



## EFFECTS OF MEDITATION ON HEALTH

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### Abstract

This paper intends to study the relevance of Meditation on health Normal healthy volunteers with age not less than 35 years and not more than 70 years. Residing at Delhi. Subjects were randomized using random numbers generated by a computer for a 2 group assignment. Measurements/Variables, WHO Quality of life – Brief. The response was collected from 50 respondents out of them 25 as control group and 25 as a practice group. Tests for Normality (Shapiro Wilk's) carried out for all the data variables showed a normally distributed data. Paired 'T' test was used to analyze within group differences in the yoga and control groups and Independent samples 'T' test was used to analyze the between group effect. The present study measured the effectiveness of Brahmakumaris Raja Yoga meditation on Quality of life domains on normal healthy volunteers compared to control group. The study showed a significant improvement in yoga group on all the four domains of WHO QOL scale such as physical health, psychological domain, social relationship domain and environmental domain compared to control group. With this a simple and easy practice of regular Brahmakumaris Raja Yoga Meditation technique helps in improving the quality of life.

**Keywords:** Meditation Health Raja Yoga

### Introduction:

#### A REVIEW ON YOGA:

##### 1.1 Health Care – A Paradigm Shift:

Man has stepped into the third millennium. Medical men are working with many technologists to offer better health care. World health organization is engaged in taking stock of global health status and taking necessary steps to raise the health standards.

Scientific aptitude that entered medical profession in the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century made rapid strides in eradicating epidemics and

pandemics, through antibiotics and vaccines. Although nutritional deficiencies and infections continue to be the major problem in the under developed and developing countries, the scenario in developed countries is totally different. Hi-tech medical facilities with fascinating advances in spare-part surgeries, although have made life more comfortable, with a life expectancy of greater than seventy years, the expected quality of life, with harmony and peace seems to be far from reality. Problems of stress, stress related ailments, unrest, breaking up families, are all on an exponential rise. The

frustrated patients are moving towards alternative, so called non-scientific therapies.

Deep thinkers, have raised questions as to why this way, what went wrong in our health delivery system? Why the mental and social health problems are on the increase? What should we do to prevent such problems? Can we raise the basic health level to greater heights as a preventive program rather than do fire -fighting after ailments have shown up? What are the markers of positive health? Is positive health a single state? What are the measures of positive health at the physical, mental, social and spiritual levels? What are the tools for achieving states of positive health?

Health professionals who started by giving relief to their suffering sick fellow beings, through medicines and surgeries, are now faced with such newer questions because of the need of the hour. Most of the common health and social problems cannot be solved through germ theories, antibiotics or surgeries. The advent of fascinating diagnostic tools has started pointing to the role of mind on matter. Biochemical, psycho-neuro physiological, immunological researchers are all recognizing the role of mind, the life style, suppressed emotions, stress etc. in the causation of many of these challenges of the millennium. Several research publications on the value of positive thinking, prayer, spiritual healing, mind-body medicine, yoga, acupuncture, energy medicine are being poured into medical journals in spite of the resistance from hard core matter-based pharmaceutical and surgery oriented researchers.

Now in the turn of the millennium, health professionals are forced to accept the paradigm shift in our approach to understanding human health problems. Mental health is being studied in all its facets. A large research team is at work in WHO, to find out methods of promoting the mental, social and spiritual well being of the human race at large.

**Yoga**, a science not less than 5000 years old has addressed to the question how a normal man can move towards higher states of harmony and

peace both as an individual and also as a social being. Through years of introspection, practice and dialogue a huge knowledge base is available in this soil of spiritual seekers who meditated in the caves of Himalayas. The fund of knowledge that has been handed over to us by these keen researchers is gaining recognition by the health scientists as valuable tool to raise the basic human consciousness towards a harmonious life style of contentment and peaceful living.

### **1.2 Introduction on Yoga:**

Yoga is becoming popular in all parts of the world. For the restless mind it gives solace. For the sick, it is a boon. For the common man it is the fashion of the day to keep him fit and beautiful. Some use it for developing memory, intelligence and creativity. With its multifold advantages it is becoming a part of education. Specialists use it to unfold deeper layers of consciousness in their move towards perfection.

Because of its rational basis, the modern medical system has replaced almost all the traditional systems of medicine in different parts of the globe. It has proved itself most effective in saving man from the fatal hands of contagious and infectious diseases. However, new widespread psychosomatic ailments and psychiatric problems are posing a great challenge to the modern medical system. It is here that yoga is making a vital contribution to the modern medical system.

