

LIFESTYLE AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OF BRAHMA KUMARIS IN CHANDIGARH AND PANCHKULA: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

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Abstract: The Brahma Kumari is a well-known spiritual organisation run mainly by women, with a presence in 137 countries. In this sect, unmarried women are eligible for permanent membership, i.e. Brahma Kumari (BK). In Hindu tradition, marriage is considered a religious sacrament that signifies some core objectives of life. Through Raja Yoga meditation, the Brahma Kumari (BK) sect is used to help individuals transform their relationships with society and nature. Their approach combines spirituality, psychology, philosophy, and environmental studies, reflecting a holistic view of well-being. The present study attempts to examine the issue that the Hindu way of life recommends marriage as a religious sacrament. Still, on the contrary, Brahma Kumari rejects the same, which considers marriage as an obstacle to the development of women. The study tries to analyse the lifestyle and social adjustment of the permanent Brahma Kumari of Panchkula. The study is empirical, employing the triangulation method, and the data was collected with the help of an interview schedule and participatory observation. The findings reveal significant correlations and differences in life satisfaction and social adjustment of BKs. The Study reveals that spirituality can bring happiness and life satisfaction and has the potential to bring about positive change for followers and humanity.

Keywords: Brahma Kumari, Raj Yoga, Triangulation, Mental Health, Life Satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

The Brahma Kumaris were founded in the late 1930s by the Sindh merchant community in Hyderabad, Pakistan (Ramsay et al., 2012), and emerged to address the troubled lives of women facing societal discontent and traditional roles (Hodgkinson & Kumaris, 1999). Lekhraj Khubchand Kirpilani (Om Baba) founded the sect, which focused on celibacy and female empowerment and challenged traditional Hindu family structures.

The Brahma Kumari sect's teachings and practices have notably disrupted traditional Hindu family dynamics and the entrenched roles of women within these structures. The decision of women to renounce sexuality is framed as a radical assertion of autonomy, resulting in a significant withdrawal of their maternal authority from both their natal and marital families. This deviation from conventional practices prompted a considerable backlash, culminating in the sect's initial withdrawal from public life. Under the leadership

of Dada Lekhraj, the Brahma Kumaris transitioned from seclusion to a focus on active proselytisation (Khandelwal, 2009).

The sect encountered substantial societal resistance, primarily due to its advocacy for celibacy and the reconfiguration of domestic spaces into "temples." In retaliation, a faction of male members from the Bhaiband (Babb, 1984) caste established the 'Anti-Om Mandali Committee' (Bab, 1984), orchestrating a protest on June 21, 1938, outside the Om Mandali premises. This protest effectively barred students from accessing the university, igniting widespread unrest across the city. Participants in the demonstrations, particularly women engaged in dialogue, faced verbal harassment, and there was an alarming incident involving an attempted arson against property owned by the Brahma Kumari sect, leading to multiple arrests by law enforcement (Jatt, 2018). Moreover, the tumultuous atmosphere resulted in numerous instances of domestic violence against women and girls (Hodgkinson & Kumaris, 1999).

When the Anti-Om Mandali's legal efforts to prohibit Brahma Kumari satsangs proved unsuccessful, they attempted to assassinate Om Baba (Chander & Shubow, 2017). The sect's consolidation took place in a context of social hostility, initially requiring isolation for its members (Olson, 2013). In a significant migration in 1950, approximately 300 women and children, accompanied by supportive men, relocated from Karachi to Mount Abu in Rajasthan, India, establishing the sect's headquarters there.

Despite facing significant societal backlash and legal challenges, the sect established a headquarters in Mount Abu, Rajasthan, in 1950 with matriarchal leadership. In their philosophy, human beings are viewed as eternal souls with intellect, conscious mind, and subconscious mind, emphasising the need for divine-oriented thoughts and the concepts of karma and reincarnation. Over time, the Brahma Kumaris shifted from seclusion to public engagement, expanding outreach through literature and permanent centres to approximately one million members by 1969 (Puttick et al., 1993). The group is a "divine university" catering primarily to middle—and upper-middle-class individuals. It addresses personal identity and integrates Hindu philosophies with innovative practices influenced by predominantly female leadership (Chowdhary, 1996).

