

# Effectiveness of Mindfulness Life Intervention on Depression among Elderly Persons in a Selected Old Age Home of Pune City

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## Abstract

**Background-** Sadness, feeling down, having a loss of interest or pleasure in daily activities - these are symptoms familiar to all of us. But, if they persist and affect our life substantially, it may be depression. Studies on the elderly population, either in the community, inpatient, outpatient and old age homes have shown that depression is the commonest mental illness in elderly subjects. Prevalence rate of major depression in India amongst the elderly was 31.2 per 1000. **Objectives-** 1) To determine the level of depression among elderly persons at selected old age home in Pune. 2) To determine the level of depression post intervention among elderly persons at selected old age home in Pune city. 3) To evaluate the effectiveness of mindfulness life intervention on the level of depression among elderly persons at selected old age home of Pune city. 4) To find the association between post-test depression level and selected demographic variables. **Methodology-** A descriptive and a pre-experimental one group pre-test and post-test research design was adopted for this study. A non-probability purposive sampling technique was used to fetch a sample of 60. A modified geriatric depression scale (short form) was used to identify the depression in elderly persons of old age home. The reliability of Modified geriatric depression scale was found to be 0.92 by using Pearson's correlation coefficient test. **Results-** out of 60 subjects, in pre-test, majority of 96.7% of the elderly persons from old age home had depression and 3.3% of them were normal. In post-test majority of 78.3% of the elderly persons from old age home had depression and 21.7% of them were normal. Average depression score in pre-test was 8.7 which reduced to 5.6 in post-test. T-value for this test was 10.6 with 59 degrees of freedom. Corresponding p-value was 0.000 which is small (less than 0.05). This indicates that depression of the elderly persons reduced remarkably after using mindfulness life intervention. **Conclusion-** This study concludes that mindfulness life interventions are effective in reducing depression of the elderly persons.

**Keywords:** Effectiveness, mindfulness, depression, elderly person, old age home.

## Introduction or background

Depression (major depressive disorder) is a common and serious medical illness that negatively affects how you feel, the way you think and how you act. Fortunately, it is also treatable. It can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems and can decrease a person's ability to function at work and at home.<sup>1</sup> Mindfulness is the psychological process of bringing one's attention to experience occurring in the present moment, which can be developed through the practice of meditation and other training. Mindfulness focus on becoming aware of all incoming thoughts and feelings and accepting them,

but not attaching or reacting to them.<sup>2</sup> The mindfulness therapy was developed to help individuals who struggle with recurrent episodes of depression. Nandi studied psychiatric morbidity of the elderly population of a rural community in West Bengal. In a sample of 183 subjects (male 85, female 98) they found 60% of the population to be mentally ill with higher morbidity in women compared to men (77.6% and 42.4% respectively).<sup>3</sup> There was significantly more morbidity in population. 2 Studies on the elderly population, either in the community, inpatient, outpatient and old age homes have shown that depression is the commonest mental illness in elderly

subjects. Prevalence rate of major depression in India amongst the elderly was 31.2 per 1000.<sup>4</sup>

**Material and Method**

A descriptive and Pre-experimental research design was selected for this study. Under the pre-experimental research design one group pre-test and post-test design was adopted. Further, nonprobability purposive sampling technique was used to grab a sample of 60. The participant of this study comprised of elderly persons of Mamata Old Age Home, Pune. On day one of the study, a modified Geriatric Depression Scale was used to assess the depression in the elderly persons. Mindfulness life intervention steps taught and demonstrated to the experimental group. Post-test was conducted four weeks following the intervention using the same modified Geriatric Depression Scale. The collected data were analyzed, organized and presented.

**Findings-** The analysis and interpretation of the data collected to determine the Effectiveness of mindfulness life intervention is carried out based on objectives set by the researcher taking the level of significance as 0.05. Researcher applied paired t-test for the effect of mindfulness life intervention on the depression among old age people.

**Table 1: Level of depression among elderly persons at selected old age home in Pune**

n=60

| DEPRESSION            | PRETEST   |       |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------|
|                       | Frequency | %     |
| Normal (Score 0-3)    | 0         | 0.0%  |
| Mild (Score 4-7)      | 44        | 73.3% |
| Moderate (Score 8-11) | 16        | 26.7% |
| Severe (Score 12-15)  | 0         | 0.0%  |

**Table 2: Assessment of depression post intervention among elderly persons at selected old age home of Pune.**

n=60

| DEPRESSION            | POST-TEST |       |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------|
|                       | Frequency | %     |
| Normal (Score 0-3)    | 1         | 1.7%  |
| Mild (Score 4-7)      | 52        | 86.7% |
| Moderate (Score 8-11) | 7         | 11.7% |
| Severe (Score 12-15)  | 0         | 0.0%  |

**Table 3: Effectiveness of mindfulness life intervention on the level of depression among elderly persons at selected old age home of Pune**

n=60

| Depression            | Pre-Test       |       | Post-Test      |       |
|-----------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|-------|
|                       | Freq-<br>uency | %     | Freq-<br>uency | %     |
| Normal (score 0-3)    | 0              | 0.0%  | 1              | 1.7%  |
| Mild (score 4-7)      | 44             | 73.3% | 52             | 86.7% |
| Moderate (score 8-11) | 16             | 26.7% | 7              | 11.7% |
| Severe (score 12-15)  | 0              | 0.0%  | 0              | 0.0%  |

**Table 4: Paired t-test for the effectiveness of mindfulness life intervention on the level of depression among elderly persons at selected old age home of Pune****n=60**

|           | MEAN | SD    | T    | Df  | p-value |
|-----------|------|-------|------|-----|---------|
| Pre-Test  | 6.6  | 1.464 | 4.41 | 59. | 0.000   |
| Post-Test | 5.6  | 1.489 |      |     |         |

### Discussion

Alexander, Langer, Newman, Chandler & Davies compared no treatment to transcendental meditation, mindfulness training and relaxation in terms of their effects on longevity of human life and age related declines amongst 73 residents of nursing home. It was found that transcendental meditation group improved most followed by mindfulness training in contrast to relaxation and no treatment groups on cognitive flexibility, mental health, systolic blood pressure and behavioral flexibility.<sup>5</sup>

In study one group pretest post-test was done. A group of sixty elderly persons of old age home was considered as experimental group. It was found that mindfulness life intervention is effective in decreasing depression level of elderly persons.

### Conclusion

This study concludes that mindfulness life interventions are effective in reducing depression of the elderly persons.

**Conflict of Interest** – Nil

**Source of Funding**- Self

**Ethical Clearance** – Obtained from Institute and Hospital

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