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Impact of meditation on state trait anxiety of teachers

Manju Gundumogula^{1,*} and Rojina Prusty²

¹PhD Scholar, Department of Sociology, SLTC Doctoral School, Lorraine University, France.

²PhD Scholar, Department of Education, Osmania University, Hyderabad, India

*Corresponding author

Abstract: Teachers face rising pressure in their job: In a connected, computerized world all information's can be found one click away in the internet, all achievements can be compared, there is a rising competition among the students and among the schools, students get more and more demanding and challenging for the teachers. The aim of present study is to find out, if the anxiety level differs between teachers that practice meditation and those who do not. To select the samples the purposive sampling method was used. The sample included 60 government school teachers, 35 male and 25 female, East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh state in India. Among them 30 meditative teachers, who are practicing Sahaja Yoga meditation about 10 years and more and 30 non-meditative teachers. Age of the subjects ranged from 35 to 59 years. The data was collected through State Trait Anxiety Test, in a questionnaire method. SPSS statistic software was used for the interpretation of the data and the statistical tools mean, Standard Deviation and T-Value and t-ratio were employed at .05 level confidence. The statistical analysis shows that there exists significant difference on anxiety level among meditative teachers and non-meditative teachers. Moreover both state and trait anxiety level of non-meditative teachers is higher than meditative teachers. Keeping this in view, it can be concluded that Sahaja Yoga Meditation practice helps the teachers to overcome their anxiety level and hence it can be used as a therapeutic technique for teachers to keep their mental health peaceful and balanced.

Keywords: Sahajayoga meditation; anxiety level; mental health; therapeutic technique; school teachers

1. Introduction

At present, we are in a modern and computerized era, with new technological innovations, which is bringing a considerable progressive advancement and creating new opportunities with lots of infrastructure changes in every field. Its effect is also clearly visible in our education sector, where teaching is becoming a challenge for teachers in order to make their students ready to face this situation and to get the victory.

Teaching is a Nobel profession, however teaching has been identified as a stressful occupation (Cacha, 1981; Farber & Miller, 1981; Landsman, 1978; Paine, 1981; Russell et al, 1987; Cooley & Yovanoff, 1996; Kyriacou, 2001; Anthoniou et al., 2006;

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Guthrie, 2006; S.S, Manabete et al., 2016). Teacher stress is the experience by a teacher; of unpleasant, negative emotions such as anxiety, tension, frustration, anger and depression, resulting from some aspect of their work as a teacher (Kyriacou, 2001; Reddy & Anuradha, 2013). The problem of teacher stress has received increased attention among educational and psychological researchers over the years (Cooley & Yovanoff, 1996; Farber, 1991; Friedman, 1993; Holland & Michael, 1993; Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Anderson et al., 1999). Stress and anxiety are inter connected and interdependent and difficult to differentiate them as the psychological and biological aspects are linked to each other (Wiedemann, 2001).

2. Anxiety and Sahaja Yoga Meditation

2.1 Anxiety

The term anxiety has been described as the emotional state which is expressed by psychological and physiological phenomena (Cohen et al., 1989). The concept of anxiety is broadly defined as 'the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system' (Spielberger, 1983). It is one of the most common psychological factor, personality concept, complex and unpleasant emotional state which place an important role in human behavior and it is often accompanied by restlessness, fatigue, problems in concentration and muscular tension (Costello et al., 2003; Gowri Naidu, 2016).

Anxiety further categorized as state anxiety and trait anxiety (Lufi et al., 2004). State anxiety can be defined as a transitory emotional state consisting of feelings of apprehension, nervousness, and physiological sequelae such as an increased heart rate or respiration (Spielberger, 1979). The trait anxiety is described as the individual's capability to perceive different situations from the environment like danger and threat. (Lufi et al., 2004). Trait anxiety represents a fairly stable characteristic related to personality (Wiedemann, 2001). On the other hand, state anxiety is described as the perception of individual's emotional situation. Normally little anxiety or stress works as a positive influence, but excessive amount of anxiety may leads to a disorder.

