



**IMMEDIATE AND SUSTAINED EFFECTS OF RAJYOGA MEDITATION ON
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG
ADOLESCENTS**

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Abstract

The present study investigated both the immediate and sustained effects of a structured Rajyoga Meditation programme on the emotional intelligence and academic achievement of adolescents. The primary objective was to determine whether the benefits acquired through meditation persisted after participants discontinued regular practice. Initially, 100 secondary school students participated in the study; however, complete data were obtained from 82 adolescents who successfully completed all phases of the investigation. Participants were assigned to either an experimental group, which received Rajyoga Meditation training, or a waiting control group that engaged in supervised sports activities for an equivalent duration of 88 days. Emotional intelligence was assessed using a standardized scale, while academic achievement was measured through students' examination scores obtained from school records. Assessments were conducted at three stages: before the intervention (pre-test), immediately after completion of the programme (post-test), and 90 days after the intervention had ended (delayed post-test). The findings revealed significant improvements in both emotional intelligence and academic achievement among students who participated in Rajyoga Meditation compared with the control group. Although a slight reduction in scores was observed during the delayed assessment, the experimental group continued to demonstrate significantly higher performance than the control group. These findings suggest that Rajyoga Meditation contributes to meaningful improvements in adolescents' emotional and academic functioning, and that many of these benefits remain evident even after formal practice has ceased. The study highlights the potential value of incorporating structured meditation programmes into school education to foster students' holistic development.

Keywords: Rajyoga Meditation, Emotional Intelligence, Academic Achievement, Adolescents, School Education, Emotional Development

Introduction

Contemporary education extends beyond the transmission of academic knowledge and increasingly emphasizes the comprehensive development of learners. Schools are expected to nurture students' intellectual abilities while simultaneously supporting their emotional, psychological, and social well-being. However, rapid technological advancement, increasing academic competition, and changing social environments have exposed adolescents to heightened levels of stress, anxiety, emotional instability, and behavioural challenges. These factors often interfere with learning, interpersonal relationships, and overall educational outcomes (Waters et al., 2014; Sharma, 2015).

Emotional intelligence has emerged as an important predictor of students' academic success, psychological adjustment, and social competence. Learners with higher emotional intelligence generally exhibit better emotional regulation, improved coping strategies, stronger interpersonal relationships, and enhanced academic performance (Chu, 2009; Hen & Goroshit, 2012).

Meditation has attracted increasing attention as an educational intervention because of its potential to improve emotional regulation, attention, self-awareness, and psychological well-being (Anderson et al., 2007; Broderick & Metz, 2009; Tang et al., 2007). Several systematic reviews have concluded that meditation-based programmes contribute positively to classroom behaviour, student well-being, and academic engagement (Albrecht et al., 2012; Waters et al., 2014).

Among the various contemplative practices, Rajyoga Meditation represents a distinctive approach that emphasizes positive thinking, conscious self-awareness, and regulation of thoughts through an open-eyed meditative process (Whaling, 2013). Unlike many meditation techniques that focus primarily on breathing or physical postures, Rajyoga Meditation cultivates self-reflection, emotional stability, and value-based thinking, making it particularly suitable for educational settings (Sharma, 2015).

Growing empirical evidence suggests that meditation contributes to improvements in emotional intelligence, emotional competence, resilience, executive functioning, and academic achievement across different age groups and occupational settings (Amar et al., 2014; Alfeansev, 2014; Kiani et al., 2017; Valosek et al., 2018). Recent investigations involving Rajyoga practitioners have similarly reported lower stress levels, greater emotional intelligence, improved concentration,

enhanced subjective well-being, and better quality of sleep (Jaiswal & Gupta, 2024; Ray et al., 2024; Singh & Kumar, 2022; Singh & Kumar, 2023).

Although previous studies consistently demonstrate the beneficial effects of meditation, most investigations have evaluated outcomes immediately after the intervention. Comparatively few studies have explored whether these improvements persist once regular meditation practice has ceased (Lin & Mai, 2016). Therefore, examining both the immediate and delayed effects of Rajyoga Meditation may provide valuable evidence regarding its long-term educational effectiveness.

Review of Literature

Meditation has been extensively investigated across health, psychology, and education, with consistent evidence supporting its positive effects on affective and cognitive outcomes. Regarding affective variables, Anderson, Lau, and Bishop (2007) reported that mindfulness meditation improves emotional well-being. Similarly, Lynks and Lauren (2009) found that mindfulness meditation enhances emotional functioning and emotional regulation. These findings were further supported by Borderck and Metz (2009), Tang et al. (2009), Munt (2012), and Waters, Barsky, Ridd, and Allen (2014), who concluded that meditation strengthens emotional regulation. Kiani, Hadinfard, and Mitchell (2017) additionally observed that meditation reduces emotional dysregulation. Improvements in emotional competence, emotional maturity, and emotional sensitivity have also been documented by Schonert-Reichl and Lawlor (2010) and Shashikala and Lakshmi (2018).

