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## COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE STATUS OF MENTAL WELL-BEING AMONG HEALTH PERSONNEL WHO REGULARLY MEDITATE AND THOSE WHO DO NOT

Gunathunga M.W.<sup>1</sup>, Gunathunga C.K.<sup>2</sup>, Jayakody J.A.D.S.O.<sup>3\*</sup> and Munugoda I.P.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

<sup>2</sup>Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka

<sup>3</sup>Department of Physiotherapy, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka

<sup>4</sup>Allied Health Sciences Unit, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

s.oshadhil@gmail.com

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### ABSTRACT

Mental well-being is crucial for physical and social well-being of an individual. Different forms of meditation have long been recognized as key approaches in improving mental well-being. To determine the difference in the status of mental well-being and level of depression between regular meditators and non-meditators. A total of 150 health care personnel participated in a three-month introductory meditation programme which included a method of body scan, concentration, letting go and insight. Six months later, a descriptive comparative study was done to determine the status of mental well-being between regular meditators and non-meditators. Main outcome measures, levels of mental well-being and depression were evaluated using Primary Mental Health Questionnaire (PMHQ) and Centre for Epidemiological Studies- Depression scale (CES-D) respectively. Independent sample T- Test and Wilcoxon Rank Sum Test were performed to determine the differences. Regular meditators were observed to have higher PMHQ scores ( $p=0.001$ ) indicating higher levels of mental wellbeing and satisfaction ( $p=0.004$ ). Though there was improvement in compassion and reduction of worries those failed to achieve statistical significance. Meditators were found to have lower CES-D scores ( $p=0.001$ ) indicating lower levels of depression. Age and occupation was matched for, hence, results were not confounded by those variables. Meditation is effective in improving mental well-being and reducing depression of health care personnel and these findings may represent important implications for the overall well-being and job performance of the individuals.

**Keywords:** Mental well-being, Meditation, Health care personnel, Level of depression