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Effects of Single-session Group Mantra-meditation on Salivary Immunoglobulin A and Affective State: A Psychoneuroimmunology Viewpoint

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Objectives: Based on existing psychoneuroimmunological insights, the present study aimed at investigating possible effects of a single-session group mantra meditation on salivary Immunoglobulin A (s-IgA) and affective states.

Materials and Methods: A controlled pretest-posttest study enrolled 30 healthy women (mean age 44 ± 3 years) through a multi-stage random sampling method from yoga clubs in Shiraz (Feb-Dec, 2016). Subjects were randomly assigned to experimental ($n=15$) and control ($n=15$) groups. Participants in both the groups attended a structured **introductory** lecture about mantra-meditation after which those in the experimental group meditated for 20 min. Saliva samples were collected after the intervention, and the participants' affective states were examined by a qualified clinical psychologist blinded to the intervention using the positive and negative affect schedule questionnaire at sequential time-points, i.e., baseline, post-meditation, and one hour later. Similar assessments were done for the control group subjects. The enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay was used to test saliva samples for the IgA titer. The s-IgA and the positive and negative affect schedule (PANAS) test results were statistically evaluated using an analysis of variance. **Result:** The mean s-IgA titer in the experimental group at 'post-meditation' and '1-hour later' time-points were found to be statistically different from those of the control group ($p < 0.05$). In addition, results indicated a significant change in affect among experimental group subjects as compared to controls ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Our findings suggest that "group mantra-meditation" training even for a single session may positively influence some immunological components and improve affective states. As a simple and low-cost psychoneurobehavioral intervention, this method may offer mental-health benefits at nursing homes as well as group-therapies.

Keywords: Mantra-meditation; Salivary immunoglobulin-A; Affects; Psychoneuroimmunology

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