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## **An experimental study to assess the effectiveness of meditation on psychological well-being among the elderly persons residing in selected old age homes from Pune city**

**Marina Thapa, Karpagavalli Nageswaran and Monita Thokchom**

**Abstract**

**Title:** "Effectiveness of meditation on Psychological well-being among the elderly persons"

**Purpose:** To determine the effectiveness of meditation on Psychological well-being among the elderly persons" Psychological wellbeing and health are closely related, which are more important at older ages. Physical diseases, psychological illness and adjustment problems are quite common during this phase of life. Meditation is considered as a type of mind-body complementary medicine. It can give a sense of calmness, peace and balance that benefits both emotional well-being and overall health of individual persons.

**Methods & Material:** A pre-experimental pre-test-post-test one group design with non-probability purposive sampling method. The tool consisted of section I (demographic data), and section II Subjective Psychological well-being Inventory (Ryffs Scales of Psychological Well Being).

**Results:** Out of 60 subjects, 41.80 % of them belonged to age above 70 years and 78.40% were female. 20 % of subjects had been practising some form of meditation before. Paired t-test for comparison of pre-test and post-test scores showed significant effectiveness of meditation in improving psychological well-being of elderly persons, as average score in pre-test was 62.2, which increased to 63.85 in post-test, t-value was 5.373 with 59 degrees of freedom. Corresponding p-value was 0.000. In Fisher's Exact Test for association p value was >0.05. Hence psychological well-being was found not significantly associated with selected demographic variables.

**Conclusion:** The analysis revealed that Raj yoga meditation was helpful to improve the subjective psychological well-being of elderly persons. However, such measures can be utilized effectively with long run for more and better outcome.

**Keywords:** Meditation, effectiveness, psychological well-being, elderly, determine

**Introduction**

People at or over the age of 60, constitute above 7.7% of total population. Old age is usually connected with the different types of problems encountered by the aged. It has been observed that physical diseases, psychological illness and adjustment problems are quite common during this phase of life. The theme of this age period is loss, which may be identified like loss of physical abilities, loss of intellectual processes, loss of work role and occupational identification (Retirement), loss of intimate ties, such as death of spouse, friends and other acquaintances. Because of this transition in their life, they experience varying degree of emotional and psychological and physical changes.

Psychological wellbeing and health are closely related, and may become more important at older ages. Studies suggest that psychological wellbeing is affected by many factors other than health like material conditions, social and family relationships, social roles and activities. There is a growing research literature suggesting that psychological wellbeing may even be a protective factor in health, reducing the risk of chronic physical illness and promoting longevity. Meditation is an age-old self-regulatory strategy that is gaining more interest in mental health. Meditation is considered as a type of mind-body complementary medicine. It can give a sense of calmness, peace and balance that benefits both emotional well-being and overall health.

