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RESEARCH ARTICLE

DEPRESSION MANAGEMENT VIA VIPASSANA MEDITATION AMONG GREY- COLLAR WORKERS

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Abstract

Depression is a common mental disorder, characterized by sadness, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, feelings of tiredness, and poor concentration. The present study has tried to explore depression among grey-collar workers and also tried to explore the effectiveness of vipassana meditation on controlling depressive thoughts among grey-collar workers. It made use of purpose sampling in selecting 100 grey-collar workers equally divided into males and females. The sample responded to the valid and reliable instrument. Beck depression inventory (BDI) construct by Beck, et al (1961) was used to measure depression of the grey-collar workers. The design which was used to conceptualize the study and analyze the data was 2x2 factorial design with two independent variables: one being before and after conditions of vipassana therapy and another being gender of the respondents. Results of the present study have revealed that the vipassana meditation has significantly decreased the level of depression among grey-collar workers.

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Introduction:-

Depression is more than just sadness. People with depression may experience a lack of interest and pleasure in daily activities, significant weight loss or gain, insomnia or excessive sleeping, lack of energy, inability to concentrate, feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt and recurrent thoughts of death or suicide. (APA, 2016). The term 'depression' covers a variety of negative moods and behavior changes. The mood change may be temporary or long lasting. It may range from relatively minor feeling of melancholy to a deeply negative view of the world and an inability to function effectively. Depression is a disturbance in mood, thought, and body characterized by varying degrees of sadness, disappointment, loneliness, hopelessness, self-doubt and guilt. Most people tend to feel depressed at one time or another; some people may experience these feelings more frequently or with deeper, more lasting effects. In some cases, depression can last for months or even years. The least intense type of depression, "feeling blue" or "being in a bad mood" is usually brief in duration and has minimal or slight effect on normal, everyday activities. With moderate depression, symptoms are more intense and last for a longer period of time. Daily activities are more difficult but the individual is still able to carry out these activities. In severe depression there may be extreme fluctuations in moods or even a complete withdrawal from daily routine and/or the outside world. Feelings of hopelessness can become so intense that thoughts of death may occur and suicide may seem a viable option. Depression is a state of low mood and aversion to activity that can affect a person's thoughts, behavior, feelings and sense of well-being.

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Depression is a mental health disorder that can affect the way you eat and sleep, the way you feel about yourself and the way you think about things. It is not a sign of personal weakness and it can't be willed or wished away. (Lucy et.al, 2015).

Depression is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest. Also called major depressive disorder or clinical depression, it affects how you feel, think and behave and can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems. You may have trouble doing normal day-to-day activities, and sometimes you may feel as if life isn't worth living (Roosi, 2015).

Depression is a state of low mood and aversion to activity that can affect a person's thoughts, behavior, feelings and sense of well-being. People with a depressed mood can feel sad, anxious, empty, hopeless, helpless, worthless, guilty, irritable, ashamed or restless. They may lose interest in activities that were once pleasurable, experience loss of appetite or overeating, have problems concentrating, remembering details or making decisions, and may contemplate, attempt or commit suicide. Insomnia, excessive sleeping, fatigue, aches, pains, digestive problems or reduced energy may also be present. (CDC, 2015).

Factors that seem to increase the risk of developing or triggering depression include -

Certain personality traits, such as low self-esteem and being too dependent, self-critical or pessimistic, traumatic or stressful events, such as physical or sexual abuse, the death or loss of a loved one, a difficult relationship, or financial problems, childhood trauma or depression that started when you were a teen or child, blood relatives with a history of depression, bipolar disorder, alcoholism or suicide, being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender in an unsupportive situation, history of other mental health disorders, such as anxiety disorder, eating disorders or post-traumatic stress disorder and abuse of alcohol or illegal drugs etc. So depression has many routes to make its entry in the inner core of the individual and its hallmark is suicide and suicidal ideation.

So, it is vital that professional help and treatment is sought as soon as possible and that treatment is adhered to. As with all major illnesses, during major depression we need additional support on a daily basis both in managing the symptoms and to provide help with treatment.

