



HOW ADVANCED MEDITATION VIPASSANA SHAPES PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAITS- A CORRELATIONAL ANALYSIS

Isha Patwa¹, Dr. Vivek Maheshwari²

Lakulish Yoga University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

ABSTRACT :

This study explores the relationships between aggression, ego control, greed, mindfulness, and forgiveness among non-meditators (NM), short-term Vipassana meditators (SM), and long-term Vipassana meditators (LM) using Pearson's correlation. The findings reveal that sustained Vipassana practice significantly enhances the integration of psychological traits, promoting mindfulness and forgiveness while reducing aggression, greed, and ego. Strong correlations among these parameters suggest that meditation fosters a cohesive psychological framework.

Keywords: Vipassana, aggression, ego control, greed, mindfulness, forgiveness.

INTRODUCTION :

Vipassana meditation is a sophisticated yogic technique renowned for its profound impact on psychological well-being. Rooted in ancient Buddhist traditions, it is a mindfulness-based practice that cultivates self-awareness and deep insight into the nature of thoughts and emotions (Davidson & McEwen, 2012; Keng et al., 2011; Singh et al., 2007). Extensive research has demonstrated the potential of mindfulness practices to enhance emotional regulation, alleviate stress, and promote interpersonal harmony (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Walsh & Shapiro, 2006). Despite the increasing focus on mindfulness, there is a pressing need to explore the intricate interconnections among key psychological traits such as aggression, ego control, greed, mindfulness, and forgiveness. This study bridges that gap by utilizing Pearson's correlation to analyze the relationships between these traits across varying levels of meditation experience. By comparing non-meditators (NM), short-term meditators (SM), and long-term meditators (LM), the research seeks to reveal the cumulative benefits of sustained Vipassana practice and its role in fostering psychological integration.

METHOD :

- **Participants and Sampling** The study included 1,013 participants categorized into three groups: NM, SM and LM. Participants were selected based on specific inclusion criteria and willingness to participate in psychological assessments. To ensure consistency, 239 participants from each group were included in the analysis.
- **Measures** Psychological traits were assessed using internationally standardized instruments validated in prior researches. The Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire, Ego Under Control Scale, Heintzelman Greed Scale, Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire-15 and Heartland Forgiveness Scale were used to ensure comprehensive coverage of the traits.
- **Procedure** Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated for each group to assess the relationships between the psychological parameters. Correlation coefficients (r-values) were categorized as follows: weak ($|r| < 0.3$), moderate ($0.3 \leq |r| < 0.5$), strong ($0.5 \leq |r| < 0.7$), and very strong ($|r| \geq 0.7$). Statistical significance was determined at $p < 0.01$ to ensure the robustness of findings.

RESULTS :

PEARSON'S CORRELATION- INTRA GROUP- ALL PARAMETERS			
PARAMETERS	NM (r-value)	SM (r-value)	LM (r-value)
AGGRESSION : EGO CONTROL	0.114	-0.040	0.678 **
AGGRESSION : GREED	0.392	0.749 **	0.968 ***
AGGRESSION : MINDFULNESS	-0.598 *	-0.877 ***	-0.957 ***
AGGRESSION : FORGIVENESS	-0.173	-0.878 ***	-0.925 ***

EGO CONTROL : GREED	0.021	-0.005	0.705 **
EGO CONTROL : MINDFULNESS	-0.143	0.009	-0.778 **
EGO CONTROL : FORGIVENESS	-0.055	0.008	-0.724 **
GREED : MINDFULNESS	-0.204	-0.870 ***	-0.939 ***
GREED : FORGIVENESS	-0.256	-0.722 **	-0.956 ***
MINDFULNESS : FORGIVENESS	0.031	0.833 ***	0.952 ***

➤ **Non-Meditators (NM)**

- **Key Findings:** Aggression exhibited a moderate negative correlation with mindfulness ($r = -0.598$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that individuals with higher aggression scores tend to have lower levels of mindfulness. However, other correlations were irrelevant.
- **Interpretation:** The weak interrelationships among psychological traits in NM indicate a fragmented psychological structure, with minimal integration of emotional and behavioral traits.

➤ **Short-Term Meditators (SM)**

- **Key Findings:**
 - ✓ Aggression showed very strong negative correlations with mindfulness ($r = -0.877$, $p < 0.01$) and forgiveness ($r = -0.878$, $p < 0.01$) suggesting that even limited exposure to Vipassana meditation enhances mindfulness and forgiveness, which in turn reduce aggressive tendencies.
 - ✓ A strong positive correlation was observed between aggression and greed ($r = 0.749$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that decrease in aggression due to Vipassana also leads to reduction in greed.
 - ✓ Mindfulness and forgiveness demonstrated a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.833$, $p < 0.01$), highlighting their interconnected role in fostering emotional balance with sustained Vipassana practice.
- **Interpretation:** These results reflect the early psychological benefits of meditation, where mindfulness and forgiveness begin to counteract negative traits such as aggression and greed.

