

ANXIETY, STRESS AND DEPRESSION IN ORPHANS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INTERVENTION EFFECT OF BHAGWAT GITA

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ABSTRACT: An epitome of all the scriptures, the life breath heart and image of lord itself, the Bhagwat Gita is considered an unfathomable ocean of wisdom. It is a dialogue between two individuals, Lord Krishna and his disciple Arjun in the battle field where there was a war between Kauravas and Pandavas for control of Hastinapur Kingdom.

Gita contains more the subject matter for personality development and behaviour modification rather than a religious book. It contains 19 chapters with about 701 Shlokas narrating different levels of human mind and its processes. Different chapters critically deal with the various forms of anxiety, stress and depression of human beings and also management of stress and rectification of behaviour through CBT, person centred approach, psychoanalysis etc. Anxiety is a mental health disorder characterised by feeling of worry, from threat etc., strong enough to interfere with one's daily activities. Stress may be defined as one's body's reaction to challenge or demand, it may be both positive and negative i.e. any feeling of emotion or physical tension. A mood disorder characterised by low mood, feeling of sadness and a general loss of interest in things may be termed as depression. A child is considered an orphan if he/she is deprived of parent's love and care (Whether due to their demise separation or abandoning the child soon after birth). The child living with such unfortunate fate is vulnerable to situations of anxiety, stress and depression in any and almost every phase of life. The present study is an effort to compute the above mentioned behavioural disorders in orphan children and also to measure if there is any change in

the behaviour after administering the intervention effect of recitation and reading sessions of Bhagwat Gita for at least 3 months

METHODOLOGY :

A sample of 100 students was chosen from the orphanage of Kanpur City.

A consolidated test on Anxiety, Stress and depression (ADSS) constructed by Dr. Pallavi Bhatnagar was used as the tool, within group (pre and post design) was applied for the study.

FINDINGS :

A pilot study of 100 students was conducted after screening 60 students who ranked high in anxiety, stress and depression were chosen for the study.

After applying the intervention effect the sample was again tested, the effect of intervention effect was that the level of anxiety lowered stress and depression took place also showed some positive symptoms.

CONCLUSION :

Bhagwat Gita blends the two paths together – God realization and self realization and focuses on action, worship and knowledge altogether, its ability to interact with the environment by one's intellect (buddhi) explains state of enlightenment and thus helps maintain the positivity of mind, speech and body

INTRODUCTION

Ever since society and institution of family came into existence parent child relationship has been observed, and to large extent, researched. Parents are those supportive aids who apart from catering every wish also help a child lead a secure, meaningful and contented life. (Lehmann, S. Haivik, O. E., Haivik T. & Heirvang, E.R. 2003) Losing a parent or both and the bereavement that follows, is difficult to cope, as the loss is irrepairable. Living with such deprivation lifelong has numerous adverse effects upon the personality of the child and may give rise to manifold behavioural and emotional problems. (Suldo, S.M. & Shaffer, E.J. (2008)

Children not only miss the physical presence of their parents but also their love care and other blessing showered upon them. In their absence they are exposed to the harsh and tough realities of "not so good" world. They fall prey to abuse, exploitation, rejection, lack of social support, etc. They may also face various traumas due to unavoidable life situations resulting in nightmares followed by PTSD. (Rahman, W., Mullick, M. S., Pathan, M. A. (2012)

Anxiety and insecurity occurring due to threatening future life situation may be stressful leading to depression in adolescents. (Fawzy, N. and Fouad, A. (2010)

Studies also show that orphan adolescent undergo various psycho somatic disorders such as tension headaches, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) sleeplessness, raised blood pressure or pulse rate at times. Moreover other behavioural problems such as eating disorders, aggression, taking up fights

for trivial things, telling lies, stealing, insecurity borne problems such as stammering, bed wetting etc. may also be apparent. (Kaur, S. and Rani, C. (2016)

