

# **How Anxiety and Depression can affect the Perceptual Process of Human Life. Exploring Human Values with Nature as a Secure Base and Focussing On Healthy Life with Yoga and Meditation (An Empirical View of Himalayan Region)**

T. Shantha Kumar<sup>1\*</sup>

## **ABSTRACT**

The present study is an attempt to find out whether Yoga Intervention has any effect on State and Trait Anxiety and also on the Subjective well-being. What we have tried to express in this paper includes the nature of anxiety, depression and perception separately and through that we have explained that anxiety can be considered an important component in perceptual process, though it has always been believed as a psychological and neurological problem.

**Keywords:** *Naturopathy, Yoga, State and Trait Anxiety, Subjective Well-being*

Anxiety disorders can undertake many forms, having multiple causes, Acting together to create the neurological disorders. Psychological characteristics, Life experiences and genetic factors all have an important role to develop anxiety. What is common to all forms of anxiety disorders is an increased state of arousal or fear.

As a whole, arousal or fear is a response of the nervous system to an external stimulus, so called as the stressor in this mentioned case. So in case of anxious individuals, there is no external stressor. Some signals are activated internally in the brains which trigger the stress response. To realize how this spontaneous signals are generated, it is important to know the correspondent structures in the brain. Researches involving brain imaging technology and petrochemical techniques have indicated that the amygdale and the hippocampus have important roles in generating stress responses.

---

<sup>1</sup> M.E CSE, M.Sc (Applied Psychology), PGD (Counseling Psychology). Asst. Professor, Dept of CSE, Alpha College of Engineering, Chennai, Tamilnadu, India

[\\*Corresponding Author](#)

© 2015 | T Kumar; licensee IJIP. This is an Open Access Research distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any Medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

**How Anxiety and Depression can Affect the Perceptual Process of Human Life. Exploring Human Values with Nature as a Secure Base and Focussing On Healthy Life with Yoga and Meditation (An Empirical View of Himalayan Region)**

***Yoga – Author’s Perception.***

- Yoga is considered to be one of the most important, effective and valuable tools available for man to overcome various physical and psychological problems. According to Kuvalayananda and Vinekar (1968) yoga includes cultivation of correct attitudes and reconditioning of the neuromuscular systems.
- Yoga helps the whole body to enable it to withstand greater stress and strain. Yoga proposes healthy diet encourages the natural process of elimination, whenever it is necessary. Yoga aims at an integrated and harmonious development of all the potentialities of man. Anxiety and stress are the major problems of the modern world particularly of the youth and college going students who are losing their health and well-being.
- Good health is one of the greatest resources for vitality, creativity and wealth, in contrast to poor health and negative feelings, which lead to various physical and psychological problems.

***Anxiety – Author’s Perception.***

Anxiety is an emotional state of mind where an apprehension of danger or loss or suffering is a prominent feature. It generally as a result of apprehension of something unknown, which seems to create conflicts, tension and disturbances in the primitive urges. Spielberger (1966) has placed anxiety into two categories, i.e. State anxiety and Trait anxiety.

State anxiety is a situational, which develops on account of severe demanding situation and this does not last long; whereas Trait anxiety has deeper roots and it refers to inherent anxiety proneness developed due to defective socialization. Subjective well-being is a function of the degree of congruence between individual’s wishes, needs and his environmental demands and opportunities. Subjective defined by Diener, Eunkook, and Shigehiro (1997) as **“how people evaluate their lives”**. *From this perspective of the internal experience of the person, subjective well-being is considered to be a function of three variables: life satisfaction, lack of negative mental states and the presence of positive mood and emotion. Its components are both cognitive and affective.*

***Nature of Anxiety:***

- Anxiety is both an emotion and a cognition. Freud’s psychoanalytic theory proposed that, beginning in childhood, people repress intolerable impulses, ideas, and feelings and this submerged mental energy sometimes produces mystifying symptoms, such as anxiety. Anxiety is a part of everybody’s life. We may feel anxious, when we talk to strangers or in front of a group, look down from a tall building, face a board of interviewers, or on the first date.

**How Anxiety and Depression can Affect the Perceptual Process of Human Life. Exploring Human Values with Nature as a Secure Base and Focussing On Healthy Life with Yoga and Meditation (An Empirical View of Himalayan Region)**

- Under the circumstances our mental predisposition is filled with emotions such as fear, negative feelings of low self – esteem or lack of self – confidence. What we try to perceive thereafter, under the effect of such negative perceptual set, is bound to be skeptical. Fortunately for most of us we overcome anxiety soon after we start experiencing the situation. It might just turn out to be another normal experience stored in our memory for future reference.

