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## Study on psychological wellbeing between followers of Sri Aurobindo and others

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### Abstract

Mental health is the state of well-being and the psychological well-being refers to how people evaluate their lives. The present study was intended to compare psychological wellbeing between followers of Sri Aurobindo and others. Sixty adults volunteered for the study. They were divided into two groups – followers of Sri Aurobindo and others. Their psychological wellbeing was tested with the Mental Health Inventory Questionnaire. All the responses were then converted into scores following the scoring guidelines. T –test was used to compare the result. The level of significance was set at 0.05 level. Apparently there were some mean differences in concerned items and sub scales but these are not significant.

**Keywords:** Mental Health, Psychological well-being, Sri Aurobindo.

### Introduction

We all are aware regarding various application of yoga, both physically and mentally. Research has also been going on worldwide. Apart from *astanga yog*, Sri Aurobindo introduced integral yoga which includes the five aspects of the human being - physical, vital, mental, psychic, and the spiritual aspects. The integral yoga is the way of a complete God-realisation, a complete Self-realisation, a complete fulfillment of our being and consciousness, a complete transformation of our nature - and this implies a complete perfection of life here and not only a return to an eternal perfection elsewhere <sup>[1]</sup>.

Sri Aurobindo established an ashram in Pondicherry. Gradually his followers established such type of ashram in different places. They assemble together, discuss, practice and follow the lessons what *Rishi* Aurobindo set down.

Mental health is the state of well-being. The psychological well-being refers to how people evaluate their lives. It encompasses specially some variables, such as positive affect, emotional ties and life satisfaction. Positive affect is one aspect of pleasurable and positive experience. Although positive affect overlaps to a significant degree with the concept of positive emotions, they are not identical. Positive affect is more closely related to mood states whereas positive emotions involve positive feelings as well as characteristic patterns of physiological arousal, thoughts, and behaviors <sup>[2]</sup>. An emotional tie is a bonding among people having connected with each other. It can stretch or relax as our emotional thoughts act. Life satisfaction is the way persons evaluate their lives and how they feel about where they are going in the future. It is a measure of well-being and may be assessed in terms of mood, satisfaction with relations with others and with achieved goals, self-concepts, and self-perceived ability to cope with daily life <sup>[3]</sup>.

It is expected that the mental aspect of the followers of Sri Aurobindo is better than that of the other general people as a result of following Sri Aurobindo. On the basis of that perception, the present study was selected.

### Methodology

#### Sample

Thirty followers (members) of Sri Aurobindo from different asrams and thirty other adult people were considered as subject for the present study.

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**Criterion Measured**

The psychological wellbeing is comprised of three subscales i) General Positive Affect, ii) Emotional Ties and iii) Life Satisfaction.

**Used tool and data collection**

The subjects were given to response against a set of Mental Health Inventory Questionnaire on psychological wellbeing comprising of three subscales as mentioned. All the responses were then converted into scores following the scoring

guidelines [7].

**Statistics for Analyzing Data**

For this study, mean, standard deviation, and paired t-tests were calculated by statistical software (Mini Tab). The level of significance was set at the 0.05 for this study.

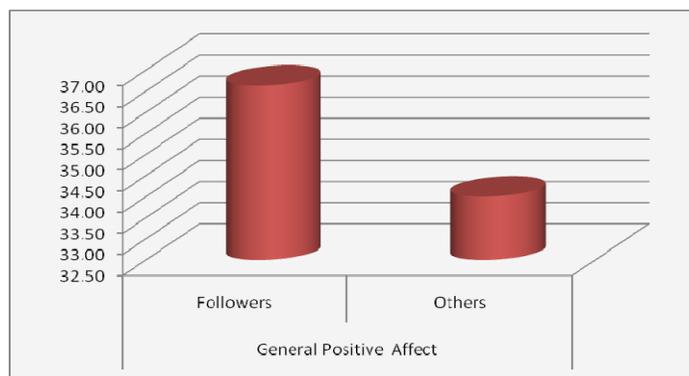
**Results and Discussions**

**General Positive Affect**

**Table 1:** Mean with SD, SE Mean, T-Value and P-Value of General Positive Affect

Variable	Groups	Range	Mean ± SD	T-Value	P-Value
General Positive Affect	Followers	10-60	36.63 ± 6.22	1.78	0.040 *
	Others		34.00 ± 5.19		

\*Significant at 0.05 level



**Fig 1:** General Positive Affect

From the table 1, it is found that there is a significant difference (T-Value = 1.78,  $P < 0.05$ ) in General Positive Affect between the followers of Sri Aurobindo and others. The first group scored more than 60% where the second group scored 56.66%.