Several studies have demonstrated the beneficial effects of meditation on emotional intelligence. Chu (2009) found that mindfulness meditation significantly enhanced emotional intelligence while reducing stress and negative mental health. Singh, Mohan, and Kumar (2011) reported similar improvements through Sahaj Marg Rajyoga Meditation. Amar, Hluvic, and Tamvatin (2012) observed enhanced emotional intelligence and leadership skills among chief executives following regular meditation practice. Alfanasev (2014) concluded that meditation positively influenced emotional intelligence, facilitating socio-psychological adaptation among migrants. Shah, Shah, Shah, and Makwana (2015) found that Rajyoga Meditation fostered positive attitudes, inner strength, empathy, emotional understanding, and better emotional management among students. Likewise, Valosek, Link, Mills, Rainforth, and Nidich (2018) reported that Transcendental Meditation improved emotional intelligence while reducing perceived stress

among government employees. Shashikala and Lakshmi (2018) further confirmed significant improvements in emotional competency, emotional maturity, emotional sensitivity, and emotional quotient following yoga and meditation practices.

Meditation has also been associated with improved academic achievement. Hall (1999) reported higher grade point averages among African-American college students who practiced meditation. Beauchemin, Hutchins, and Patterson (2008) similarly observed improvements in academic performance. Nidich et al. (2011) found significant gains in mathematics and English achievement among urban middle school students practicing Transcendental Meditation. George and Sara (2012) reported that Rajyoga Meditation improved the study habits of nursing students. Waters, Barsky, Ridd, and Allen (2014) concluded that meditation enhances well-being, social competence, and subsequently academic achievement. Lin and Mai (2016) found that mindfulness meditation improved short-term academic performance, although the gains were not sustained over the long term.

The review indicates that meditation positively influences emotional well-being, emotional regulation, emotional competence, emotional intelligence, and academic achievement (Anderson, Lau, & Bishop, 2007; Lynks & Lauren, 2009; Borderck & Metz, 2009; Tang et al., 2009; Schonert-Reichl & Lawlor, 2010; Singh, Mohan, & Kumar, 2011; George & Sara, 2012; Waters et al., 2014; Valosek et al., 2018; Shashikala & Lakshmi, 2018). However, only a limited number of studies have specifically examined the effects of Rajyoga Meditation on emotional intelligence and academic achievement among adolescents, and none have investigated the retention (delayed) effects of meditation. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to examine both the immediate and delayed effects of Rajyoga Meditation on the emotional intelligence and academic achievement of adolescents.

Operational Definitions

Rajyoga Meditation

For the purpose of this study, Rajyoga Meditation refers to a structured, open-eyed meditation technique developed and disseminated by the Rajyoga Education and Research Foundation of the Brahma Kumaris. Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (n.d.) The practice emphasizes conscious self-awareness, positive thinking, and reflective concentration on the self and the Supreme Being. Unlike meditation techniques centred primarily on physical postures or

breathing exercises, Rajyoga Meditation focuses on the deliberate regulation of thoughts and the cultivation of positive values to enhance mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is defined as an individual's ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and effectively utilize emotions in personal and social contexts. It encompasses emotional awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, interpersonal competence, and the capacity to make constructive decisions in emotionally demanding situations. In the present study, emotional intelligence was measured using the standardized Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Singh and Narain (2014).

Academic Achievement

Academic achievement refers to the level of scholastic performance attained by students as reflected in their examination scores. In this investigation, academic achievement was operationalized as the marks obtained by participants in the Second Terminal Examination (pre-test), Final Examination (immediate post-test), and First Terminal Examination of the subsequent academic session (delayed post-test), as recorded in official school records.

Adolescents

Adolescents in this study refer to students enrolled in Grade IX and belonging to the age group of 13–14 years. This developmental stage is characterized by significant cognitive, emotional, and social transitions, making it an appropriate period for examining the educational impact of meditation-based interventions.

Objectives of the Study

The present investigation was undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To examine the immediate effect of Rajyoga Meditation on the emotional intelligence of adolescents by comparing pre-test and post-test scores.
2. To determine whether improvements in emotional intelligence are retained after a three-month interval by comparing pre-test and delayed post-test scores.
3. To evaluate the sustainability of emotional intelligence gains by comparing immediate post-test and delayed post-test scores.
4. To assess the immediate effect of Rajyoga Meditation on adolescents' academic achievement through a comparison of pre-test and post-test performance.