But characterized by distressing persistent anxiety or maladaptive behaviors that reduce anxiety. Anxiety disorders are distinguished by the intensity of the emotion itself and the intensity of the impact of such anxieties on a person's perception of his own self and his surroundings.

1. People with generalized anxiety disorder (**GAD**) feel persistently and uncontrollably tense and apprehensive, for no apparent reason. In the more extreme panic disorder, anxiety escalates into periodic episodes of intense dread.
2. Those with a phobia may be irrationally afraid of a specific object or situation. Persistent and repetitive thoughts (obsessions) and actions (compulsions) characterize obsessive - compulsive disorder (**OCD**).
3. Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (**PTSD**) include four or more weeks of haunting memories, nightmares, social withdrawal, jumpy anxiety, and sleep problems following some traumatic and uncontrollable event.

In its own way, each of the above mentioned anxiety disorders, our perception and thereby the quality of our life. Perception is not merely a projection of the world onto our brain. Rather sensations are disassembled into information bits that the brain then reassembles into its own functional model of the external world. Our brain constructs our perception. When we know a thing, it's hard to mentally simulate what it's like not to know.

For example, when a person is attacked by a fierce dog, he could later develop a fear for all dogs. When bad events happen unpredictably and uncontrollably anxiety often develops. In one survey, 58 percent of those with social phobia experienced their disorder after a traumatic event. Once we have formed a wrong idea about reality, we have more difficulty seeing the truth.

Anxiety is most often triggered by the stress in our lives. Usually anxiety is a response to outside forces, but it is possible that we make ourselves anxious with negative self – talk: a habit of always telling ourselves the worst will happen. We may at times be obsessed with senseless or offensive thoughts that will not go away. Obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviors may interfere with everyday living and cause the person distress. The obsessive thoughts become so haunting, the compulsive rituals so senselessly time – consuming that effective functioning becomes impossible.

**How Anxiety and Depression can Affect the Perceptual Process of Human Life. Exploring Human Values with Nature as a Secure Base and Focussing On Healthy Life with Yoga and Meditation (An Empirical View of Himalayan Region)**

***Hypotheses:***

1. There will be a difference in the levels of State and Trait Anxiety before and after the practice of yoga.
2. Subjective well-being will be higher after the practice of yoga in comparison to the one after practice of the yoga.

***Subjective Well-being Inventory:***

It is a self-report questionnaire consisting of 40 items designed to measure feelings of well-being or the lack of it as experienced in various day-to-day concerns on a three point scale. The items represent 11 sub- dimensions in the structure of well-being namely- Positive effect, Expectation- achievement congruence, Confidence in coping, Transcendence,

- *Family group support,*
- *Social support,*
- *Primary group concern,*
- *Inadequate mental mastery,*
- *Perceived ill-health, and deficiency in social contacts and General well-being negative effect.*

There are various psychological factors that influence contextual performance of an employee. For an employee to think about the overall success of the organization and look beyond the task and duties assigned, a sense of attachment and feeling of oneness with the organization is of great importance. Also, feeling empowered and having a sense of control and belief in ones'' ability gives courage and confidence to face challenges and take responsibility beyond the usual. This paper explores the relationship of contextual performance with its psychological correlates i.e. work engagement, spirit at work and psychological empowerment.

An engaged worker focuses on the work performed and willingly dedicates one's self (physical, cognitive and emotional) to the work assigned. Research Says suggested that an engaged employee approaches work with a sense of self investment, passion and a lot of energy and it translates into not only high performance but high extra role behavior as well.

Engagement acts as an indicator of employees willingness to expend discretionary effort to help the organization .Individuals who invest themselves completely in their work role are likely to carry a broader conception of the role assigned and probability of their stepping out of the formal boundaries of work assigned and facilitating the organization,

## INDICATIONS OF ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

### 1) *Behavioral Signs:*

- Acting-out behaviors such as running away or temper tantrums.
- Regressive behaviors such as thumb sucking, nail biting, baby talk or curling up in fetal position
- Poor academic performance.
- Drug and/or alcohol abuse
- Self-mutilating behaviors, cutting self or hurting self in other ways
- Radical behavior change in any direction. For example, suddenly becoming a model Child or suddenly beginning to act rebellious or unruly.
- Eating disturbances
- Sleep disturbances, especially nightmares or insomnia
- Difficulty concentrating

### 2) *Emotional Signs:*

- Depressed or sad mood
- Feeling anxious in general or having fears of specific settings or circumstances,
- Perfectionism in Job Areas.
- Aggression
- Withdrawal
- Low self-esteem
- Guilt, self-blame

### 3) *Physical Signs:*

- Abdominal pain
- Genital, urethral or rectal pain, bleeding or abrasions
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Recurrent urinary tract infections
- Bed-wetting

### **Mental Health Battery (MHB):**

In order to ascertain the level of mental health status among subjects, English version of Mental Health Battery developed by **Singh and Sen Gupta (1987)** was used in the present study. Mental Health Battery intends to assess the mental health status of persons in the age range of 18-23 years, as it is a battery of six (6) tests, the mental health battery consists of 130 items which are Divided into six (6) parts.

