

IMPACT OF YOGA FOR THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF COLLEGE STUDENTS- A RESEARCH BASED STUDY

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Introduction:

There is a growing concern about the mental health of students that needs to be addressed in an effective, scalable, and attractive manner. Yoga would improve psychological outcomes and physiological responses, resulting in improved mental health among students. Along with affecting public health, Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) poses a threat to psychological well-being as well. From 2700 B.C., yoga has been practiced in north western South Asia as a way of life since the Indus Saraswati Valley civilization.

What is Yoga?

With the application of an extremely subtle science, yoga brings balance to the mind and body. Broad, W. J. (2012). Health and science go hand in hand when it comes to living a healthy lifestyle. Yoga derives from the Sanskrit root yuj, which means "to join, yoke, or unite." The yoga scriptures describe yoga as a method of connecting the individual with the universal. A quantum firmament is the manifestation of the entire universe, according to modern science. Those who have experienced this oneness of existence are said to be "in yoga" and are known as yogis who have achieved Mukti, nirvana, kaivalya, or moksha. By achieving union between the mind and the body, "Yoga" is an inner science that helps individuals reach self-realization. A yoga practice (sadhana) is intended to lead to holistic health, happiness, and harmony with the goal of overcoming all sorts of sufferings.

In ancient times, yoga existed thousands of years before any religion or belief system ever existed. The first yogi, known as adiyogi, and the first guru, known as adiguru, is considered Shiva. The seven saptarishis, or "seven sages," learned Atiyogi's wisdom near Kantisarovar lake in the Himalayas several thousand years ago. These sages spread Yogic science throughout Asia, the Middle East, northern Africa, and South America. A part from working on the body, yoga also works on the mind, emotions, and energy levels. Four broad categories of yoga can be identified: Karma Yoga, which emphasizes the use of our bodies, Jnana Yoga, which emphasizes the use of our minds, Bhakti Yoga, which emphasizes the use of our emotions, and Kriya Yoga, which emphasizes the use of our energy.

Significance of the Study:

It has been shown that academic achievement is related to a student's engagement in the classroom by Dotterer & Lowe (2011) and Johns et al. (2018). A post-yoga academic class showed higher achievement and engagement among students who practiced yoga daily (Finnan, 2015). Our purpose in the present study is to add to existing research by

exploring how yoga can enhance student engagement and achievement in special education classroom. In special education small group classes, teachers can use these findings to enhance engagement and increase achievement by implementing the methods in this study.

Key terms definitions:

Yoga: Yoga is the practice of union of individual and universal consciousness, according to Yogic scriptures. All matter in the universe is thought to be manifestations of the same quantum firmament by modern scientists. A yogi who achieves moksha, also called Mukti, nirvana or kaivalya, is referred to as a yogi who has achieved moksha. A variety of techniques are used in yoga in order to unite the mind and body for the purpose of self-realization. In all spheres of life, Yoga practice (sadhana) can alleviate suffering, leading to peace, harmony, and freedom from suffering.

Well-being: By focusing on specific poses, breathing exercises, and meditations, it aims to improve one's mental, physical, and spiritual health. Daily practice calisthenic workouts help in enhancing physical fitness by making the muscles more supple, the body more stable, and the bones stronger; hence positively influencing the mental health by helping to calm the nerves, decrease stress, anxiety, or depression levels. From a psychological point of view yoga promotes emotional health, teaching awareness, acceptance, and appreciation of one's own self; and from a philosophical perspective yoga helps reach and maintain spiritual health by helping a person locate him/herself along with other individuals and the world. Thus, yoga can increase sleep quality, immunity, energy levels, memory and interactions with other people, mood, and sense of well-being, and make one's life more purposeful.

Mental Health: Researchers from the University of Wisconsin, led by Richard Davidson, PhD, have found that meditation increases the activity of the prefrontal cortex, which has been linked to better immune function and happiness. During and after their months of yoga practice, participants in a study published in the Indian Journal of Physiology and Pharmacology reported less anxiety and depression. Consistent yoga practice increases circulation in the endocrine glands, which enhances the function of hormones that play a primary role in depression physiology. A reduction in depression and an improvement in mood are the results. The beneficial effects of yoga on anxiety have been demonstrated in controlled studies. It has been shown that regular yoga practice improves the functioning of the parasympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for triggering relaxation. According to these results, participants' subconscious and emotions are more aware after yoga and the brain is deeply relaxed.

