

EFFECT OF SAHAJA YOGA MEDITATION IN REDUCING ANXIETY LEVEL OF CLASS VI STUDENTS TOWARDS ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

Anxiety is one of the major causes for poor achievement in English as a second language in India. Sahaja Yoga Meditation treatment was associated with significant improvements in quality of life and anxiety reduction. The objective of the present study is to find out the effect of Sahaja Yoga Meditation in reducing anxiety level of class VI students towards English as a Second Language. Children Foreign Language Anxiety Scale and Sahaja yoga meditation module are used as tool for this study. Pre-test and post-test experimental method has been used in this study. 122 Class VI students are randomly selected as control and experimental group. Independent t-test and ANCOVA Statistical analysis is assessed through SPSS. The ANCOVA result reveals that the effect size of the SYM module is medium on experimental group to reduce anxiety towards English as a second language than control group while controlling the varied pre-test values.

KEYWORDS: Anxiety, Sahaja Yoga Meditation, Children Foreign Language Anxiety Scale

INTRODUCTION

“Sahaja Yoga is the spontaneous union of the individual consciousness with the all-pervading divine power, through the awakening of the residual power of the Kundalini which lies dormant within all human beings in the triangular bone at the base of the spine, called the sacrum, the sacred bone.” (Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, 2018) This meditation technique is started by Dr. Nirmala Srivastav in the year 1970. Sahaj Yoga is a form of “Kundalini Yoga” which describes a simple technique to arouse the latent potential of man by a simple meditative process. (Sharma, Das, Mondal, Goswami, Gandhi, 2006). Sahaja Yoga helps in reducing the anxiety levels of the healthy practitioners. (Batra, 1999) Sahaj Yoga practice in addition to the improvement in various other cognitive domains seen with conventional anti-depressants, can lead to additional improvement in executive functions like manipulation of information in the verbal working memory and added improvement in attention span and visuo-motor speed of the depressives. (Sharma & et al, 2006). Sahaja Yoga Meditation treatment was associated with significant improvements in quality of life, anxiety reduction, and blood pressure control. (Chung, Brooks, M. Rai, Balk, S. Rai, 2012)

Anxiety is the major cause for poor achievement in English as a second language in India. (Prusty, Ramakrishna, 2021). Students with high anxiety for English language score lower academically when compared with students with low anxiety level. (Halder, 2018) English Second Language learners are more anxious to use English inside and outside the classroom. (Saranraj & Meenakshi, 2016).

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Stephen Krashen has opined that low self esteem, lack of motivation, low self confidence, high anxiety level block the second language acquisition process of an individual. Hence, as per his suggestion happy and joyful classroom environment helps in reducing the anxiety for second language among the learners. As suggested by Lozanov in his “Suggestopaedia” yogic styles or meditation are helpful to relax the psyche of the second language learner and to create a joyful classroom environment for the second language acquisition. Hence, in the present study an attempt has been made to find out the effect of Sahaja Yoga Meditation in reducing anxiety level of class VI students towards English as a Second Language in Telangana State.

OBJECTIVE FOR THE STUDY

To find out the effect of Sahaja Yoga Meditation in reducing anxiety level of class VI students towards English as a Second Language.

REVIEWS FOR THE STUDY

The following reviews related to the impact of meditation in reducing the anxiety for second language has been gathered from various sources.

Onem (2015) found out that meditation has a positive impact in reducing anxiety and enhancing leaning the foreign languages. Mindfulness meditation has brought modest improvement in the second language acquisition and lowering the anxiety level of primary bilingual students towards foreign language. (Lousia, 2017). Bilingual Guided Meditation is a good technique to create a relaxed learning environment and positive mindset and that it has a positive impact on anxiety reduction and academic enhancement. (Cai, Qinghong, 2017). Practice of Mindful meditation has improved self-confidence and self-awareness which lowered the affective filter of English language students and teachers as well. (Garcia, 2016) Meditation as a classroom management technique helps students to achieve a relaxed state which in turn helps them to acquire the second language. (Jenkins, 2015).