Anxiety is a natural and usually short lived reaction to a stressful situation, associated with feeling of tension, worried thoughts, state of inner turmoil accompanied by nervous behaviour and chronic fear persisting in the absence of any direct threat. (Macleod, C. (1999) Recurring intrusive thoughts and concerns with no clear justification may give rise to physical changes like increased blood pressure, muscular tension, restlessness, fatigue, problems of sleep, memory and concentration. (Shri, R. 2010)

According to Ross, anxiety is a serious symptom arising from adaptation to life strains and stresses. It is unpleasant emotional state associated with psycho physiological changes in response to intra psychic conflict or state of apprehension arising out of anticipation of such danger that is largely unknown.

The probability of its occurrence increases in new, unfamiliar and challenging situations as a form of over reaction in an attempt to meet difficult situations.

Biopsychology of anxiety :

Some individuals are extra sensitive to stimulation and stress than others since birth. People born with such temperament are more prone to pathological levels of anxiety.

Common anxiety situations faced day to day may be :

a) Environmental and social anxiety including child abuse, poverty, rejection

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By family or society, unequal treatment etc.

b) Somatic :- Use of drugs including caffeine, alcohol, smoking etc.

c) Existential anxiety :- which generally includes nihilistic feelings and lowered self esteem and actualization.

Stress hormones released in this state have an impact on bowel function and may contribute to IBS including abdominal pain, bloating, gas, constipation; diarrhea etc. Upsetting the function of digestion and respiration, tension headache may also contribute to stage of severe anxiety.

Though anxiety in nature may be genetic or chemically induced, psychology of mind and attitude play an important role too medication clubbed with counselling can help relieve the panic by giving support to the concept but the metabolic pathways causing anxiety are unknown and may be quite complex.

The term stress describes physical emotional, cognitive and behavioural response to events that are appraised as threatening and challenging and the demands of the situation go beyond one's coping resources.

Stress producing events may be both positive (eustress), negative (distress) or mixed. From trivial matters to serious life changing decisions, stress may be born out of anything or everything. (Fink, G. (2010) When the body or mind is exposed to harm or threat, the result is the cluster of physiological changes generally referred to as the stress response or just stress (Ray, William J. (2015)

The degree, intensity and the effect of stress may vary.

Stress can show itself in many ways such as physical problem include unusual fatigue sleeping problems, frequent colds, chest pain nausea etc.

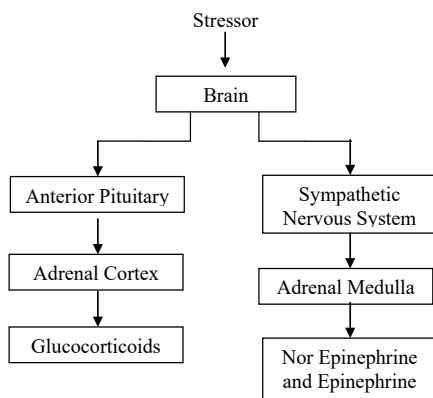
Psychological stress may include different or bizarre behaviour such as eating too much or too little, crying a lot, smoking, drinking, pacing, throwing tantrums, fear, frustration irritability, cognitive deviations such as lack of concentration, lowered memory and decision making power and above all people after loss hope, resilience and their sense of humour (Sahoo, S; Khess, C.R. (2010).

Biopsychology of stress

Hans Selye (1950) attributed the stress response to the activation of anterior pituitary to the adrenal cortex system. Stressors acting on neural circuits stimulate the release of adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH) from the anterior pituitary. ACTH in turn triggers the release of gluco corticoids from the adrenal cortex which produce many component of stress response.