Extensive research on Yoga therapy over the last few decades has brought out the usefulness of Yoga for dealing with these ailments as an effective adjunct to medical management and also for long term rehabilitation.

Prevention is better than cure' a proverbial saying is kept only as an accepted proverb in modern medicare delivery system. Hardly 1% of the budget is allotted in any country. Yoga could play a vital role in preventing diseases. All health clubs have started including yoga as part of their schedule and many go only for yoga in these health clubs.

Promotion of positive health is being nurtured by many who do not want to be the victims of modern ailments. Yoga is playing a vital role in this aspect in the new millennium.

### 1.3 Understanding Yoga:

The term Yoga has its verbal root as yuj! (Yuj) in Sanskrit. Yuj means joining, "Yujyate anena iti yogah". Yoga is that which joins. In the traditional terminology it is joining of jivatma with paramatma the individual self with the universal self. It is an expansion of the narrow, constricted, egoistic personality to an all pervasive, eternal and blissful state of REALITY.

Patanjali Yoga is one among the six systems of Indian philosophy known as 'Shad Darshanas'. One of the great Seer, Patanjali compiled the essential features and principles of Yoga in the form of 'Sutras' (aphorisms) and made a vital contribution in the field of Yoga, nearly 4000 years ago. Accordingly, Yoga is a conscious process of gaining mastery over the mind.

In general, there is a growth process due to interactions with nature in all creation. But it may take thousands and millions of years for this natural growth; that is the long, instinctive way in animals. Man, endowed with discriminative power, conscious thinking faculty the buddhi and well-developed voluntary control systems, aspires to accelerate growth. Yoga is that systematic conscious process which can greatly compress the process of man's growth.

Thus, Yoga is a systematic process for accelerating the growth of a man in his entirety. With this growth, man learns to live at higher states of consciousness. Key to this all-round personality development and growth is the culturing of mind.

### 1.4 Definition of Yoga

#### A. Mastery over mind:

Patanjali defines "Yogashchittavritti nirodhah"<sup>1</sup> (Yoga Sūtrā: 1.2) Yoga is a process of gaining control over the mind. By so controlling the mind we reach our original state; "Tada Drashtuh Svarupe avasthanam"<sup>2</sup> (Yoga Sutras: 1.3) Then

the Seer establishes himself in his causal state. This is the technique of 'mind control' prescribed by Patanjali. Control involves two aspects – a power to concentrate on any desired subject or object and a capacity to remain quiet any time. Rarely, the second capacity of man, to remain calm and silent, has been harnessed. Hence, Yoga mainly emphasizes, this second aspect. Yoga is thus a skilful, subtle process and not a brutal, mechanical gross effort to stop the thoughts in the mind and thereby becomes a process for elevating oneself through calming of mind.

In action, Yoga is a special skill which makes the mind reach its subtler state: "Yogah karmasu kaushalam"<sup>3</sup> (Geeta 2.50). Yoga is dexterity in action. The dexterity is in maintaining relaxation and awareness in action. Relaxed action is the process. Efficiency in action is an outcome. Thus, Yoga is a skilful science of gaining mastery over the mind. Yoga is normally and traditionally conjectured and popularly known as a process or a technique to reach the ultimate state of perfection. However, yoga is found defined even as ultimate state of silence. Further, yoga is also described as the power of all creative endeavors and creation itself.

#### B. A state

Yoga is a state of great steadiness at emotional level; balance between concentration and detachment at mental level and homeostasis at body level. It integrates the personality by bringing body-mind co-ordination in a well balanced way. Hence yoga is the very states of higher, subtler layers of mind.

#### C. A power of creation

Yoga is conceived as a creative power in man and that of the reality itself.

### 1.5 The Four Streams of Yoga

There are a large number of methods of yoga catering to the needs of different persons in society to bring about the transformation of the individual. They are broadly classified into four

streams. Swami Vivekananda puts them as work and worship, philosophy and psychic control.

1. The path of work (**Karma Yoga**) involves doing action with an attitude of detachment to the fruits of action. This makes man release himself from the strong attachments and thereby brings in him a steadiness of mind which verily is Yoga “Samatvam yoga uchyate”<sup>4</sup> (Geeta 2.48). Instruments of action and understanding (karmendriyās and jnanendriyās) get cleansed.