Methodology :

Overview:

The research methodology used in collecting the data for the present study. The objectives and hypotheses have been described as part of the process. In this study, researchers explained the research design, data collection tools, and data sampling techniques. In the current study, researchers also attempted to give a deep insight into the present study and to make it more meaningful. Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It's the science of learning how research is scientifically conducted. Research methodology is the direction by which researchers need to carry out their work. It shows the direction by which these researchers formulate their problems and objectives, and presents the results of the data obtained during the study period.

Research Design:

The researcher undertakes descriptive research to conduct the study, including surveys and fact finding surveys of various kinds. The main purpose of the descriptive research is to identify the current state of affairs. The major characteristic of this approach is that the researcher has no influence over the variables. The researcher seeks to measure the satisfaction level of satisfaction with yoga, perception gap with **Impact of Yoga on Psychological-Well Being of College Students**. It also involves the researcher's attempts to discover factors even though it is unable to control variables. Research methods used in descriptive studies are survey methods of all types, including comparative and correlational methods.

Sampling :

Purposive sampling was used in this study to select participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. Which purposive sampling, as a non-probability sample, was used to include only individuals that have relevant knowledge and experience. It enables the researcher to find and select respondent(s) who can meaningfully respond to the subject are working with, helping to contribute depth and the reliability of the study.

Data Collection :

Data collection in research refers to the systematic gathering of information for analysis and interpretation to answer research questions or test hypotheses. It is a crucial step in the research process, enabling researchers to obtain the evidence needed to develop conclusions and make informed decisions. Data can be collected through various methods, including surveys, interviews, observations, experiments, and document analysis. The choice of method depends on the research design, objectives, and the nature of the data required.

Research Methods :

In the present study, statistical tools such as average, percentage, standard deviation, correlation and one way anova methods are used to analyze data and test the hypothesis. Here analyzed the data using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data have been presented in tabular, diagrammatic, and textual formats.

Descriptive Techniques and Frequency Statistics :

Depending on the type of research question and the study design, descriptive statistics may be quantitative or qualitative. The purpose of descriptive statistics is to answer the question of 'what', 'when', 'how', or 'why'. A statistical method that summarizes and tabulates data in a manner that makes their primary features more apparent. In order to reduce the amount of data that must be analyzed, the raw data was converted into a summary format by formulating averages, frequencies, and percentages.

Objectives of the study:

The major objective of this research is to examine the impact of yoga on the psychological well-being of college students.

Objective-wise Hypotheses

Objective 1: To analyze the difference in psychological well-being among yoga and non-yoga practitioners.

Hypothesis: H₁: *Does gender have a significant impact on psychological well-being?*

H₂: *Does practicing yoga (vs. not practicing yoga) have a significant impact on psychological well-being?*

H₃: *Does the effect of yoga on psychological well-being depend on gender?*

Objective 2: To examine the difference in self-esteem among yoga and non-yoga practitioners.

Hypothesis: H₁: *Does gender have a significant impact on self-esteem?*

H₂: *Does practicing yoga (vs. not practicing yoga) have a significant impact on self-esteem?*

H₃: *Does the effect of yoga on self-esteem depend on gender?*

Objective 3: To find out whether there is any difference in the quality of life among yoga and non-yoga practitioners.

Hypothesis: H₁: *Does gender have a significant impact on quality of life?*

H₂: *Does practicing yoga (vs. not practicing yoga) have a significant impact on quality of life?*

H₃: *Does the effect of yoga on quality of life depend on gender?*

Objective 4: To examine if there is any difference in the perception of body image among yoga and non-yoga practitioners.

Hypothesis: H₁: *Does gender have a significant impact on body image?*

H₂: *Does practicing yoga (vs. not practicing yoga) have a significant impact on body image?*

H₃: *Does the effect of yoga on body image depend on gender?*

Objective 5: To find out if there is any difference in the pattern of spirituality among yoga and non-yoga practitioners.

Hypothesis: H₁: *Does gender have a significant impact on spirituality?*

H₂: *Does practicing yoga (vs. not practicing yoga) have a significant impact on spirituality?*

H₃: *Does the effect of yoga on spirituality depend on gender?*

Data analysis and interpretation :

1. Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 presents the gender distribution of the study participants. Out of a total sample of 200 individuals, 43 participants (21.5%) are male, while 157 participants (78.5%) are female. The valid percent column confirms that these proportions reflect the actual distribution of responses without missing data. The cumulative percentage indicates that after accounting for the female participants, 100% of the sample is covered

Table 1 Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	43	21.5	21.5	21.5
Female	157	78.5	78.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

These results highlight that the majority of the participants in this study are female, which may influence the generalizability of findings, particularly in areas where gender differences could.