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND PRACTICES

Brahma Kumaris distinguish themselves from traditional Hinduism by focusing on spiritual education and disciplined living (Wikimedia, 2024), which includes celibacy, a lacto-vegetarian diet and daily meditation (Today, 1995). Their core belief is that all beings possess an immortal soul, which has become disconnected from its spiritual essence due to attachment to the physical world (Ramsay et al., 2017). They teach that souls emanate from a "spirit world" and cycle through birth and rebirth, with a cosmology consisting of a 5,000-year cycle divided into four ages. Their ultimate aim is to enhance soul consciousness and fulfilment through Raja Yoga, seeking a connection with the Supreme Soul, Shiva Baba

(Barrett., 2004). The Brahma Kumari lifestyle also emphasises strict adherence to purity in thought, speech, and action, including practices like "traffic control" for meditation. Organizationally, the Brahma Kumaris are led by a hierarchical structure that recognises God as the highest authority, with global operations managed from their headquarters in Mount Abu, Rajasthan, and London. Annual pilgrimage events attract millions, featuring live broadcasts and translations for international participants.

The organisational framework of the Brahma Kumaris is hierarchical, featuring a chief administrative head, a joint administrative head, and several co-administrative heads, all operating under the premise of divine leadership, with God as the spiritual head. The structure includes regional and national coordinators who collaborate closely with the chief administrators to oversee the five designated regions outside India. The world headquarters are in Mount Abu, Rajasthan, India, while the international headquarters are in London. The organisation hosts significant annual pilgrimage sessions during winter months, drawing millions of adherents and visitors alike. These sessions include real-time broadcasts of online meetings and events equipped with simultaneous translation services.

In India, female teachers dedicated to the organisation undergo a rigorous training regimen, culminating in a formal dedication ceremony akin to a matrimonial event, signifying their commitment. In international contexts, foreign sisters and brothers often partake in smaller private or public ceremonies that foster a sense of community and belonging. Since its inception in 1936, leadership within the Brahma Kumaris has been predominantly female. Following the passing of "Brahma Baba" in 1969, Dadi Prakashmani ascended to leadership and spearheaded the organisation's expansion into over 110 countries. After her passing in 2007, Dadi Janki, Dadi Gulzar and Dadi Ratan Mohini took the helm, during which the organisation experienced significant growth. This period marked the establishment of a global methodology designed to adapt to evolving circumstances and effectively manage the Brahma Kumaris' expansion on an international scale (Walliss., 2017).

GLOBAL EXPANSION AND SOCIOCULTURAL DYNAMICS OF THE BRAHMA KUMARI ORGANISATION

The Brahma Kumari (BK) organisation, founded in 1950, has grown to nearly 1,000,000 members across 110 countries. It blends management principles with spiritual values, focusing on holiness and soul consciousness to promote a global spiritual framework. BK fosters its identity through the worldwide distribution of spiritual texts and live-streamed sessions to engage members. The organisation also addresses global issues with secular initiatives and holds consultative status with the United Nations, participating in climate change and sustainability discussions (Verma, 2011). The BK adopts a feminist perspective, critiquing the status of women in Hindu society and advocating for their liberation. It encourages a redefined role for women, emphasising purity and independence through the imagery of Hindu goddesses. The organisation challenges traditional gender roles and links the subordination of women to sexual relationships, promoting empowerment through sexual renunciation and celibacy (Jeffery & Sharma, 1981).

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

This study analyses the socio-religious dynamics of the Brahma Kumari sect by applying various sociological theories of religion. It employs conflict theory to explore how religion can reinforce social hierarchies and conflict, while symbolic interactionism emphasises personal religious experiences and followers' interpretations. As presented by Emile Durkheim, functionalism posits that religion creates collective moral authority, while Malinowski and Evans-Pritchard discuss the psychological aspects of religious rituals. Other frameworks, such as Radcliffe-Brown's and M.N. Srinivas's research, illustrate the interplay between social structures and religious practices. The evolution of animism is discussed as a precursor to more complex religions, supported by thinkers like Herbert Spencer and Sir James Frazer.