HYPOTHESES FOR THE STUDY

- There is no significant difference between control and experimental groups towards Pre-test Children’s Foreign Language Anxiety Scale scores.
- There is a significant difference between control and experimental groups towards Post-test Children’s Foreign Language Anxiety Scale scores.
- Sahaja Yoga Module will have positive impact on reducing anxiety level of Class VI students towards English as a second language.

PROCEDURE

In the present study pre-test and post-test experimental method has been used to find out the effect of Sahaja Yoga Meditation in reducing anxiety level of class VI students towards English as a Second Language. Total 122 samples are chosen from two schools of the Rajendranagar Mandal of Telangana state for conducting the experiment. The samples are randomly divided into control group and experimental group with 61 students in each group. The students of control group

have not given any intervention program, whereas the students of experimental group have practiced Sahaja Yoga Meditation regularly for six months. Sahaja Yoga Meditation is taken as independent variable and Anxiety for English as a second language is taken as dependent variable for the study.

TOOLS FOR THE STUDY

For the present study, two tools are used to collect the data from the participants.

- Children Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (CFLAS) developed by Aydin Selami & et al. in 2016. It is a standardized tool. This tool is adopted from Horwitz's Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FCLAS) and modified to make it suitable to assess the children's anxiety level. The CFLAS tool has total 20 items which are distributed into 3 dimensions as Communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Likert 5-point scale with facial images is used to create interest for the children to rate the items. The reliability of the scale is .85 in Cronbach's Alpha. The validity of the scale is with Varimax rotation, the rotated factors explained 48.39% of the variance.
- Sahaja Yoga Meditation Module is developed by the researcher by collecting the information from various sources. The sources are; Sahaja yoga official website of shajayoga.org, sahaja yoga module of six weeks for children, research article on benefits of sahaja yoga, the book written by Dr. Nirmala Srivastav, "The Meta Modern Era" and above all with the personal experiences of the researcher in practicing this meditation and conducting Sahaja Yoga Meditation classes for various school students. This module is prepared for 23 weeks and 15 minutes regular practice is given to the meditative groups. The content validity has been established as per the suggestions of the experts who are practicing Sahaja yoga meditation for a long period of time.

DATA COLLECTION

Before the administration of the intervention program to the participants, pre-test is conducted for both control group and experimental group students. The CFLAS tool is used to find out the anxiety level of the participants towards English as a second language. The experimental group has received the intervention of Sahaja Yoga meditation practice for 6 months. The control group has not received any intervention program. After 6 months again post-test is conducted for both Control group and experimental group students by administering the same CFLAS tool.

DATA ANALYSIS

Both pre-test and post-test results were analyzed with the help of SPSS software. Independent t-test and ANCOVA non-parametric statistical techniques are used to analyze the data.

Table 1: T-Test for Independent Samples for Control and Experimental Groups on Pre-Test Children Foreign Language Anxiety Scale

Variable	Name of the Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-test Children Foreign Language Anxiety Scale	Experimental	61	39.6557	3.71432	.47557
	Control	61	38.6721	5.91811	.75774

Table 2: Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

Variable	Variance	t value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
Pre-test CFLAS	Not equal	1.099	100.920	.274	.98361	.89461	-.79108	2.75829

(Note: CFLAS refers to Children Foreign Language Anxiety Scale)

If we observe the above table, we can notice that the scores varied for the groups (experimental group students - $M = 39.65$, $SD = 3.714$; control group students - $M = 38.67$, $SD = 5.918$). At an alpha of .05, the analysis indicated no statistically significant difference among the groups, $t(100.9) = 1.099$, $p = .274$. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 3: T-Test For Independent Samples For Control and Experimental Groups On Post-Test Children Foreign Language Anxiety Scale

