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Brahmi for the better? New findings challenging cognition and anti-anxiety effects of Brahmi (*Bacopa monniera*) in healthy adults.

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Abstract

RATIONALE: A number of studies have indicated positive effects of long-term administration (3 months) of *Bacopa monniera* (Brahmi) on various cognitive functions especially memory and anxiety. However, inconsistent results in literature may be linked to various methodological issues.

OBJECTIVE: The present study aimed to test the chronic effects (12 weeks) of 450 mg of a *B. monniera* (Brahmi) extract on learning and memory, information processing and anxiety in healthy adult Indian population.

METHODS: The study design was a randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled parallel design. Participants comprised of 72 healthy urban adults, both men and women, in the age range of 35-60 years who were educated and English speaking with basic knowledge of computers from Bangalore. The outcome measures included verbal learning and memory, inspection time, attention and interference. State and trait anxiety were additional outcome variables.

RESULTS: In the present study, there were no significant differences between the two groups on any of the cognitive measures. However, there was a trend for lower state anxiety in the *B. monniera* (Brahmi) group as compared to placebo group.

CONCLUSIONS: The current study attempted to determine the chronic effects of single daily dose of 450 mg of Brahmi extract on cognitive performance and anxiety in healthy adults. The results of the current study are not in agreement with findings of some of the earlier studies which have found improvement both on cognitive parameters and a reduction of anxiety scores.

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