Additionally, Victor E. Frankl's logotherapy, founded in the 1930s, presents an alternative approach to addressing psychological issues

through the 'will to meaning'. Key principles of logotherapy include freedom of will, will to meaning, and meaning in life, highlighting the importance of finding purpose for psychological well-being. Overall, the emphasis on meaning emerges as a vital component of mental health and personal fulfilment.

ABOUT THE CENTRES

The Brahma Kumaris Center, located at Sadbhavna Bhawan, Kothi No: I-7, Sector 12A, Panchkula, is an oasis for individuals aiming to enhance their spiritual practice through the principles of Rajayoga meditation. This meditation technique fosters inner tranquillity, augments self-awareness, and nurtures a profound connection with one's true self. The centre offers a spectrum of courses tailored for both novices and seasoned practitioners, with the eminent 7-day Rajayoga course being particularly noteworthy. This immersive program serves as a comprehensive introduction to meditation methodologies, spiritual principles, and the discipline of self-reflection. With its primary hub in Sector 33A, the Brahma Kumaris organisation is committed to fostering holistic spiritual development while promoting inner peace across diverse services and programs. Raja Yoga meditation lies at the core of their pedagogical framework. Emphasising spiritual education and active community involvement, the organisation posits that individual growth is intrinsically linked to collective welfare.

Participants at this centre engage in regular Raja Yoga meditation classes meticulously designed to facilitate spiritual advancement and enhance self-awareness. These sessions impart meditation techniques and insights into spiritual wisdom, enabling attendees to comprehend their purpose and potential better. Beyond the foundational 7-day course, the centre also hosts personality development camps specifically tailored for students, concentrating on cultivating positive traits, refining interpersonal skills, and reinforcing self-confidence and dignity.

In alignment with its mission of service and support, the organisation actively participates in various community service initiatives, engaging in humanitarian and environmental projects that embody its values. These endeavours are often sustained through philanthropic contributions, showcasing the organisation's commitment to effecting meaningful societal change. Furthermore, the main centre in Sector 33A routinely organises

special events and advanced programs for those seeking an in-depth exploration of Brahma Kumaris' teachings and practices. These initiatives delve into themes of personal spiritual identity and self-realisation, equipping participants with essential tools for fostering inner peace—critical for navigating the complexities of contemporary life.

Participants can acquire diverse books and resource materials related to meditation and spiritual development to support ongoing personal growth and comprehension. This accessibility to knowledge is vital for enhancing their practice, thereby creating a peaceful and balanced world. The organisation's overarching vision of world renewal underscores the necessity of cultivating a collective consciousness anchored in compassion, understanding, and mutual respect.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review is essential for researchers to understand their topic, build a theoretical framework, and evaluate current research (Rhodes, 2011). Paul van der Velde (2003) analyses the Brahma Kumaris sect, founded by Dada Lekhraj in 1936. He highlights its contemplative nature and foundations in New Age philosophies, including renunciation and spiritual rebirth. Following Lekhraj's death, debates arose regarding the authenticity of his teachings and the messages from Sister Gulzar. Smith and Ramsay (2008) describe the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (BKWSU) as an organisation with a hierarchical structure operating in 128 countries. The organisation focuses on spiritual hierarchy and international growth. It engages in diverse societal programs and promotes Raja Yoga meditation as a path to peace and self-awareness. Whaling (2012), in "Understanding the Brahma Kumaris", discusses Dada Lekhraj's transformation from businessman to the spiritual leader of a movement founded in Sindh in the 1930s, initially called Om Mandali and later renamed the Brahma Kumaris in 1945. This movement, primarily women-led, emphasises celibacy and soul-consciousness through Raja Yoga. Key elements include the rejection of traditional sexual relationships, millenarian beliefs in 5,000-year cycles, and its growth among Indian immigrants. Despite facing criticism for its celibacy practices, the Brahma Kumaris offer an eight-element model for understanding religions, although they do not provide a broader social

analysis of South Asia. Ramsay et al. (2012) note that BKWSU aims to promote purity and virtuous living worldwide, equating purity with the essence of the soul and the world. Gupta et al. (2014) demonstrate the health benefits of Raja Yoga meditation on pulmonary function, significantly improving lung metrics among practitioners.

