ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE: To investigate the anxiolytic effects of classical five element acupuncture in comparison to western acupuncture among B.N.Y.S medical students appearing basic science subjects during the 1st year university exams.

BACKGROUND: Exam related anxiety is one of the most commonly suffered problems among medical students reported by many authors. Several studies show that medical students have marked undue stress prior to and during examination. Further, it has also shown to impair memory, concentration, decision making, learning and is associated with lower academic performance.

In acupuncture, there are limited studies on its efficacy on pre-exam anxiety. Moreover most papers are based on auricular acupuncture. My study compares the efficacy of classical five element acupuncture and western acupuncture.

DESIGN AND METHOD: 60 student subjects were randomized Using computerized number generation method into Group A (Five element; N = 30) and Group B (Western; N= 30) on 1:1 ratio. The Subjects of Group A and Group B received their respective treatment one day prior the university exam. Data was collected before and after treatment using 30 Point- VAS scale for anxiety and STAI Y-6 questionnaire along with BP and HR parameters.
**RESULTS:** Primary outcome: Intensity of anxiety showed statistically significant reduction in both Groups (P<0.001). However on observing t value Group A showed better improvement than Group B.

Secondary outcome: Physiological parameters also showed significant changes in both groups. However on observation of their mean, t value and SD betterment was in Group A than Group B.

**CONCLUSION:** This trial suggested that both Classical Five Element acupuncture and Western Acupuncture are better in reducing pre-exam anxiety.

**KEY WORDS:** Exam anxiety, five element acupuncture, western acupuncture, VAS-A, STAI