2.2 Sahaja Yoga Meditation

Meditation is a systematic narrowing of attention that slows the metabolism and helps produce feelings of relaxation (Rathus, 1997; Gundumogula & Prusty, 2018). Meditation has been used to decrease the negative effects of stress on the nervous system, thereby increasing the individual's capacity to resist stress and respond adaptively to the work environment (Shapiro & Walsh, 1984; Swanson & Oates, 1989). During the past 25 years, the emergence of complementary and alternative medicine therapies as useful and effective therapeutic tools in conventional medicine has led to the exploration of meditation for treating and managing a variety of illnesses (Beauchemin et al., 2008). Meditation has been effective in decreasing both state anxiety (DeBerry et al, 1989) and trait anxiety (Goleman & Schwartz, 1976).

In the present research meditative teachers have been practicing Sahaja Yoga meditation (SYM) atleast for the last 10 years. SYM is founded on the principle that

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the path to achieving peace and harmony in the world begins with each individual establishing a higher sense of awareness and subtle self-knowledge. It works by balancing the energy of the body on a subtle level and connecting the individual with the universal living consciousness (Choudary et al., 2012). It has been proved that SYM is an effective tool: for promoting mental health and stress reduction (Manocha et al., 2009), to prevent of cardiovascular diseases and high blood pressure (Rai, 1993), to control asthma (Manocha et al., 2002), to increase of Grey Matter (Hernandez et al., 2016), to make positive influence on ADHD children (Harrison et al., 2003), for quality of life, functional health and wellbeing (Manocha et al., 2012), as a complimentary therapy in the management of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and stress related disorders (Gupta et al., 2015), for its beneficial effects on some organ systems including cardiovascular system (Yalta et al., 2011), occupational health (Manocha et al., 2011), for constant downfall of anxiety and depression level of the individual (Sharma et al., 2005).

3. Objectives and Hypothesis of the Study

3.1 Objective

The present study endeavours to find out whether the Sahaja Yoga Meditation has any significant impact on the state trait anxiety level among the government school teachers.

3.2 Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between meditative and non-meditative teachers in their State Anxiety level.

There is no significant difference between meditative and non-meditative teachers in their Trait Anxiety level.

There is no significant difference between meditative and non-meditative teachers in their Trait Anxiety level based on their age and gender.

4. Methodology

4.1 Sample

For the selection of samples purposive sampling technique has been used in the present study. It consists of 60 government school teachers; out of these 35 male and 25 female teachers are chosen from East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh State, India. Again it is subdivided into 30 Sahaja Yoga meditation practising teachers, who are practicing Sahaja Yoga meditation for 10 years or above and 30 non-meditative practitioner teachers. Their mean age is 47 yrs.

4.2 Tool used

The data for the present study was collected with the help of Sanjay Vohra (2001) State-Trait Anxiety Test which intends to assess the State-Trait Anxiety. It measures State-Trait Anxiety in five dimensions- Guilt Proneness(Gp), Maturity (Ma), Suspiciousness(Su), Self-Control(Sc) and Tension(Tn) which contains immediate

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manifest content suggesting psychiatric symptoms of anxiety, to a total number of 40 items.

4.3 Data Collection

Data is collected through questionnaire from government school teachers in East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh, India. Teachers are approached individually, the objective and the purpose of the research are explained and they are asked to respond each statement truthfully. All the teachers, who are willing to participate in it voluntarily, are given the questionnaire to fill. Investigator has assured the confidentiality of their responses.

5. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Number and percentage of the social background of meditative teachers and non-meditative teachers (N=60)

Sl. No.	Variables	categories	No. of non-meditative teachers	% of non-meditative teachers	No. of meditative teachers	% of meditative teachers
1.	Gender	Male	16	53.3%	19	63.3%
		Female	14	46.7%	11	36.7%
2.	Age	35-39	8	26.7%	6	20.0%
		40-44	4	13.3%	3	10.0%
		45-49	9	30.0%	11	36.7%
		50-54	7	23.3%	7	23.3%
		55-59	2	6.7%	3	10.0%

If we consider the age group, the total sample distributes between the age groups of 35 to 59 for both the non-meditative and meditative teachers, and again the age groups are distributed in 5 age groups and the class intervals for each group are also 5. Looking closely, we observe that highest percentage of teachers for both non-meditative and meditative teachers are 9 (30%) and 11(36.7%) respectively belong to 45-49 age group. Again the lowest number of teachers are included from the age group of 55-59; 2 (6.7%) and 3 (10%) for non-meditative and meditative teachers respectively.

Table 2: Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk of meditative teachers and non-meditative teachers (N=60)

Group		Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Significance	Statistic	df	Significance
meditative	Age	.112	30	.200*	.954	30	.211
	sexr	.406	30	.000	.612	30	.000
	Age	.134	30	.180	.931	30	.053

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Non meditative	sexr	.354	30	.000	.637	30	.000
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Figure 1: Q-Q-Diagrams of Age of the meditative teachers and non-meditative teachers (N=60)

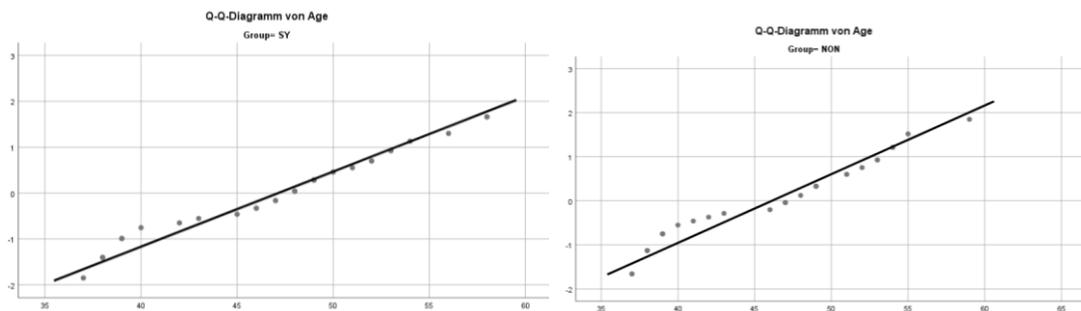


Table 3: t-test for independent samples for Meditation Practicing (non-meditative teachers, meditative teachers) on different dimensions of Anxiety

Variable	Practicing Meditation	Number of cases	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
guilt proneness	non-meditative teachers	30	19.5667	2.77530	.50670
	meditative teachers	30	14.5667	3.20219	.58464
Maturity	non-meditative teachers	30	9.4667	2.06336	.37672
	meditative teachers	30	7.8000	1.32353	.24164
self control	non-meditative teachers	30	11.7667	2.83675	.51792
	meditative teachers	30	9.5667	2.35889	.43067
suspiciousness	non-meditative teachers	30	7.1000	1.51658	.27689
	meditative teachers	30	5.1667	1.44039	.26298
Tension	non-meditative teachers	30	17.4000	2.74929	.50195
	meditative teachers	30	13.7333	2.14851	.39226

Table 4: Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

Variable	Variances	t value	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		Effect size
							Lower	Upper	
guilt proneness	Not Equal	6.463	56.852	.000	5.00000	.77366	3.45069	6.54931	1.18
Maturity	Not Equal	3.724	49.409	.001	1.66667	.44756	.76746	2.56588	0.96
self control	Not Equal	3.266	56.132	.002	2.20000	.67358	.85072	3.54928	0.84

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Suspiciousness	Not Equal	5.063	57.847	.000	1.93333	.38187	1.16890	2.69777	1.31
Tension	Not Equal	5.756	54.799	.000	3.66667	.63704	2.38990	4.94343	1.49

From the above table, it can be observed that there exist significance differences in the anxiety level of Non-Meditative and Meditative teachers according to different dimensions. Statistically we found 2-tailed significant differences in all dimensions.

