

**MAPPING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF YOGA,
MEDITATION, AND POSITIVE PRACTICES: A MIXED-METHOD
INQUIRY**

GARIMA RAJAN



DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI

APRIL 2022

© Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD), New Delhi, 2022

**MAPPING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF YOGA,
MEDITATION, AND POSITIVE PRACTICES: A MIXED-METHOD
INQUIRY**

by

GARIMA RAJAN

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

Submitted

in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

to the



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI

APRIL 2022

Dedicated to My Parents

Late Dr. Rajeev Rajan & Dr. Jyostna Kumari

Thank You For Everything!

Certificate

This is to certify that the thesis titled “**Mapping the Psychological Benefits of Yoga, Meditation, and Positive Practices: A Mixed- Method Inquiry**”, being submitted by **Ms. Garima Rajan** to the **Indian Institute of Technology Delhi**, for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology**, is a record of original bona-fide research carried out by her under my supervision. In my opinion, the thesis has reached the standards fulfilling the requirements for submission relating to the degree.

The results contained in the thesis have not been submitted, in part or full, to any other institute or university for award of any degree or diploma.

Dr. Kamlesh Singh

Professor of Psychology

Department of Humanities & Social Sciences

Indian Institute of Technology Delhi

New Delhi-110016, India

Date: 4 April, 2022

New Delhi, India

Acknowledgements

As I sit and write this section of my thesis, I am taken back to a long memory lane of my entire journey in the field of psychology that began in 2009. Everyone's life and PhD journey is unique, filled with its own unique set of challenges and learnings. Mine was no less special, in fact, it was more than adventurous is what I can say! I am thankful to each and every one in my life who has been an integral part of my journey till here. PhD is a long road with literally a lot of sweat, blood and tears. My roller-coaster journey at IIT Delhi began in July 2016 and after many weeks, months and years, I finally got into the wonderful area of yoga and meditation in July 2018 for my research. I am supremely thankful to my advisor, my guide, mentor – not just for my PhD but for life as well. Prof. Kamlesh Singh, there are many people who touch our lives, but your place in my heart shall always be the most special. You undertook me under your guidance in 2018 and since then my life truly changed forever. Words will never be able to express my gratitude towards you and for everything you have done for me. Thank you for everything Ma'am!

The journey of over 5 years is so long and there are so many people who become an inseparable part of your PhD journey. My family, my mother, Dr. Jyotsna Kumari, my sister, Ms. Gargi Rajan, my grandmother Mrs. Savita Prasad Sah and grandfather Mr. Ram Prasad Sah, who always believed in me no matter what the odds were and ensured that I had all the support to get my doctorate in a field that I truly love. I can never thank you all enough for all the love, support and encouragement throughout these challenging years of PhD. I am sure if my father, Late. Dr. Rajeev Rajan, was here to witness me being awarded a doctorate from India's best institution, he would have been nothing but proud. I miss you, Papa! The Universe has been kind to me in innumerable ways and blessed me with the most loving and supporting husband and in-laws too. My husband, Mr. Shashank Agarwal, has been my rock

in the last few years and always kept me motivated to do my best and ensured timely submission. The understanding, patience and love that my mother-in-law, Mrs. Abha Agarwal showered me upon during the past few months makes my heart full of gratitude.

Prof. Purnima Singh, Prof. Ambuj Sagar, Prof. Sanil V. and Prof. Sangeeta Kohli, I can never forget your kindness and all the help in the most difficult phase of my PhD in 2018. I thank you all from the bottom of my heart to have been there with me during this journey. I also sincerely thank Prof. Rahul Garg for giving me permission to collect data from the Value Education Centre at IIT Delhi and Dr. Divya Kanchibhotla and Mr. Prateek Harsora from Art of Living Foundation to allow me to carry out my research work with Art of Living practitioners. A special thanks to Prof. Sumitava Mukherjee and Mr. Kashish Bansal for helping me with the smartphone application *PsyEx* development for my thesis. A sincere heartfelt thanks to all the participants, trainers and practitioners who were a part of the thesis. This PhD would not have been possible without the help and cooperation of you all.

