

Reiki and Stress: A Study on Software Professionals of Delhi

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Abstract

The current study is titled “Reiki and Stress: A Study on Software Professionals of Delhi”. This study explored the efficacy of Reiki on stress. The pre-post experimental design with control and experimental group was employed in the study. The sample was consisted of 80 software professionals based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria from software companies of Delhi. The selected subjects were randomly assigned in to two groups of experimental (40Ss) and Control group (40Ss) having more or less equal variance of stress scores. The reiki healing was applied 10 minutes each day for 30 days on experimental group. Perceived Stress Scale was used to assess the stress level of participants for all the groups. All groups were assessed at two time intervals, before and after the treatment. The obtained data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, Mean, SD and t-test. Results indicate that there is a significant reduction in perceived stress of software professionals due to reiki.

Key words- Reiki, Stress, Gender, IT Professionals.

Stress is a natural physical and mental reaction to life experiences. Everyone expresses stress from time to time. Everyday responsibilities like work and family or serious life events such as a new diagnosis, war, or the death of a loved one can trigger stress. When people reach out for help, they are often dealing with circumstances, situation and stressors in their lives that leave them feeling emotionally and physically overwhelmed. Stress can be result of any positive and negative experiences, it is necessary for survival and some stressor continues to be a part of our modern lives since its motivate us to accomplish task or make needed changes. Scientific and technological progress all over the globe has made us highly sensitive, critical and creative than other things. Associated with this growth is the emergence of stress. The term ‘stress’ has become a part of every day vocabulary. Stress has been defined as a force, which acts upon the individual causing him to respond to it and cope with it in such a way that strain, ensues. Lazarus (1968) in the International Encyclopedia of Social Science, writes that ‘stress’ suggests excessive demands made on man and animals, demands that produce disturbance of physiological, social and psychological systems. Levi (1972) suggests “stress is one of the mechanisms suspected of leading under circumstances to disease”.

Reiki – a relaxing treatment to counteract stress

Reiki is a complementary and alternative therapy and is categorized as an energy medicine. The word Reiki is Japanese and means Universal energy, which is the vital life force energy that is infused in the air that we breathe. When reiki is administered appropriately bring balance in the body thereby creating wellness. One of the most relaxing treatments you can experience is Reiki healing. It is a light touch form of body work therapy which heals the problem by transmitting life energy in the affected body parts through the hands of experienced practitioner. Relaxation and rest are vital elements that help this system to work effectively. This life force energy nourishes our immune system and every cell in our body vibrates and emits a frequency that emanates out into the aura creating an energy field that surrounds the physical body. When our immune system is healthy, we feel strong, vibrant and alive and emanate positive energy. When we are stressed or unhappy our immune system becomes depleted and we succumb more easily to illness and disease. Stress and tension affect every cell in the body, so our health is reflected in our energy field.

Elaine and Bukowski (2015) was to determine 20 week structured self reiki programme on stress reduction and relaxation in college students. PSS (perceived stress scale) was completed every four weeks once the interventions were initiated. With the exception of three participants, participants believed that reiki is a credible technique for reducing stress levels. All participants experienced stress within the month prior to completing the initial PSS. There was a significant reduction in stress levels from pre study to post study. Cuneo et al., (2011) suggests that work-related stress is an influential factor in nursing burn out and retention. Reiki, an ancient form of Oriental "energy work" or healing, has been found to decrease stress. The Perceived Stress Scale was administered prior to the Reiki I class and after three weeks of practicing self-Reiki. Results indicated that practicing Reiki more often resulted in reduced perceived stress levels. Data from this small pilot study supports educating nurses about Reiki practice to decrease work-related stress.

Problem:

1. To study the effect of Reiki on reduction of stress among software professionals of Delhi.

Hypothesis:

1. There will be significant effect of Reiki on reduction of stress among software professionals of Delhi.

Method

Participants:

The participants for the study were consisted of 80 IT professionals of age group 25-30 years age. These subjects were randomly selected out of a total of 150 subjects who were initially screened by stress

inventory. The subjects were further randomly assigned to experimental (40Ss) and control group (40Ss) in equal numbers. A pre-post design with experimental and control group was employed to accomplish the research. The reiki was applied as treatment on experimental group and its effect was observed on stress.

Inclusion and Exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria: Only those subjects were considered in the study:

- Male and Female it professionals. Gender was considered to be a sociodemographic variable in this study to check its influence on the outcome of all interventions across the sample.
- Age 25 to 30 years. This age category was considered as it would fit under the category of “youth”.
- Minimum of 12 months’ work experience in an organisation. A fresher would have a different take on the job role in comparison to an experienced professional. Hence at least 12 months of experience was considered to be mandatory.
- Minimum educational qualification- Bachelor of Engineering/Bachelor of Technology/ BCA/ BSC Computer science. Most IT companie employs on similar job roles with such educational qualifications hence these qualifications were considered.

