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General health, depression and anxiety among students practicing yoga and not practicing yoga

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Abstract

The word "yoga" comes from a Sanskrit root "yuj" which means union, or yoke, to join, and to direct and concentrate one's attention. (Laster J, Raub, J.A. 1997, 2002) Regular practice of yoga promotes strength, endurance, flexibility and facilitates characteristics of friendliness, compassion, and greater self-control, while cultivating a sense of calmness and well-being. (Collins, C 1998, McCall T. 2007) [12] Student's mental health issue is a raising around the globe which needs to be addressed. Universities around the world are faced with an increasing prevalence of mental health problems among their students (Auerbach *et al.*, 2018; Hunt & Eisenberg, 2010). As mental health issues raise most of the feel face depression and anxiety. These mental health issues needs to be addressed at the right time and help the young people to cope with such issues. The objective of the study was to find the difference among the students those practicing yoga and not practicing yoga with regard to their general health, depression and anxiety. The sample consisted of 60 college students among which 30 were practicing yoga and 30 students were not practicing yoga. A purposive sampling technique was opted for the study. The mean, SD, and "t" was computed using appropriate statistical measures. The results revealed that the students practicing yoga had good general health, did not have any symptoms of depression and anxiety than those not practicing yoga.

Keywords: Anxiety, depression, general health, students, yoga

Introduction

Yoga is derived from the Sanskrit word 'yuj' which means 'to unite or integrate'; yoga is a 5,000-year-old Indian body of knowledge. Yoga is all about harmonizing the body with the mind and breathe through the various means of breathing exercises, yoga poses (asanas) and meditation means of breathing exercises, yoga poses (asanas) and meditation. Yoga is a methodical effort toward self-perfection through developing your talent potential on the physical, vital, mental, intellectual, and spiritual levels. The most fundamental step is toward expanding the limits of the consciousness and to gain mastery over the mind.

Therefore, yoga is an extraordinary spiritual science of self-development and self-realization that shows us how to develop our full potential in our many-sided lives. It was first devised by the rishis and sages of ancient India and has been maintained by a stream of living teachers ever since, who have continually adapted this science to every generation.

Yoga's integrative approach brings deep harmony and unshakable balance to body and mind in order to awaken our latent capacity for a higher consciousness that is the true purpose of human evolution. The many methods of yoga spans a vast range from physical postures to breathing practices and meditation, all based upon a philosophy of consciousness and natural way of life. According to Riley (2004) controlled breathing helps to focus the mind and achieve relaxation while mediation aims to calm the mind. A national survey in the U.S. mentioned that 7.5% of respondents using Yoga at least once in their lifetime, and 3.8% were used in the past year. Khalsa (2004), bibliometric analysis it was found that there is an increase in the publication regarding the clinical application of Yoga and the use of randomized controlled trials. In their study Madhusudan, K.S. and Kumar, D (2020) have reported that intervention of yoga had positive effect on anxiety and had a high positive impact on managing stress.

Depression (major depressive disorder) is a common and serious medical illness that negatively affects the way an individual feel, think and act. Fortunately, it is also treatable. Depression causes feelings of sadness and/or a loss of interest in activities you once enjoyed.

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It can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems and can decrease your ability to function at work and at home.

Depression affects an estimated one in 15 adults (6.7%) in any given year. And one in six people (16.6%) will experience depression at some time in their life. Depression can occur at any time, but on average, first appears during the late teens to mid-20s. Women are more likely than men to experience depression. Studies show that one-third of women will experience a major depressive episode in their lifetime. There is a high degree of heritability (approximately 40%) when first-degree relatives (parents/children/siblings) have depression. In a study conducted by Shah, T.D., and Pol, T. (2020) have revealed that moderate-to-severe levels of depression and anxiety exist in college students, which need to be confirmed and diagnosed clinically and treated at the earliest. Enrique Ramón-Arбуés, *et al.*, (2020). Have reported that a moderate prevalence of depression, anxiety and stress symptoms were found in their sample.

