Self-Reiki for Stress Reduction: A Mixed-Methods Study on College Students' Well-Being

Kiki Hocking, Non-faculty Reiki Practitioner, Sofia University

Objective: This study investigated the effects of self-Reiki on stress and well-being in college students. Reiki, a biofield complementary therapy within integrative medicine, has been shown to promote relaxation and reduce stress. While Reiki research is expanding, studies on self-directed Reiki remain limited. With increasing stress levels among college students and its impact on mental and physical health, exploring accessible, non-pharmacological interventions is crucial.

Participants: Thirty-six college students (ages 18–35) were randomly assigned to an intervention group (n = 18), which practiced self-Reiki for 10 minutes daily, or a crossover control group (n = 18), which read health articles before transitioning to self-Reiki at Week 4.

Methods: A convergent mixed-methods design integrated quantitative and qualitative data. Stress was assessed using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10) and General Well-Being Schedule (GWB) before and after the 4-week intervention. Thematic analysis of participant journals provided additional insights.

Results: Statistical analysis showed significant stress reduction in the intervention group from Baseline to Week 4 ($p = 0.0001$) and improvements in the control group after transitioning to self-Reiki ($p = 0.0005$). Likewise, well-being scores significantly increased in the intervention group ($p = 0.001$) and later in the control group ($p = 0.0023$) post-crossover. Qualitative findings revealed enhanced emotional regulation, increased self-awareness, and improved resilience.

Conclusions: These findings suggest that self-Reiki is a promising, easily implementable, and accessible stress mitigation tool for college students. As a self-directed biofield therapy, it holds potential for integration into university wellness programs to support mental health and well-being.