

Effect of Eight-Week Omkara Chanting Program on the Mindfulness Level of Early Adolescent Girls

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of an eight-week Omkara chanting program in enhancing mindfulness levels among early adolescent girls. A pre-test post-test experimental research design was used with a total sample of 30 girls aged 10 to 12 years from a Marathi medium school in Sutarwadi, Pune. Participants were selected using a non-probability convenience sampling technique and divided equally into an experimental group (n = 15) and a control group (n = 15). The experimental group participated in an eight-week intervention that included 21 Omkara chants and breathing exercises, while the control group engaged only in breathing exercises without chanting. Mindfulness was measured using the Child and Adolescent Mindfulness Measure (CAMM) developed by Greco, Baer, and Smith (2011). Data were analyzed using SPSS software with both descriptive and inferential statistics. The experimental group showed a significant improvement in mindfulness levels, with a mean change of 11.60 (± 4.29), compared to 1.80 (± 2.31) in the control group. The mean difference between the groups was 9.80, and the t-value was -7.794 with a p-value of 0.00, indicating a statistically significant effect. The findings suggest that the Omkara chanting program significantly improved mindfulness among early adolescent girls and may serve as a culturally relevant and cost-effective intervention for enhancing mental well-being in school-based settings.

Keywords: *Mindfulness, Omkara Chanting, Early Adolescent Girls, Child and Adolescent Mindfulness Measure (CAMM)*

Mindfulness, defined as the ability to maintain present-moment awareness without judgment, has gained recognition for its significant impact on mental well-being, emotional regulation, and stress reduction (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Among mindfulness practices, chanting has been an essential component of several spiritual and therapeutic traditions. One such practice is Omkara chanting, which involves the repetition of the sound "Om," a sacred syllable that represents the primordial sound of the universe in many Eastern philosophies. Despite its cultural and spiritual importance, empirical research on the psychological benefits of Omkara chanting, particularly among adolescent populations in India, remains limited. Adolescence is a developmental stage characterized by significant emotional, social, and cognitive changes, which can be accompanied by

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heightened levels of stress, anxiety, and mood disturbances (Steinberg, 2014). For girls in early adolescence (ages 10 to 14), these stressors are compounded by academic pressures, social relationships, and concerns about body image. As such, there is a growing need for effective, low-cost interventions that can help manage stress and improve mental well-being during this critical period of development. Mindfulness-based interventions, including meditation and chanting, have shown promising results in improving emotional regulation and reducing stress among adolescents (Zoogman et al., 2015). However, most of the existing research has focused on Western approaches to mindfulness, with limited exploration of culturally rooted practices such as Omkara chanting.

Omkara chanting has long been an integral part of yogic and spiritual practices in India. Previous studies have shown that chanting Om can induce a state of relaxation by activating the parasympathetic nervous system and reducing heart rate (Telles et al., 1998). These physiological effects suggest that Omkara chanting may be an effective mindfulness tool for improving mental health, particularly in adolescents. However, there is a scarcity of research examining the effects of Omkara chanting specifically on the mindfulness levels of early adolescent girls in India. This study aims to address this gap by exploring the impact of an eight-week Omkara chanting intervention on the mindfulness levels of early adolescent girls. The primary objective of this study is to assess whether regular practice of Omkara chanting can significantly enhance mindfulness in adolescent girls, as measured by standardized mindfulness scales such as the Child and Adolescent Mindfulness Measure (CAMM) (Greco et al., 2011). It is hypothesized that the intervention will lead to measurable improvements in mindfulness, including greater attention, emotional regulation, and self-awareness. This research is particularly significant because it offers a culturally relevant alternative to Western mindfulness programs, which may not always resonate with Indian adolescents.