Table 5: t-test for independent samples for meditation practicing (non-meditative teachers, meditative teachers) on Trait and State anxiety levels

Variable	practicing meditation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Trait anxiety score	non-meditative teachers	30	33.2667	3.59054	.65554
	meditative teachers	30	26.0667	5.25182	.95885
State anxiety score	non-meditative teachers	30	32.0333	4.96528	.90653
	meditative teachers	30	24.7667	3.87462	.70740

Figure 2: Trait & State Anxiety Mean Scores of meditative and non-meditative teachers

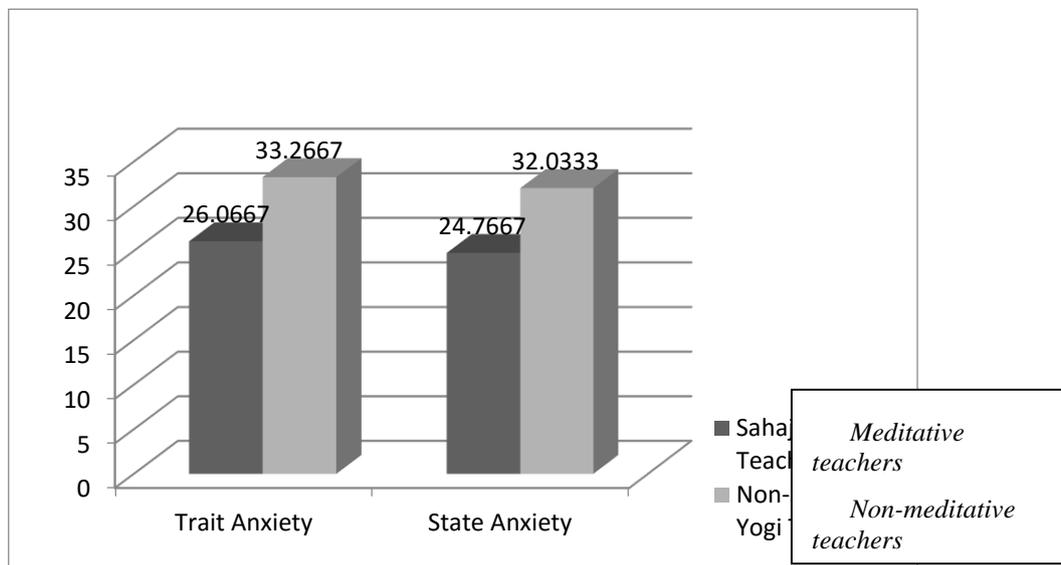


Table 6: Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

Variable	Variance	t value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		Effect size
							Lower	Upper	

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trait anxiety score	Not Equal	6.199	51.249	.000	7.20000	1.16152	4.86843	9.53157	1.60
state anxiety score	Not Equal	6.320	54.765	.000	7.26667	1.14988	4.96203	9.57130	1.63

From the above table it is clearly visible that there exist significance differences in trait and state anxiety level between non-sahaja yogia and sahja yogi teachers at 2-tailed significance level.

Trait Anxiety Level: These are the anxiety levels which are intrinsic in nature and hence quite unrealized by the respondents. Mostly found in sub-conscious level of an individual. If we observe the above table, we can notice that the scores varied for the groups (non-meditative teachers- $M= 33.26$, $SD= 3.590$; meditative teachers- $M= 26.06$, $SD= 5.251$). At an alpha of .05, the analysis indicated a statistically significant difference among the groups, $t(51.2) = 6.199$, $p = .000$, effect size = 1.60 SD. It is clearly observed that the value of effect size is higher than the value 0.8 of Cohen's d and thus, it can be deduced that non-sahaji group experiences very high trait anxiety level than sahaji teacher's group.

