

Can Pranakarshan Pranayam helps to cope up the stress?

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Abstract

We all are well known to breathing practices which is also known as Pranayama, "Pranayamas is a yogic breathing technique which is known to improve the physical and mental well-being.¹" when we starts talking about mental well being, it is our prime duty to assess the efficacy of therapy on stress. So, now the present study was aimed to find out the Impact of Pranakarshan Pranayam on stress level of college students. and the criteria for the selection of the sample is pre determined, Forty subjects of 18-25 yrs age groups and having the same level of intelligence were selected from Dev sanskriti university, Haridwar Uttarakhand. A package of Pranakarshan Pranayam was administered for 40 days including Sunday and holidays. Total duration of intervention was 20 min/day, the effects studied with the help of stress scale developed by Dr. M. Singh. The mapping revealed that the practice of Pranakarshan Pranayam helps the students to cope up the stress.

Key words: Pranakarshan pranayam, Yoga, Stress

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Pranakarshan Pranayam for stress management

Introduction:

We all are well introduced with the ancient breathing practices which are also known as Pranayama. "Pranayamas is a yogic breathing technique which is known to improve the physical and mental well-being."¹ when we start talking about mental well being, it is our prime duty to assess the efficacy of therapy on stress. Because the traditional medical system had no concrete strategy for the complete cure the stress. "Allopathy includes traditional anti-anxiety drugs such as benzodiazepines, and newer options like antidepressants and beta-blockers. These medications can be very effective, but they shouldn't be thought of as a cure"¹⁵. As "Stress is unavoidable"¹⁵ So, now we are going through the practice of only one Pranayama i.e. **Pranakarshan Pranayama**, The present study was aimed to find out the Impact ratio of Pranakarshan Pranayam on stress level of adults.

1.1. Stress is one of the main reasons for the development of various pathological conditions. These include psychological disorders such as depression and anxiety^{1,2} and medical disorders, including coronary heart diseases, hypertension and diabetes³ Physiological studies have shown that stress from any source can influence the endocrine, hemopoietic and immune system. Cytokines and cortisol seem to play an important role in the communication of these systems.⁴

1.2. "There is a very long list of diseases, such as blood pressure, cardiovascular diseases and asthma, which are known as stress-borne diseases. If you study this list, you yourself can conclude that 89% of all the ailments today are stress-borne. Science today is beginning to relate psychological behavior to these stress conditions and therefore it is very necessary to study what stress is, and how it can affect the various aspects of

human life. In order to do this we have to first of all understand the nature of stress and from where it originates".⁷

"The human body is the most excellent boon conferred by the Almighty and the person who comprehends his own body completely, realizes the subtle mysteries of the entire universe. We have used it to move further towards the wrongly chosen valueless philosophy of loge and comfort-driven mode of living, generating restlessness, tensions, stress and a horde of new diseases and disorders".⁸

"**Stress** can be a reaction to a short-lived situation, such as being stuck in traffic. Or it can last a long time if you're dealing with relationship problems, a spouse's death or other serious situations. Stress becomes dangerous when it interferes with your ability to live a normal life over an extended period. You may feel tired, unable to concentrate or irritable. Stress can also damage your physical health"¹⁰. As well we all are well known about the worst condition of the present situation which is going on throughout the world. The expectation of parents from a child/ student causes increasing of stress level. In this sequence we can say that there is a burden on students which is generating an extra pressure psychologically causes stress in collage going students, "The social system and other systems are no longer the same as they used to be in ancient times. Today in this fast growing world the competencies for the survival have gone up and one has to face a lot of competitions".¹¹

"The practice of Yoga not only helps to keep the young body strong and supple but also incorporate mental activities, disciplines that help to develop attention and concentration and stimulate the creative ability that are latent within human body".¹² **Udupa** suggests that "stress-related disorders evolve gradually through four stages. In the first stage, psychological symptoms like anxiety and

irritability arise due to over activation of the sympathetic nervous system. The second stage is characterized by related physical symptoms like high blood pressure, increased heart rate etc. In the third stage, the abnormalities manifest clinically in the organ systems. In the last stage, severe symptoms in particular organs result which need long-term medical management.”⁹

Strength of Pranayam:

Pranayam is generally defined as breath control. Although this interpretation may seem correct in view of the practices involved. The word pranayamas had comprises of two roots: 'prana' and 'ayama'. Prana means 'vital force' or 'life force' and ayama is defined as 'extension' or 'expansion'. Thus, the word Pranayama means 'extension or expansion of the dimension of vital force. The techniques of Pranayama provide the method where the flow of prana in the nadis situated in the subtle body is regulated, activated and purified, inducing physical and mental stability. Pranayam maintain the adequate amount of vital energy in the nadis results the physical body became stronger.