Exclusion Criteria

- Presence of any chronic physical ailment or psychiatric disorder. As this study explores the efficacy of Reiki, administering of the same on ill participants is not advisable as the consequences of the same is a violation of research ethics.
- Previous exposure to any behavioural intervention within the past 12 months. Influence of such intervention would affect the results of the study and hence should be accounted.

Procedure of Reiki:

The first session was preparatory session (relaxation). In this session following instructions were given to the client:

- Close your eyes
- Take 11 deep breaths
- Concentrate on your mind and breathe slowly
- Slowly contract and release every part of the body from toe to head
- At last subject was again asked to take 5 deep breaths and lay quite for 5 minutes.

After the completion of preparatory session reiki therapy was apply on subjects by expert.

Material:

Perceived Stress Scale (PSS): developed by Cohen, et al., (1983), is a global scale and identifies the factors influencing or influenced by stress appraisal. It is a 14 item scale which measures the degree to which situations in one's life is appraised as stressful during the past month. Co-efficient alpha reliability for PSS is 0.84 with a test retest correlation of 0.85.

Procedure:

A sample of 150 software professionals registered formally for the program out of which only the first 80 were selected due to limited space availability. All the subjects undertook pre assessment. These subjects were further randomly assigned in two groups experimental and control group. The researcher who is trained in reiki therapy, apply reiki to participants of experimental group. The Reiki intervention was for 10 minutes daily for 30 days wherein the reiki healing was administered to the participants by placing both palms one inch above the head. This was done during work hours only. Each participant was permitted to choose their preferred time slots for healing. All participants strictly followed their healing time schedules during the tenure of the intervention program. At the end of the program for the group was again assessed (post assessment).

Results and discussion:

The present study had made an attempt to investigate the effect reiki on stress. Obtained data were analyzed with the help of mean, SD value and t-test. The results are presented as follow:

Table-1 Mean scores, SD value and t- value for stress

Variable	treatments	Group	Mean	SD	t-test
Stress	Experimental	Pre	33.45	7.71	4.46**
		Post	18.67	8.18	
	Control	Pre	32.77	7.75	0.89
		Post	32.55	9.89	

**significant at .01 level of confidence.

Table-1 indicates that t-value is 4.46 which is significant at .01 level of confidence. The pre mean score of experimental group is 33.45 and the post mean score is 18.67 on stress. The pre mean score of control group is 32.77 and the post mean score is 32.55 on stress. Results clearly indicate that reiki reduces the level of stress.

The reason for this effectiveness may be reiki helps to grow emotionally, spiritual, mentally, giving wonderful benefits of health in its wider sense. Stress causes psychophysical reactions such as increase rate of palpitations, heart-beat, uneasy feeling, sweating. Reiki makes a person calm, quiet, balance the energy level, aids positive thinking and strengthen the immune system. reiki affects seven chakras (glands) located midline in the body chakras are the center of energy. Reiki brings energy to chakras that give us health, knowledge, bliss, energy, effectiveness, centeredness, sense of peace, spiritual, release internal blocks. These energetic chakras are responsible for individuals good health and free from disease and illness. Reiki balances the functioning of glands and hormone level through opening chakras because they are highly associated with glands. During reiki session subjects feeling of relaxation, experience subjective sensation as warmth, cold, pressure etc. refresh or more other symptoms. Peck et al., (2003) observed improvement in pain reduction, disturbed sleep, emotional stress and other psychological changes after healing touch. Shore (2004) examined long term effects of energetic healing on symptoms of psychological depression and self-perceived stress. Wardell and Engebretson (2001) conducted a single-group repeated measures design study to evaluate selected biological markers for the effects of Reiki on stress reduction. The study was done on 23 participants. Each participant received one 30-minute Reiki session. Data were collected before, during, and immediately after the session for salivary, cortisol, blood pressure (BP), electromyography, and the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI). The results showed that only parameters such state anxiety mean scores were lower after the Reiki and a significant drop in systolic blood pressure after the Reiki session. The researchers concluded that Reiki brought about stress reduction.

Conclusion:

Reiki is a complementary and alternative medicine has potential to be handling stresser experienced by the software professionals and also for enhancing their subjective wellbeing. It helps to balance the body energy and direct it in positive direction. So it is quite clear that reiki is a credible technique for reducing stress level.

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