

Development of Human Potential through Yogic Practices assessed by Psychological and Health Variables

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND:

There are a large number of methods of yoga catering to the needs of different types of people in society to bring about the transformation of the individual. They are broadly classified into four streams. Swami Vivekananda puts them as Work, Worship, Philosophy and Psychic control. One can even achieve highest goal of life either one or more or all of these to get one liberated. Integral Yoga modules included all these four streams of yoga in our study.

Aims

The study was aimed to evaluate the human potential through four main streams of Yoga (Paths) through Yoga modules practices and literatures by quantifying the changes in psychological and health variables evoked by following Integral yoga practices, *Kapālabhāti* (KB) and Deep Relaxation technique (DRT).

OBJECTIVES

1. To evaluate the effect of integral yoga on sustained attention, emotional intelligence, general health, triguna personality and to evaluate the correlations of each variable with other variables.
2. To study the immediate effect of *Kapālabhāti* and Breath awareness on state anxiety, sustained attention and verbal and spatial memory

3. To study the immediate effect of Deep Relaxation Technique VS Supine rest on state anxiety and sustained attention

Material and Methods

- A. Effect of integral yoga practiced for 28 days, on sustained attention (Six Letter Cancellation (SLC) & Digit Letter Substitution (DLS), Emotional Intelligence (EQ) General Health (GHQ) and guna personality (Sattva, Rajas, Tamas) on one group of 108 healthy volunteers ages ranged from 17 to 63 years, in a pre-post study design.
- B. Immediate effect of *kapālabhāti* (KB) verses Breath Awareness (BA) on state anxiety, sustained attention, (SLC and DLS) tests and verbal and spatial memory on self control study group of 43 healthy volunteers aged 20-45 years practiced 20 minutes KB and BA over two consecutive days.
- C. Immediate effect of Deep Relaxation Technique (DRT) verses Supine Rest (SR), on state anxiety and sustained attention (SLC and DLS) on 86 healthy subjects aged 18 to 64 years with a mean age 29 years. These subjects were divided into two groups of 43 volunteers each for 20 minutes each for DRT and SR respectively immediately before and after practice.

RESULTS

- A. Integral yoga: Significant pre-post improvements were found in sustained attention (SLC & DLS), EQ, GH and rajas ($p < 0.001$), tamas ($p < 0.01$) and in sattva ($p < 0.05$).
- B. KB VS BA: After *kapālabhāti* scores reduced significantly on state anxiety and increased on both sustained attention verbal and spatial memory ($p < 0.001$). After breath awareness changes were also significant ($p < 0.001$) on all variables except state anxiety ($p > 0.05$).

C. DRT VS SR: A significant reduction in state anxiety score ($p < 0.001$) was observed for the group practicing DRT, but not for the group practicing SR. For the sustained attention tests, however there were significant increases in scores in both DRT and SR groups ($P < 0.001$).

CONCLUSION

- A. The study shows that integral yoga practices imparts significant benefits to healthy volunteers in all psychological (SLC, DLS), emotional (EQ), health (GHQ) and personality (PI) variables.
- B. KB VS BA: The study suggests that both KB and BA reduce anxiety and improve sustained attention. However KB was significantly more effective in doing so than BA. In contrast they act in opposite directions on verbal and spatial memory.
- C. DRT VS SR: Results suggest that both interventions improve attention but that only DRT reduces state anxiety.

Key words: Yoga, Emotional Intelligence, psychological, Gunas, Memory, Health