Last but not the least, I take this opportunity to thank my best friends Dr. Kalyan Raj Kota and Kirti Tyagi for always being there to listen to my rant and help me in the most difficult times of PhD journey as well. I have no idea how would I have ever been able to get my PhD without your constant love and support. Shilpa, Suryodaya and Apurva, my peers and friends, thank you so much for always providing comfort in times of distress and also giving me insight into my work at multiple occasions. Thank you all who made the journey at IIT Delhi so worthwhile. I owe and dedicate my PhD to you all for being there unconditionally!

Abstract

This thesis primarily examines and documents the various psychological benefits of practicing yoga, meditation, and associated positive practices. Study 1 is a qualitative inquiry aimed at understanding different meditation practices, the similarities and differences across various meditation practices in terms of techniques used, associated positive practices, and outcomes from the practice. It documents several perceived benefits as reported by meditation trainers and advanced practitioners. This study recruited 25 participants from 11 different meditation techniques, who were interviewed using a semi-structured questionnaire. Reflexive thematic analysis was employed to understand meditation techniques, associated positive practices, and practitioners' various perceived benefits.

Study 2 examines the several psychological benefits in college students who attended the ongoing yoga–meditation-based workshops and courses in their college. In total, 113 college students from an engineering college in Delhi, India, participated for the three sub-studies, Study 2a, 2b, and 2c. The three studies documented several psychological benefits from three ongoing courses/workshops named *Science of Happiness* (mindfulness meditation), *Inner Clarity* (yoga, *pranayama*, and guided meditation), and *Mind, Body, and Heart* (yoga, *pranayama*, and heartfulness meditation). These studies used standardized self-reported psychological assessments along with semi-structured interview questionnaires for qualitative data analysis. The findings from these three sub-studies revealed significant positive changes with medium to high effect size on participants' flourishing, peace of mind, harmony in life, emotion regulation, and executive functioning from these courses/workshops, thus supporting literature on including such workshops and courses as a part of higher education academic curriculum to assist college students in managing stress and leading a more fulfilling, happier, productive, and balanced life.

For Study 3, an Android smartphone application named *PsyEx* was developed for data collection. Study 3a was conducted for final stimuli selection for emotion regulation experiment on 15 participants, who were recruited to rate 144 positive and negative pictures from the standardized Geneva Affective Picture Emotion Database. Once the stimuli for the emotion regulation experiment was finalized, the smartphone application underwent beta testing and was subsequently released on Google Play Store for data collection. Study 3b experimentally tests the psychological benefits on participants who attended a short, online, advanced yoga and meditation course, called Advanced Meditation Program (AMP) conducted by the Art of Living (AOL) foundation. The study assessed the changes in the use of emotion regulation strategies and executive functioning, while measuring changes in flourishing, peace of mind, and harmony in life in participants who attended the program. The results of 32 participants' pre–post test scores revealed significant positive changes with medium to high effect size on levels of flourishing, peace of mind, harmony in life, and emotion regulation. Results also indicated significant improvements in inhibitory control, attention, and cognitive flexibility from the advanced yoga–meditation-based course.

Finally, Study 4 included 70 participants—25 in non-yoga–meditation practitioner control group, 23 in novice yoga–meditation practitioner group (0–1 year of experience), and 22 in advanced yoga–meditation practitioner group (5 years and more of experience)—and showed significant differences with medium to high effect size in the three groups on psychological variables of executive functioning and use of emotion regulation strategies along with well-being indicators of flourishing, peace of mind, and harmony in life.

The findings from this thesis helps to conclude that yoga, meditation, and associated positive practices have numerous positive psychological, affective, and cognitive benefits on its practitioners. The findings from the above studies reveal that yoga, meditation, and positive

practices are viable to design effective psychological interventions for people to combat life stressors better, manage emotions more efficiently, improve executive functioning, and lead a more peaceful, harmonious, and flourishing life.