Positive affect reflects an individual’s experience of positive moods such as joy, interest, and alertness. Positive affect marks or signals current health and well-being [4, 5]; the

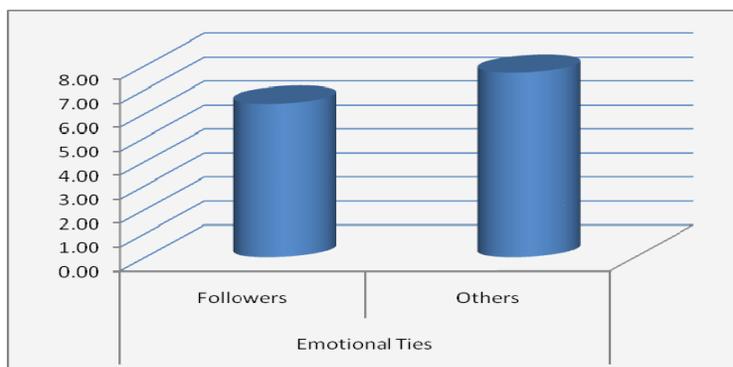
broaden-and-build theory goes further to suggest that positive affect also produces future health and well-being [6]. All the disciples of Sri Aurobindo believe in the fact that ‘man is a transitional being’ and ‘becoming’ is the aim. This thought may help them to grow positivity.

**Emotional Ties**

**Table 2:** Mean with SD, SE Mean, T-Value and P-Value of Emotional Ties

Variable	Groups	Range	Mean ± SD	T-Value	P-Value
Emotional Ties	Followers	2-h12	6.40 ± 1.61	-3.32	0.999 NS
	Others		7.70 ± 1.42		

NS = Not Significant



**Fig 2:** Emotional Ties

Table 2 shows that there is no significant difference in Emotional Ties (T-Value = -3.32,  $P > 0.05$ ) between the followers of Sri Aurobindo and others. Here the second group

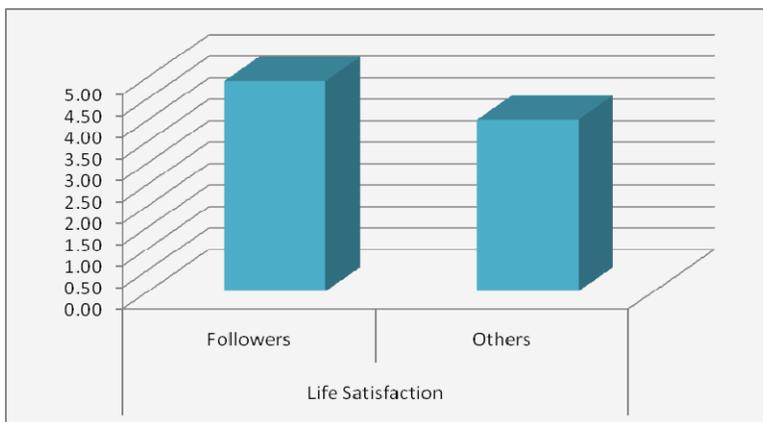
scored higher. This may affect on the result. The spiritual belief may reduce human bonding in the followers of Sri Aurobindo.

**Life Satisfaction**

**Table 3:** Mean with SD, SE Mean, T-Value and P-Value of Life Satisfaction

Variable	Groups	Range	Mean ± SD	T-Value	P-Value
Life Satisfaction	Followers	1-6	4.900 ± 0.759	4.64	0.000 *
	Others		4.000 ± 0.743		

\*Significant at 0.05 level



**Fig 3:** Life Satisfaction

From the table 3, it is clear that there is a significant difference (T-Value = 4.64,  $P < 0.05$ ) in Life Satisfaction between the followers of Sri Aurobindo and others. Here the first group scored 81.66% where the second group scored 66.66%.

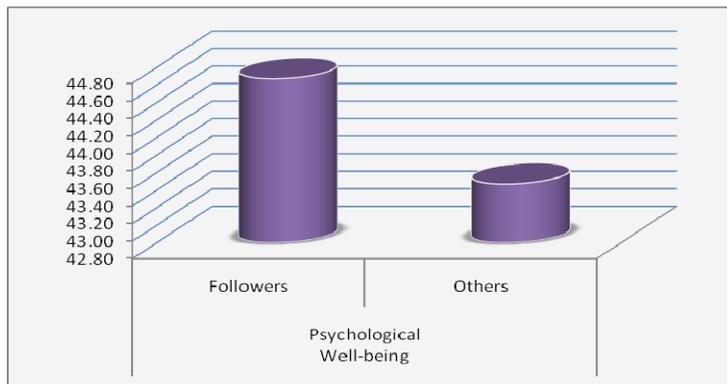
Following and practicing integral yoga may increase life satisfaction among the disciples.