The level of circulating of glucocortecoids is the most commonly employed physiological measures of the stress. Stress activates the sympathetic nervous system by increasing the amount of epinephrine/nor epinephrine released from adrenal medulla Stressors produce psychological reactions that participate in body's inflammatory process and it also has disruptive effect on the immune system causing fever inflammation etc. (Wahab, S.; Rahman, F.N.A.; Hasan, W.; Hafiz, W.M.; Tamani, Intan, Z. and Arbaiei, N. C. (2013).

Two System View of Stress Response



Stress negatively effects and also disrupts the performance tasks depending upon the hippocampus as it reduces its dendrite branches and modifies the structure of hippocampus synapse (Kim Pellman and Pariante, 2015)

Stress responses are complex and varied, with the exact response depending on the stressor, its timings, the nature of the stressed person, and how the stressed person reacts to stressors.

Simply Stating Depression or anhedonia is (loss of capacity to experience pleasure) often for no apparent reason. When the condition lasts for more than two weeks it is termed as clinical depression.

This type of depression may be diagnosed in children, adolescents and adults. In adults it is generally comorbid (The tendency of two health conditions, both physical and mental, occurring together in same individual for eg. anxiety disorder clubbed with diabetes or CHD etc.) Laurance, J.; Sawyer, M. and Ainley, J. 2015.

Self blame, guilt, helplessness, shame etc. irrationally arises when bad, negative or unfavourable things happen, and these can lead to depression.

Depression can take on many forms. It may be situational or reactive (death of loved ones, separation, rejection, any other major loss peripartum of postpartum depression). It may be endogenous (depression with no apparent reason especially occurring due to feeling of meaninglessness in life). Long term depression or dysthymia i.e. diseased mood, or under severe conditions, it may be termed as major depression involving SAD, PTSD etc. Cohen, S.; Janicki - Deverts, D. and Miller, G. E. (2007)

Depressed people continuously suffer from negative and self defeating thoughts. Their tendency of hopelessness leads to learned helplessness with lowered self confidence and shattered self esteem. Sometimes sick fabrication of society provides way to depression such as poverty, inequality exploitation on the basis of caste, creed religion, spoil law and order conditions etc.

Biopsychology of depression

Studies proved that chronic illness and regular or long term use of drugs (including tobacco and alcohol) may lead to depressed mood.

Drugs used to treat depression and mania typically affect the levels of the three neurotransmitters (serotonin, nor epinephrine and dopamine) either alone or in combination (Cohen, 1997; Cummings & Coffey, 1994; Ruhe et al. 2007).

Depressed individuals show greater loss in amygdale and hippocampus (Goodkind, et al. 2015). Researches have also observed that genes play a vital role in the occurrence of unipolar or bipolar depression (Hyman & Cohen, 2013; Mc Mohata et al. 2010)

Neuroplasticity theory of depression also states that a decrease of neuroplastic processes in various brain structures (eg. the hippocampus) leads to neuron loss and other neural pathways. (Castren and Hen, 2013; Miller and Hen, 2015)

Bhagwat Geeta is said to be the most beautiful, perhaps the only true philosophical song existing in any known tongue. It is an epitome of all the scriptures and conveys lessons on philosophy, religion and ethics.

Apart from being the most influential work in Indian thought, the message of deliverance by holy Geeta is simple and practical.

The Very God descended into humanity (Krishna) is supposed to address (Arjun) the representative man, at a great crises in his life.

Arjun, at the last moment, in the battle field shrinks from his duty and typifies the struggling individual who feels the burden and the mystery of world. Arjun displays the mood of despair, despondency and intense inward agony, depression borne out of acute anxiety and situational stress leaves Arjun with a sense of escapist tendency and learned helplessness . The 18 chapters and 700 shlokas accordingly deal with the inner conflict Arjun goes through and the counselling process by the Almighty ultimately leading towards the path of enlightenment and salvation.

Bhagwat Geeta contains divine words. As a scripture, Geeta embodies the supreme spiritual mystery and secret. It contains the essence of all the four

Vedas.