Keywords: Yoga, Meditation, Positive Practices, Psychological Benefits, Flourishing, Emotion Regulation, Executive Functioning

सारांश

यह थीसिस मुख्य रूप से योग, ध्यान और संबंधित सकारात्मक प्रथाओं के अभ्यास के विभिन्न मनोवैज्ञानिक लाभों की जांच और दस्तावेज करता है। अध्ययन 1 एक गुणात्मक जांच है जिसका उद्देश्य विभिन्न ध्यान प्रथाओं, विभिन्न ध्यान प्रथाओं में उपयोग की जाने वाली तकनीकों, संबंधित सकारात्मक प्रथाओं और अभ्यास से परिणामों के संदर्भ में समानताएं और अंतर को समझना है। यह ध्यान प्रशिक्षकों और उन्नत चिकित्सकों द्वारा बताए गए कई कथित लाभों का दस्तावेज है। इस अध्ययन ने 11 विभिन्न ध्यान तकनीकों से 25 प्रतिभागियों की भर्ती की, जिनका साक्षात्कार अर्ध-संरचित प्रश्नावली का उपयोग करके किया गया था। ध्यान तकनीकों, संबंधित सकारात्मक प्रथाओं और चिकित्सकों के विभिन्न कथित लाभों को समझने के लिए रिफ्लेक्सिव विषयगत विश्लेषण को नियोजित किया गया था।

अध्ययन 2 कॉलेज के छात्रों में कई मनोवैज्ञानिक लाभों की जांच करता है जिन्होंने अपने कॉलेज में चल रहे योग-ध्यान-आधारित कार्यशालाओं और पाठ्यक्रमों में भाग लिया। कुल मिलाकर, दिल्ली, भारत के एक इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेज के 113 कॉलेज के छात्रों ने तीन उप-अध्ययनों, अध्ययन 2ए, 2बी और 2सी में भाग लिया। तीन अध्ययनों ने साइंस ऑफ हैप्पीनेस (माइंडफुलनेस मेडिटेशन), इनर क्लैरिटी (योग, प्राणायाम, और गाइडेड मेडिटेशन), और माइंड, बॉडी एंड हार्ट (योग, प्राणायाम, और हार्टफुलनेस मेडिटेशन) नामक तीन चल रहे पाठ्यक्रमों / कार्यशालाओं से कई मनोवैज्ञानिक लाभों का दस्तावेजीकरण किया। इन अध्ययनों में गुणात्मक डेटा विश्लेषण के लिए अर्ध-संरचित साक्षात्कार प्रश्नावली के साथ-साथ मानकीकृत स्व-रिपोर्ट किए गए मनोवैज्ञानिक आकलन का उपयोग किया गया था। इन तीन उप-अध्ययनों के निष्कर्षों ने प्रतिभागियों के फलने-फूलने, मन की शांति, जीवन में सामंजस्य, भावना विनियमन और इन पाठ्यक्रमों / कार्यशालाओं से कार्यकारी कामकाज पर मध्यम से उच्च प्रभाव आकार के साथ महत्वपूर्ण सकारात्मक परिवर्तन प्रकट किए, इस प्रकार इस तरह की कार्यशालाओं को शामिल करने पर साहित्य का समर्थन किया। और उच्च शिक्षा शैक्षणिक पाठ्यक्रम के एक भाग के रूप में कॉलेज के छात्रों को तनाव के प्रबंधन और अधिक पूर्ण, खुशहाल, उत्पादक और संतुलित जीवन जीने में सहायता करने के लिए।