Additionally, it could provide valuable insights into the applicability of traditional practices like Omkara chanting in modern mental health interventions for young people. In India, there has been a growing interest in integrating mindfulness practices into educational and therapeutic settings. However, there is limited statistical data regarding the effectiveness of specific mindfulness interventions for adolescents, particularly those rooted in Indian traditions. While yoga and meditation have been studied extensively for their benefits in reducing stress and improving mental health (Kalyani et al., 2011), the specific impact of Omkara chanting on mindfulness in adolescents remains unexplored. Given the cultural significance of chanting in Indian spirituality, it is essential to conduct rigorous studies to determine whether Omkara chanting can serve as an effective and accessible tool for enhancing mindfulness in this population. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to evaluate the impact of Omkara chanting on the mindfulness levels of early adolescent girls, addressing the following research questions: (1) Does Omkara chanting lead to significant improvements in mindfulness among early adolescent girls? (2) Can Omkara chanting be an effective and low-cost mindfulness intervention for school-based mental health programs in India? (3) What are the effects of Omkara chanting on emotional regulation and stress levels in adolescent girls? By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to the body of research on mindfulness interventions, particularly in the context of India, where traditional practices like Omkara chanting are culturally significant. This research will not only add to the understanding of the effectiveness of Omkara chanting in improving mindfulness but also contribute to the development of culturally relevant mental health interventions for adolescents in India. If proven effective, Omkara chanting could become an accessible tool for promoting emotional resilience and well-being among young girls, offering a holistic approach to addressing the mental health challenges they face.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Method of Study- Experimental pre-test post test research design was used.

Subjects- The study include 30 early adolescent girls aged 10 to 11 years from Marathi medium school Sutar wadi Pune, India. Participants were assigned to either the experimental group or the control group, with 15 participants in each by using non probability convenience sampling technique.

Variables

- **Independent variable-** Omkara chanting Program,
- **Dependent Variable-** mindfulness.

Tool Used for Data Collection the Child and Adolescent Mindfulness Measure (CAMM) is a standardized questionnaire designed to assess mindfulness levels in children and adolescents. The Child and Adolescent Mindfulness Measure (CAMM) was developed by Greco, L., Baer, R. A., and Smith, G. T. (2011). It is a self-report tool where participants respond to a set of statements that measure their present-moment awareness and non-reactivity to thoughts and emotions. Scoring and Measurement of The CAMM consists of 10 statements, each describing mindfulness-related behaviors and attitudes. It uses a 5-point Likert scale to measure mindfulness levels in children and adolescents. Scoring and Calculation of CAMM Each item in the Child and Adolescent Mindfulness Measure (CAMM) is rated on a 5-point Likert scale as follows: 0 = Never true, 1 = Rarely true, 2 = Sometimes true, 3 = Often true, 4 = Always true, Total Score Calculation The scores from all 10 items are summed. Score range: 0 to 40. Interpretation of Score Higher Score=Lower Mindfulness Lower Score=Higher Mindfulness

Procedure:

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of Omkara chanting on the mindfulness levels of early adolescent girls. A survey research approach was used to carry out the investigation. Schools in selected areas were contacted for permission, and one Marathi-medium school located in Sutarwadi, Pune, granted approval to conduct the research. A total of 30 girls studying in the 5th grade, aged between 10 and 11 years, were selected using a non-probability convenience sampling method. All participants voluntarily agreed to take part in the study. To ensure a fair and balanced distribution, the ABBA method was used to assign participants to the experimental and control groups. First, the names of all 30 participants were listed in the order in which they enrolled. Then, using the ABBA method, students were alternately assigned to the two groups. The first participant was placed in the Experimental Group (A), the second in the Control Group (B), the third also in Experimental Group (B), and the fourth in Control Group (A). This pattern continued until all 30 participants were evenly distributed. As a result, both the Experimental and Control groups consisted of 15 girls each. Before starting the intervention, all participants were given a pre-test. The tool used was the Child and Adolescent Mindfulness Measure (CAMM), developed by Greco, Baer, and Smith in 2011. Each participant was given 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The Experimental Group participated in an eight-week Omkara chanting intervention. Each session began with a short prayer and breathing exercises, followed by seven repetitions of Omkara chanting and two minutes of silent sitting. This entire cycle was repeated three times per session. The sessions were conducted five days per week, resulting in a total of 21 sessions over the eight-week period. In contrast, the Control Group continued their regular school routine, which included only prayer and breathing exercises, without the Omkara chanting. The pre-test and post-test scores of the CAMM (Child and Adolescent Mindfulness Measure) were analyzed to calculate the change in performance for both the

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Experimental and Control Groups. An independent sample *t*-test was used to compare the pre-test and post-test scores. The results and conclusions were drawn based on the outcomes of the statistical analysis.