**How Anxiety and Depression can Affect the Perceptual Process of Human Life. Exploring Human Values with Nature as a Secure Base and Focussing On Healthy Life with Yoga and Meditation (An Empirical View of Himalayan Region)**

Part I: Emotional Stability (ES)	15
Part II: Overall Adjustment (OA)	40
Part III: Autonomy (AY)	15
Part IV: Security Insecurity (SI)	15
Part V: Self-Concept (SC)	15
Part VI: Intelligence (IG)	30
Total	130

Table. 1 MHB values

**Yoga and Meditation to Overcome Anxiety disorder:**

These yoga postures can help achieve a happy and healthy mind and body. Asana’s help release tension and negativity from the system.

1. Dhanurasana (Bow Pose)
2. Matsyasana (Fish Pose)
3. Janu Shirshasana (One-Legged Forward Bend)
4. Setubandhasana (Bridge Pose)
5. Marjariasana (Cat Stretch)
6. Paschimottanasana (Two-Legged Forward Bend)
7. Hastapadasana (Standing Forward Bend)
8. Adhomukha Shwanasana (Downward Facing Dog)
9. Shirshasana (Headstand)
10. Shavasana (Corpse Pose)

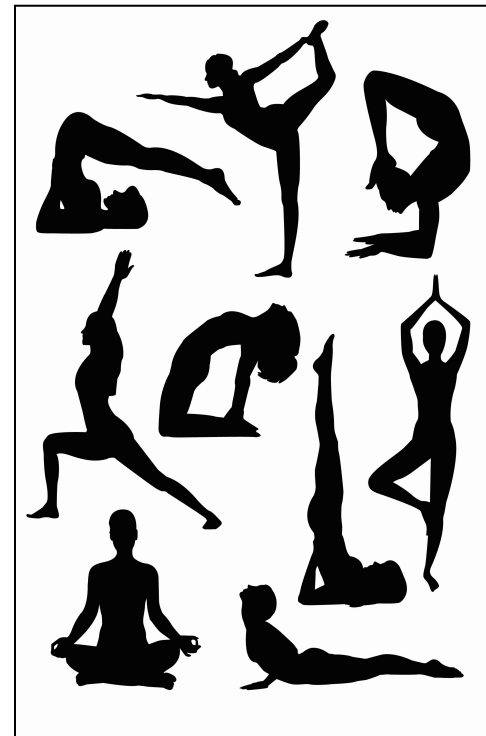


Fig. 1 Yoga Poses for Anxiety Control

**Meditate to enjoy the gift of a relaxed mind:**

Meditation can be an excellent technique to relax a distracted mind, give you a sense of calm and peace, and also observe with daily practice how your mind works to keep you involved in small, petty things around.

It can also help you not worry too much or get anxious of the unknown future. You might have often heard the term ‘adrenalin rush’. This happens when we get too anxious about a potential threat. For instance, while taking an adventure ride.

## How Anxiety and Depression can Affect the Perceptual Process of Human Life. Exploring Human Values with Nature as a Secure Base and Focussing On Healthy Life with Yoga and Meditation (An Empirical View of Himalayan Region)

At such a time, the level of adrenalin hormone goes higher, leading our heart to beat faster, making the muscles tense and our body sweat profusely. Scientific research has shown that regular meditation practice can help significantly reduce the level of this stress hormone.

Meditation is the best form of reassurance and support to keep you anxiety-free. Developing habits of daily prayer, chanting or singing (individual religion based-devotional songs) fill you with positive energy and also help still the mind. They also instill a sense of deep faith that all happens for the best and that there is a higher divine power that takes care. Moreover, make a conscious effort to smile more and more. It will instill confidence, calmness and positivity instantaneously.

### *Understand the Nature.*

- When this realization sets in that everything around us is temporary and would change, we become relaxed and settled from within. A feeling of ‘this too shall pass and not remain forever’ arises in us and frees us from anxiety. Meditation can help us see this founding principle of life.
- When you spend more time with positive-minded people, you are influenced by similar thoughts, which reflect in your overall attitude to life. Only a positive mind can breed joy, peace and relaxation.

### **Perception about Himalayas: 3 Life Lessons (Author View)**

#### ***1. Moving forward is the only logical choice.***

Trekking the Himalayas is not like walking up mountains gradually. The landscape consisted of many steep ups and downs. Going down is as demanding as going up to the base camp, so no matter how tired you are, when you are in the middle of the trek about to give up, you realized that you will have to go through the ups and downs again on your way down. In the end, moving forward is your only logical choice.