Today yoga and Pranayamas is popular not so much as a system of philosophy, but as a system of practical discipline. The applications of yogic techniques are considered for the benefit of health and cure of certain diseases, like stress management or for improving adjustment of individual in different fields as well as physiological problems.

Methods and procedures:

Sample:

The total sample of 40 students ranging in age from 18 to 25 years was selected from the population of the post graduate students from dev sanskriti vishvavidyalaya, Haridwar, Uttarakhand. The sample consists of 40 Students in experimental group. All the subjects for this research were selected by the purposive sampling. Subjects that are selected for this research were willingly wishes to participate in

this study, and all are physically and mentally fit and not taking any kind of allopathic medicine, the subjects was matched in terms of age (18 to 25), education and socio economic status. Only male participants were considered and minimum education was at least post graduate.

Criteria for selection of sample:

In order to study the effect of Pranakarshan Pranayam on Stress of collage level Students, the primary criteria for the selection of the subjects are, subjects are suffering with these symptoms as mention below:

1. Stressed from some physical or mental reasons
2. Insomnia, nightmares, disturbing dreams
3. Lack of concentration
4. Frequent headaches, jaw clenching or pain
5. Forgetfulness, disorganization, confusion
6. Cold or sweaty hands, feet
7. Nervousness

And the secondary criteria to participate in this study were also who willing to participate in yoga practices and also being physically fit and not taking any kind of medication.

Intervention Schedules:

The intervention program of Yogic practices was started to the experimental group. Participants assigned to the experimental group underwent the selected yogic intervention and each day they performed yoga practices early in the morning by 6:30 to 6:55 for Twenty five (20) minutes per day and for 40 days rigorously including Sundays and holidays. The process for this intervention was undergone in the open ground in the month of March, so the climate was also too gentle (Approx 20 - 25 C) means not so cold and not too hot. The intervention schedules are as shown in given table.

Intervention table:

S. no	Intervention	Round/day	Time
1	Om chanting	3 round	02 minutes
2	Pranakarshan Pranayam	12 round	15 minutes
3	Om chanting followed by shantipath	3 round	03 minutes
	Total		20 minutes

Design:

Single group pre-post test design was used in the present study, at the beginning of the study pre data was collected and tabulated and after 40 days of intervention post data of effectiveness was collected, data was analyzed to see if there is a difference between them as a result of the treatment or intervention or not.

Tools:

Stress level was measured by stress scale developed by Dr. M. Singh (2002) (pub. By Institute of research and test development, Andheri East, Mumbai).

Procedures:

This study was conducted at Dev sanskriti university, Haridwar, Uttarakhand. Forty male students were selected through purposive sampling and the sample was assigned as experimental group (n= 40) and there age range is in between 18 to 25 years of age. All members of experimental group followed there prescribed yogic practices during the course of study and also instructed not to exert his body. The Yogic intervention was given to the experimental group while there was no control Group. The outcome measures were assessed in both groups before and after the study.

Procedure for Pranakarshan Pranayam:¹⁷

The developer of this Pranayam Pt. Shri ram sharma Acharya has advocated the following simple steps for practice:

- I. In the early pre dawn hours after performing daily ablutions sit cross legged facing the eastern direction. Place both hands on the knees. Close your eyes. Meditate on the fact that in the entire sky

Prana (vital force of life) is full of light and energy pervades it. Prana akin to clouds of hot steam shining in sun light are flowing towards us from all directions. And within this Prana we are seated contentedly, peacefully and joyfully.