The present study has tried to explore the effectiveness of vipassana meditation in managing depression of the grey collar workers. Vipassana means insight. To see things as they really are, in their true perspective, in their true nature. It is a practical technique of self-examination, a scientific method of self-observation that results in the total purification of the mind and the highest happiness of full liberation. The objective of the technique is to purify the mind. All human actions emanate from the mind and a pure mind is by nature full of love and compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity. Sustained practice of vipassana brings about the total transformation of the human personality. Vipassana is a way of self-transformation through self-observation. It focuses on the deep interconnection between mind and body which can be experienced directly by disciplined attention to the physical sensations that form the life of the body and that continuously interconnect and condition the life of the mind. (dhamma,2019). It is the observation based self observation based self exploratory journey to the common roots of mind and body that dissolves mental impurity, resulting in a balanced mind full of love and compassion.

The present study has tried to manage the depression of grey-collar workers. The term grey-collar worker is used to describe elderly individuals working beyond the age of retirement, as well as those occupied that incorporate some of the elements of both blue and white collar and generally are in between the two categories in terms of income-earning capabilities.

According to Pittsburgh post gazette (2006) grey collar could be the underemployed white collar workers.(Anya,Sostek,II August,2006). It is not just blue or white collar anymore as consultants labels for new job to be palette. So we can say that grey collar worker refers to the balance of employed people unclassified as white or blue collar. The study has selected white collar workers converted into grey collar workers ie they were selected on the basis of their nature of job for example retired professors of arts, commerce, science, medical, engineering streams were selected for the study. Since these people bear great responsibilities and require high technical knowledge and administrative abilities to handle people so they are more prone to face depression if felt unsuccessful. Their age factor also contribute as a high corralate of depression. So it would be interesting to explore as how much they get benefitted by the intervention of vipassana meditation.

Methodology:-**Objectives:-**

1. To identify depression among grey-collar workers.
2. To identify the effectiveness of vipassana meditation in managing depression of grey-collar workers.
3. To identify gender difference on depression among male and female grey-collar workers. .

Hypotheses:-

1. Vipassana meditation would significantly decrease depression among grey-collar workers.
2. There would be significant gender differences on depression among male and female grey-collar workers.

Sample:

A sample of 100 grey-collar workers (50- males & 50 females) were chosen from Lucknow city. Only those respondents were selected for the study who were highly qualified professionals and working even after their retirement . Another precaution was made while selecting the candidates for the study ie only those respondents were selected for the study who were found to report high level of depression. The mean age of the candidates ranging from 62.6 years for the females and 64.6 years for the male respondents.

Research Design:

The design which is used to conceptualize the study and analyze the data was 2x2 factorial design with two independent variables: one being before and after conditions of vipassana therapy and another being gender of the respondents.

Tool used:**Beck depression inventory (BDI-II) by Beck, Ward, Mendelson, Mock & Erbaugh, 1961.**

The beck depression inventory (bdi), of beck (1961), is a 21 questions multiple choice survey that is one of the most widely used instruments for measuring the severity of depression.

Vipassana meditation:

Vipassana is the oldest of buddhist meditation practices. Vipassana can be translated as “insight,” a clear awareness of exactly what is happening as it happens. Vipassana is a form of mental training that will teach you to experience the world in an entirely new way. You will learn for the first time what is truly happening to you, around you and within you. It is a process of self-discovery, a participatory investigation in which you observe your own experiences while participating in them as they occur.

Steps of vipassana meditation

1. Quiet location to meditate, sit in a comfortable position, close your eyes
2. Start breathing normally.
3. Focus on a portion of the breathing
4. Find a beginning, middle, and an end to the breathing.
5. Visualize the abdomen rising and falling.

Procedure:

All the participants of the study were individually informed about the purpose of the study and were applied with bdi. After the pre test the high depression respondents were provided with the sessions of vipassana meditation thrice in a week for 2 months by the researcher, while in other days they were instructed to practice the techniques by themselves twice a day i.e. Early in the morning and at bed time. The participants were provided with daily record sheets which they fill up regularly and were checked twice weekly. After 2 months post test was taken and the pre- test and post- test scores were statistically analyzed by means of anova to test the significance of difference.