Since ages, it has exhibited a new facet of thoughts everyday and thus it remains eternally new. (Goyandka, J. 2015) It supercedes the holy ganga in the way that he who bathes in Ganga attains liberation himself but he who dives in Geeta not only him, but he also attains the power to liberate others. (Rao, A. Venkoba and Parvathi Devi, S.)

An unfathomable ocean of wisdom and an infinite store of knowledge, Geeta is believed to be at par to god himself. It is the very life, breath, heart and the verbal image of god. No sacrifice, charity, austerity, religion, pilgrimage, self restraint, fasting, stand in comparison to Geeta. (Balodhi, J. P., 1984)

Geeta Teaches the lesson of applying the spiritual truth in practical life. The individual (Sadhak) could attain the path of god realization through three principles:-

- a) Action, b) Worship, c) Knowledge.

Modern man is in need of the message of Bhagwat Geeta, if he is to find freedom from the tensions and anxiety brought into his life by the scientific and technological development of today. It also high lights the different component of emotional intelligence (Ramchandra Rao, S. K. 1983; Govindswamy, M.V.).

The 18 chapter of Bhagwat Gita may be broadly divided into 3 main yogas or paths. Yoga trains body and mind to avoid weakness, depression, distress, dejection and engage in effective karmas.

Chapters 1-6 Karma Yoga

- 1. Arjuna Vishad Yoda
- 2. Sankhya Yoga
- 3. Karma Yoga
- 4. Jnana Yoga
- 5. Karma Vairagya Yoga
- 6. Abhyasa (Atma Sanyam Yoga)

Karma yoga upholds and emphasizes the necessity of action. When man attains proper knowledge it leads a path of selfless action. (Tilak, B. 2017)

Chapters 7-12 Bhagti Yoga

- 7. Paramahamsa Vijnana Yoga
- 8. Aksara - Parabrahman Yoga
- 9. Raja - Vidya - Guhya Yoga
- 10. Vibhuti Vistara Yoga
- 11. Visvarupa Darsana Yoga
- 12. Bhakti Yoga

Bhakti Yoga or the path of devotion inculcates in the devotee or the sadhak the attitude of loving devotion and service as an instrument of supreme spirit. Surrender, trust adoration and ultimate faith upon the Supreme Power enlightens one with right knowledge and righteous action. (Verma, D. 2016; Prabhupada, A. (2015)

Chapters 13-18 Jnana Yoga

- 13. Ksetra - Ksetrajna Vibhaga Yoga
- 14. Gunatraya Vibhaga Yoga
- 15. Purusuttama Yoga
- 16. Daivasura - Samvad - Vibhaga Yoga
- 17. Sraddhatraya Vibhaga Yoga
- 18. Moksha Upadesa Yoga

Jnana Yoga or the path of knowledge, wisdom and direct realization of self drives the individuals consciousness to achieve the ultimate goal for which he had been striving.(Gupta. B. (2001)

Bhagwat Gita as a counselling Process :

The opening chapter shows great insight into the heart of man (Arjuna as the patient) its conflicts of motives, dejection, aversion to worldly enjoyments, faint heartedness and fear of loss of friends and relatives. The chapter is addressed as “Yoga of dejection of Arjun or Arjun Vishad Yoga. (Das, S. (2015)

The second chapter projects (Lord Krishna as the therapist) who guides, teaches and preaches the confused and dejected Arjun. He works upon clearing the negativities of mind which prevent him from performing righteous action according to dharma or justice.