Siddappa Naragatti (2016) emphasises the overall health benefits of Raja Yoga meditation, highlighting its role in fostering mental tranquillity and promoting positive behaviours. Pandya (2018) Explored the impact of Raja Yoga meditation on life satisfaction and happiness in older adults, finding that regular practice significantly enhances perceived meaning and well-being. The study emphasises the need for a personalised approach considering cultural and health contexts. Sharma et al., (2023) investigated the neurophysiological effects of Raja Yoga meditation using EEG, showing changes in brain activity linked to cognitive processes. Further studies on the meditative process and brain activation patterns are recommended. Jasleen Kaur (2023) examines mental health and life satisfaction among married and unmarried women in the Brahma Kumari community, finding that unmarried women report higher life satisfaction and better mental health. This challenges common assumptions about marital status and suggests that spiritual practices may benefit their well-being. In their study, Saini et al. (2024) investigated the benefits of Raja Yoga meditation, linking meditation to reduced hypertension, cholesterol, and stress and improved overall well-being. Their findings support the integration of Raja Yoga into holistic health practices.

Wallis (2018) analysed the evolution of the Brahma Kumaris from a 'world rejection' stance to 'world ambivalence', highlighting the organisation's global outreach and reinterpretation of millenarian principles through an ethnographic lens. Bernard (2019) discussed the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University's focus on spiritual education for sustainability and individual accountability in promoting environmentally friendly behaviours while fostering a respectful relationship with nature.

Saryal and Saryal (2023) emphasised the role of faith communities in environmental stewardship, noting that spiritual values influence ecological behaviours. Highlighted the Brahma Kumari community's approach to global change through

individual self-transformation and positive thinking for sustainable environmental practices. NV and Naragatti (2023) explore Brahma Kumari's philosophy in their study "Sacred Symbiosis," focusing on balancing spiritual growth with personal autonomy amid life's challenges. They introduce the concept of "sacred symbiosis" for achieving spiritual equilibrium, which has implications for the organisation and individual practitioners. Jasleen Kaur (2023) examines mental health and life satisfaction among married and unmarried women in the Brahma Kumari community, finding that unmarried women report higher life satisfaction and better mental health. This challenges common assumptions about marital status and suggests that spiritual practices may benefit their well-being. In their study, Saini et al. (2024) investigated the benefits of Raja Yoga meditation, linking meditation to reduced hypertension, cholesterol, and stress and improved overall well-being. Their findings support the integration of Raja Yoga into holistic health practices.

RESEARCH GAP

Extensive research has delved into Brahma Kumari members' multifaceted existence and practices within the organisation. Nevertheless, significant gaps persist in examining crucial areas such as the educational framework designed for full-time Brahma Kumaris, dynamics of family income, and the socio-cultural motivations prompting individuals to join the organisation. Moreover, critical dimensions like the organisation's spiritual pedagogy, the nature of community support systems for members, and the factors influencing personal development are still inadequately explored. Particularly noteworthy is the under-researched process of spiritual maturation among full-time Brahma Kumaris, encompassing analysis of educational initiatives, induction protocols for new adherents, and the criteria employed to evaluate members' spiritual progress. This research initiative's primary objective is to comprehensively examine individuals' transformational experiences concerning their daily practices, value orientations, and community engagement pre- and post-adoption of the Brahma Kumari lifestyle. By scrutinising these dimensions, the intent is to illuminate the effects of this spiritual path on

personal growth and community integration among practitioners.

In addition to the previously mentioned gaps, several pivotal questions remain unanswered: What specific methodologies do Brahma Kumaris employ to impart Raja Yoga meditation effectively? How do their pedagogical approaches benchmark against other spiritual organisations with analogous practices? Furthermore, what do former Brahma Kumari members report the long-term implications concerning their spiritual and mental health after exiting the community? This research endeavour aims to address these critical inquiries.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study seeks to deliver an in-depth analysis of the socio-economic contexts, motivations, organisational frameworks, and lifestyle transformations associated with full-time practitioners of the Brahma Kumari movement. The research objectives are outlined as follows.

