



Pranic energy sensations experienced by Indian adolescents: A cross-sectional study

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Prana is the universal principle of energy or life-force, essential for survival. This vital energy can be felt by almost anybody with guidance and training. Objectives: The present study seeks to assess the extent of sensations during perceiving the *pranic* energy between hands. The sample consists of 237 National Cadets Corps (NCC) students from northern, southern, eastern and western states of India, with a mean age of 18.0 years. Cross-sectional research design was used in this study. The experiment on *prana* involves experiencing the *prana* between the hands. After the experiment on *prana*, participants were instructed to measure the extent of sensations experienced by them and mark on the centimetres level given against each sensation in the questionnaire. The results were analysed using Pearson chi-square and contingency coefficient analysis. There were significant differences observed between participant's ratings on each *pranic* energy sensation ranges from 0 to 30 cm. Participants rated their sensations on cm given, in which the majority of the ratings concentrated more in 1-10 cm and least rating found in 30 cm or more. Participants from different states, irrespective of their region, found alike in perceiving the extent of *pranic* energy sensations. Experiencing the *prana* between the hands led the participants to feel and quantify the *pranic* energy through felt sensations. This study provides the fundamentals of a scientific foundation for understanding the vital energy more concretely. Further theoretical and experimental research is needed to refine and standardize the measurements of life energy.

Keywords: Chi, Life energy, Pranic Healing, Subtle energy

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Until recently, the western world largely ignored the Eastern understanding of humans as energy beings¹. However, a considerable body of evidence has made clear that the existence of bio energies that are not recognised in conventional science.^{2,3} There is the existence of a subtle energy body which is closely associated with, but separate from, the physical body and it is more 'gross' and explained as the electromagnetic field⁴. The notion of universal energy that stands in humans as an "energetic body" has been invoked as an explanation for paranormal phenomena⁵. The important difference between traditional and modern views of the vital force is that the energy field rests on physical principles and can be measured, whereas the traditional concepts remain metaphysical⁶.

Although science is not able to detect and measure life energy or *prana*, it does not mean that *prana* does

not exist or does not affect the health and well-being of the body. The *chi* or *prana* is the fundamental agent of the universe, the subtle energy, existing everywhere. It makes up material objects and is also the waveform that accounts for how objects interact. There is a force in the world that makes things happen⁷. For life to exist, the body must have *prana*, *chi* or life energy⁸. Scientifically, the kind of energy, too, which the masters were referring has become known as external energy, on the other hand, the internal energy is the energy that flows within the body and is vital to life. All of us have that, as do animals and plants.⁷ *Prana* is also called bioplasmic energy. Just as the visible physical body has blood vessels through which the blood flows, the bioplasmic body has fine invisible bioplasmic channels or meridians through which *ki* and bioplasmic matter flow to be distributed all over the body⁸.

It's an energy field that permeates the universe, is the basis for paranormal phenomena and alternative

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forms of healing. It is our connection with the higher planes of consciousness, the great beyond the fundamental quantum reality that makes up the world. According to the researchers, the existence of *chi* proved scientifically and *prana* is the mechanism behind such psychic phenomena a psychokinetic and extrasensory perception as well as the amazing claims of cures for various diseases. However, those who practice energy healing have never doubted *chi*. They know it is true for simplest of reasons: they can feel it⁷. Various complementary healing or traditional healing forms such as *Tai-chi*, *Reiki* and *Pranic Healing* have *chi* or *prana* as the fundamental principle on which physical or emotional ailments are alleviated. There is a way however to understand *prana* and our energetic anatomy through sensitizing our hand chakras, which are located in the centre of the palm, to feel the energy between them⁹. This technique can be an excellent way to acquaint oneself about the existence of *prana*.