5. To examine the delayed effect of Rajyoga Meditation on academic achievement by comparing pre-test and delayed post-test scores.
6. To investigate whether improvements in academic achievement are sustained over time by comparing immediate post-test and delayed post-test scores.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the pre-test and immediate post-test emotional intelligence scores of adolescents who participated in the Rajyoga Meditation programme.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the pre-test and delayed post-test emotional intelligence scores of adolescents who participated in the Rajyoga Meditation programme.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between the immediate post-test and delayed post-test emotional intelligence scores of adolescents who participated in the Rajyoga Meditation programme.

H₀₄: There is no significant difference between the pre-test and immediate post-test academic achievement scores of adolescents who participated in the Rajyoga Meditation programme.

H₀₅: There is no significant difference between the pre-test and delayed post-test academic achievement scores of adolescents who participated in the Rajyoga Meditation programme.

H₀₆: There is no significant difference between the immediate post-test and delayed post-test academic achievement scores of adolescents who participated in the Rajyoga Meditation programme.

Research Design

The present investigation employed a **quasi-experimental pre-test–post-test control group design** to evaluate the effectiveness of Rajyoga Meditation on adolescents' emotional intelligence and academic achievement. This design enabled the comparison of changes in the outcome variables across three assessment periods while minimizing the influence of pre-existing differences between groups.

Participants were assigned to either an experimental group or a waiting control group following a matching procedure based on age and spiritual values. The experimental group participated in a structured Rajyoga Meditation programme conducted over a period of **88 consecutive days**, whereas the waiting control group engaged in supervised sports activities during the same period.

This arrangement ensured that both groups remained equally occupied while only the experimental group received the meditation intervention.

Data were collected at three different stages. Baseline measurements (pre-test) were obtained prior to the intervention. Immediately after completion of the meditation programme, participants were reassessed (post-test) to determine the immediate impact of the intervention. A delayed post-test was administered **90 days after** the conclusion of the programme without providing any additional meditation training or follow-up instructions. This follow-up assessment enabled the evaluation of the persistence of intervention effects after discontinuation of formal meditation practice.

Within this research framework, **Rajyoga Meditation** served as the independent (treatment) variable, while **emotional intelligence** and **academic achievement** constituted the dependent variables. The design facilitated an examination of both the immediate effectiveness and the longer-term retention of outcomes associated with the meditation programme.

Method

Participants and Study Setting

The study was conducted in two randomly selected government high schools affiliated with the Himachal Pradesh Board of School Education. From an initial pool of 282 Grade IX students, 100 adolescents (13–14 years) were selected using a matching procedure based on age and spiritual values. Participants were then randomly assigned to either an experimental group or a waiting control group. During the intervention, 18 students withdrew from the study, resulting in a final sample of 82 participants whose data were included in the analysis.

Instruments

Three instruments were used for data collection. Spiritual Values Scale (Nazam et al., 2015) was administered to match participants before group allocation. Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Singh and Narain (2014) measured emotional intelligence at different stages of the study. Academic achievement was assessed using students' official examination scores obtained from school records, including the Second Terminal Examination (pre-test), Final Examination (post-test), and the First Terminal Examination conducted three months later (delayed post-test).

Procedure

A quasi-experimental pre-test–post-test control group design was employed. The experimental group participated in a structured Rajyoga Meditation programme for 88 days, whereas the

waiting control group attended supervised sports activities during the same period. Emotional intelligence and academic achievement were assessed before the intervention, immediately after completion of the programme, and again after a 90-day follow-up period during which no meditation practice was formally continued. This follow-up assessment enabled the evaluation of the persistence of intervention effects after withdrawal of the programme.

Control Measures

Several measures were adopted to strengthen the internal validity of the study. Participants belonged to the same grade level and age group, and were matched on spiritual values before random group assignment. The meditation programme was delivered by the same investigator throughout the intervention to ensure consistency. Students were requested not to participate in any additional programmes that could influence emotional or academic outcomes during the study period. A waiting control design helped minimize treatment diffusion, while identical testing procedures and comparable learning conditions were maintained for both groups.

Statistical Analysis

Data were analysed using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) to compare the emotional intelligence and academic achievement scores of the experimental and control groups while controlling for baseline differences. Separate analyses were performed for pre-test versus post-test, pre-test versus delayed post-test, and post-test versus delayed post-test comparisons. Prior to conducting ANCOVA, assumptions relating to homogeneity of variance, homogeneity of regression, additivity, and regression (Johnson, 1961; Guilford, 1981) were examined and found to be satisfactory. Manual calculations were subsequently verified using SPSS to ensure the accuracy of the statistical results.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analysed using IBM SPSS (Version XX). Descriptive statistics were computed to summarize participants' scores on emotional intelligence and academic achievement. Prior to hypothesis testing, the assumptions of Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA), including homogeneity of variance, homogeneity of regression, linearity, and additivity, were examined and found to be satisfactory. ANCOVA was subsequently performed to compare the post-intervention performance of the experimental and control groups while controlling for baseline differences. Statistical significance was evaluated at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels.