2. The control of emotions is the key in the path of worship (**Bhakti Yoga**). In this modern world, man is tossed up and down due to emotional onslaughts. The path of Bhakti is a boon to gain control over emotional instabilities by properly harnessing the energy involved in it.

3. The age of science has made man a rational being. Intellectual sharpness is imminent. Analysis forms the tool. The path of philosophy (**Jnana Yoga**) is apt for the keen intellectuals and is centered on the analysis of ‘happiness’, the vital contribution of Upaniñads. Also many other fundamental questions regarding the mind, the outside and inside world and the reality are taken up. Basic questions are raised even involving the intellect itself to reach the very basis of intellect.

4. Culturing of mind is the key for success in almost all endeavors in our lives. The yoga of mind culture or psychic control (**Rāja Yoga**) gives a practical and easy approach to reach higher states of consciousness. It is based on the **Austang Yoga** of Patanjali’s Yoga system.

#### 1.5.1 Austang Yoga

One of the major contributions of Patanjali’s Yoga Sutrās is the eight-limbed Yoga, popularly known as ‘**Austang Yoga**’<sup>5</sup>//2.29//, which gives a comprehensive and systematic approach for developing the mind. The eight limbs are;

1. Yama (the disciplines,)
2. Niyama (the injunctions,)
3. Āsana (the posture of the body)

4. Pranayama (the control of Prana, the life force)

5. Pratyahara (restraint of senses from their objects of enjoyment)

6. Dharana (focusing of mind)

7. Dhyana (concentration)

8. Samadhi (super consciousness)

The first five limbs come under Bahiranga Yoga. In this the Bahirindriyās are used for indirect control of mind. It includes;

a) **Karmendriyas** Hands, feet, organs of speech, excretion and procreation.

b) **Jnanendriyas** Eyes, ears, organs of smell (nose), taste (tongue), and touch (skin).

The last three limbs are referred to as Antaranga Yoga; the mind is used directly for culturing itself.

Thus, the four streams of Yoga help man to develop the personality at four different levels – physical, mental, intellectual and emotional and simultaneously bring about spiritual progress. Most of the other methods of Yoga – Laya yoga, Japa yoga, Mantra yoga, Hatha yoga, Kundalini yoga, etc., are permutations and combinations of these basic methods of yoga.

#### 1.5.2 Unity in Diversity

The four streams of Yoga have a basic unity among them in that all these paths lead independently to the same goal and there is the same structural transformation that takes place in the mind. This ‘Unity in Diversity’ forming the core of Indian culture offers a grand note of cohesiveness among various practices. With this catholicity in understanding, when persons follow any one or more of these paths, they allow a harmonious and total growth of the personality. Thus, ‘Yoga’ is a vital tool for the development of man, probably more relevant in the modern scientific era than ever before.

#### 1.6 Why Yoga?

Any system or process will be accepted by the common man if it can prove its usefulness in his

day-to-day aspects of life. In the past we have seen how the society accepted and adopted science as an integral part of its structure as technology solved the problem of providing the basic necessities of life and offering a more comfortable life to an individual. We have also seen, that now society is all set for Yoga as it offers man a conscious process to solve the menacing problems of unhappiness, restlessness, emotional upset, hyperactivity, etc., in the society and helps to evoke the hidden potentialities of man in a systematic and scientific way by which man becomes a fuller individual. All his faculties – physical, mental, intellectual and emotional – develop in a harmonious and integrated fashion to meet the all-round challenge of the modern technological era with its hectic speed.

### **1.6.1 Integrated Personality Development**

The specialty of yogic processes is that, the faculties get sharpened in tune with the spiritual progress of man by an integrated personality development with spiritual growth.

### **1.6.2 Personality development – Physical level**

An ideal body has the following features brought about by Yoga;

- 1) A proportionate body with all muscles relaxed in the normal state. It is soft like a flower and flexible to the core.
- 2) Instantaneously it can acquire a diamond's hardness. All organs and systems in the body work in harmony and with least abnormalities.
- 3) The chronic and acute ailments vanish or are absent in such a body.

These aspects of personality development at physical level make the body work most efficiently by harnessing the energies in the right direction. At resting periods all the muscles are relaxed and the joints remain loose to conserve energy and the metabolic rate is very low. During normal activities, just the necessary amount of energy is used by the body. At crucial times, under conditions of high stress, the functions of the organs co-ordinate so nicely that the

necessary energy gets evoked and flows profusely into those regions which need more energy. The body gets all the necessary strength to deal with the situation. This 'stamina' through harnessing of inner vital energies and training the different organs and systems to work in such co-ordination, can be effectively accomplished by yogic practices. It is in this area of application of yoga that the specialists in physical culture, wrestlers, sportsmen, acrobats, gymnasts, etc., are keenly interested and are putting Yoga to utmost use.

