

Research Paper

An Effect of Vipassana on Anxiety Level of Meditates and Non Meditates

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ABSTRACT

Present day of civilization is heading towards the industrialization, mechanization, and to a maximum exploitation of the natural resources available. It is a new social process where competition, conflict, social differentiation, economic inflation, rising cost of living, migration of population to cities and disruption of joint families etc., combine together to make up a disorganized society in which we live today. Many diseases are caused by our inner worries and nervousness. If the agitation is removed, the disease may be alleviated or disappear. The Vipassana is one of the most ancient Indian techniques of meditation. The purpose of technique is not to cure diseases. But someone who really practices Vipassana learns to be happy and balanced in all circumstances. The result of this research is that, the Vipassana Meditation reduced anxiety level of Meditates after imparting Vipassana course than Non-Meditates.

Keywords: *Vipassana Meditation, Anxiety Level, Meditates, Non-Meditates*

Present day of civilization is heading towards the industrialization, mechanization, and to a maximum exploitation of the natural resources available. It is a new social process where competition, conflict, social differentiation, economic inflation, rising cost of living, migration of population to cities and disruption of joint families etc., combine together to make up a disorganized society in which we live today. Therefore, the present era in which we live today has been called the “age of anxiety” and anxiety manifestations are certainly widespread. Many diseases are caused by our inner worries and nervousness. If the agitation is removed, the disease may be alleviated or disappear. The Vipassana is one of the most ancient Indian techniques of meditation. The purpose of technique is not to cure diseases. But someone who really practices Vipassana learns to be happy and balanced in all circumstances. Therefore, the purpose of this present study is to examine effects of Vipassana meditation on anxiety level of Meditates and Non Meditates.

CONCEPTS INCLUDED IN THIS STUDY

Vipassana

Vipassana is a pali word, literally means “to see thing as they really are in their true nature, their true characteristics of impermanence.” The term vipassana has two component parts,

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Received: May 30, 2022; Revision Received: August 11, 2022; Accepted: August 19, 2022

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namely *vi + passana*. *VI* means perfectly, exactly, sincerely etc., and *passana* means observing, analyzing, introspecting, investigating etc. It means observing oneself in a special way. There are various definitions of vipassana has given on different point of views. According to S.N. Goenka (2000) “Vipassana meditation a non-sectarian, scientific, result-oriented technique of self-observation and truth-realization.” Another definition has given by Kishor Chandiramani (1998), “vipassana means promoters conscious life-style changes, enhances concentration of mind and facilitates deeper psychological introspection to bring about lasting behavioral changes.” William Hart also tried defined to vipassana, “Vipassana is insight, seeing the reality, the truth, understanding reality by experiencing the reality inside oneself.” Ram Sing (1998) “Vipassana meditation is a method of objective observation of mind-body phenomenon, leading to purification of mind.”

Vipassana is taught in a basic ten-day residential course. There are three steps of the training given in a Vipassana course. The first step is an observation of five fundamental precepts of morality. Which means is abstention from violence, lying, theft, sexual misconduct and the use of alcohol and other intoxicants. In the Pali Literature these precepts are known as “*Panchsila*”. Whenever, anybody violates these, someone generates impurities in one’s mind. These impurities are the root causes of the stress, anxiety, depression and strains from which one tries to gain release. The second step is to achieve some mastery over our unruly mind by focusing attention on the natural and normal breath (Not controlled and regulated breath as in *pranayama*). This is called “*Anapana-Sati*”, which means awareness of respiration. There is just observation of natural and normal breath. This concentration helps to sharpen the mind of meditates. This helps to meditates to take third step of technique that called *Vipassana*. Where the meditates require to observe the sensations which manifest the entire body every moment, as a result of the constant and continuous interactions of mind and matter. Our mind is constantly reacting to pleasant and unpleasant happening in the world outside. But a deep investigation of the mind through vipassana reveals that when we react, actually we reacting to the body sensations that result from our contact with the outside world & our own thoughts. When thoughts arise, it manifests as a sensation on the body pleasant and unpleasant and one starts to like & dislike it. This is the law of nature. Soon those like and dislike began to combine and develop into negativities of craving and aversion, we create misery for ourselves by continuously reacting to sensations.

Anxiety

Anxiety is a physiological state characterized by cognitive, somatic, emotional, and behavioural components (Seligman, Walker & Rosenhan, 2001). These components combine to create the feelings that we typically recognize as fear, stress, apprehension, tension or worry. Anxiety is often accompanied by physical sensations such as heart palpitations, nausea, and chest pain, shortness of breath, stomach aches, or headache. Anxiety an emotional state in which people feels uneasy, apprehensive, or fearful. People usually experience anxiety about organize events, they cannot control or predict or about events that seem threatening. People often use the words fear, stress and anxiety to describe the same thing. The physical symptoms of anxiety show a chronic willingness to deal with some future threat. These symptoms may include fidgeting, muscle tension, sleeping problems, increase body temperature and headaches. Higher levels of anxiety may produce such symptoms as rapid heartbeat, sweating, increased blood pressure, sweating, fear and dizziness. All people experience anxiety to some degree. A mild to moderate amount of anxiety in these situations is normal and even really beneficial for people. Anxiety can really motivate people, to prepare for an upcoming event and can help, to keep them focused on

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the task at hand without any fear. However, too less anxiety or too much anxiety can be cause of various problems. Individuals who feel no anxiety when faced an important situation it will be lack of alertness and focused. On the other hand, individuals who experience an abnormally high amount of anxiety often feel overwhelmed, powerless, and unable to accomplish the task at hand. People with too much anxiety often suffer from anyone of the anxiety disorders or a group of mental illnesses. In fact, in day-to-day life more people experience anxiety disorders than any other type of mental illness.