स्टडी 3 के लिए, डेटा संग्रह के लिए PsyEx नामक एक एंड्रॉइड स्मार्टफोन एप्लिकेशन विकसित किया गया था। अध्ययन 3ए 15 प्रतिभागियों पर भावना विनियमन प्रयोग के लिए अंतिम उत्तेजना चयन के लिए आयोजित किया गया था, जिन्हें मानकीकृत जिनेवा अफेक्टिव पिक्चर इमोशन डेटाबेस से 144 सकारात्मक और नकारात्मक चित्रों को रेट करने के लिए भर्ती किया गया था। एक बार भावना विनियमन प्रयोग के लिए उत्तेजनाओं को अंतिम रूप देने के बाद, स्मार्टफोन एप्लिकेशन का बीटा परीक्षण हुआ और बाद में डेटा संग्रह के लिए Google Play Store पर जारी किया गया। स्टडी 3बी उन प्रतिभागियों के मनोवैज्ञानिक लाभों का प्रयोगात्मक रूप से परीक्षण करती है, जिन्होंने आर्ट ऑफ लिविंग फाउंडेशन द्वारा आयोजित एक लघु, ऑनलाइन, उन्नत योग और ध्यान पाठ्यक्रम में भाग लिया था। अध्ययन ने कार्यक्रम में भाग लेने वाले प्रतिभागियों में उत्कर्ष, मन की शांति और जीवन में सद्भाव में परिवर्तन को मापने के दौरान भावना विनियमन रणनीतियों और कार्यकारी कामकाज के उपयोग में परिवर्तन का आकलन किया। 32 प्रतिभागियों के प्री-पोस्ट टेस्ट स्कोर के परिणामों ने मध्यम से उच्च प्रभाव आकार के साथ उत्कर्ष, मन की शांति, जीवन में सद्भाव और भावना विनियमन के स्तर पर महत्वपूर्ण सकारात्मक परिवर्तन प्रकट किए। परिणामों ने उन्नत योग-ध्यान-

आधारित पाठ्यक्रम से निरोधात्मक नियंत्रण, ध्यान और संज्ञानात्मक लचीलेपन में महत्वपूर्ण सुधार का भी संकेत दिया।

अंत में, अध्ययन 4 में 70 प्रतिभागियों को शामिल किया गया- 25 गैर-योग-ध्यान व्यवसायी नियंत्रण समूह में, 23 नौसिखिए योग-ध्यान व्यवसायी समूह में (0-1 वर्ष का अनुभव), और 22 उन्नत योग-ध्यान व्यवसायी समूह में (5 वर्ष और अधिक) अनुभव के) - और तीन समूहों में मध्यम से उच्च प्रभाव आकार के साथ कार्यकारी कामकाज के मनोवैज्ञानिक चर और भावना विनियमन रणनीतियों के उपयोग के साथ-साथ उत्कर्ष, मन की शांति और जीवन में सामंजस्य के साथ महत्वपूर्ण अंतर दिखाया।

थीसिस यह निष्कर्ष निकालने में मदद करते हैं कि योग, ध्यान और संबंधित सकारात्मक प्रथाओं के अपने चिकित्सकों पर कई सकारात्मक मनोवैज्ञानिक, स्नेह और संज्ञानात्मक लाभ हैं। उपरोक्त अध्ययनों के निष्कर्षों से पता चलता है कि योग, ध्यान और सकारात्मक अभ्यास जीवन के तनावों से बेहतर तरीके से निपटने, भावनाओं को अधिक कुशलता से प्रबंधित करने, कार्यकारी कामकाज में सुधार करने और अधिक शांतिपूर्ण, सामंजस्यपूर्ण और समृद्ध जीवन जीने के लिए प्रभावी हस्तक्षेप के रूप में व्यवहार्य हैं।