### **1.6.3 Personality development – Mental level**

The power of imagination 'Creativity' and steadfastness (Will-power) are the two aspects of mind which come under this head of personality development. It has been well recognized that creativity is the core of 'Arts' and 'Technology'. It has been seen that yogic practices enhance the creative power of man. As such, many musicians, poets, film artists, engineers and technologists have been attracted to Yoga. 'Will power' is an essential requirement for all persons to accomplish any work, however insignificant or great the task is.

Yoga by its systematic and conscious process of calming down the mind erases the weakness in the mind and builds will power into it. In such a mind each obstacle is conceived as a challenge and arouses tremendous energy to combat the situation. Bravery becomes a part of the personality. Steadfast to the core, such a person takes up with marvelous sobriety the challenges of life and converts them into opportunities for accomplishing his mission.

### **1.6.4 Personality development – Emotional level**

Our emotion controls our behavior especially at crucial junctures. The challenges of the modern era pose a great threat to the emotional faculty of man. Yet the culturing of our emotions – development of our emotional faculties finds no place in the whole scheme of education. Man looks lost amidst the atrocities of life unable to overcome his emotional conflicts, blocks, and

turmoil's. The result is deep unrest, agony and psychosomatic ailments.

Yoga trains us to;

- Systematically sharpen and sensitize our emotions and
- Consciously expand and diffuse the overtones of such sensitization. Thus, yoga offers a fine tool for the development of the emotional personality of man.

### 1.6.5 Personality Development – Intellectual Level

In the modern era of science, a sharp intellect plays a key role in the scheme of education. Rather than mechanical cramming up of information, thinking and understanding are valued more in the learning process. The children are taught right from the primary level to think logically and scientifically. The capacity to analyze and correlate relevant information forms the function of the intellect; concentration is the expression, precision is the outcome.

However, this enhanced power of the sharpened intellect associated with deep powerful concentration among the intellectual cream of the society has also bound man into the whirlpool of intellectual slavery. He finds himself unable to come out of the strong clutches of deep concentration. Though it is torturous and he very much wants to come out of it, he finds himself stuck. His worries and attachments do not release him. The development of personality at intellectual level should not only result in an intense sharpening of the intellect but also include a mastery to come out of the enslaving power of the sharpened intellect. Swami Vivekananda therefore rightly emphasized "concentration and detachment" as the two vital parts of education. Not only should it be possible for one to dive deep into any subject but also be able to come out of it at any moment. It is again the specialty of Yoga that can bring about this comprehensive development of intellect. As we have seen, yoga emphasizes the skill to calm down the mind and it is this skill to pacify the mind that brings the capacity to detach. Hence,

yoga is attracting the attention of many 'intellectual sufferers'.

### 1.6.6 Personality Development – Spiritual Basis

A man may have a very sturdy physique, amazing creative power, a powerful intellect and a highly sensitized emotional grasp, yet may have no iota of spiritual progress. He may not possess even an inkling of the spiritual dimension.

Normally all of us are so structured that we look mostly outside of ourselves – at the environment. The senses grasp things around them – predominantly we spend the whole life in understanding the grandeur of the world outside, solving the problems associated with it; unraveling the mysteries therein; using such knowledge to make our life more comfortable and enjoyable; bringing up our children to perpetuate and sustain the society around us striving to set patterns of behavior and etiquettes of transactions, and so on. We are busy throughout. Notwithstanding this pattern of life, some glimpses into the depths of our inner dimension occasionally flash in all our lives. Very few catch these glimpses but some are awfully struck by the hitherto unknown dimensions hidden within. The search begins; the quest starts. Then, that person is on the march towards spirituality.

Thus the spiritual dimension of man concerns itself with the inner world – the move towards the causal state of mind, the root of the intellect and the substratum of the emotions. Man starts looking inwards. It is this inward journey that marks the beginning of the spiritual quest. Introspection, an inward look, an inner awareness, features the quest. The subtler layers of mind unfold themselves – the inner dimensions of the personality open out.