METHODOLOGY

Objectives

- To compare the pretest and posttest in terms anxiety level of Meditates and Non-Meditates groups.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between pretest and posttest in terms of anxiety level of Meditates Group than Non-Meditates Group after imparting ‘*Vipassana*’ intervention program.
2. There is significant difference between pretest and posttest in terms of anxiety level of Meditates Group than Non-Meditates Group after imparting ‘*Vipassana*’ intervention program.

Variables

- Independent Variable- Vipassana Meditation
- Dependent Variable-Anxiety Level

Sample

In the present study out of 69 individual total 46 males and females were randomly selected from different corners of Shirpur and Shindhkheda city. Their age range was 30-50 years. Educational status was minimum graduate as well as they were selected from different occupational background. The sociodemographic profiles of all subjects were almost similar. Among that 17 individual from professor (Senior & Junior College), 09 engineers, 12 teachers, 4 Doctors, 4 Clarks etc. In this sample 17 females and 29 males were participated.

Description of the tools

In this present study “State-Trait Anxiety Test (STAT)” designed and developed by Psy-Com Services was used. In this test 40 items were included. Tension (Tn), Guilt Proneness (Gp), Maturity (Ma), Suspiciousness (Su) and Self-Control (Sc) these are five dimensions which measure state and trait anxiety. The reliability coefficients were computed for over 3000 individual used Spearman-Brown formula. The split half reliability coefficient correlation was 0.88. After interval of seven days and one month Test-Retest reliability was calculated on the same sample the coefficient correlation was found 0.82 and 0.78 respectively. As well as test construct validity was calculated with Taylor’s Manifest Anxiety Scale. The sample size was 527 and correlation coefficient was 0.70.

Design

In this present study ‘Pre and Post Control Groups Design’ was adopted. In this study 46 Meditates and Non-Meditates were randomly selected. They divided into both group such as Meditates group (MG) (n=23) and Non-Meditates group (NMG) (n=23). Before Vipassana intervention program pre anxiety level assessment was taken into both groups through

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“State-Trait Anxiety Test”. After the pre assessments program, the Vipassana Meditation intervention program (10 days) has imparted to Meditates groups. At same time the Non-Meditates group was neutral. Finally post assessment was carried out within both groups on the basis of standardized psychological inventories State-Trait Anxiety Test.

Statistical Analysis

Table shows Mean, SD & t values of pretest and posttest of Vipassana.

Variable	Group	Pre Course Mean	Pre Course SD	Post Course Mean	Post Course SD	t	p
Anxiety Scores	Meditates Group	9.9	9.6	7.5	7.2	3.9	<.001
	Non Meditates Group	16.5	9.8	16.3	9.6	0.2	N.S.

Table showing the mean, SD and t values of Meditates group and Non-Meditates groups. When we observe the mean & SD values of pre and posttest of Meditates group it would be clear there is noticeable difference is taken placed. Pretest and posttest calculate t value is $3.9 < .001$. There is significance difference at 0.05 level. Therefore the first null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. That means anxiety level of Meditates is clearly reduced after imparting Vipassana meditation Course. Similarly, when we see the Mean SD and t values of Non Meditates group then perceive there is no significance difference between pre and posttests. The supportive studies are to above conclusion such as Kochargaonkar, S.H. (2005) she concluded that Vipassana Meditation had significantly affected the Subjective Well-Being (SWB) and also contributed towards enhancement of Academic Performance (AP) of the adolescents. Amulya Khurana and P.L. Dhar (2002) was conducted a study in the Tihar Jail, Delhi. They concluded as the experimental (Vipassana) group’s Criminal Propensity decreased and Subjective Well-Being increased significantly as compared to control (Non-Vipassana) group. Other studies have supported to present study such as Singh (1997), Wallace & Benson (1972), Dhar P.L. [1994] etc.

CONCLUSIONS

The Vipassana Meditation reduced anxiety level of Meditates after imparting Vipassana course than Non Meditates.

Limitations & Suggestion

1. The age range was 30-50 years was considered in this research paper. If anyone wants to verify this research, they can do it by selecting people of different ages.
2. Educational status was minimum graduate as well as they were selected from different occupational background. If anyone wants to verify the results of this research, then they can select different occupational background people as a sample than the present sample.
3. The results of this research can also be verified by taking people from different socio-economical backgrounds.

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Acknowledgement

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Dongare, N. S. (2022). An Effect of Vipassana on Anxiety Level of Meditates and Non Meditates. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 10(3), 327-331. DIP:18.01.031.20221003, DOI:10.25215/1003.031