On the base of theoretical background on *Prana*, earlier *pranic* energy studies were solely concentrated on providing the existence of *prana* and finding out the various physiological and psychological sensations resulting in experiencing the different sources of this vital energy. A study found that the majority of the participants perceived the *pranic* energy between their hands when they sensitised their hands. The influence of vital energy leads participants to feel warmth sensation, pulsation, tingling sensation, magnetic sensation in their hands¹⁰. Studies on different sources of *pranic* energy such as air *prana*, ground *prana* and tree *prana* show that participants had viewed air globules, the aura of the tree and ground *prana* with guidance. Viewing and experiencing these sources of *pranic* energy led them into relaxed sensation, mentally strong and enhanced positive emotions¹¹. Studies focussing on the perception of energy has elucidated that sensations like magnetic or attraction feeling, tingling, electric current, pressure were experienced by participants when experiencing and absorbing *pranic* energy between their hands¹⁰⁻¹². Numerous body-oriented complementary healing methods such as meditation, acupuncture, *yoga*, some of these approaches interpret tingling as the presence or flow of energy¹³. This study has taken a further step to measure those defined sensations up to some given extent. Hence this study intended to understand the scope of sensations influenced participants after experiencing the *prana* between hands.

Method

Objective: This study aims to explore the range of energy experienced by participants through an attempt to quantifying the felt sensations by measuring scale during sensing the *pranic* energy between the hands.

Sample: The participants taken for this study were National Cadet Corps (NCC) students from 18 states including northern, southern, eastern and western states of India, organised in Mysore. The sample consists of 237 students, with a mean age of 18 years. Table 1 provides socio-demographic details of the participants.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Students of both gender and those interested to learn about *prana* were included in the study. Those with previous *pranic* energy experience and those younger than 16 years were excluded.

Tools: The questionnaire was developed exclusively for the study, it consisted of a set of defined bioplasmic sensations such as magnetic, tingling, pressure/balloon, electric and rotation in the palm, that results from focussing on *pranic* energy experience between the hands. The participant ticked the sensations that they experienced and noted down anything else than the ones mentioned. The sensations provided as options or qualifiers were based on responses given by participants in previous exploratory studies¹⁰⁻¹². The questionnaire was given to participants after concluding the session on *pranic* energy and they were instructed to rate the extent of their sensations. The rating involved marking the distance between the points of sensation to the hands, on a centimetre scale.

Table 1— Socio-demographic profile of participants

Socio-demographic profile.	Variable	F	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	123	51.89
	Female	114	48.10
Age	<18	123	51.89
	19>	114	48.10
Education	Postgraduate	11	4.64
	Graduate	103	43.45
	High school/diploma	123	51.89
Locality	Urban	143	60.33
	Rural	94	39.66
State	South	127	53.58
	North	36	15.18
	West	31	13.08
	East	43	18.14
Practising exercise	Yes	76	32.06
Practising <i>pranayama</i>	Yes	67	28.27

And also, spaces were provided to mention additional experiences of the participants. The questionnaire included demographic details. A measuring scale was used to measure the distance of the extent to which certain bioplasmic sensations were experienced. Some of the items on the response sheet included:

- 1) Change in temperature: No change/Cool/Warm/Both at different times
- 2) Experience in palms and fingers: No experience/ Palms/Fingers/Both
- 3) Select the appropriate distance at which you experienced the energy: No Experience/ 1-10 cm/ 10.1-20 cm/ 20.1-30 cm/ 30 cm or more

Procedure

Cross-sectional research design was used in this study. Permission was obtained from the concerned authority for conducting the study. Protocols adopted for experiencing the *prana* between the hands were conceptualised by Master Choa Kok Sui⁸. To avoid biases and suggestions that would affect their judgement, participants were not instructed at the beginning of the experiment that the distance will be measured. After the experiments on *prana* as laid out in the protocol, participants were then directed to measure the extent of sensations experienced by them and mark on the measuring scale, the distance between their palm and the point in space outside their physical body where they experienced a sensation of *prana*/energy. The Precautions were taken to make sure that the participants measured the distance precisely, by assisting them with taking measurements. They were also then instructed to fill out the rest of the questionnaire based on the several sensations experienced during the experiment on *prana*. The responses were then grouped and statistical

assessment was carried out to analyse the data and the findings were interpreted.

Protocols: Feeling *Prana* In between the hands⁸

1. Connect your tongue to your Palate
2. Press the centre of your Palms with your thumbs
3. Put your hands about two inches apart parallel to each other with the armpits slightly open
4. Be aware of the centres of your palms and the tips of the fingers. Inhale and exhale slowly.
5. Move your hands slightly back and forth very slowly.

Statistical analysis

The results were analysed using Pearson Chi-Square and contingency coefficient analysis. Significant level determined for this study was 0.05.

