

# Effectiveness of T'ai Chi Therapy on Depression

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## Abstract

Depression spikes all over the worlds, its acceptable shocking this depression is common among elderly especially in those who were in old age home. This present study aimed to conduct evaluate the effectiveness of T'ai Chitherapyin the level of depression among senior citizens. This quantitative research study was conducted at Mahatma Gandhi old age home in Puducherry. After pre-test from 54 inmates, 30 senior citizens were selected for T'ai Chi therapy by convenient sampling technique. Following the assessment 15 days of T'ai Chi therapy was administered to samples than post-test level of depression was assessed on 4th week. In pretest Most of the senior citizen (60%) had moderate level of depression and 40% of senior citizens had mild level of depression. The post-test majorities (66.6%) of the sample had no depression and 33.3% of the sample had only mild level of depression. The obtained 't' value 13.07 was statistically highly significant at <0.05 level. The tai chi was found effective in reduction of depression among elderly.

**Keywords:** Tai chi; Depression; Elderly.

## INTRODUCTION

Ageing is natural, universal, phenomenon which takes place even with the best nutrition and health care. Depression is a common problem

among older adults, Depression is nothing but that disturb the lives of the elders both mentally and physically.

According to World Health Organization 2013, Depression affects more than 350 million people of all ages, in all communities, and is a significant contributor to the global burden of disease. More than 2 million people aged 65 and older suffer from depression which includes 50% of those living in nursing homes.<sup>1</sup> Studies on residents in homes for the elderly found that 5-15% suffer from depression. It is also known that much depression among the elderly is not diagnosed by psychiatric services said by daily Science 2011.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Helen Lavretsky, University of California said Unfortunately, the anti-depressant drugs most doctors prescribe to treat depression can have

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serious side-effects in older people.<sup>3</sup> Adding up a mind-body exercise like T'ai Chi that is widely available in the community can improve the outcomes of treating depression in older adults. In an article of American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry 2011 T'ai Chi may be an effective treatment for depression in older people and it has other compelling health benefits as well.<sup>4</sup>

This present study aimed to assess the effectiveness of T'ai Chitherapy in the level of depression among senior citizens residing in a selected old age home at Puducherry.

## METHODOLOGY

The present study was adopted quantitative research approach, one group pre test and post test design. The study was conducted at Mahatma Gandhi old age home in Puducherry. The data were collected by self-structured questionnaire which has two parts. Part 1 consist of demographic characteristics of the samples whereas part 2 consisted Yessavage J.A Brink et al Geriatric Depression Scale" is a self-rated scale which includes 30 items. In the first week pre-test level of depression was assessed from 54 in mates, 30 senior citizens who fulfilled the inclusion criteria were selected for T'ai Chi therapy by convenient sampling technique. Following the assessment 15 days of T'ai Chi therapy was administered to samples. Post-test level of depression was assessed on fourth week. The data analyzed by using inferential and descriptive statistics.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Regarding demographic characteristics of the sample's majority of the samples having depression (i.e. 63.3%) were from the age group of 60-69 years, 53.3% of the samples were males, 90% of the samples were Hindu, 70% of the samples had Primary school education, 63.3% of samples were unemployed, 63.3% of samples were widow, 13.3% of the samples getting economical support from family, 50% of the samples were not getting support from any sources.

Most of the senior citizen (60%) had moderate level of depression and 40% of senior citizens had mild level of depression. This pre test findings were similar to the study Barua A, Ghosh MK et al (2011) conducted a study in patients with depressive disorders among 4,87,275 world elderly of aged 60 & above. The result shows that median prevalence rate of depressive disorders in the world for the

elderly population was about 10.3% and among the elderly Indian population was about 21.9%. It concluded that there was a significantly higher rate of depression among Indians in recent years than the rest of the world.<sup>5</sup>

The post-test majorities (66.6%) of the sample had no depression and 33.3% of the sample had only mild level of depression. The overall mean of senior citizens was 17.06 with standard deviation of 3.8 on the assessment day and the mean was 9.0 with standard deviation of 2.7 on the evaluation day. The obtained 't' value 13.07 was statistically highly significant at <0.05 level. These findings supported to Bannuru R et al (2010) conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis of Tai Chi effects on Depression and Mood disturbances in eastern and western populations. The result revealed that Tai Chi significantly reduced the Depression level (ES, 0.56; 95% CI, 0.31 to 0.80). It was concluded the Tai Chi appeared to be associated with improvements in psychological well-being. This results clearly state that tai chai was effective in control of depression among elderly.<sup>6</sup>

There was no statistically significant association between the pre-test level of depression and the selected demographic variables such as age, gender, education, pre-retirement employment status, marital status, religion, support group, and source of income of the senior citizens.

## CONCLUSION

Most of the people residing in the old age home suffered from either mild or moderate depression. T'ai Chi therapy was effective in reducing level of depression among the senior citizens in the old age homes. Since there was no association between the pretest level of depression and demographic variables, it indicates that T'ai Chi therapy can be administered to all the groups of senior citizens in reducing the level of depression.

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