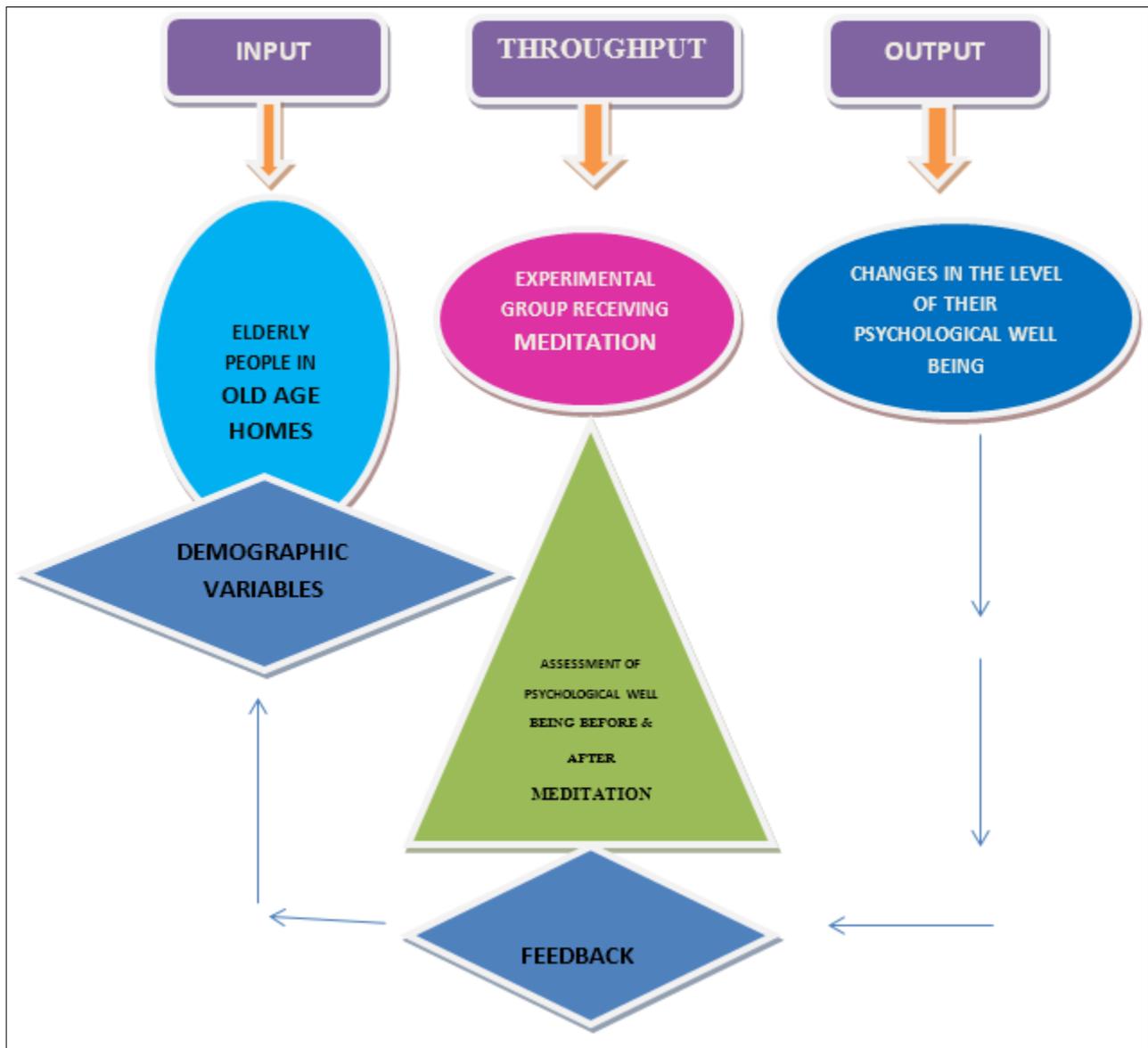
Spending even a few minutes in meditation can restore mental calmness and inner peace. Brahma kumaris Rajyoga meditation gives a clear spiritual understanding of self and helps one to re-discover the use of positive qualities which are already latent within oneself, this enables to develop strengths of character and to create new attitudes and responses to life.

Jharna Bag, Debashish Sanyal in their study took 50 elderly people from two different old age homes in Kolkata. The findings revealed that more than half (52%) of the elderly people have reported high subjective psychological well-being status. Regression analysis showed that perceived physical health problem ( $P < 0.001$ ) and having children ( $P = 0.010$ ) were statistically significant predictors of subjective well-being. They concluded that in order to

improve the quality of life of elderly people health workers should give more emphasis on psychosocial aspects of this population. Improved psychosocial aspects can increase perceived physical health hence subjective well-being.

**Objectives**

1. To assess the level of psychological well-being of elderly persons before intervention.
2. To assess the level of psychological well-being of elderly persons after intervention.
3. To determine the effectiveness of meditation on psychological well-being of elderly after intervention.
4. To associate the findings with selected demographic variables.



**Fig 1:** Conceptual framework on general systems theory

**Materials and Method**

**Hypothesis**

Ho : There is no significant difference between the pre and posttest level of psychological well-being of the elderly persons exposed to meditation program at 0.05 level of significance.

**Methodology**

In order to achieve the desired objectives of the study quantitative research approach with Pre- experimental Pre-test, Post- test one group research design was adopted for the present study. Using non-probability purposive sampling

60 elderly people who were residing in selected old age homes from Pune City, were enrolled for the study. After obtaining administrative approval and written consent from the participants, tool was administered for data collection. Data collection was accomplished by using tool comprised of, Section I: Demographic profile and. Section II: Subjective Well Being Inventory. After pre-test, the enrolled elderly were exposed to Rajyoga meditation for every twenty minutes for four weeks and posttest was conducted.

An appropriate instructions given before starting the meditation program where they were asked to do deep breathing exercise for about 5 minutes to calm down the mind and body and then Put on the audio of Raj yoga meditation for 20 minutes. An informal feedback was taken from the group after each session.

