

Effectiveness of meditation programs in empirically reducing stress and amplifying cognitive function and boosting individual health status: A review

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Meditation had long been believed to possess a multitude of putative beneficial effects which it could bestow upon its practitioner, but it was not until the 1960's that scientific exploration into the process began. Rigorous increase in randomized controlled trials on mindful interventions has been observed in the past two decades. It has been shown, with increasing evidence, to harbor a myriad of positive effects, a few including, but not limited to, stress reduction, cognition enhancement, an increase in memory, boosted intelligence, etc. Such profound positive influences have led to it being rather commonly deployed to promote general health and treat stress and stress related conditions. Meditative modalities are broadly classified as those stressing on mindfulness, concentration or automated self-transcendence. Certain popular modalities such as transcendental meditation follow the use of a mantra such that one transcends to a state where focused attention is absent. In contrast, others such as mindfulness based stress reduction are based on present focused awareness or mindfulness. While it is not clear if these differences influence the result of practice, all classes are broadly considered 'meditation' and studied as such. The session shall aim to give a brief introduction to the world of meditation followed by discussion of the increasing evidence of mindfulness intervention by reviewing the effects of mindfulness interventions on reducing stress levels and boosting cognitive function along with the psychological and neurobiological mechanisms of such interventions, with an aim to provide a robust understanding of the process involved in the benefits of practicing mindfulness, as well as a concise insight into the process of meditation.

Keywords - Meditation, Stress, Cognition.

Biography

Reshu Gupta currently serving as an Associate Professor in Department of Physiology, RUHS College of Medical Sciences, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India with a total of 12 years of teaching experience in public and private medical colleges. She presented research papers in various national and international conferences, 20 full text papers published in indexed national and international journals. She is also Member editorial board and reviewer in journals of medical education.

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