Thus, **yoga is a process of** all-round personality development by;

1. deep relaxation at muscular level,
2. slowing down of breath and maintaining balance at Pranic level,
3. increasing creative and will powers at mental level,

4. sharpening the intellect and calming down the mind at intellectual level,
5. enhancing the happiness in life and equipoise at emotional level and
6. Manifesting the innate divinity in man in all aspects of life.

Yoga is not only a process for leading man towards this astounding hidden inner personality of man by bringing mastery over the body, mind, intellect and emotional faculties, but also a powerful tool to manifest those hidden potential powers in him.

As man progresses, his zeal to perfect himself grows. In the process, he learns and understands the expressions of nature around him. The inner growth and outer expressions go hand in hand. He starts manifesting the inner divinity in his behavior. His lower animal pulls and emotions – Ariñadvarga, the six major enemies of man namely Kāma (intense desire), Krodha (anger), Lobha (miserliness), Moha (infatuation) Mada (arrogance) and Mātsarya (jealousy) diminish continuously. His slavery reduces. He starts becoming the master by gaining control over them. And that is the growth process which is in tune with spiritual growth.

### **1.7 Studies on Brahmakumaris Raja yoga Meditation**

Eighteen male subjects were studied using the 'self-as-control' design and the two types of sessions, meditation and non-meditation, were repeated thrice in each subject. The heart rate during the meditation period was increased compared to 'baseline' as well as compared to during the non-meditation period of control sessions. In contrast there was no significant change during meditation, for the group as a whole, in GSR, respiratory rate and finger plethysmogram amplitude. The individual level analysis revealed that changes in autonomic variables suggestive of both activation and relaxation occurred simultaneously in different subdivisions of the autonomic nervous system in a meditator. Apart from this, there were differences in patterns of change among the

persons who practiced the same meditation<sup>6</sup> (Telles, & Desiraju, 1993a).

In an another study conducted on eleven experienced practitioners of Brahmakumaris Raja Yoga meditation, meditators while participating in a functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) study, were able to reach a deep meditative state (suggested by pulse rate and breath rate changes), while in the 'loud' scanner environment<sup>7</sup> (Khushu, Telles, Kumaran, Naveen, & Tripathi, 2000). All subjects reported vivid visual images related to the content of the meditation after the session. One subject showed significant activation in the primary visual cortex. Recently, it has been shown that Brahmakumaris Raja Yoga meditation produces changes at the level of the mesencephalon – diencephalon<sup>8</sup> (i.e., possibly thalamic level) (Telles, & Naveen, 2004).

Great scientists as great seekers of reality hesitate not, to open themselves to unknown regions as well. There is an adventure in it for them<sup>9</sup>. The new glimpses of the inner world draw them within. It is this openness, humbleness and humility among the highly developed researchers of the modern scientific era that is making them use yogic practices in their quest<sup>10</sup>. They know no prejudices. Appreciation of such developments by earlier seekers characterizes them. Yoga is leading them to open up their spiritual dimensions<sup>11</sup>. Thus Yoga can accomplish an all-round personality development by solving the problems of man and by bringing bliss into his life. It is for this reason that yoga is also becoming popular day by day in all parts of our globe just as science and technology grew popular in the society<sup>12</sup>. Yoga is a science applicable to all, irrespective of age or sex, caste or creed, religion or sect.

### **1.8. Essential steps for meditation**

1. It is important to have a separate room for meditation where not many people have access. A small room, without a window to distract, without insects is an ideal room.
2. The room should have beautiful portraits of God/Gods and Guru.

3. Self control should be practiced on individual's actions, food, places visiting, dreams etc.
4. Food should be pure, vegetarian and from righteous earnings.
5. Food should be prepared in the pure and right frame of mind and after preparation it should have been offered to god and guru first.
6. Yoga exercises and 'Jeevan Tatva Sadhan' should be practiced daily.
7. The room for meditation should always be clean and pure. Females during their periods should not enter the room.
8. From time to time the divine scriptures like Ramayana, Mahabharata, Upanishads, Geeta, Gurugeeta etc. should be read in that room.
9. Always try to seek blessings from saints and yogis and spend time in their company ('satsang').
10. Discipline should be maintained in life and at a definite time worship, asanas and meditation should be done regularly.
11. It is ideal if meditation is done during the early morning hours as during those hours Siddha Yogis can easily notice the devotees.
12. Stay with total self control in that place. Do not quarrel, have any family feud or display any unpleasant behavior.
13. Chanting of mantra is most essential. (Mantra Japa). Method of Chanting Guru Mantra Take a breath with the first letter/word/part of your Mantra inside. Hold your breath with the second letter/word/part of the Mantra and take out the breath with it. This will automatically start the Purak, Rechak and Kumbhak Pranayam that will control the mind and help concentrating it at a desired place. After some practice this action happens with ease naturally and becomes internal.
14. Practice of Shatkarmas- Neti, Jalneti, Dugdhaneti help in Meditation.
15. River from the Ganges, Cow's milk, Tulsi, Gomutra is good for purity. Fragrant flowers, incense, camphor etc. are also useful in creating an environment.
16. The place to sit should neither be very raised on too low. Only one place should be used