1. To uncover full-time practitioners' demographic and economic characteristics, including their education, family income, and socio-cultural influences that led them to join the Brahma Kumaris.
2. To identify the motivational factors that attract individuals to the Brahma Kumaris, such as spiritual teachings, community support, and personal growth, while also examining any negative perceptions about membership.
3. To focus on the spiritual development process within the Brahma Kumaris, outlining the educational programs, initiation rituals, and how members are categorised based on their spiritual growth.
4. To explore members' transformative journeys, highlighting changes in their daily routines, values, and community involvement before and after committing to the Brahma Kumaris lifestyle.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aims to systematically gather and analyse nuanced information regarding participants' attitudes, motivations, and experiences, thereby developing a profound

understanding of the research topic through a comprehension-based approach. This research utilised a descriptive design paired with thematic analysis to examine the topic in-depth. Data was systematically collected from a purposive sample of 12 full-time practitioners associated with the Brahma Kumaris organisation. This targeted sampling strategy was instrumental in gaining nuanced insights into their experiences and viewpoints, particularly reflecting their adherence to the Brahma Kumaris philosophy and practices.

This research employs a structured methodology for data collection, primarily utilising in-depth structured interviews in conjunction with facilitated focused discussions. The study aims to offer a granular understanding of the subject matter through a meaning-making framework by synthesising qualitative data from these methodologies. This methodology enables a comprehensive exploration of the intricate meanings and interpretations connected to various social phenomena, significantly enhancing the depth of the analysis. To augment the qualitative insights collected, the research incorporates detailed observational techniques that capture the subtle nuances of respondents' attitudes and behaviours. This approach adds depth to the qualitative findings, facilitating a holistic understanding of the subjects examined.

This research focuses on full-time practitioners of the Brahma Kumari within the "Tricity" area, comprising a Brahma Kumari centre in Chandigarh and another in the Panchkula district of Haryana. This geographical and cultural context provides a fertile ground for investigating the spiritual and communal dynamics intrinsic to the Brahma Kumaris tradition. The systematic methodology adopted here is designed to yield credible and reliable findings anticipated to contribute significantly to the existing scholarly discourse in this domain. By exploring the experiences of these individuals, the research aims to elucidate the interplay between personal beliefs and collective practices within the Brahma Kumaris community, ultimately enhancing the understanding of their role within contemporary society.

RESULT

The following is a comprehensive analysis of the data gathered during the research process. This includes a detailed examination of the various

metrics, trends, and patterns observed within the dataset and insights derived from the analysis to understand the implications of the findings. Each aspect was explored to understand the overall results and their significance better.

Table 1: Education of the Respondents

Education	Frequency	Percent
Upto 12th	2	16.7
Graduate/Postgraduate	10	83.3
Total	12	100.0

The data outlined in **Table No 1** indicates a significant trend within the Brahma Kumari organisation, where most full-time members emerge from robust socio-economic and educational backgrounds. This cohort, often possessing advanced academic credentials or engaged in postgraduate studies, typically gravitates towards the Brahma Kumaris after completing their formal education. Demographic analysis reveals that over 80% of these full-time practitioners hold advanced degrees in medicine (including MBBS and BDS), engineering, and finance. A noteworthy observation is that many professionals elect to contribute to societal welfare through their commitment to the Brahma Kumaris, consciously opting for this path over conventional corporate trajectories.

Table 2: Family Income

Income	Frequency	Percent
Upto ₹ 50000	1	8.3
Upto ₹ 100000	5	41.7
More than ₹ 100000	6	50.0
Total	12	100.0

Table 2 reveals a striking correlation between socioeconomic status and full-time commitment to the Brahma Kumaris organisation. Specifically, more than 90% of respondents reported family incomes surpassing Rs 1 lakh (₹100,000). This data underscores a trend indicating that a substantial portion of Brahma Kumari practitioners possess the financial resources necessary for extensive engagement in the organisation's spiritual practices and teachings. Such findings may suggest a discernible socioeconomic pattern within the demographic profile of its membership.