**Psychological Wellbeing**

**Table 4:** Mean with SD, SE Mean, T-Value and P-Value of Psychological Well-being

Variable	Groups	Range	Mean ± SD	T-Value	P-Value
Psychological Wellbeing	Followers	14-84	44.67 ± 6.09	0.86	0.197 NS
	Others		43.47 ± 4.64		

NS = Not Significant



**Fig 4:** Psychological Well-being

Table 4 shows that the difference in Psychological Well-being between the followers of Sri Aurobindo and others is not significant (T-Value = 0.86,  $P > 0.05$ ). The figure shows a difference but that is not so much so as to be significant.

The Psychological Well-being is the sum of all the scores of General Positive Affect, Emotional Ties and Life Satisfaction. The difference were significant in General Positive Affect and Life Satisfaction but not in the case of Emotional Ties. This may affect on the result of overall Psychological Well-being.

1. General Positive Affect of the followers of Sri Aurobindo is higher than that of the other general people.
2. The difference in Emotional Ties between the followers of Sri Aurobindo and others is not significant.
3. Life Satisfaction among the followers of Sri Aurobindo is significantly higher than other people.
4. Overall Psychological Wellbeing of the followers of Sri Aurobindo is not significantly higher.

**Conclusions**

On the basis of the results mentioned above, it can be concluded that

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Sri Aurobindo has been widely acclaimed as a modern seer and a Vedic scholar. He had headed the first National College of Education of Calcutta and had written extensively on the subject of education. His approach to 'Integral education' is in itself a unique concept. Education of the body, mind and spirit are each expounded in his writings on education, but their integration is even more significant. He has also dwelt on the social and psychological aspects of education. His thought has been put to practice at Sri Aurobindo Ashram's educational programmes. The Auroville and several other schools of the country. "The first principle of teaching is that nothing can be taught". The present study was intended to compare psychological wellbeing between followers of Sri Aurobindo and others. Sixty adults volunteered for the study. They were divided into two groups " followers of Sri Aurobindo and others. Their psychological wellbeing was tested with the Mental Health Inventory Questionnaire. Methodology Sample Thirty followers (members) of Sri Aurobindo from different asrams and thirty other adult people were considered as subject for the present study. ~ 86 ~. International Journal of Physical Education, Sports and Health. Criterion Measured The psychological wellbeing is comprised of three subscales i) General Positive Affect, ii) Emotional Ties and iii) Life Satisfaction. It was wrongly thought that India was reluctant to use psychology as a separate study. But this presumption is certainly not true. It is certainly true that psychology in India as elsewhere was not a separate science, but was centred on religion and philosophy; and, so, psychology was intimately connected with all of the above. Perhaps the intimate relation of psychology with that of religion and philosophy in India is the main cause of this misconception. To them, there is no separate existence of self other than body. Self-consciousness is an emergent property of the body itself. Body is perceptible, not soul. In the second interpretation Sri Aurobindo showed that soul and mind are basically two separate entities. Thus they should not be confused together. This article provides an overview of Sri Aurobindo's psychological thought and system of Integral Yoga Psychology (IYP). Relevant biographical and historical background is introduced, and his influence on the development of transpersonal psychology reviewed. Using Sri Aurobindo's cosmology of consciousness as a framework for transpersonal experience, IYP's model of planes of consciousness and parts of the being is explained and illustrated with quotations from Sri Aurobindo's writings. Emphasis is placed on the psychic being (soul) and overhead planes of consciousness, as these are central to IYP's psycho-spiritual method of transforming the ego. Psychological wellbeing has two important facets. The first of these refers to the extent to which people experience positive emotions and feelings of happiness. Sometimes this aspect of psychological wellbeing is referred to as subjective wellbeing (Diener, 2000). Subjective wellbeing is a necessary part of overall psychological wellbeing but on its own it is not enough. To see why this is so, imagine being somewhere that you really enjoy, perhaps sitting on a yacht in the sunshine, with your favourite food and drink and some good company " or alone if that's how you'd prefer it!