## Results

**Table 1:** Description of sample according to demographic variables n=60

S.no	Demographic variables	Frequency	%
1.	<b>Age(In Yrs)</b>		
	a. 60-65	12	19.9%
	b. 66-70	23	38.3%
	c. >70	25	41.8%
2.	<b>Gender</b>		
	a. Male	13	21.6%
	b. Female	47	78.4%
3.	<b>Marital Status</b>		
	a. Married	13	21.67%
	b. Single	13	21.67%
	c. Widow	27	45%
	d. Widower	04	6.66%
	e. Divorced	03	5%
4.	<b>Education</b>		
	a. Primary	29	48.2%
	b. Secondary	10	16.6%
	c. Higher Secondary	08	13.4%
	d. Graduates	12	20.2%
	e. Post Graduates	01	1.6%
5.	<b>Family Income Per Month</b>		
	a. 5000-15000	03	5%
	b. 15001-30000	27	45%
	c. 30001-45000	24	40%
	d. >45000	06	10%
6.	<b>Recreational Activities</b>		
	a. TV	33	55%
	b. TV /Music	06	10%
	c. Music	07	11.67%
	d. Movies	01	1.67%
	e. Reading Books	07	11.67%
	f. Reading Books /Movies	03	5%
	g. Reading Books/TV	02	3.33%
	h. Reading Books/ Gatherings	01	1.66%
7.	<b>How Long Per Day</b>		
	a. <1 Hour	22	36.67%
	b. 1-3 Hours	36	60%
	c. 3-4 Hours	02	3.33%
	d. >4 Hours	00	0%
8.	<b>Have You Done Meditation Before</b>		
	a. Yes	12	20%
	b. No	48	80%
9.	<b>If Yes, How Many Times Per Day</b>		
	a. 1-2 Times	10	16.8%
	b. 2-3 Times	01	1.6%
	c. >3 Times	01	1.6%

Table no 1 reveals 41.80 % of participants belonged to age above 70 years, 38.30% were under the age group 66-70 years and 19.90 % of them belonged to age group 60-65 years. 78.40% participants were female. Majority 45% of them were widow, 21.67% were married, 21.67% were single, 6.66% were widower and 5% of them had been divorced. 48.20 % of participants had been educated up to their primary level of education, 16.60 % had secondary education, 13.40 % had higher secondary education, 20.20

% had their education up to graduate level and only 1.60 % had their education up to post graduate level. 45% of their monthly family income was between Rs.15001- 30000. 55% of them watched TV daily as their recreational activity, 60% of them devoted 1-3 hours for their recreational activity. Around 80% of them said that they did not practice any form of meditation before. 16.8% of them said that they practiced meditation 1-2 times per day.

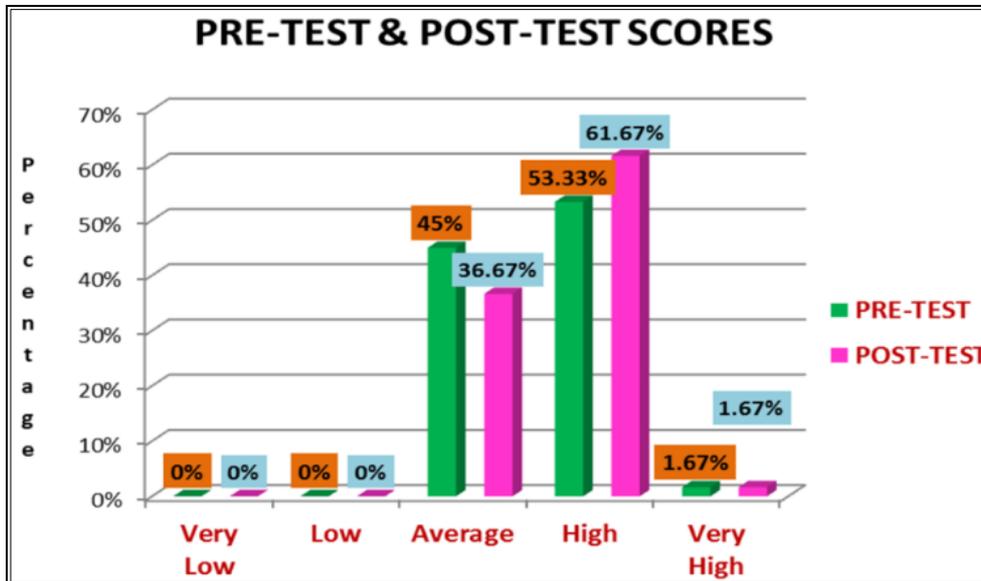


Fig 2: Comparison of pre-test and post-test scores of subjective psychological well being N=60

Figure 2 shows comparison of pre-test and post-test scores where 53.33% of participants had high score i.e (61-80), 45% of them had an average score i.e (41-60) and 1.67% had very high score i.e (>80) before they were exposed to meditation program. After they were exposed to the

meditation program, post-test revealed 61.67% of participants scored high level of subjective well being, 36.67 % of them scored average level and 1.67% of participants scored very high level of subjective psychological well-being.