Results

Effect of Rajyoga Meditation on Emotional Intelligence

Table 1

ANCOVA Results for Emotional Intelligence

Comparison	Adjusted (Experimental)	Mean	Adjusted (Control)	Mean	F	t	p
Pre-test vs Post-test	25.21		20.91		21.17	4.95	<0.01
Pre-test vs Delayed Post-test	24.08		21.21		11.28	3.68	<0.01
Post-test vs Delayed Post-test	23.20		22.09		1.54	1.51	>0.05

The findings indicate that adolescents who participated in the Rajyoga Meditation programme demonstrated significantly higher emotional intelligence than those in the control group immediately after the intervention ($F = 21.17$, $p < .01$). The improvement remained significant at the delayed post-test ($F = 11.28$, $p < .01$), suggesting that the benefits were retained over time. The comparison between the immediate and delayed post-tests was not statistically significant ($F = 1.54$, $p > .05$), indicating that emotional intelligence remained relatively stable during the follow-up period.

Effect of Rajyoga Meditation on Academic Achievement

Table 2

ANCOVA Results for Academic Achievement

Comparison	Adjusted (Experimental)	Mean	Adjusted (Control)	Mean	F	t	p
Pre-test vs Post-test	449.89		404.01		66.27	9.12	<0.01
Pre-test vs Delayed Post-test	302.41		227.81		31.55	6.31	<0.01
Post-test vs Delayed Post-test	289.04		241.18		12.61	4.17	<0.01

The ANCOVA results revealed a significant positive effect of Rajyoga Meditation on academic achievement. Students in the experimental group obtained significantly higher adjusted mean scores than the control group immediately after the intervention and continued to outperform the control group during the delayed assessment. Although academic scores declined slightly after withdrawal of the programme, the improvement remained statistically significant, demonstrating sustained academic benefits.

Table 3
Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Variable	Decision
H₀₁	Emotional Intelligence (Pre–Post)	Rejected
H₀₂	Emotional Intelligence (Pre–Delayed)	Rejected
H₀₃	Emotional Intelligence (Post–Delayed)	Accepted
H₀₄	Academic Achievement (Pre–Post)	Rejected
H₀₅	Academic Achievement (Pre–Delayed)	Rejected
H₀₆	Academic Achievement (Post–Delayed)	Accepted

Table 4
Overall Summary of the Intervention

Outcome Variable	Immediate Effect	Delayed Effect	Interpretation
Emotional Intelligence	Significant	Significant	Benefits were retained after three months.
Academic Achievement	Significant	Significant	Improvement declined slightly but remained significantly higher than the control group.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that the adolescents, who experienced Rajyoga Meditation Programme, were reported with enhanced emotional intelligence and academic achievement than those adolescents, who did not experienced Rajyoga Meditation Programme. This finding is in accordance with the findings of Shah, Shah, Shah and Makwana(2015), which concluded that Rajyoga Meditation Rajyoga Meditation enhances compassion, empathy, emotional stability, capacity to evaluate and manage emotions. The other study by Misra, Guta, Alreja and Prakesh (2013) indicated that Rajyoga Meditation Rajyoga Meditation enhances hope, happiness and cognitive functions.

The present findings are consistent with earlier investigations demonstrating that Rajyoga Meditation enhances emotional intelligence, emotional stability, empathy, and self-regulation (Shah et al., 2015; Singh et al., 2011; Jaiswal & Gupta, 2024). Similar improvements in emotional regulation have also been reported following mindfulness-based interventions (Anderson et al., 2007; Broderick & Metz, 2009).

The other part of study revealed that the scores of declined slightly for academic achievement after the programme was stopped but they were higher than the scores of control group. This means that benefits of meditation fade quite slowly, when one stops performing meditation.

The significant improvement in academic achievement observed among adolescents supports previous findings that meditation enhances attention, study habits, cognitive functioning, and academic performance (Hall, 1999; Beauchemin et al., 2008; Nidich et al., 2011; Lin & Mai, 2016).

The sustained benefits observed during the delayed post-test further suggest that Rajyoga Meditation promotes durable psychological and educational gains. Comparable long-term improvements have been reported in studies examining workplace emotional intelligence, subjective well-being, and cognitive performance among regular meditation practitioners (Valosek et al., 2018; Singh & Kumar, 2022; Singh & Kumar, 2023; Ray et al., 2024).

It may be concluded from the finding of the study that Rajyoga Meditation Programme enhances emotional intelligence and academic achievement. Moreover, the benefits of Rajyoga Meditation Programme were retained and fade quite slowly. So it is suggested that Rajyoga Meditation should be introduced in schools. This study can guide to plan meditation programmes in educational institutions.

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