Table 3: Social and Cultural Influences that Inspired you to Join the Brahma Kumaris

Influence	Frequency	Percent
Spiritual Quest and Inner Peace	1	8.3
Universal Brotherhood and Soul Consciousness	2	16.7
Community and Support	1	8.3
Empowerment of Women	1	8.3
All of the Above	7	58.3
Total	12	100.0

Table 3 demonstrates that approximately two-thirds of full-time members of the Brahma Kumaris organisation are primarily attracted by its significant attributes. Central to this appeal is a profound spiritual quest that resonates with many individuals and the prospect of attaining inner peace. The organisation's commitment to universal brotherhood and the cultivation of soul consciousness fosters meaningful connections among members, particularly appealing to those seeking a deeper relational experience. Furthermore, the organisation's strong sense of community and mutual support is critical in attracting individuals. Notably, women's empowerment stands out as a fundamental principle, aligning with modern values of gender equality and personal development, which enhances the organisation's appeal.

Table 4: Spiritual teachings that drew you to the Brahma Kumaris

Spiritual Teachings	Frequency	Percent
The Eternal and Spiritual Nature of the Soul.	1	8.3
Practice of Self-Reflection and Connection with the Supreme Soul through Rajyoga	1	8.3
Law of Karma and Universal Brotherhood	2	16.7
All of the Above	8	66.7
Total	12	100.0

The data in Table 4 highlights key spiritual principles resonating with full-time members of the Brahma Kumari organisation. Notably, 70% of respondents strongly supported the idea of the soul's eternal essence, emphasising personal transcendence beyond physical limits. Self-reflection emerged as crucial for personal growth and spiritual awakening, encouraging continuous self-improvement. Raja Yoga, a vital method for attracting new members, goes beyond meditation to promote spiritual balance and well-being through mindfulness and connection with the Supreme Soul. Additionally, the Law of Karma, which asserts that actions have consequences, reinforces the importance of ethical conduct and personal accountability in spiritual growth. The organisation's focus on universal brotherhood fosters community and belonging, advocating mutual respect and compassion. In summary, these teachings inspire many individuals to align with the Brahma Kumari principles, motivating them to commit to full-time service.

Table 5: Community support programme of the Brahma Kumaris

Programme	Frequency	Percent
Improve Living Standards for those in Slums by Raising Health Awareness and Addressing Negative Habits	3	25.0
Education that covers Positive thinking, Meditation, and Personal Development	6	50.0
Addressing Contemporary Issues Like Health, Education, Drug Addiction, and the Environment.	1	8.3
All of the Above	2	16.7
Total	12	100.0

The data indicates from the table that Brahma Kumaris' community outreach initiatives effectively catalyse positive behavioural transformations within marginalised urban populations, particularly in slum areas (1/4). These programs are designed to enhance living conditions for underprivileged groups by promoting health literacy and mitigating maladaptive lifestyle practices. Half of the respondents (1/2) stated that

the core components of the initiative encompass positive psychology, meditation, and personal development while addressing multifaceted challenges such as health inequities, educational deficiencies, substance misuse, and environmental concerns (1/10). Key factors promoting interest in the community include a desire for spiritual development, meditation practices, and a focus on self-realisation.

Table 6: Personal growth programme for the full-time practitioners of Brahma Kumaris

Programme	Frequency	Percent
Spiritual Study and Practice	2	16.7
Lifestyle Disciplines	1	8.3
Value Education that enriches Community Engagement	1	8.3
Self-Awareness and Development	1	8.3
All of the Above	7	58.3
Total	12	100.0

The data presented in the table reveals that approximately two-thirds of participants endorse the personal development framework provided by the Brahma Kumaris as a robust and integrated model. This framework effectively weaves spiritual studies, lifestyle disciplines, and value education into a unified pedagogical approach. The spiritual studies segment thoroughly examines sacred texts and philosophical teachings, fostering enhanced self-awareness and elucidating the individual's intrinsic connection with the cosmos. Concurrently, the lifestyle discipline component advocates for a holistic and balanced health paradigm, promoting meditation, yoga, and various mindfulness techniques to improve physical well-being and psychological resilience. Furthermore, the value education dimension is instrumental in cultivating fundamental core values—such as compassion, respect, and integrity—that fortify personal character and facilitate meaningful community engagement. This integration of elements underscores the comprehensive nature of

the educational strategy employed by Brahma Kumaris.