Variable	Name of the Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-test Children Foreign Language Anxiety Scale	Experimental	61	80.4590	7.05118	.90281
	Control	61	70.7541	7.02770	.89980

Table 4. Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

Variable	Variance	t value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
Post-test CFLAS	Not equal	7.614	119.999	.000	9.70492	1.27464	7.18121	12.22862

(Note: CFLAS refers to Children Foreign Language Anxiety Scale)

If we observe the above table, we can notice that the scores varied for the groups (experimental group - $M = 80.45$, $SD = 7.051$; control group students - $M = 70.75$, $SD = 7.027$). At an alpha of .05, the analysis indicated statistically significant difference among the groups, $t(119.9) = 7.614$, $p = .000$. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 5: Levene's Test to test the Homogeneity of Variance in both the Groups in Relation to Children Foreign Language Anxiety Scale

Dependent Variable: Post-test Children Foreign Language Anxiety Scale			
F	df1	df2	Sig.
.857	1	120	.357

The above table shows that F-value of .357 (Levene's statistics) was found insignificant at 0.05 level. This proves that the data fulfils the assumption of Homogeneity of Variance.

Table 6: Comparison of Adjusted Post-Test means among Control and Experimental Group in Children Foreign Language Anxiety Scale by using ANCOVA

Dependent Variable: Post-test Children Foreign Language Anxiety Scale						
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	3004.615 ^a	2	1502.308	30.746	.000	.341
Intercept	8515.031	1	8515.031	174.269	.000	.594
T_CFLAS	131.959	1	131.959	2.701	.103	.022
GROUP	2722.963	1	2722.963	55.728	.000	.319
Error	5814.500	119	48.861			
Total	706214.000	122				
Corrected Total	8819.115	121				

The above table reveals that the obtained $F(1,119) = 55.728, p = 0.000$. Importantly the effect size for control and experimental group is medium: Partial Eta Squared = 0.319. There is a significant difference in mean Children Foreign Language Anxiety Scores between Control and Experimental group while adjusting for pre-test values. This shows that Experimental group has revealed low anxiety level in Children Foreign Language Anxiety than Control group while they have unequal pre-test scores. In other words, the variance in post-test Children Foreign Language Anxiety scores is 31% due to the intervention of Sahaja Yoga Meditation Module. Hence, the framed directional hypothesis is accepted.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The control and experimental groups did not show significant differences in their pre-test Children’s Foreign Language Anxiety Scale scores. Their mean and standard deviation scores are close to each other. Hence, it can be interpreted that both control and experimental groups have similar level of anxiety towards English as a second language before the intervention program is conducted.

The control and experimental groups revealed significant differences in their post-test Children’s Foreign Language Anxiety Scale scores. Their mean and standard deviation scores significantly differ from each other and the mean and standard deviation scores of experimental group is higher than the control group.

Sahaja Yoga meditation module has a significant positive impact on reducing anxiety level of experimental group students, which is evident from the differences in pre and post test Children’s Foreign Language Anxiety Scale scores. Again the ANCOVA result reveals that the effect size of the SYM module is medium on experimental group to reduce anxiety towards English as a second language than control group while controlling the varied pre-test values. In the other way, the students of experimental group has 31% lower anxiety level than control group in their post-test CFLAS scores because of the intervention of SYM module. Garcia (2016) in her study revealed that decrease in the gaps of affective filter due to meditation practice leads to increase in positive attitude and motivation towards English language learning. Onem (2015) and Qinghong (2017) have revealed similar effect of meditation in reducing anxiety level of students towards English language.

CONCLUSION

From this study it can be concluded that Sahaja Yoga Meditation practice is effective in reducing the anxiety level of Class VI students towards English as a second language. Hence, it can be suggested to the policy makers, teachers and other stake holders to use Sahaja Yoga Meditation technique in the second language classrooms to create a relaxed, joyful learning environment for the learners and eventually help them in their second language acquisition process.

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