➤ **Long-Term Meditators (LM)**

- **Key Findings:**
 - ✓ Aggression displayed very strong negative correlations with mindfulness ($r = -0.957$, $p < 0.01$) and forgiveness ($r = -0.925$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that sustained meditation practice significantly mitigates aggressive tendencies through enhanced emotional regulation.
 - ✓ Aggression and greed were very strongly positively correlated ($r = 0.968$, $p < 0.01$), emphasizing that reduction in any one of them due to long Vipassana practice, contributes greatly in the decrease of the other negative trait as well.
 - ✓ Mindfulness and forgiveness showed a highly positive correlation ($r = 0.952$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that long-term meditation fosters deeper integration of these positive traits.
 - ✓ Strong negative correlations were noted between ego control and mindfulness ($r = -0.778$, $p < 0.01$) and between ego control and forgiveness ($r = -0.724$, $p < 0.01$), highlighting the ability to balance the ego as the two positive traits increase with continuous Vipassana practice.
- **Interpretation:** The pronounced correlations in LM underscore the transformative potential of sustained Vipassana practice in fostering psychological integration and reducing negative traits.

DISCUSSION :

This study highlights the significant influence of Vipassana meditation on the interconnectedness of essential psychological traits. Among non-meditators, correlations between these traits were minimal or absent, suggesting a lack of integration in the absence of meditation practice. In contrast, short-term meditators displayed more robust correlations, indicating that even limited exposure to Vipassana supports the integration of psychological traits. The strongest effects were evident in long-term meditators, where consistent practice led to marked improvements in mindfulness and forgiveness, as well as notable reductions in aggression, ego-driven tendencies, and greed.

The strong negative correlations between aggression and both mindfulness and forgiveness in meditators align with prior research, suggesting that meditation fosters emotional regulation and reduces impulsivity (Davidson & McEwen, 2012; Hölzel et al., 2011; Kabat-Zinn, 1990). The positive correlations between mindfulness and forgiveness highlight their mutual reinforcement in promoting empathy, compassion, and emotional resilience (Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Shapiro et al., 2008). Additionally, the inverse relationships between ego control and positive traits such as mindfulness and forgiveness in long-term meditators suggest a shift away from rigid self-regulation toward greater psychological flexibility and acceptance.

These findings hold significant promise for therapeutic applications. The gradual benefits associated with varying durations of meditation practice suggest that Vipassana may be a powerful approach for managing negative emotions and cultivating positive psychological qualities. Future studies should delve into the underlying mechanisms driving these effects and examine their applicability across different populations and cultural contexts to ensure broader relevance and impact.

CONCLUSION :

This research offers strong evidence that Vipassana meditation fosters the harmonious development of psychological traits by enhancing mindfulness and forgiveness while reducing aggression, greed, and ego-driven behavior. The gradual intensification of correlations observed among non-meditators, short-term meditators, and long-term meditators illustrates the accumulating advantages of consistent meditation practice. These results emphasize the transformative potential of Vipassana in promoting mental well-being and cultivating emotional stability.

REFERENCES :

- Baer, R. A., Smith, G. T., Hopkins, J., Krietemeyer, J., & Toney, L. (2006). Using self-report assessment methods to explore facets of mindfulness. *Assessment, 13*(1), 27-45.
- Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2003). The benefits of being present: Mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 84*(4), 822-848.
- Buss, A. H., & Perry, M. (1992). The aggression questionnaire. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 63*(3), 452-459.
- Davidson, R. J., & McEwen, B. S. (2012). Social influences on neuroplasticity: Stress and interventions to promote well-being. *Nature Neuroscience, 15*(5), 689-695.
- Hölzel, B. K., Carmody, J., Vangel, M., Congleton, C., Yerramsetti, S. M., Gard, T., & Lazar, S. W. (2011). Mindfulness practice leads to increases in regional brain gray matter density. *Psychiatry Research: Neuroimaging, 191*(1), 36-43.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). *Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness*. Delta.
- Keng, S. L., Smoski, M. J., & Robins, C. J. (2011). Effects of mindfulness on psychological health: A review of empirical studies. *Clinical Psychology Review, 31*(6), 1041-1056.
- Shapiro, S. L., Carlson, L. E., Astin, J. A., & Freedman, B. (2006). Mechanisms of mindfulness. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 62*(3), 373-386.
- Singh, N. N., Lancioni, G. E., Winton, A. S. W., Singh, J., Curtis, W. J., Wahler, R. G., & Sabaawi, M. (2007). Mindful parenting decreases aggression, noncompliance, and self-injury in children with autism. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 15*(3), 169-183.
- Walsh, R., & Shapiro, S. L. (2006). The meeting of meditative disciplines and Western psychology: A mutually enriching dialogue. *American Psychologist, 61*(3), 227-239.