everyday. Sit on a woolen cloth as it is an insulation for energy generated in the body while meditating. No other person should use that woolen cloth except the person using it.

17. It is best to start meditation with mentally worshipping the God/Guru. It is best to start mentally worshipping by touching God's/Guru's feet.

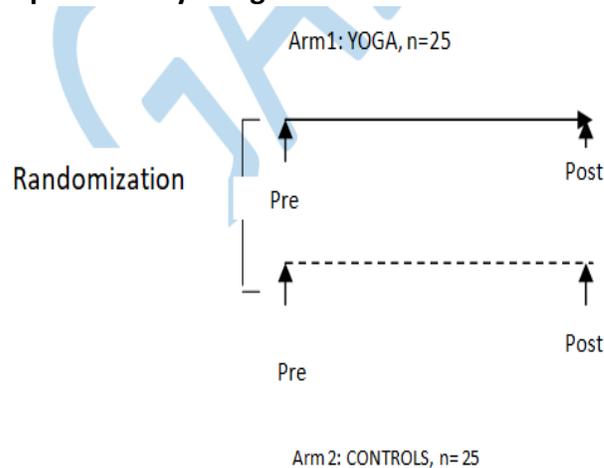
Then concentrate on the Muladhar chakra of the body and the Lord of that chakra- Ganesh. This particular meditation should be done when Guru instructs a disciple to follow this route, otherwise there are many other ways of meditating and they should be done under the guidance of a capable guru.

## 2. METHODS:

### 2.1.1 Overview of design

This study seeks to compare the effects of a Raja yoga meditation in normal healthy volunteers on Quality of life.

#### Proposed study design



Subjects who consent to participate in this study were randomly assigned into the above groups and assessments were done at baseline (study visit) and at the end of one month of intervention.

### 2.1.2 Study Subjects: Selection Criteria

#### 1) Inclusion Criteria

1. Normal healthy volunteers with age not less than 35 years and not more than 70 years.

2. Having a performance status of 0 - 3 in accordance with Zubrods performance status 0-3. [0 = Asymptomatic, fully ambulatory; 1 = Symptomatic, fully ambulatory; 2 = Symptomatic, ambulatory > 50 % of the time. 3 = Symptomatic, ambulatory < 50% of the time]. [Kennealey and Mitchell, 1977]

**Justification:** the inclusion criteria are intended to enroll as many subjects as possible.

## 2) Exclusion Criteria

1. Adults with age less than 35 years and more than 70 years.
2. Any associated disease.
3. Those in Zubrod's performance status of 4 or severely ill.

[3 = Symptomatic, ambulatory < 50% of the time. 4 = Bed ridden]

4. Illiterate patients.

**2.1.3 Randomization:** Subjects were randomized using random numbers generated by a computer for a 2 group assignment.

## 2.2 Measurements/Variables

WHO Quality of life - Bref

## 2.3 Data Analysis

Tests for Normality (Shapiro Wilk's) carried out for all the data variables showed a normally distributed data. Paired t test was used to analyze within group differences in the yoga and control groups and Independent samples t test was used to analyze the between group effect.

## 2.4 Intervention

In the world of today, where life has become a very complicated affair and where man's daily dealings with man often cause him mental tension, nervous strain, emotional disturbances, sleeplessness and peacelessness, more and more people feel inclined to take to yoga-the path of real peace and enlightenment but one is generally scared away from this divine gift of God because of two wrong impressions. One of these is that yoga is meant for the selected few