Results

Participants' ratings for extent/degree of sensations experienced were coded and statistically assessed for tabulation and interpretation. Table 2 shows the extent of magnetic sensations experienced by the participants during feeling the *prana* between the hands. The extent of experienced sensations ranges from 1cm to 30 cm or more in the 4-point scale. Totally 43.5% of them expressed their experience of magnetic sensation at the range of 1to 10 cm. 36.3% of them expressed their experience of sensation at the range of 10.1 to 20 cm. No significant differences were observed within gender, age and state zone categories concerning the magnetic sensation.

Totally 31.2% of them expressed their experience of a tingling sensation at the range of 1to 10 cm (Table 3). 19.0% of them expressed their experience of a tingling sensation at the range of 10.1 to 20 cm. There were no significant differences were observed

Table 2 — Magnetic sensation of *pranic* energy between hands.

Magnetic Sensation		Gender		Age		State Zone				Total
		M	F	18 and below	19 and above	South	North	West	East	
No experience	F	4	4	3	5	3	0	1	4	8
	%	3.3	3.5	2.4	4.4	2.4	0	3.2	9.3	3.4
1 to 10 cm	F	46	57	52	51	57	15	8	23	103
	%	37.4	50	42.3	44.7	44.9	41.7	25.8	53.5	43.5
10.1 to 20 cm	F	45	41	48	38	47	15	16	8	86
	%	36.6	36	39	33.3	37	41.7	51.6	6	36.3
20.1 to 30 cm	F	18	11	17	12	14	6	5	4	29
	%	14.6	9.6	13.8	10.5	11	16.7	16.1	9.3	12.2
30 cm or more	F	10	1	3	8	6	0	1	4	11
	%	8.1	0.9	2.4	7	4.7	0	3.2	9.3	4.6
Statistics		CC=10.087, p=0.39		CC=4.472, p= .346		CC=20.635, p= .056				X ² =164.498, p<.000

within gender, age and state zone categories concerning a tingling sensation. Totally 30.4% of them expressed their experience of balloon/ pressure at the range of 1 to 10 cm. 34.2% of them expressed their experience at the range of 10.1 to 20 cm (Table 4). There is a significant difference (CC=10.280, p=.036) was observed in the age category to experiencing the

sensation of the balloon and the other two categories remain insignificant.

Totally 17.7% of them expressed their experience of electric/current sensation at the range of 1 to 10 cm. 10.1% of them expressed their experience of sensation at the range of 10.1 to 20 cm (Table 5). There were significant differences were observed within gender

Table 3 — Tingling sensation of *pranic* energy between hands.

Tingling Sensation		Gender		Age		State Zone				Total
		M	F	18 and below	19 and above	South	North	West	East	
No experience	F	56	48	49	55	57	8	17	22	104
	%	45.5	42.1	39.8	48.2	44.9	22.2	54.8	51.2	43.9
1 to 10 cm	F	36	38	43	31	37	17	11	9	74
	%	29.3	33.3	35.5	27.2	29.1	47.2	36.5	20.9	31.2
10.1 to 20 cm	F	23	22	23	22	27	8	3	7	45
	%	18.7	19.3	18.7	19.3	21.3	22.2	9.7	16.3	19
20.1 to 30 cm	F	7	5	7	5	6	2	0	4	12
	%	5.7	4.4	5.7	4.4	4.7	5.6	0	9.3	5.1
30 cm or mor	F	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	2
	%	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.9	0	2.8	0	2.3	0.8
Statistic		CC=.684, p=.953		CC=2.309, p=.679		CC=19.328, p=.081				X ² =152.557, p<.000

Table 4 — Balloon/pressure sensation of *pranic* energy between hands.

Balloon/pressure Sensation		Gender		Age		State Zone				Total
		M	F	18 and below	19 and above	South	North	West	East	
No experience	F	26	20	22	24	28	5	4	9	46
	%	21.1	17.5	17.9	21.1	22	13.9	12.9	20.9	19.4
1 to 10 cm	F	32	40	28	44	35	12	10	15	72
	%	26	35.1	22.8	38.6	27.6	33.3	32.3	34.9	30.4
10.1 to 20 cm	F	40	41	52	29	43	12	12	14	81
	%	32.5	36	42.3	25.4	33.9	33.3	38.7	32.6	34.2
20.1 to 30 cm	F	19	12	17	14	16	6	5	4	31
	%	15.4	10.5	13.8	12.3	12.6	16.7	16.1	9.3	13.1
30 cm or more	F	6	1	4	3	5	1	0	1	7
	%	4.9	0.9	3.3	2.6	3.9	2.8	0	2.3	3
Statistics		CC= 6.504, p=.165		CC=10.280, p=.036		CC=5.196, p=.951				X ² =76.734, p<.000

Table 5 — Electric/current sensation of *pranic* energy between hands.