मुख्य शब्द: योग, ध्यान, सकारात्मक अभ्यास, मनोवैज्ञानिक लाभ, भावना विनियमन

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Certificate	i
Acknowledgements	ii
English Abstract	iv
Hindi Abstract.....	vii
Table of Contents.....	ix
List of Figures.....	xv
List of Tables.....	xvii
CHAPTER 1- INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Yoga and Its Origin.....	1
1.1.1 Types of Yoga.....	4
1.1.2 Benefits of Yoga.....	5
1.2 Meditation – Definition and Origin.....	6
1.2.1 A Brief History of Meditation.....	7
1.2.2 Types of Meditation.....	8
1.3 Mindfulness Meditation – A Most Researched Meditation Technique	
Worldwide.....	9
1.3.1 Types of Mindfulness Practices.....	11
1.4 Understanding Heartfulness Meditation – A <i>Heart-Centric</i> Approach to	
Meditation.....	12
1.4.1 Relevance of Studying Meditation.....	14
1.5 Relationship of Meditation to Spirituality and Religiosity.....	16
1.5.1 Link between Positive Psychology and Spirituality/Religiosity.....	18
1.6 Understanding Happiness from Different Perspectives.....	20
1.6.1 Understanding Indic Concepts of Happiness and <i>Guna</i> Theory of	
Personality.....	22
1.6.2 Flourishing as Synonymous to Well-Being and Happiness.....	23

1.6.3 From Savoring to Flourishing: A Step Towards Enhancing Happiness.....	23
1.6.4 Optimism, Pessimism, and its Relation to other Psychological Variables.....	25
1.6.5 Conceptualizing Peace of Mind and Harmony in Life.....	26
1.6.6 Positive Practices and its Link to Positive Psychology.....	27
1.7 Problem Statement of the Thesis.....	28
1.8 Research Questions.....	30
1.9 Structure of the Thesis.....	31

CHAPTER 2

Phase I: A Qualitative Inquiry into Understanding Meditation Practices and its Benefits

Study 1: Understanding Meditation, Yoga and Associated Positive Practices: A Thematic Analysis of Semi-Structured Interviews of Meditation Trainers and Advanced Meditation Practitioners from Different Meditation Practices.....

33

2.1 Rationale and Objectives for Study 1.....

33

2.2 Method.....

34

2.3 Results and Discussion.....

43

2.3.1 Theme 1. Precursors to Meditation Practice.....

44

2.3.1.1 Subtheme 1. Life Events and Stressors Leading to Meditation.....

44

2.3.1.2 Subtheme 2. Reasons for Joining the Practice.....

44

2.3.1.3 Subtheme 3. Expected Outcome(s) from the Practice.....

45

2.3.2 Theme 2: Process of Meditation Practice.....

47

2.3.2.1 Subtheme 1. Meditation Technique and Routine Followed in the Practice....

47

2.3.2.2 Subtheme 2. Associated Positive Practices.....

48

2.3.3 Theme 3: Perceived Benefits/Profits Incurred by Meditation Practice.....

56

2.3.3.1 Subtheme 1. Psychological Benefits with three sub-categories of Cognitive, Affective and Social Benefits from the Practice.....

49

2.3.3.2 Subtheme 2. Physiological and Health Benefits from the Practice.....

51

2.3.3.3 Subtheme 3. Other Benefits from the Practice.....

52

2.3.4 Similarities and Differences Across Different Meditation Practices.....

53

CHAPTER 3

Phase II: Examining the Psychological Effectiveness of Yoga- and Meditation-based Workshops on College Students

55

3.1 Problem Statement.....	55
3.1.1 Stress, Anxiety and Depression in College Students.....	56
3.1.2 Stressors Effecting Cognitive Abilities of College Students.....	57
3.2 Understanding Positive Education: Positive Intervention with a focus on Classroom-Based Interventions for Students.....	58
3.3 Understanding Executive Functioning and its Importance for College Students.....	60
3.4 Understanding Emotion Regulation and its Relevance.....	61
3.4.1 Emotion Regulation and its Relationship with Yoga and Meditation.....	62
3.5 Incorporating Yoga and Meditation Practice to Improve Overall Happiness and Emotion Regulation in College Students.....	63
CHAPTER 4.....	66
4.1 Rationale for Studies 2a, 2b & 2c.....	66
4.2 Study 2a: Effectiveness of a Course on “Science of Happiness”: A Classroom-Based Study in College Students.....	67
4.2.1 Objectives of the Present Study.....	67
4.2.2 About the Course.....	68
4.2.3 Activities from the Course.....	69
4.2.4 Sessions Description.....	70
4.2.5 Method.....	71
4.2.6 Results.....	73
4.2.7 Qualitative Data - Results and Analysis.....	75
4.2.8 Discussion.....	85
4.3 Study 2b: Examining the Psychological Benefits of a Classroom-Based Workshop “Inner Clarity” on College Students.....	89
4.3.1 Objectives of the Present Study.....	89
4.3.2 About the Workshop.....	89
4.3.3 Sessions Description.....	91
4.3.4 Method.....	92
4.3.5 Results.....	95

