±2.58	13.38±2.60	.201	.651
2)	Enthusiastic- non enthusiastic	13.63±2.54	12.75±1.89	2.65	.102
3)	Assertive submissive	13.50±2.86	12.05±3.06	.015	.90
4)	Suspecious-trusting	13.12±3.72	12.03±3.38	1.61	.204
5)	Depressive-non depressive	10.92±4.11	10.78±3.29	4.32**	.004
6)	Emotional/Instabilty	13.84±4.42	12.78±3.26	6.14**	.005

** highly significant

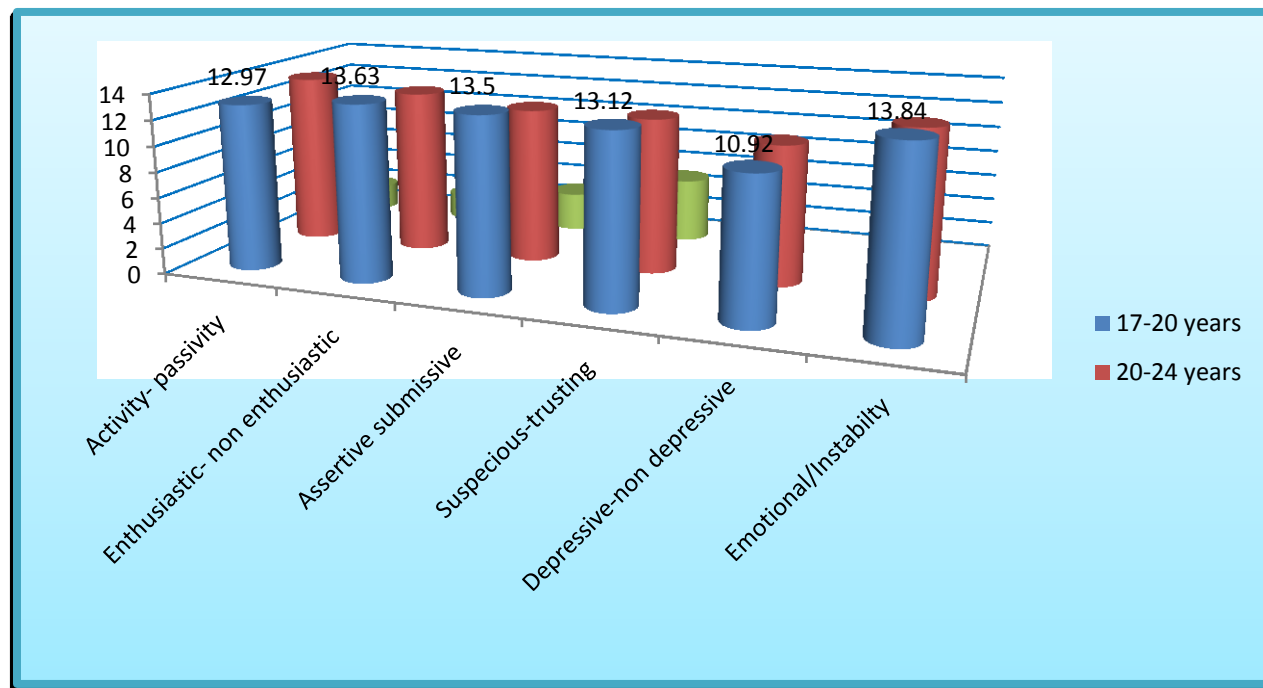


Fig .2. Differences of personality among college going students according to age

The personality traits among students who practice meditation regularly are categorized into two age groups and compared. The students in the age group of 21- 24 years were found to be active ($\mu=13.38$) non enthusiastic ($\mu=12.75$); submissive ($\mu=12.05$) trusting ($\mu=12.03$); non depressive ($\mu=10.75$) but emotionally unstable ($\mu=12.78$) in comparison to the students in the age group of 17-20 years. It may also be noted that highly significant differences among the two groups is observed in depressive symptoms and emotional stability age is found to be a vital measurement of personality, as age increases, the maturity also increases and hence, significant differences in the personality is observed. Even though both the groups are in regular practice of meditation, age is found to be a significant criterion

DISCUSSION

Meditation, in the present study, means ‘silence of mind’ which brings positive cognitive and affective changes in the personality. Other techniques of meditation also reported their effectiveness for psychological functioning like self esteem (Kritzell, 2000; Lesko, 2000), concentration, decision making power (Rozman, 1994), intelligence (Aron et al, 1981; Shah et al., 2001), memory (Miskimum, 1973). It helps to remove negative emotions (Gaur et al., 2003), anxiety, complexes (inferiority or superiority) as it makes the mind silent. This change helps to increase trust in the abilities and good qualities of the self confidence. Previous studies supported this finding as Aron et al. (1981) found that participation in transcendental meditation classes produced significant increase in intelligence and increased social self confidence. Brown et al. (1993) confirmed that students who meditated, or who meditated and exercised had significantly greater inner-directedness than did those who

only exercised or who did neither. **Shah et al. (2001)** found that there is a positive and significant effect of Saral meditation on confidence. **Gaur et al. (2003)** revealed that who practiced the preksha Meditation for 25 days increased their ego strength and confidence self assurance.

Conclusion: College life is the crucial period of a person's life where in the major transition of life occurs during this period as well as it is the period when the bases for majority of the personality parameters are framed. The status of personality of college going students has performed the impact of meditation and significant difference between experimental and control group are due to the dual stress among college going students. International studies may be carried out especially for college going students. Which may include meditational technique to avoid stress in their life, healthy life style, and positive outlook And enhance the mental health of college going students. The findings of their research are very useful to identify various dimensions of personality.

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