Electric/current Sensation		Gender		Age		State Zone				Total
		M	F	18 and below	19 and above	South	North	West	East	
No experience	F	79	76	74	81	90	16	22	27	155
	%	64.2	66.7	60.2	71.1	70.9	44.4	71	62.8	62.8
1 to 10 cm	F	27	15	20	22	17	12	5	8	42
	%	22	13.2	16.3	19.3	13.4	33.3	16.1	18.6	17.7
10.1 to 20 cm	F	7	17	15	9	13	3	2	6	24
	%	5.7	14.9	12.2	7.9	10.2	8.3	6.5	14	10.1
20.1 to 30 cm	F	9	3	11	1	4	5	2	1	12
	%	7.3	2.6	8.9	0.9	3.1	13.9	6.5	2.3	5.1
30 cm or more	F	1	3	3	1	3	0	0	1	4
	%	0.8	2.6	2.4	0.9	2.4	0	0	2.3	1.7
Statistics		CC=11.328, p=.023		CC=10.919, p=.027		CC=19.490, p=.077				X ² =322.599, p<.000

Table 6 — Rotation in palm sensation of *pranic* energy between hands.

Rotation in palm Sensation		Gender		Age		State Zone				Total
		M	F	18 and below	19 and above	South	North	West	East	
No experience	F	57	53	42	68	66	9	16	19	110
	%	46.3	46.5	34.1	59.6	52	25	51.6	44.2	46.4
1 to 10 cm	F	37	40	49	28	38	18	6	15	77
	%	30.1	35.1	39.8	24.6	29.9	50	19.4	34.9	32.5
10.1 to 20 cm	F	16	15	20	11	12	6	7	6	31
	%	13	13.2	16.3	9.6	9.4	16.7	22.6	14.0	13.1
20.1 to 30 cm	F	9	5	9	5	7	3	2	2	14
	%	7.3	4.4	7.3	4.4	5.5	8.3	6.5	4.7	6.9
30 cm or more	F	4	1	3	2	4	0	0	1	5
	%	3.3	0.9	2.4	1.8	3.1	0	0	2.3	2.1
Statistics		CC=2.900, p=.575		CC=15.509, p=.004		CC=16.400, p=.174				X ² =168.295, p<.000

(CC=11.328, p=.023) and age category (CC=10.919, p=.027) and state zone remain insignificant in experiencing current/electric sensation. Totally 32.5% of them expressed their experience of rotation in the palm at the range of 1 to 10 cm (Table 6). 13.1% of them expressed their experience of rotation sensation at the range of 10.1 to 20 cm. There was a significant difference observed within the age category to experiencing the sensation of rotation in the palm and the other two categories remain insignificant.

According to the Chi-square test, significant differences were observed between the participant's ratings on each sensation range from 1 to 30 cm. The significance involves for magnetic sensations ($X^2=164.498$, p<.001), tingling sensation ($X^2=152.557$, p<.001), sensation of balloon and pressure ($X^2=76.734$, p<.001), sensation of electric/current ($X^2=322.599$, p<.001) and feeling of rotation in palm ($X^2=168.295$, p<.001) respectively for feeling *prana* between hands.

Discussion

This study is an attempt to measure the sensations experienced by participants while feeling the vital energy between hands. The results show that participants rated their sensations on a given scale, in which majority of the ratings fell in the category of 1-10 cm and the least rating was found in the category of 30 cm or more. So, there were significant differences observed between the participant's ratings on each sensation ranges from 1 to 30 cm. A few participants were able to perceive magnetic, tingling, electric, rotation in palm and sensation of the balloon at a distance that exceeded 30 cm. A previous exploratory study has shown that *prana* can be experimental and experiential; anyone can perceive the magnetic, tingling and such other sensations while

experiencing and absorbing *pranic* energy between hands^{10,11}. A similar kind of effort was seen in another previous study which quantified the aura/energy field of the respondents. The study measured the participant's aura in inches i.e., 1-2, 2-4 and 5-6¹² and also looked at the participants experience while viewing the aura. Likewise, the present study supports the notion that *prana* can be felt and can be measured as well between the hands.