State Anxiety Level: On the other hand, state anxiety level is extrinsic and felt by the respondents directly. Consciously an individual could feel his/her anxiety level. Similarly the trait anxiety, state anxiety level reveals that the scores varied for the groups (non-meditative teachers- $M= 32.03$, $SD= 4.965$; meditative teachers- $M= 24.76$, $SD= 3.874$). At an alpha of .05, the analysis indicated a statistically significant difference among the groups, $t(54.7) = 6.320$, $p = .000$, effect size = 1.63 SD. It is also revealing that the effect size value is higher than the value 0.8 of Cohen's d and can be interpreted as non-sahaji group experiences very high state anxiety level than sahaji teacher's group.

Table 7: t-test for independent samples for meditation practicing (non-meditative, meditative teachers) on over all anxiety levels

Variable	Practicing Meditation	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Overall Anxiety level	non-meditative teachers	30	65.3000	7.16385	1.30793
	meditative teachers	30	50.8333	8.53020	1.55739

Figure 3: Mean of t-test for independent samples for meditation practicing (non-meditative, meditative teachers) on over all anxiety levels

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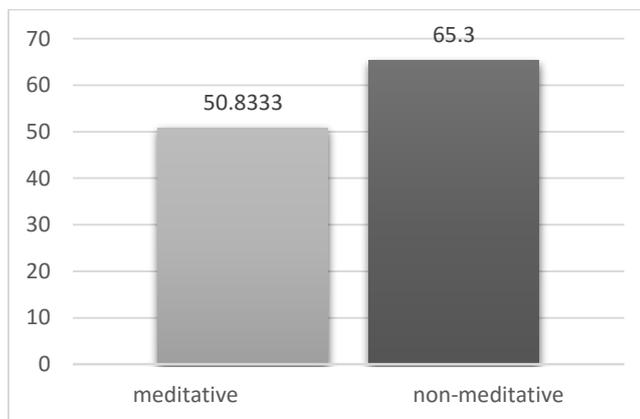


Table 8: Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

Variance	t value	Df	Sig(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		Effect size
						Lower	Upper	
Not Equal	7.113	56.318	.000	14.46667	2.03376	10.39307	18.54026	1.84

In the above table, the overall anxiety level shows that the scores varied for the groups (non-meditative teachers- $M = 65.30$, $SD = 4.965$; meditative teachers- $M = 24.76$, $SD = 7.163$). At an alpha of .05, the analysis indicated a statistically significant difference among the groups, $t(56.3) = 7.113$, $p = .000$, effect size = 1.84 SD. Here also the effect size value is higher than the value 0.8 of Cohen's d and hence interpreted as non-sahaji group experiences very high overall anxiety level than sahaji teacher's group. The reason for this difference can be, by practicing Sahaja Yoga Meditation, an individual get physical, mental and emotional balance in their life; which results in decrease in the above discussed all the dimensions of the anxiety enabling an individual feel relaxed and realistic; free from stress and anxiety. This result is also agreeing with Flook Lisa and et al, who conducted a pilot study to assess the effect of mindful meditation on stress, burn out and teaching efficacy. Their study revealed that this meditation practice has reduced significantly psychological symptoms and burn out. Similarly Gouda Saraha & et al conducted a pilot study on benefit of mindful meditation on stress reduction of school students and teachers. Their result is also coinciding with our result.

Table 9: t-test for independent samples for Gender (male, Female) on over all anxiety levels

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Overall Anxiety level	Male	35	58.5143	10.80678	1.82668

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	Female	25	57.4400	10.70467	2.14093
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Table 10: Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

Variance	t value	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Equal	.381	58	.705	1.07429	2.81885	-4.56825	6.71682

The above table reveals that the scores of the groups (male - M= 58.51, SD= 10.806; Female- M= 57.44, SD= 10.704). At an alpha of .05, the analysis indicated not a statistically significant difference exist among the groups, $t(58) = .381, p = .705$. This reveals that there is no significant difference between Male and Female teachers. As the work load is equal for both male and female teachers, the result would have come so.