4.3.6 Qualitative Data - Results and Analysis.....	99
4.3.7 Discussion.....	108
4.4 Study 2c: Psychological Benefits of Classroom-Based Workshop “Mind, Body, and Heart” on Yoga, Heartfulness Meditation and Positive Practices in College Students.....	111
4.4.1 Objectives of the Present Study.....	111
4.4.2 About the Workshop.....	112
4.4.3 Workshop Activities.....	113
4.4.4 Method.....	114
4.4.5 Results.....	117
4.4.6 Qualitative Data – Results and Analysis.....	120
4.4.7 Discussion.....	128
CHAPTER 5	
Phase III: Experimental and Psychological Testing of Various Benefits from Short-Term, Advanced Yoga and Meditation Program.....	133
5.1 Study 3a: Pilot Study to Finalize Emotion Regulation Experiment Stimuli and Development of Smartphone Application “PsyEx” for Data Collection on Yoga-Meditation Practitioners.....	133
5.1.1 Aims and Objectives of the Study.....	134
5.1.2 Pilot Study for Finalizing Emotion Regulation Task Stimuli.....	134
5.1.3 Participants and Procedure.....	135
5.1.4 Final Emotion Regulation Task for the App.....	135
5.1.5 <i>PsyEx</i> Smartphone Application Development.....	136
5.1.6 Emotion Regulation Experiment for Pre- and Post-Test Phases.....	136
5.1.7 Executive Function Tasks for the Smartphone Application.....	139
5.1.8 Self-Report Questionnaires.....	140
5.1.9 <i>PsyEx</i> Smartphone Application Testing.....	141
5.2 Study 3b: Examining the Executive Functioning, Emotion Regulation, and Other Well-Being Indicators via “PsyEx” in Participants from a Short, Online Advanced Yoga and Meditation Program.....	142
5.2.1 Rationale for the Present Study.....	142

5.2.2 Relevance of Executive Functioning and Emotion Regulation.....	144
5.2.3 Understanding Emotion Regulation Strategies of Reappraisal and Suppression....	145
5.2.4 Emotion Regulation and its Relationship with Yoga and Meditation.....	146
5.2.5 Other Psychological Variables Under Examination in the Current Study.....	147
5.2.6 Objectives of the Present Study.....	147
5.2.7 About the Online Advanced Meditation Program (AMP) by Art of Living.....	148
5.2.8 Few Positive Practices and Activities during the Program.....	149
5.2.9 Different Meditations During the Program.....	151
5.2.10 Method.....	151
5.2.11 Results and Analysis.....	152
5.2.12 Discussion.....	158

CHAPTER 6

Phase IV: Documenting the Differences in Psychological Variables Between Advanced, Novice, and Non-Practitioners of Yoga and Meditation.....	164
---	------------

6.1 Study 4: Examining the Differences in Executive Functioning, Use of Emotion Regulation Strategies and Other Psychological Variables Between Novice, Advanced, and Non-Practitioners of Yoga and Meditation.....	164
--	------------

6.1.1 Objectives of the Present Study.....	164
6.1.2 Rationale for the Present Study.....	165
6.1.3 Method.....	166
6.1.4 Results and Analysis.....	169
6.1.5 Discussion.....	189

6.2 General Discussion and Conclusions.....	195
--	------------

CHAPTER 7

Summary, Implications, Limitations, and Recommendations for Future Research.....	199
---	------------