#### **Lesson 1:**

*In order to grow as a person, you have to move forward regardless of the speed. Going backward is impossible in life and staying still means you are spending your life doing nothing. While trekking, you can't just stay still unless you want wild animals to devour you as it gets darker and darker every hour. Even if you move slowly, you are way closer to the destination than standing still. The key is to move forward.*

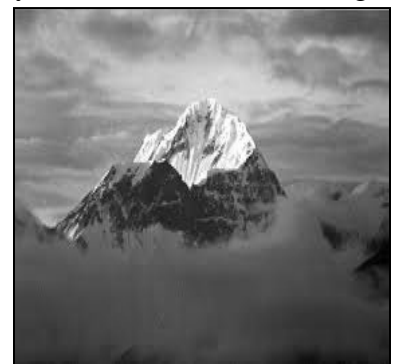


Fig. 2 Himalayan Creative Representation

#### ***2. No matter how fast/slow you go, you will reach your destination as long as you move.***

While trekking, no matter how fast or slow you are, everyone will reach the same destination. I was often the slowest trekker around but I always arrive at my destination no matter how hard it gets. I took it slow. If my body starts feeling exhausted, I rest and enjoy the view, if not, I move

**How Anxiety and Depression can Affect the Perceptual Process of Human Life. Exploring Human Values with Nature as a Secure Base and Focussing On Healthy Life with Yoga and Meditation (An Empirical View of Himalayan Region)**

forward one step at a time. There's no use in going fast when the race is a marathon. As long as you reach your goal, the speed doesn't matter.

**Lesson 2:**

*If you are planning to travel the world or starts a business, just start doing it even if it's just a small step. Start listing out countries you wanna visit or start drafting your business on paper. The key is to start taking steps toward your dreams regardless of how small that step is.*

**3. Trust is important for a meaningful life**

I have been traveling alone for a while now, and even though I have met and talk with many travelers, nothing comes close to the deep connections I had with the people I met during the trek. Trekking brings out the rarest component in people, trust. Since you are on the same boat for the rest of the trek and you will be meeting them every day from lodge to lodge. Your trust in these people tends to grow as time goes. Since human contact are rare while trekking in the forest, people are more genuine and talks from their hearts. Everyone always said hi (Namaste in this case) to each other. People encourage each other along the way and exchange pleasantries even though we don't know each other's names.

**Lesson 3:**

*The best thing you can give to people is your trust. Be open to the people you meet and your conversation will become more meaningful. As life flashed before our eyes, we often realized how little friends we had in our lives. Be more open to people, leave a positive mark in their lives and they will do the same to you.*



Fig. 3 Himalayan Creative Representation

**CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this study has validated the presence of social problem solving abilities in resilient adolescents of urban India. Perhaps fostering resilience and social problem solving abilities would ensure a mentally fit and hardy generation ahead. Anxiety disorders show the ability of the brain to create reality in the mind of human being. Perception as we mentioned above is a multiple process which can be affected by anxiety. This way we can assume factor of anxiety as a very important element which can not only play its role as a malfunction in process of perception but also, we may define it as a secondary functional thing in the whole perceptual



**How Anxiety and Depression can Affect the Perceptual Process of Human Life. Exploring Human Values with Nature as a Secure Base and Focussing On Healthy Life with Yoga and Meditation (An Empirical View of Himalayan Region)**

process. Perception is mostly considered as the primary step of cognition and it can be affected by anxiety in the brain when anxiety causes a disruption in information interpreting system of the brain.

**REFERENCES:**

- Bhushan, L. I. (2009). Yogic Lifestyle and Psychological Well-being. Paper presented as S. P. East West Psychology National Award lecture on 4 Jan. at Hyderabad.
- Desai, F., & Vyas, O. (2001). A study to determine the effectiveness of yoga, biofeedback and music therapy in management of hypertension. *The Indian Journal of Occupational Therapy*.
- Gopukumar, K., & Hussain Ali, M. Meditation – A harbinger of subjective well-being. *Journal of Personality and Clinical Studies*.(2002)
- Gupta, K., Hinger, A., Mittal, U., & Pareek, S.,(2007). Impact of yoga and naturopathy on the relationship of stress and life satisfaction; A study of patients with depression. *Nisargopachar Varta*.(2009).
- Kuvalyananda, S., & Vinekar, S. L. *Yogic Therapy, Yoga Mimamsa* , Press. In Vishal, Seward, B.L. (1999). *Managing Stress: Principles and Strategies for Health and Well- being*, Sadbury, MA : Jones and Barlet.
- Singh, and Madhu A Study of The Effect of Yogic Practices On Certain Psychological Parameters *Indian Journal of Clinical Psychology*.