Chapter 3 onwards the therapeutic sessions start where Arjun is instructed by Lord Krishna to Shrug off the feeling of attachment and perform his duty. Illumination and self realization are instrumental for execution of such action.(Carl Rogers, C. 1977)

In the following chapters, self devaluated Arjun is directed and re-educated to surrender himself to the supreme power and focus only on his needful actions without caring about the consequences. Here the weakness and turmoils of common man are portrayed too. The pressures individual focus in his day to day life and the anxiety stress and depression he undergoes. When one surrender all his worries, desires and egos to the supreme power and focuses only on his present moment and actions they only he leads a life with balanced mind and body. (Vajpayee, B. 2014)

Gradually as the individual enters into the 3rd phase i.e. the Jnana Yoga he attains the knowledge of Karma Bhakti, righteousness, critical analysis and conceptual clarity of thoughts and facts. He uplifts his self above all the joys, sorrows, grief, attachments for material things and attains divine qualities. This is the stage where he achieves the liberation of soul or Moksha. (Prashupada, A. 2016) (Jeste D.V. Vahia IV 2008)

The Bhagwat Gita embodies finest psychological principles. In the battle field it is the treatise to guide and resolve conflicts, get clarification and assurance based on Karma Yoga and enlighten the individual to achieve adequate ego strength.

It helps one establish and practice self control, peace and harmony at interpersonal and social level and to judiciously perform right action at right time. It also educates the society to fight for its rights instead of exhibiting denial and escapism. Same way it teaches to be aware of, and readily perform one's duties too, towards his loved ones, community and mankind as a whole. (Gandhi, M. 2009)

Solution focussed directive counselling and cognitive restructuring along with dealing with transpersonal aspects projects close relation of Bhagwat Gita with psychology. Apart from being a spiritual scripture , it is a best book for personality development and tool for resolving day to day problems of man. (Trivedi, D. (2017) (Rao, A.; Venkoba, Parvathidevi, S. (1974)

Methodology

Objectives :-

- 1) To assess the pre and post anxiety level of orphans by administering the intervention effect of Bhagwat Gita.
- 2) To compute the pre and post stress level of orphans by administering the intervention effect of Bhagwat Gita.
- 3) To find out the pre post depression level of orphans by administering the intervention effect of Bhagwat Gita.

Hypothesis :-

- 1) There would be significant difference between pre and post anxiety level of orphans on administering the intervention effect of Bhagwat Gita.
- 2) There would be significant difference between pre and post stress level of

orphans on administering the intervention effect of Bhagwat Gita.

3) Significant difference would be found between pre and post depression level of orphans by administering the intervention effect of Bhagwat Gita

Sample selection and intervention procedure :

Initially 100 orphans (irrespective of gender) were randomly chosen for pre test. After assessing the anxiety, stress and depression levels, 20/20 adolescents categorized under above average or higher levels of anxiety, stress and depression were selected for intervention process. Intervention effect on Bhagwat Gita was administered for a duration of 3 months.

A group of interventionists interacted with the orphan adolescents for 1 hour every day. The procedure was initiated with the induction of importance of Bhagwat Gita, its impact on the overall personality for 1st 15 minutes, next 15 minutes were devoted in conceptual clarity of each chapter and its psychological implication.

Last 30 minutes, the concluding part included in it the spiritual growth, therapeutic value, healing power and striving towards general well being followed by interaction with the sample, clearing their doubts and helping them cope with adversities of life and thus manage their anxiety, stress and depression effectively.

Tools :-

A consolidated test on Anxiety, Stress and Depression (ADSS) Constructed by Dr.Pallavi Bhatnagar, Megha Singh et al. (Lucknow University) was used as the tool. It contained 48 items divided into 3 sub-scales.

- a) Anxiety sub scale (containing 19 items)
- b) Stress sub scale (containing 14 items)
- c) Depression sub scale (containing 15 items)

Response were to be given in terms of “Yes” and “No”. Scale can be administered in individual as well as group setting and both by self or by the examiner. It was beneficial for use in both clinical and non-clinical samples ranging from 14 to 70 years.

Research design :-

Pre and post within group designs was opted for the study.

Analytical Strategy :-

The obtained data were analyzed by computing mean, standard deviation and t-test.

Scoring and Interpretation :-

Keeping in view the present study, the obtained data was analyzed using t-test.