7.1 Summary and Implications of Results and Findings

7.1.1 Study 1.....	200
7.1.2a Study 2a.....	201
7.1.2b Study 2b.....	203

7.1.2c Study 2c.....	204
7.1.3a Study 3a.....	206
7.1.3b Study 3b.....	207
7.1.4 Study 4.....	210
7.2 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research	
7.2.1 Study 1.....	213
7.2.2a Study 2a.....	213
7.2.2b Study 2b.....	214
7.2.2c Study 2c.....	214
7.2.3 Study 3b.....	215
7.2.4 Study 4.....	216
References.....	218
Appendices.....	267
Appendix I: Study 1: Understanding Meditation - Data Collection Form.....	267
Appendix II: Study 2a: Science of Happiness - Data Collection Form.....	270
Appendix III: Study 2b: Inner Clarity – Data Collection Form.....	274
Appendix IV: Study 2c: Mind, Body and Heart – Data Collection Form.....	281
Appendix V: Study 3a: Pilot Study Emotion Regulation Experiment Instructions.....	291
Appendix VI: Study 3b: Emotion Regulation Experiment Instructions.....	293
Appendix VII: Study 3b and Study 4: <i>PsyEx</i> App Consent Form, Tasks and Assessments.....	297
Appendix VIII: Tasks and Assessments Used in Study 3b and Study 4.....	298
Garima Rajan’s Curriculum Vitae.....	304

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. <i>Educational Qualification of the Participants</i>	34
Figure 2. <i>Relationship Status of the Participants</i>	35
Figure 3. <i>Influencing Factors for Participants to be Introduced into the Practice</i>	35
Figure 4. <i>Current Living Situation of the Participants</i>	36
Figure 5. <i>Total Duration of Practice Every Day by the Participants</i>	36
Figure 6. <i>Number of People Reported to be Influenced and Impacted by the Participants</i>	37
Figure 7. <i>Thematic Map of the Findings from Study 1</i>	40
Figure 8. <i>Participants’ Feelings Having Completed the “Science of Happiness” course</i>	76
Figure 9. <i>Aspects of the Course Most Liked by the Participants</i>	78
Figure 10. <i>Parts of the Course Least Liked by the Participants</i>	80
Figure 11. <i>Kinds of Courses/ Sessions which Participants Wanted to Participate in</i>	81
Figure 12. <i>Perceived Benefits and Changes in Participants After the Course</i>	83
Figure 13. <i>Participants’ Feelings Having Completed the “Inner Clarity” Workshop</i>	99
Figure 14. <i>Aspects of the Workshop Most Liked by the Participants</i>	101
Figure 15. <i>Parts of the Workshop Least Liked by the Participants</i>	103
Figure 16. <i>Perceived Benefits and Changes in Participants Having Attended the Workshop</i>	104
Figure 17. <i>Types of Courses/Sessions that the Participants Wanted to Participate in</i>	107
Figure 18. <i>Participants’ Feelings Having Completed the “Mind, Body, and Heart” Workshop</i>	120
Figure 19. <i>Aspects of the Workshop Most Liked by the Participants</i>	122
Figure 20. <i>Parts of the Workshop Least Liked by the Participants</i>	123

Figure 21. *Perceived Benefits and Changes in Participants Having Attended the Workshop.....125*

Figure 22. *Types of Courses/Programs/Sessions that the Participants Wanted to Participate In.....127*

Figure 23. *Diagrammatic Representation of the Four Phases and the Studies Done in this Thesis.....199*