Statistical-Analysis:

The obtained data were analyzed using Mean,SD and ANOVA

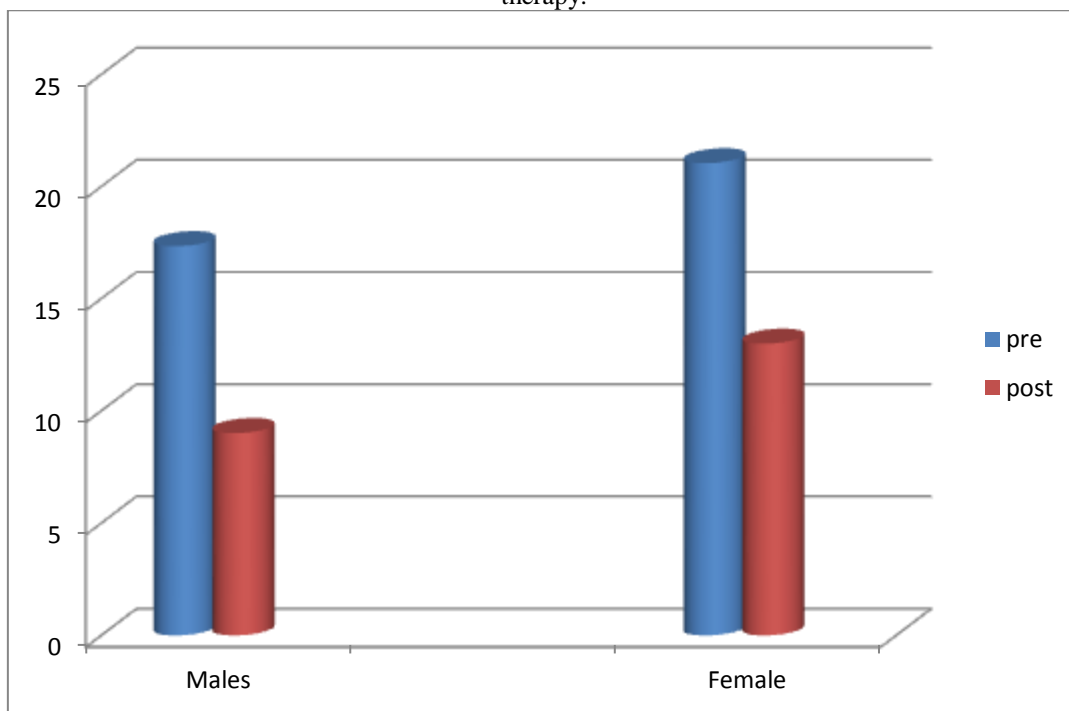
Table-1:- Mean and SD on Depression among Grey-Collar Workers.

	Pretest		Posttest			Total	
	Mean	Sd	Mean	Sd		Mean	Sd
Males	17.34	3.12	9.01	3.26		13.17	3.19
Females	21.04	3.09	12.99	2.72		17.01	2.90
Total	19.19	3.10	11.00	2.99			

Table-2:- Summary ANOVA on Depression

Sources	SS	df	MS	F
Gender	294.29	1	294.29	11.41**
Therapy	134.21	1	134.21	5.99**
Gxt	2.19	1	2.19	.04

**=significant at .01 level

Graph-1:- Mean of Males and Females Grey Collar Workers on Depression for Before and After conditions of therapy.

Results and Discussion:-

Following results were obtained on the basis of data analysis

Effect of Vipassana Meditation in reducing Depression of Grey Collar Workers

As it is clear from the inspection of table-2 that significant differences were obtained in before and after conditions of vipassana meditation. It is further clear from the observation of table-1 that after the introduction of intervention programme (vipassana meditation) the depression of the respondents was reduced significantly. These results support the first hypothesis stating that vipassana meditation would significantly decrease depression among grey-collar workers.

Since grey collar workers are the old persons, facing many physical and psychological problems in their day to day life are more prone to feel depressed in their lives. When these grey collar workers who are strong enough but need a slight direction at this moment of their life so that they can reattain their strength and will power and be enable to transform their negativity into positivity. Vipassans meditation has done this task of making them aware of their abilities, helping them to get insight about the problems of their life they are facing and are exposed to.