Table 10: One way - ANOVA analysis Age group (35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59) on Overall Anxiety level

Age Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
35-39	14	58.0714	9.21090	2.46172	52.7532	63.3896	43.00	69.00
40-44	7	62.1429	12.82483	4.84733	50.2819	74.0038	46.00	84.00
45-49	20	55.8000	9.95040	2.22498	51.1431	60.4569	44.00	83.00
50-54	14	60.7857	11.10217	2.96718	54.3755	67.1959	44.00	75.00
55-59	5	53.8000	13.70036	6.12699	36.7888	70.8112	43.00	76.00
Total	60	58.0667	10.68639	1.37961	55.3061	60.8273	43.00	84.00

Table 11: ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	413.590	4	103.398	.899	.471
Within Groups	6324.143	55	114.984		
Total	6737.733	59			

Table 12: LSD Post Hoc, Dependent Variable: total interval

(I) age	(J) age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
35-39	40-44	-4.07143	4.96382	.416	-14.0191	5.8763

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	45-49	2.27143	3.73663	.546	-5.2169	9.7598
	50-54	-2.71429	4.05294	.506	-10.8366	5.4080
	55-59	4.27143	5.58660	.448	-6.9244	15.4672
40-44	35-39	4.07143	4.96382	.416	-5.8763	14.0191
	45-49	6.34286	4.70909	.184	-3.0944	15.7801
	50-54	1.35714	4.96382	.786	-8.5906	11.3049
	55-59	8.34286	6.27879	.189	-4.2401	20.9258
45-49	35-39	-2.27143	3.73663	.546	-9.7598	5.2169
	40-44	-6.34286	4.70909	.184	-15.7801	3.0944
	50-54	-4.98571	3.73663	.188	-12.4741	2.5027
	55-59	2.00000	5.36154	.711	-8.7448	12.7448
50-54	35-39	2.71429	4.05294	.506	-5.4080	10.8366
	40-44	-1.35714	4.96382	.786	-11.3049	8.5906
	45-49	4.98571	3.73663	.188	-2.5027	12.4741
	55-59	6.98571	5.58660	.216	-4.2101	18.1815
55-59	35-39	-4.27143	5.58660	.448	-15.4672	6.9244
	40-44	-8.34286	6.27879	.189	-20.9258	4.2401
	45-49	-2.00000	5.36154	.711	-12.7448	8.7448
	50-54	-6.98571	5.58660	.216	-18.1815	4.2101

Looking at the above table, we can interpret that the scores for the groups (35-39 – M =58.07, SD = 9.210; 40-44 – M= 62.14, SD =12.824; 45-49 – M = 55.80, SD = 9.950; 50-54 – M = 60.78, SD = 11.102; 55-59 – M = 53.80, SD = 13.700). At an alpha of .05, the analysis indicated not a statistically significant difference exist among the groups, $F(4 \text{ between the groups and } 55 \text{ within the groups}) = .899, p = .471$. This shows that there is no significant difference among the different age groups of teachers in their anxiety levels. The reason may be that all the teachers irrespective of their age get the equal work load and responsibilities in their teaching profession.

6. Conclusion

The data of the mean of the t-test on over all anxiety levels showed approx. 30% higher values of anxiety for the non-meditative teachers compared to the teachers practicing Sahaja Yoga meditation. The present study concludes that according to the findings Sahaja Yoga meditation may be a good method to deal with the anxiety levels in general and as well with state as with trait anxieties. As Sahaja Yoga Meditation practice helps the teachers to overcome their anxiety level and hence it can be used as a therapeutic technique for teachers to keep their mental health peaceful and balanced

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