These elements are instrumental in fostering self-awareness, thus enabling individuals to forge meaningful connections with themselves and their communities while contributing to social welfare initiatives. Governance within the Brahma Kumaris operates on a hierarchical structure, allowing full-time practitioners to ascend through various leadership roles, such as Chief, Additional Chief, Joint Chief, and Regional Chief. Each role carries specific governance responsibilities within designated regional divisions, facilitating organised oversight and management.

Table 7: Process of Initiation and Samskaras

Process	Frequency	Percent
Initiation and Dedication through the probationary Period.	2	16.7
Samskaras include daily practices, celibacy, diet, and neuroplasticity.	1	8.3
transforming negative thoughts through meditation and self-reflection	1	8.3
All of the Above	8	66.7
Total	12	100.0

The data derived from Table 7 reveals that approximately two-thirds of participants underscored the significance of several critical elements essential for a full-time commitment to the Brahma Kumari tradition. These elements encompass initiation and unwavering dedication during the probationary phase, adherence to daily rituals, commitment to celibacy, maintenance of a sattvic diet, and applying neuroplasticity principles. Furthermore, respondents emphasised the importance of transforming negative cognitive patterns through meditation and introspective practices, which are recognised as fundamental teachings and lifestyle choices instrumental in cultivating positive energy. Intrigued by the organisation's pedagogical approach centred on spiritual evolution and introspective exploration, prospective members embark on an intensive five-year developmental program designed to deepen their connection with their intrinsic selves. Upon indicating their interest, candidates enter a

transformative journey characterised by commitments and a probationary phase, which rigorously evaluates their alignment with the sect's foundational principles. Individuals participate in structured practices throughout this critical period to enhance their spiritual maturity. Successfully navigating this demanding process is pivotal for obtaining formal recognition within the Brahma Kumaris framework, thereby validating their allegiance to the group's core philosophies.

Table 8: Lifestyle Before Being a Full-Time Practitioner of Brahma Kumaris

Lifestyle	Frequency	Percent
Individuals may have family, work, and social commitments outside the Brahma Kumari organisation	1	8.3
Their diets might not be fully sattvic, and they may not practice celibacy or maintain consistent meditation	2	16.7
Were influenced by family members involved with Brahma Kumaris, which shaped their interest in it	9	75.0
Total	12	100.0

Table 8 delineates a significant shift in respondents' lifestyles upon full immersion in the Brahma Kumaris organisation. Prior to their commitment as full-time practitioners, these individuals typically navigated various responsibilities encompassing familial, occupational, and social domains that were external to their engagement with Brahma Kumaris. This multifaceted balancing act likely had implications for several aspects of their lives, notably their dietary habits, which often fell short of the Sattvic principles prioritising purity and health.

Many practitioners may not have consistently adhered to celibacy during this initial engagement phase and likely did not incorporate meditation as a regular facet of their daily practices. The impetus for their transition to Brahma Kumaris often

stemmed from familial connections; numerous respondents indicated that relationships with family members already involved in the organisation significantly influenced their interest. This familial impetus catalysed a deeper exploration of Brahma Kumaris' teachings and practices, ultimately culminating in their full-time commitment.

Table 9: Lifestyle after becoming a full-time practitioner of Brahma Kumaris

Lifestyle	Frequency	Percent
Celibate Lifestyle	1	8.3
Highly disciplined routine, Sattvic vegetarian diet, meditation and spiritual practices, community living	1	8.3
focus on purity and spiritual development.	1	8.3
All of the Above	9	75.0
Total	12	100.0