Further grey collar workers require training to acquire their specific skills portfolio which spans technical and knowledge competencies in addition to operational skills. Since grey-collar workers require familiarization with technical expertise, analytical competencies and administrative skills so they are more prone to anxiety and depression because they have to adjust themselves to the changing expectations of their job. The present study has selected only those respondents who were having high depression. But after the intervention programme their depression level was found to reduce drastically. ($m=19.19$ in before condition and $m=11.00$ in after condition).

Vipassana meditation may help mitigate psychological and psychosomatic distress. All the respondents of vipassana meditation pronounced improvement in anxiety and depression (Hussaini, 2001). Since vipassana meditation is mind-body awareness, it may be used to produce general physical well-being. It can relieve minor psychological abnormalities like irritability and short temperedness.

It is important to realize that depression is not an inevitable part of getting older nor is it a sign of weakness or a character flaw. It can happen to anyone, at any age, no matter of a person's background or previous accomplishments in life. While life changes as we age such as retirement, death of loved ones, declining health can sometime trigger depression, they don't have to keep us down (Helpguide, 2019). There is always a way to get through them and we acted as showing them that positive route.

The management of depression among the grey collar workers is quite manageable but the problem is that people don't recognize depression among them which worsen their condition. The fact that elderliness is accepted as a property of depressive symptoms both by relatives of the patients and doctors is one of the factors which make it difficult to recognize their depression. Only 10% receive treatment for depression (Verma, 2012).

The management of depression through vipassana may be attributed to the fact as in vipassana meditation, the mediator uses his concentration as a tool by which his awareness can chip away at the wall of illusion that cuts him off from the living light of reality. It is a gradual process of ever increasing awareness into the inner workings of reality itself.

Gender differences in Depression among Grey Collar Workers:

As it is clear from the inspection of Table-2 that significant differences were obtained in among males and females on depression. It is further clear from the observation of Table-1 and Graph-1 that females of the present sample were found to report more depression as compared to males. These results support the second hypothesis of the present study stating that there would be significant gender differences on depression among male and female grey-collar workers.

The reason may be attributed to our societal structure & different varying practices for males & females so they feel more helpless than males, they cannot change anything, they find themselves unable to express their emotions making them feel anxious and depressed as compared to males. Since no one seems to understand them, they tend to internalize their emotions and since females are not generally encouraged to talk about themselves and to express how they feel, when given the opportunity they often have trouble verbalizing their emotions. The present finding is also supported by the study of Piccinelli & Homen (1997) who reported that depression contributes most significantly to the global burden of disease and it is the most frequently encountered female's mental health problem. Major depression occurs approximately twice as often in adolescent females as in adolescent males. (Harry, 2007). The research findings Breslau et al (1998) stand in contrast to the finding of the present study who reported depression more in males and Sangmitra (2014) reported that depression and anxiety are the most common in male & females while found no gender difference in depression.

The results of the present study have suggested that the interaction of therapy and gender was not found to be significant (Table-2) which has suggested no difference between females and males on depression after the intervention of vipassana meditation.

Conclusion:-

The results of the present study have suggested that vipassana meditation was found to be effective in managing depression of grey-collar workers. Grey collar workers are those who are still in work after their retirement or still in the work force in their early 60s and late 60s. Depression is less prevalent among older adults, than among young adults but can have serious consequences. Depressed older adults are less likely to endorse affective symptoms and

more likely to display cognitive changes, somatic symptoms and loss of interest than are younger adults. So this group of the respondents needs more attention so that they can get rid of their depression. So vipassana meditation which is a technique of arising awareness helps the individual to make them conscious of their own abilities and try to explore meaning in their life must be necessarily included as the part of their daily life because it would be unrealistic to expect all problems to be solved only in one training period of 10 days. So in order to get maximum advantage from this therapy one has to practice it regularly. So the present study may prove fruitful and enlightening for the counsellors and policy makers to make such plans/schemes which can be beneficial for the respondents of this age group in the long run.

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