Findings and Conclusions :

This chapter presents the analysis of data collected to address five main objectives, focusing on the impact of yoga practice and gender on various psychological and well-being variables. The first objective is to determine whether there is any difference in psychological

well-being based on yoga practice (yoga vs. non-yoga) and gender among students. This aspect of the study explores how regular yoga practice might contribute to an individual's psychological health compared to non-practice, and whether gender plays a role in moderating this effect.

The second objective explores whether there is any difference in self-esteem based on yoga practice (yoga vs. non-yoga) and gender among students. This part of the study investigates how yoga influences an individual's self-perception, particularly in relation to socially desirable and undesirable aspects of self-esteem.

The third objective seeks to identify whether there is any difference in the quality of life based on yoga practice (yoga vs. non-yoga) and gender among students. This objective examines the extent to which yoga practice impacts students' overall life satisfaction, happiness, and stress reduction, while also evaluating the influence of gender.

The fourth objective seeks to determine whether there is any difference in the perception of body image based on yoga practice (yoga vs. non-yoga) and gender among students. This section evaluates how yoga practice influences perceptions of body image and whether these effects are different for males and females. The Body Image Scale, which measures dimensions such as weight perception, body satisfaction, and health consciousness, was used for this analysis.

The fifth objective addresses whether there is any difference in the pattern of spirituality based on yoga practice (yoga vs. non-yoga) and gender among students. This section of the study investigates the role of yoga practice in shaping spiritual beliefs and participation, exploring how gender might influence this relationship.

Based on the empirical results obtained in the analysis, it is concluded that:

Objective 1

In conclusion, the analysis of psychological well-being revealed significant influences of both gender and yoga practice on various dimensions of well-being, including satisfaction, efficiency, sociability, mental health, and interpersonal relations. Gender differences were evident across all dimensions, suggesting that males and females experience psychological well-being differently. Yoga practice was found to positively affect all dimensions of well-being, particularly enhancing emotional stability, social interactions, and mental health. The interaction between gender and yoga practice highlighted that the benefits of yoga on psychological well-being are not uniform, emphasizing the importance of gender-sensitive approaches in developing effective yoga-based interventions.

Objective 2

The analysis of self-esteem, both in its socially desirable and undesirable dimensions, highlighted significant effects of gender and yoga practice. Gender differences were evident in both dimensions, indicating that males and females experience self-esteem differently. Yoga practice also played a positive role, with practitioners reporting higher levels of socially desirable self-esteem and lower levels of socially undesirable self-esteem. The interaction between gender and yoga showed that yoga's impact on self-esteem varies across genders, emphasizing the need for gender-specific interventions. These findings underscore the importance of tailoring yoga-based wellness programs to enhance self-esteem in both male and

female students.

Objective 3

The analysis of quality of life highlighted the significant roles of both gender and yoga practice. Yoga practice also had a positive effect on quality of life, with practitioners reporting higher satisfaction and well-being compared to non-practitioners. Furthermore, the interaction between gender and yoga revealed that the benefits of yoga on quality of life are not uniform, indicating that gender-specific yoga interventions could further enhance overall well-being. These findings underscore the importance of tailoring wellness programs to both gender and yoga engagement.

Objective 4

In conclusion, the analysis of body image across several dimensions highlighted significant effects of both gender and yoga practice. Yoga practice was shown to positively influence body image, improving perceptions of weight, body satisfaction, and health consciousness.

Objective 5

The analysis of spirituality revealed significant effects of gender and yoga practice on both spiritual belief and spiritual involvement. Yoga practice positively influenced both dimensions of spirituality, enhancing individuals' spiritual beliefs and involvement in spiritual activities.

Limitations :

- I. The study sample may not be representative of the broader population, as it primarily focuses on students. This limits the ability to generalize the findings to other age groups or populations, and the effects of yoga on psychological well-being, quality of life, and body image may vary for non-student groups.
- II. The study used a cross-sectional design, meaning data were collected at one point in time. This prevents the establishment of causal relationships between yoga practice and psychological outcomes, as it is unclear whether yoga directly leads to improvements over time.
- III. Data were gathered through self-reported measures, which can introduce biases such as social desirability and recall bias.
- IV. The study controlled for yoga practice and gender but did not account for other potential confounding variables like socioeconomic status or physical activity outside of yoga.

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