Table 2: Paired t-test for effectiveness of meditation on psychological well-being n=60

	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value
Pre-test	62.02	9.596	5.373	59	< 0.001
Post-test	63.85	9.598			

Table 2 shows average knowledge score of participants in pre-test was 62.2 which increased to 63.85 in post-test. T-value for this comparison was 5.373 with 59 degrees of freedom. Corresponding p-value was < 0.001. Hence null

hypothesis is rejected. The above results indicate that meditation program was found to be significantly effective in improving subjective psychological well-being of the elderly persons.

Table 3: Fisher’s Exact test for association between subjective psychological well-being scores (Pre-test scores) and selected demographic variables n=60

S no	Demographic variables	p value	Significant/ not significant
1.	AGE in yrs	0.0512	Not Significant
	a. 60-65		
	b. 66-70		
	c. >70		
2.	Gender	0.2527	Not Significant
	a. Male		
	b. Female		
3.	Education	0.8188	Not Significant
	a. Primary		
	b. Secondary		
	c. Higher Secondary		
	d. Graduates		
e. Post Graduate			

4.	Have you done Meditation Before	0.6141	Not Significant
	a. Yes		
	b. No		

Since p- value in Fisher's exact test (in each case) is more than 0.05. Hence there is no significant association between psychological well-being and selected demographic variables.

### Discussion

The findings of the study was discussed with the objectives and hypothesis stated. The present study was undertaken to determine the effectiveness of meditation on psychological well-being of elderly persons residing in selected old homes from Pune city. Sample of 60 who met the mentioned criteria were included in this study. Researcher applied paired t-test for comparison of psychological well-being score before and after meditation. Average score in pre-test was 62.2 which increased to 63.85 in post-test. t-value for this comparison was 5.373 with 59 degrees of freedom. Corresponding p-value was 0.000, which is small (less than 0.05), null hypothesis is rejected. Meditation was found to be significantly effective in improving the subjective psychological well-being of the elderly persons.

To support present study, researcher intended to cite few of the previously carried out studies which are as follows;

- A descriptive survey study conducted by Sreevani R to assess the emotional problems among elderly people in a selected old age home at K.G.F. Kolar. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 50 elderly people as a sample. Socio-demographic data and general health questionnaire were used as tools.. The results revealed that 38% of the subjects were suffering with major health problems, 16% of them were having minor health problems, 46% were healthy and nearly half of the sample 46% was suffering from emotional problems.
- A study was conducted by Kavitha, A.k (2007) to compare quality of life among senior citizens living in home for aged and family set up in Erode district, Salem. Convenience sampling technique was used to select senior citizens in both home for aged and family set up. The sample was limited to 50 from home for aged and 50 from senior citizens in the family both male and female were included. Structured interview schedule was used to collect the data. Findings revealed that quality of life higher among senior citizens living in family set up than the senior citizens living in home for aged.

### Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to assess the effectiveness of meditation on psychological well-being of elderly persons residing in selected old age homes from Pune city. Pre-experimental pre-test post-test one group design was used for the study, which consisted of 60 samples that were selected on the basis of the purposive sampling technique. The content validity and reliability of the tool was done, which suggested that the tool was reliable. The pilot study was conducted among 6 samples and the feasibility of the study was established. Based on the objectives and the assumption, the collected data was

analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. The data analysis was done by calculating the mean, mean percentage, standard deviation, frequency and percentage, paired t-test, Fissure's Exact test.

### Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the study, it is recommended that

- A similar study may be conducted on a larger population for generalization of findings.
- A study can be conducted in different settings to strengthen the study findings.
- A comparative study can be done to assess the effectiveness of meditation on Old Age Homes and the community area.
- Such study can be done among the nursing students as well other students.
- Another study can be performed among the school or college teachers

### Limitations

The limitation of the present study is as follows:

- A limited time available for data collection.
- Sample size limited
- Few old Age Homes
- The relevant and appropriate literature was scanty, as hardly any nursing study has been conducted on the topic under investigation.

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