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. <i>Understanding the Technique and Associated Positive Practices with Different Schools of Meditation Practice</i>	41
Table 2. <i>Sessions Description for the Course on “Science of Happiness”</i>	70
Table 3. <i>Pre-Post Scores on Selected Psychological Scales for Study 2a</i>	74
Table 4. <i>Sessions Description for “Inner Clarity” Workshop</i>	91
Table 5. <i>Pre-Post Scores on Happiness Scales for Study 2b</i>	95
Table 6. <i>Pre-Post Scores on Emotion Regulation Strategies for Study 2b</i>	96
Table 7. <i>Pre-Post Scores on Executive Functioning Scales for Study 2b</i>	97
Table 8. <i>Pre-Post Scores on Triguna Scale for Study 2b</i>	98
Table 9. <i>Overview of the 6-Day “Mind, Body and Heart Workshop”</i>	112
Table 10. <i>Pre-Post Scores on Various Psychological Variables Assessed in Study 2c</i>	117
Table 11. <i>Overview of the Advanced Meditation Program (AMP)</i>	148
Table 12. <i>Pre-Post Scores on Various Psychological Assessments for Study 3b</i>	152
Table 13. <i>Pre-Post Scores on Cognitive Tasks Measuring Executive Functioning</i>	155
Table 14. <i>Pre-Post Scores from Experiment on Use of Emotion Regulation Strategies</i>	157
Table 15. <i>Means and Standard Deviations of Variables on Stroop Task for the Three Groups in Study 4</i>	167
Table 16. <i>One-Way Analysis of Psychological Variables on Stroop Tasks for the Three Groups</i>	170
Table 17. <i>Means and Standard Deviations of Reaction Time Variables on Stroop Task for the Three Groups</i>	170
Table 18. <i>One-Way Analysis of Reaction Time Variables on Stroop Tasks for the Three Groups</i>	171
Table 19. <i>Means and Standard Deviations of Variables on Go/No-Go Task for the Three Groups</i>	172
Table 20. <i>One-Way Analysis of Variables on Go/No-Go Tasks for the Three Groups</i>	172
Table 21. <i>Means and Standard Deviations of Variables on Multidimensional Flourishing Scale for the Three Groups</i>	173

Table 22. <i>One-Way Analysis of Variables on Multidimensional Flourishing Scale for the Three Groups</i>	174
Table 23. <i>Means and Standard Deviations on Peace of Mind and Harmony in Life for the Three Groups</i>	174
Table 24. <i>One-Way Analysis of Variables on Peace of Mind and Harmony in Life Scale for the Three Groups</i>	175
Table 25. <i>Means and Standard Deviations on Variables for Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire for the Three Groups</i>	176
Table 26. <i>One-Way Analysis of Variables on Peace of Mind and Harmony in Life Scale for the Three Groups</i>	177
Table 27. <i>Means and Standard Deviations on Variables for Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire for the Three Groups</i>	178
Table 28. <i>One-Way Analysis of Variables for Emotion Regulation Questionnaire for the Three Groups</i>	179
Table 29. <i>Means and Standard Deviations on Variables for Emotion Regulation Experiment for Baseline Condition for the Three Groups</i>	179
Table 30. <i>One-Way Analysis of Variables for Emotion Regulation Experiment for Baseline Condition for the Three Groups</i>	180
Table 31. <i>Means and Standard Deviations on Variables for Emotion Regulation Experiment for Cognitive Reappraisal Condition for the Three Groups</i>	181
Table 32. <i>One-Way Analysis of Variables for Emotion Regulation Experiment for Cognitive Reappraisal Condition for the Three Groups</i>	182
Table 33. <i>Means and Standard Deviations on Variables for Emotion Regulation Experiment for Suppression Condition for the Three Groups</i>	182
Table 34. <i>One-Way Analysis of Variables for Emotion Regulation Experiment for Suppression Condition for the Three Groups</i>	183
Table 35. <i>Means and Standard Deviations on Variables for Control Non-Meditator Group for Three Conditions of Emotion Regulation Experiment</i>	184
Table 36. <i>One-Way Analysis of Variables for Control Non-Meditator Group for Three Conditions of Emotion Regulation Experiment</i>	185

Table 37. *Means and Standard Deviations on Variables for Novice Meditator Group for Three Conditions of Emotion Regulation Experiment.....*186

Table 38. *One-Way Analysis of Variables for Novice Meditator Group for Three Conditions of Emotion Regulation Experiment.....*187

Table 39. *Means and Standard Deviations on Variables for Advanced Meditator Group for Three Conditions of Emotion Regulation Experiment.....*187

Table 40. *One-Way Analysis of Variables for Advanced Meditator Group for Three Conditions of Emotion Regulation Experiment.....*188