RESULTS

Scores collected were statistically analysed by using descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS software. Mean, Standard deviation and standard Error of mean were calculated for pre & post- test Using Child and adolescent mindfulness measure Questionnaire scores for both experimental and control groups under descriptive analysis as show in below table no.1 the mean score indicate positive score.

Table No.1 Descriptive statistic of mindfulness level on early adolescent girls, for experimental and control group

Group	Test	Mindfulness		
		Mean	Standard Error of Mean	Standard Deviation
Experimental N=15	Pre	31.60	.760	2.94
	Post	20	1.05	4.07
	Change in performance	-11.60	1.10	4.28
Control Group N=15	Pre	34.12	7.0	2.72
	Post	32.33	.65	2.55
	Change in performance	-1.8	.59	2.30

SD=standard Deviation, SEM= Standard error of mean

As seen in Table No. 1, The mean of pre- and post-test mindfulness scores for the experimental group of early adolescent girls were 31.60 and 20.00 respectively. The standard error of the mean was 1.05 for the post-test, and the standard deviation was 2.94 for the pre-test and 4.07 for the post-test. This shows a notable improvement in mindfulness levels following the eight-week Omkara chanting program, as indicated by the significant reduction in scores (lower CAMM scores represent higher mindfulness). The change in performance was -11.60, suggesting a considerable positive effect of the intervention. In contrast, the control group had a mean mindfulness score of 34.12 in the pre-test and 32.33 in the post-test. The standard error of the mean was 0.65 in the post-test, and the standard deviation was 2.72 and 2.55 for pre- and post-tests respectively. The change in performance was -1.80, indicating minimal improvement in mindfulness in the absence of the intervention.

Table No.2 Inferential statistics for change in performance scores of all 30 early Adolescent Girls

	Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t- test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig	t	df	Sig.2- Tailed	Mean Difference	Std.error difference
Equal variances assumed	5.202	.030	-7.794	28	.000	-9.80000	1.25736
Equal Variances Not assume			-7.794	21.464	.000	-9.80000	1.25736

To assess the effect of the eight-week Omkara chanting program on the mindfulness level of early adolescent girls, an independent sample *t*-test was conducted on the change in performance scores between the experimental and control groups. Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances yielded an F-value of 5.202 with a significance level (*p*) of 0.030. Since the *p*-value is less than 0.05, it indicates that the variances are not equal, and hence the row for "Equal variances not assumed" was used for interpretation. The *t*-test results revealed a *t*-value of -7.794 with 21.464 degrees of freedom, and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.000. The mean difference between the two groups was -9.80 with a standard error of 1.25736. This result is highly significant (*p* < 0.001), indicating that the girls who participated in the Omkara chanting program showed a significantly greater improvement in mindfulness levels compared to those in the control group. The findings suggest that the Omkara chanting intervention had a substantial and statistically meaningful positive effect on enhancing mindfulness in early adolescent girls.

DISCUSSION

This study demonstrates that an eight-week Omkara chanting program significantly enhances mindfulness levels among early adolescent girls, as shown by the improvement in their CAMM scores. The experimental group showed a notable decrease in CAMM scores, indicating increased mindfulness, while the control group showed minimal change. These results align with previous research on mindfulness interventions improving emotional regulation and well-being in adolescents (Zoogman et al., 2015; Kalyani et al., 2011). Omkara chanting, a culturally significant practice, activates the parasympathetic nervous system and induces relaxation (Telles et al., 1998). The findings suggest that this culturally rooted practice can be a low-cost, accessible intervention in Indian school settings. However, not all mindfulness interventions yield consistent results. For example, Van der Velden et al. (2015) found that some mindfulness programs did not significantly enhance mindfulness, highlighting the importance of considering individual or contextual factors in future research.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the results of this study demonstrate that the Omkara chanting program effectively enhances mindfulness levels in early adolescent girls. This culturally rooted intervention offers a promising, low-cost approach to improving mental well-being and emotional regulation in school settings.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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