- II. From both nostrils start inhaling and meditate on the fact that we are imbibing within the body clouds of Prana principle. Just as a bird and snake enter their nest and hole in the same way scattered Prana flow around us is entering our body via the nose. Thus it is also entering our brain, chest, heart, stomach and all other organs.
- III. When you inhale deeply stop it from getting exhaled for sometime and feel mentally: "The Prana I have inhaled is now pervading every pore of my body. Just as when we pour water on mud it soaks the water so too our bodily parts are like dry mud and water as Prana is being soaked by our entire body. Further our body is also fully imbibing consciousness, divine light, strength, zest, enterprise, patience and valor that are conjoined to Prana".
- IV. Try and stop exhalation (after inhaling air) as much as you are comfortable and then slowly exhale this air. At that time mentally think: "After imbibing the essence of Prana in every pore of our body dirty air is being emitted out of our body. It is like throwing away remnants after butter is churned from buttermilk. All mental taints and distortions are being emitted via exhalation of this air and like black smoke it is throwing out all unwholesome imprints of the psyche".

V. After exhaling fully let the air remain outside for sometime i.e. life without air for some time and think: "Since all the taints of my mind have been exhaled I will shut all doors on them. Now these distortions have run away miles from me". This cycle has to be repeated again and again, approximately for fifteen minutes. Since each cycle will be around of one and half minutes, approx within

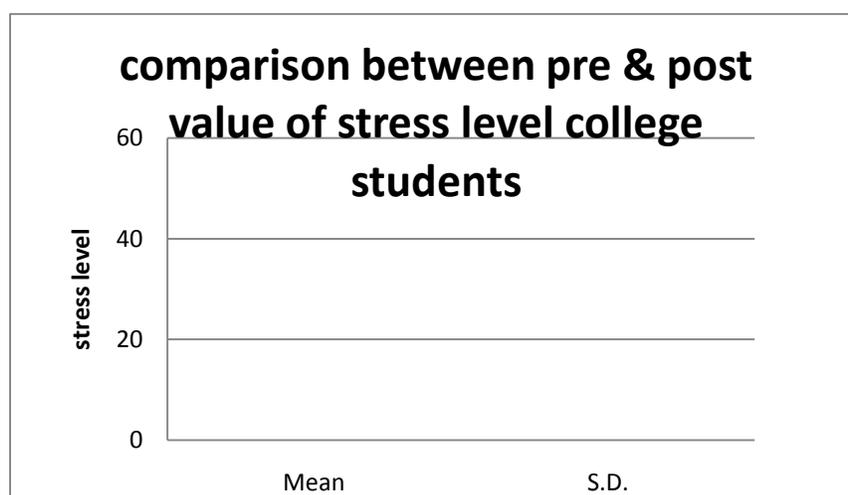
fifteen minutes, an individual can complete almost twelve cycles.

Statistical analysis:

Obtained data were tabulated and analyzed. The initial values on 0th day of each parameter were compared with the final values obtained on 40th day's measurement. Paired t- test was used for the statistical analysis.

States	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	r	Significance
Pre Test	50.5	40	6.35	0.141	3.93	.90	.01 Level
Post Test	44.95	40	5.54				

df = 39 and the level of significance at = .01 level



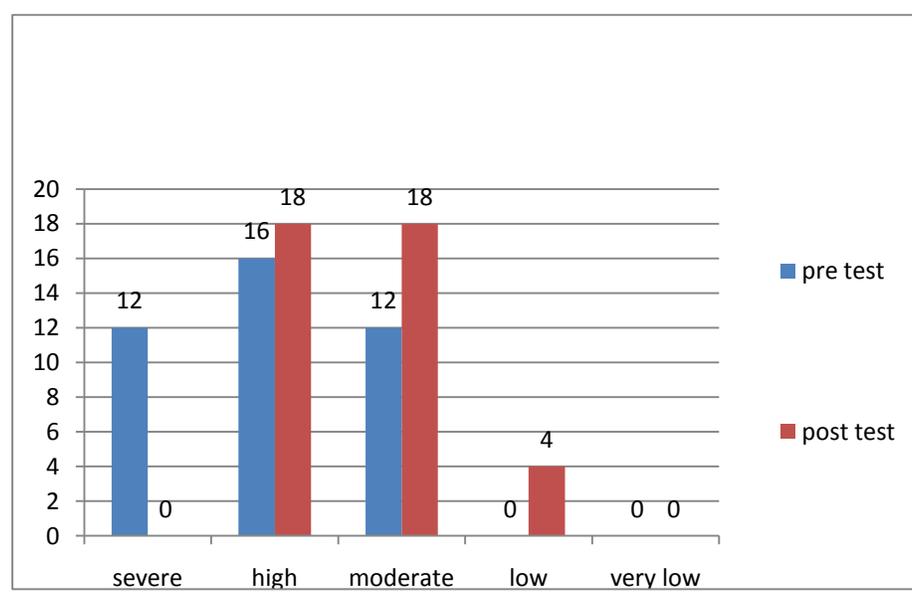
Results:

The mean & standard error of mean ($M \pm SD$) of pre test and post test on level of stress of the experimental group were consecutively found to be 50.50 ± 6.35 and 44.95 ± 5.54 . The correlation (r) .90 and SE_d is 0.141 and obtained t-value is 3.93 which are statistically significant at 0.01 significance level of confidence.

In this study we can see clearly that the stress level had shifted from severe stage to normal stage, which denotes that, the practitioners of Pranayama get relief and feeling relaxed. On the basis of obtained result it can be concluded that Pranakarshan Pranayam intervention is significantly improves the level of stress of college students/ adults.

S.no	Stages of stress	quantify the stress	pre- test	post- test
1	Severe stage	> 57	12	00
2	High stage	47-56	16	18
3	Moderate / normal	37-46	12	18
4	Low stage	27-36	00	04
5	Very love stage	< 26	00	00
		Total	40	40

Graphical representation of stress level in subjects before and after test:



Graphical representation of stress level in subjects before and after test

Conclusion:

The results of the present study reveal that the regular practice of Pranakarshan Pranayam helps to cope up the Stress level of college Students/ adults. All these aspects affect the interpersonal and social behavior as well as psychological Health of an individual. Healthy citizen makes mentally healthy society then this will lead to the society for the development.

In other way different yogis stat the principle of yoga that the blockage in the pranic passage is known as disease so during the practice of yoga,

actually we are trying to clear the blockage which exist in the way of vital energy/Prana. Once a person clear the blockage he definitely get rid of disease. "Pranayama induces calmness and tranquility in several ways. It clears all the pranic passages of any blockages, due to the presence of toxins-It equalizes the flow of prana in the ida and pingala network of nadis. It purifies the blood systems of all toxins. The purifying action of Nadi-shodhan Pranayama on the brain cells enhances the efficiency of the brain centres, allowing them to function at their optimum capacity."¹³

According to traditional medical practitioners "Pranayama have proved to be the best for removal of Stress and Tension, Deep breathing has proved to be the best for removal of Frustration."¹⁴ The statement of this researcher influences that Pranayama act as a Tranquilizer and can reduce the stress phenomena of a mentally stressed adults. Again we found evidence in the support of hypotheses of our study and the researcher states that "Taking your attention to the breath can help free the mind of the unnecessary clutter of thoughts that breed anxiety/ stress."¹⁶ Here is the only way to cope up the stress, as we all are familiar with the remedy in the traditional medicines. "The effect of stressor can be reduced / avoided by strengthening will power or by changing life style or one may opt for taking medicines."¹⁵

Pranayama helps the people to keep the mind relaxed as many medical practitioners believe that alternative medicines has more stable efficacy on the stress, they said that "There are many treatment alternatives to medication, including cognitive behavioral therapy, which is widely accepted to be more effective for anxiety than drugs. To overcome anxiety for good, one may need to change life style; it includes regular exercise, breathing practices adequate sleep, and a healthy diet. Other effective treatments for stress include talk therapy and meditation."¹⁵ On the behalf of these studies we must state that the Pranakarshan Pranayam tranquilizes the mind and body, to get the mind relax and stress free.

So, it can be concluded as the Practice of Pranayama is calming down the mind and body as well as enhancing work ability. In today's haphazard life, stress has become an evitable part of life. Yogic practices not only reduce the stress among individuals but also strengthen the positive aspects of human personality, enhance the hidden quality of human being and also help in developing the country.

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