who are hermits and recluses as it is something mysterious and time consuming and is one that requires an atmosphere of solitude and seclusion. Secondly, it is thought that yoga involves a rigorous discipline of the body as it requires a man to regulate his breath or to perform some other penanceful acts and to keep the body in a fixed posture for a considerable time at a stretch. So, it is necessary to remove these common misconceptions. It requires to be explained that the practice of physical postures, breath control, etc., which most Indian preachers have been advocating in India and abroad, though useful for the physical health, is not "Yoga", for yoga in its essence is a mental discipline, nay it is a spiritual practice and a noble way of life. In this stressful society interested in stress eradication through yoga or meditation. in this world so many types of meditation techniques are available but which method is reliable to reduce our stress or which method gives mental peace. Here we will focus on Raj Yoga meditation. this is the meditation recommended in the Shrimad Bhagwad Gita. Rajyoga means the king of yogas. It involves purposeful thoughts about spiritual concepts. Raj yoga deals with the spiritual dimension of your inner life. It includes all the above techniques but interprets them in a more symbolic way. Here I am going to explain with the help of example that is the chanting the mantra. The mantra is not repeated verbally or silently internally, but rather you think deeply about it and remind yourself to stay in the awareness of the meaning of the mantra. This changes the quality of your consciousness. In this way, meditation practice is a process of shifting again and again from body –consciousness to soul-consciousness. Maintaining soul-consciousness is the awareness of the soul, the life force and divine light that animates your physical form and makes breathing possible. It is a continuous and progressively subtle effort to stay in that state of being and from there to move your consciousness or thoughts beyond into the non-material realm of purity and silence, where you can connect and commune with God the

Supreme Soul. This requires stillness of mind, focus and purity of thoughts. For that, the Asana is to sit in the metaphorical lotus pose of detachment and balance. Your soul-conscious contact with the Divine, Supreme Soul, the ocean of all qualities, is the sacred focus of attention. Your dhyana, attention or concentration is upon that Divine Source. Once you orient your attention on God in this way, you can go further, than looking at a representation or image. You establish a connection cultivate a relationship and absorb divine qualities, virtues and powers. The practice of Raj yoga also keeps you alert and aware of the different traps and illusions of material consciousness so that you notice when you drift into false ego. Raj yoga enables you to accumulate the inner powers to perform pure karma.

Eventually Raj yoga takes the form of a preparation for leaving this world. It frees you from the fear of the in known and gives you clarity and certainty about what lies beyond the immediate perceivable world. So that when your time comes you can move on easily and comfortably, knowing how and where to go.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:**

A total of 50 subjects (yoga, n=25 and control, n=25) participated in this study. The mean age of participants was 34.36 ± 9.35 years in yoga group and 35.25 ± 8.17 years in Control group.

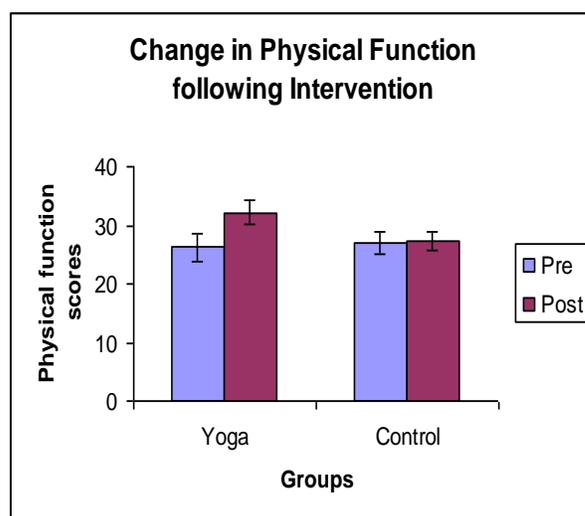
**Scores on WHO Quality of life:**

Paired t test used to analyze within group changes found a significant increase in Physical health (t= -17.57, p<0.001), Psychological domain (t= -14.98, p<0.001), Social relationship (t= -13.72, p<0.001) and Environment domain (t= -15.92, p<0.001) in yoga group only and not in controls. Independent sample t test on change scores was used to analyze between group changes also showed a significant improvement in Physical health (t= -15.67, p<0.001), Psychological domain (t= -13.47, p<0.001), Social relationship (t= -12.05, p<0.001) and Environment domain (t= -15.73, p<0.001) in Yoga group compared to Control group.