Table No. 9 delineates the profound lifestyle adaptations of transitioning to a full-time practitioner within the Brahma Kumaris framework. Practitioners undertake a regimen of celibacy, adherence to a disciplined daily schedule, consuming a Sattvic vegetarian diet, and regular meditation. They engage in community living while prioritising purity and spiritual maturation. During an initial five-year probationary phase, individuals are systematically guided to internalise these foundational principles, culminating in a dedication ceremony. This ceremony symbolises an individual's commitment to spiritual ideals and social service. Distinct from conventional religious ceremonies, this event is highly adaptable and tailored to individual contexts. It may include rituals such as circling the sacred Shivling or the ceremonial exchange of garlands and sweets among peers, emphasising a sense of community and celebratory spirit. While specific practices may vary due to personal and cultural influences, a pivotal element of the ceremony is the issuance of an identity card from the Brahma Kumari Ashram, signifying one's dedication to the divine precepts.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results obtained from the data, it can be concluded that The Brahma Kumari organisation predominantly attracts members from educated and affluent socio-economic backgrounds, with over 80% of full-time participants possessing advanced degrees in fields such as medicine, engineering, and finance. This educational attainment significantly correlates with their engagement, as more than 90% report family incomes above ₹100,000. Members are often motivated by the organisation's profound spiritual teachings, with approximately two-thirds indicating that the quest for inner peace, universal brotherhood, and women's empowerment are key factors driving their involvement. Several foundational principles are central to Brahma Kumaris' spiritual framework: the recognition of the soul's eternal nature, self-reflection as a tool for personal development, Raja Yoga meditation techniques, and the Law of Karma, which underscores the importance of ethical behaviour and personal accountability.

The organisation's mission extends beyond spirituality, including community outreach initiatives aimed at marginalised urban populations. These initiatives focus on health literacy and foster positive behavioural changes through meditation and personal development programs. Participants benefit from a holistic framework for personal growth that integrates spiritual education, lifestyle discipline, and value-centered teachings designed to enhance self-awareness, physical health, and core ethical values. The governance structure of Brahma Kumaris is critical in promoting an environment conducive to self-awareness, meaningful relationships, and social welfare. Commitment to the organisation involves several key elements: a formal initiation process, steadfast dedication, adherence to daily spiritual practices, commitment to celibacy, a vegetarian diet, and meditation aimed at cognitive transformation.

Prospective members typically engage in a rigorous five-year developmental program to assess their alignment with the organisation's spiritual principles and lifestyle practices. As members progress through this program, they undergo significant lifestyle transformations incorporating celibacy, a disciplined daily routine,

a vegetarian diet, and community living. Familial connections often serve as the initial impetus for their involvement. During probation, practitioners receive systematic guidance, culminating in a dedication ceremony that signifies their commitment to the organisation's spiritual values and altruistic service. Following this ceremony, members are issued an identity card from the Brahma Kumari Ashram, symbolising their official integration into the organisation and its community.

RECOMMENDATION

Research suggests that religious institutions should prioritise the establishment of more rigorous admission policies regarding underage females, even when verbal consent is given. This approach is essential to safeguarding their legal rights and respecting their autonomy. Enrolling underage girls in religious organisations often entails the relinquishment of critical inheritance rights, with potentially severe repercussions, particularly for families within lower-middle-class demographics. In such contexts, families may seek to circumvent legal age restrictions to secure membership for their daughters in these institutions. This practice raises significant ethical dilemmas concerning the long-term ramifications for the girls' futures and their capacity to claim rightful inheritance. Such situations could perpetuate cycles of financial instability and limit avenues for personal growth and independence. Religious organisations must acknowledge these complexities and take proactive steps to ensure the protection of young women's rights and overall welfare within their frameworks.

CONTRIBUTION TO LITERATURE AND PRACTICE

The research paper "Lifestyle and Social Adjustment of Brahma Kumaris: A Sociological Study" offers significant contributions to theoretical discourse and applied research within sociology. It delves into the Brahma Kumaris organisation's distinctive lifestyle choices and social adaptations. It analyses how their spiritual tenets and practices shape their quotidian lives and societal interactions. By investigating the interplay between spirituality and social behaviour, the study

elucidates how religious communities confront and adapt to the complexities of contemporary urban life. Furthermore, it elucidates the broader implications of these dynamics for understanding social cohesion, identity construction, and the formation of community support networks. This

research enriches the literature on religion and sociology and functions as a pragmatic resource for scholars and practitioners focused on the intricate dynamics of faith-based organisations and their influence in modern society.

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