Interpretation of results :-

As stated earlier, being an orphan is such self devaluating feeling which leaves a child a loner in this deceptive and selfish world. This in the long run counts as predisposing factor and makes person victim to raised anxiety, stress and depressive symptoms.

Table 1 displayed that anxiety level of orphans was found to be reduced at a significant level after the intervention of Bhagwat Gita for 3 months and observing its effect. Mean and SD values for pre test were 11.75 and 1.55 respectively and that of post test were 6.45 and 2.66 attaining the ‘t’ value as 2.96 which was significant at 0.01 level of significance.

Conditions	Mean	SD	T. Value
Pre test (Prior to intervention)	11.75	1.55	2.96**
Pre test (After intervention)	6.45	2.66	

Anxiety level of orphans was reduced to a significant level after administering the intervention effect of Bhagwat Gita for 3 months. Gita works as a therapeutic aid to overcome feeling of anxiety (especially separated anxiety).

They learn to re-educate and reconcile themselves with adverse life situations. Understanding and imbibing to the subject matter of Gita also helps one control negative feeling of insecurity, nervousness and fear from uncertainty of future.

Thus hypothesis number 1 has been proved.

As for as the factor of stress is concerned table 2 shows the mean value as 11.25 and 6.95 for pre and post intervention conditions. The values obtained for SD and 1.58 and 2.18 whereas the ‘t’ value obtained is 1.70 which is not significant at any of the two levels (i.e. 0.05 and 0.01 levels).

Conditions	Mean	SD	T. Value
Pre test (Before to intervention)	11.25	1.58	1.70*
Pre test (After intervention)	6.95	2.18	

The result obtained rejects hypothesis Number 2. The reason for no significant effect found after the intervention given to the sample and thus. The stress not reduced largely, shows that the sample chosen for the study of stress level was less suggestible, tenacious, with more of self blaming attitude. It was hard to counsel them towards positive and solution focussed theory of life. Their sense of rejection and denial towards their real life situations made them sufferers to chronic stress which could not be helped and reduced to a significant level by interacting with intellectualism. They may be suggested to other behaviour modification techniques and supportive therapies to manage stressfulness of mind.

Table 3 displayed the level of depression on two conditions. Table displayed the mean values of 10.9 and 6.05 (pre and post intervention and conditions). Similarly SD 1.83 and 2.99 was computed. ‘t’ value obtained was 3.32 which was found significant at 0.01 level of significance. The value thus obtained proves hypothesis no. 3.

Conditions	Mean	SD	T. Value
Pre test (Before to intervention)	10.9	1.83	3.32**
Pre test (After intervention)	6.05	2.99	

Impending threat and uncertainty of insecure future life situations is liable to make any individual (especially orphan youth) subject to depression. One may face mild/moderate or severe depressive stages swinging between unipolar to bipolar stages of depression. The intervention effect given on account of Bhagwat Gita helps one rationalize impulsiveness of behaviour. One’s adverse and less beneficial life situations positively and focuses on one’s positive actions to make life conditions more meaningful rather than brooding over destiny and deprivations. Meichembaun’s self instruction therapy may help them re-educate and reconstruct life situations and crisis and overcome sense of lowered self esteem, rejection feeling of negligence etc. Overcoming depression helps them to introspect within and mark out that life they are bestowed with, is full of blessings and positivities. It is not a fractured one and if by any chance it is, they are certainly capable to fix it.

Conclusion

The results obtained hence proved helpful to a large extent in discussing and interpreting that how much adverse, challenging or deprived the conditions of life may be, intervention effect of Bhagwat Gita is an effective tool with unflinching positive powers to heal any individual mentally and physically. Significant fall in the levels of anxiety and depression after pre and post intervention sessions establish the importance of this ocean of spiritual knowledge and personality growth. The existence and importance of Bhagwat Gita and its teachings would never fade, no matter how many decades and times change

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