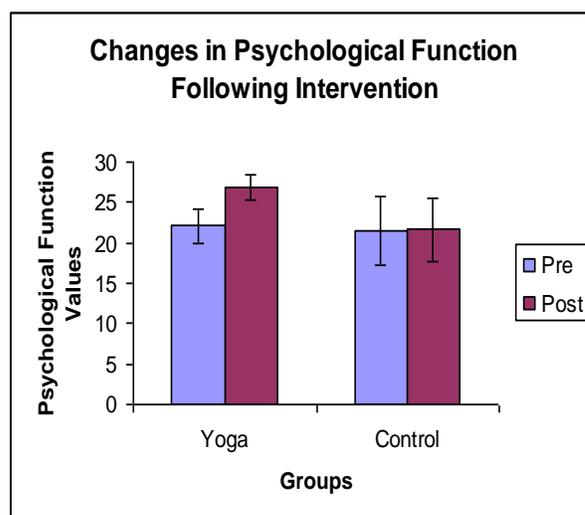
**Table 1: Changes in the Quality of Life following intervention.**

Parameter	Yoga		Control	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Physical Function	26.2 (2.38)	32.2** (2.18)	27.04 (1.86)	27.2 (1.61)
Psychological Function	22.08 (2.18)	26.84** (1.65)	21.52 (4.18)	21.68 (3.92)
Social Domain	11.44 (1.39)	13.96** (0.84)	10.8 (1.32)	10.8 (1.12)
Environmental Domain	26.08 (3.49)	31.84** (3.10)	31.12 (3.47)	31.08 (3.29)

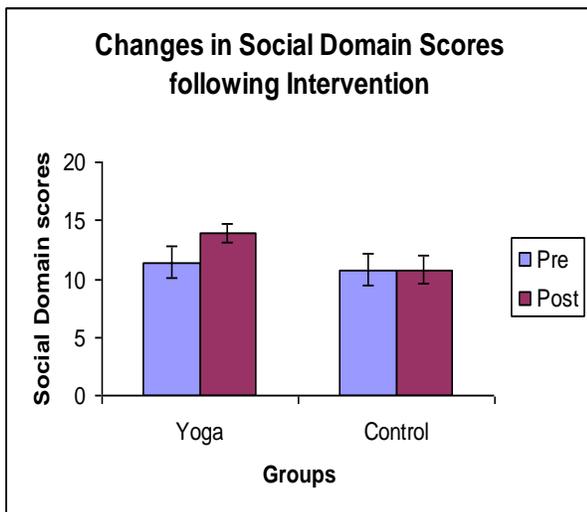
\*\* p< 0.01 for within group using paired sample t test



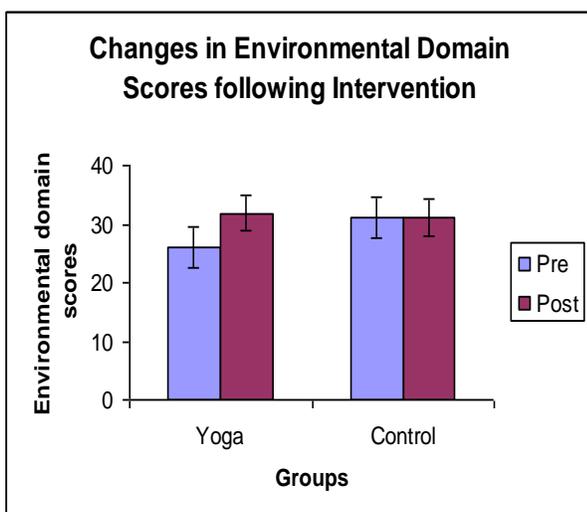
**Fig 1: Changes in Physical Function following intervention**



**Fig 2: Changes in Psychological Function following intervention**



**Fig 3: Changes in Social Domain Scores following intervention**



**Fig 4: Changes in Environmental Domain Scores following intervention**

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:**

The present study measured the effectiveness of Brahmakumaris Raja Yoga Meditation on Quality of life domains on normal healthy volunteers compared to control group. The study showed a significant improvement in yoga group on all the four domains of WHO QOL scale such as physical health, psychological domain, social relationship domain and environmental domain compared to control group. With this a simple and easy practice of regular Brahmakumaris Raja Yoga Meditation technique helps in improving the quality of life. The other meditation techniques such as Transcendental meditation, Zen

meditation, Om meditation, cyclic meditation etc have also shown the beneficial effects on various physiological parameters.

This type of simple meditation practices can be adopted in daily life to maintain good health and also helps in prevention of many psychosomatic disorders where psychological stress is believed to play a role. These practices mainly reduce psycho physiological arousal but also enhance different aspects of attention, such as the ability to sustain; focus and shift attention thereby instills a greater amount relaxation.

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