Among those sensations, the majority of the participants have experienced magnetic sensation. The sensation of magnetic force is commonly accompanied by electric/current sensation while experiencing *prana*. Research on biofield suggests that Electrical currents, along with their associated magnetic fields, can be found in the body¹⁴. The electrical and magnetic aspects of the human body are complex and dynamic and are associated with dynamical processes such as heart and brain function, blood and lymph flow, ion transport across cell membranes, and many other biologic processes on many different scales¹⁵. It is believed that those with a higher degree of magnetism are likely to be succeeding in materialistic and spiritual affairs. The magnetic force is in direct control of the mind and the will of human beings. It can be channelized, developed and directed to healthy living and successful life as well. In addition to magnetic force and electric sensation, participants felt like *prana* is rotating across their palm. Thus, the presence and flowing energy throughout the body have led the participants to experience this sensation. And they narrated that energy is felt as holding a ball between hands. Due to the power of these energy force fields, when a person receives *prana* through any type of energy healing, they may experience pressure, tingling, vibrations, changes in temperature, electromagnetic

and other physical sensations¹⁶. Healers noted the rhythm, contraction, expansion and pulsation of activity within the body and also outside of the body were common in the subjects while receiving the energy¹⁷. Benor² reported numerous healers experience palpable sensations when they move their hands close to but not touching the body experienced as heat, tingling, pulsation feeling in the healer's hand.

Tingling is an omnipresent body sensation, experienced under a variety of conditions and circumstances from everyday experiences to experimental and therapeutic situations. This sensation is an altered sensation localized on the surface of the skin, which is not related to pain and thermal sensations. Beyond tingling, the term includes further sensations, such as tickling, pricking, numbness, burning, pins and needles¹⁸. This study has witnessed the tingling sensation in participants while experimenting with *prana*. The sensation felt in this context suggests that it result by acquiring more energy through *pranic* experimentation. Some previous studies were in line with the current findings. These studies say that tingling sensation is experienced as a result of positive excitement and the feeling of being energised¹⁹. As evidenced by numerous body-oriented complementary healing methods such as meditation, acupuncture, yoga, some of these approaches interpret tingling as the presence or flow of energy, also called *qi* or *prana*¹³. Tingling sensation during these interventions can be caused by attention-related processes, changes in peripheral physiology e.g. during relaxation, static postures and slow exercises, or deep breathing brought by autonomic and somato motor self-regulation and affective processes and movement-related sensory enhancement²⁰. In addition, numerous *pranic* healers have reported tingling sensation, when the *prana* is absorbed through the palms⁸.

In discussing significant differences about gender, age and state zone, i.e. when comparing to groups within, age and gender found significant in experiencing some sensations. Age found a significant difference in perceiving balloon/pressure sensation, electric and rotation in palm sensation. Gender found significant in experiencing electric sensation. Thus, participants from different age group and both genders vary in experiencing only a few sensations result from *pranic* energy. There were no significant differences observed concerning any of the categories in experiencing tingling and magnetic sensations. Not surprisingly, state zone found insignificant in

perceiving any of the sensations. So, it can be inferred that participants from different states, irrespective of their region found alike in perceiving the extent of *pranic* energy sensations. They were not influenced by boundaries like language, culture, tradition and different background in experiencing any of these sensations.

Conclusion

The current study has shed light on various sensations experienced by individuals when they are made aware of the existence of *prana*. The study has not alone reinforced that it falls in the realm of possibility for everyone to experience *prana* with ease but has also indicated that *prana* can be measured by carefully observing the extent of *prana*/energy available. Allowing measurement of *prana* opens avenues to measure progress during healing processes. Questions with regard to tracking change or progress after healing has been raised in the scientific community in the past. Questions such as - Is measuring Pranic energy possible? How can energy be measured to say that there has been an observable change in the energy level after healing? Can this observable change be experienced in the individual after being subjected to healing? Experiencing *prana* between hands led the participants to feel and measure the *pranic* energy. However, further theoretical and experimental research is needed to refine and standardize the measurements of life energy to increase objectivity and consistency of results.

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