

Objective

To examine the relationship between meditation practice and quality of life among currently enrolled college students at UCSD.

Background

- In a quantitative 2019 undergraduate survey regarding overall health, less than half of students admitted to having very good or excellent health.¹
- Having a lower affect component of subjective well-being is highly associated with experiencing neuroticism or emotional distress.²
- Mindfulness based approaches reduce the amount of stress, anxiety, and depression in students.³

Materials & Methods

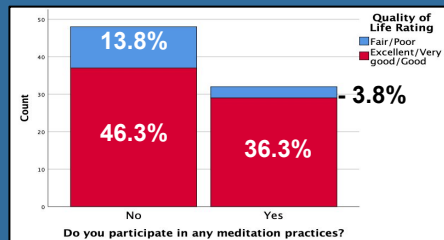
- We conducted a research study with current UC San Diego students (n=81) using descriptive data analysis through an online quantitative survey.
- Distribution: Emailed to Public Health students through BSPH advisors and shared on UCSD-affiliated Facebook groups.
- Time Frame: mid-April to mid-May 2020
- Survey questions consisted of participants' general demographic, meditation practices, and perceived quality of life.

Results

Demographic Chart: Organized participants' characteristics by age, gender, and grade.

| Year | Gender | | | | Age | | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| | Female | Male | Non-Binary | Total | 17-19 years | 20-22 years | 23-25 years | >25 years | Total |
| 1st year undergraduate | 8 | 3 | 1 | 12 (14.8%) | 11 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 12 (14.8%) |
| 2nd year undergraduate | 5 | 8 | 0 | 13 (16%) | 4 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 13 (16%) |
| 3rd year undergraduate | 11 | 2 | 0 | 13 (16%) | 0 | 11 | 1 | 1 | 13 (16%) |
| 4th year undergraduate | 29 | 7 | 1 | 37 (45.7%) | 0 | 36 | 0 | 1 | 37 (45.7%) |
| 5th year undergraduate | 3 | 2 | 0 | 5 (6.2%) | 0 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 (6.2%) |
| Graduate | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 (1.2%) | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 (1.2%) |
| Total | 57 (70.4%) | 22 (27.2%) | 2 (2.5%) | 81 (100%) | 15 (18.5%) | 59 (72.8%) | 4 (4.9%) | 3 (3.7%) | 81 (100%) |

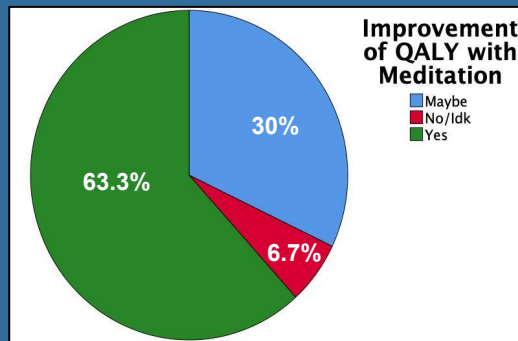
Figure 1 Crosstab Between Meditation Participation and Quality of Life: Chi square test results revealed there was no association between participating in meditation and perceived quality of life (p=.118)



Student Opinions On the Impact of Meditation on QALY

- "By practicing meditation, one can foster greater inner calmness and live in a more aware fashion."
- "A positive impact, as it may help an individual practice being calm and peaceful during stressful times or during an anxiety or mental breakdown."

Figure 2 Participants' Meditation Perceptions: UCSD student responses when asked if practicing meditation improves quality of life.



Conclusion

While our data found no association between practicing meditation and improved quality of life, the majority of respondents' perceived attitudes support that meditation can potentially enhance an individual's quality of life.

Policy Implications

- Meditation resources should be more readily accessible and affordable to UCSD students to improve their quality of life.
- Better meditation awareness in the UCSD community can increase exposure of meditation practices.

References

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- Well-Being Concepts | HRQL | CDC. (2018, 2018-11-05T01:24:58Z/).
- González-Valero, G., Zurita-Ortega, F., Ubago-Jiménez, J. L., & Puertas-Molero, P. (2019, 11). Use of Meditation and Cognitive Behavioral Therapies for the Treatment of Stress, Depression and Anxiety in Students. A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. Int J Environ Res Public Health, 16(22).

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