Adolescence is a transitional period from childhood to adulthood. Adolescence in this stage experience emotional instability making them vulnerable to depression. The state of emotional instability results from difficulties in establishing self-identity and self-esteem leading to conflicts within family and peer groups. In adolescents this may be a part of the adolescent developmental process, resulting from the giving up of childlike security in the drive for separation and independence.

Consequences of depression in this age group are phenomenal. It may negatively impact peer or family relationship. Moderate to severe depression can affect the scholastic performance of adolescents. Above all, there is also a danger of students picking up habits like usage of substances of abuse to get over depression. Major depressive disorder is also found to be a leading cause of youth suicidal behavior and suicide. Adolescent depression disorder often has a chronic waxing and waning course and there is a two to fourfold risk of depression persisting into adulthood.

Anxiety is a normal and often healthy emotion. However, when a person regularly feels disproportionate levels of anxiety, it might become a medical disorder. Anxiety disorders form a category of mental health diagnoses that lead to excessive nervousness, fear, apprehension, and worry. These disorders alter how a person processes emotions and behave, also causing physical symptoms. Mild anxiety might be vague and unsettling, while severe anxiety may seriously affect day-to-day living. Anxiety is an unconscious reaction to depressive tendencies which may turn into severe fear or panic. Moreover, anxious students are also reported to suffer from leaning difficulties and problem solving. The psychological and physical symptoms include shivering of hands and lips, dryness in mouth, frequent urination and restless sleep.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) reports, community-based studies revealed an overall prevalence rate for mental disorders around 20% in several national and cultural contexts. A study conducted on Saudi secondary school boys indicated that 38.2% had depression, while 48.9% experienced anxiety. A research study done on girls in Abha showed that depression was accounted as 41.5%, anxiety was 66.2%. Reem Alharbi *et al.* conducted a study on depression and anxiety among high school student

at Qassim Region. Their results revealed that there was a significant correlation between depression and anxiety.

Aim: To find General Health among students practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga
To find depression among students practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga
To find Anxiety among students practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga

Objectives

To study the General Health among students practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga
To study Depression among students practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga
To study Anxiety among students practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga

Hypothesis

There will be no significant difference in general health among students practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga
There will be no significant difference in depression among students practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga
There will be no significant difference in anxiety among students practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga

Variables

Independent Variable

Students' practicing yoga and student's not practicing yoga

Dependent Variable

General Health, Depression and Anxiety

Sample:

The sample consisted of 60 college going students among which 30 students were practicing yoga and 30 college going students not practicing yoga. The student's age ranged between 19 to 22 years. Both the genders were considered for the study. All 60 college students were residents of Bangalore City.

Inclusion Criteria

Students studying in degree colleges
Students above the age of 18 years
Both the genders were considered for the study

Exclusion Criteria

Students studying in School and PUC
Students below the age of 18 years
Students perusing post-graduation

Research design

A between group design with purposive sampling was opted for the study

Tools

General Health Questionnaire
Anxiety Scale – Self Analysis Form
Beck's Depression Inventory

General Health Questionnaire (GHQ): GHQ developed by Goldberg and Hiller in 1972. The questionnaire consists of 28 items. The 28-item GHQ is proposed consisting of 4 subscales: somatic symptoms, anxiety and insomnia, social

dysfunction and severe depression. The scale has a good test-retest reliability of Robinson and Price (1982) examined test-retest reliability of the GHQ-28

Anxiety Scale – Self Analysis Form: The scale is developed by R.B. Cattell (1957, 1963). The IPAT is a brief, valid, and non-stressful questionnaire scale, measuring anxiety levels in adults and young adults. The test is in questionnaire form, is practically self-administering, and takes only five-to-ten minutes. It gives an accurate appraisal of free anxiety level, supplementing clinical diagnosis, and facilitating all kinds of research or mass screening operations where very little diagnostic or assessment time can be spent with each examinee. Ages 14 and over. The I. P. A. T. Anxiety Scale consists of 40 items which best represent the five scales most heavily loaded in the anxiety factor. The Anxiety Scale, therefore, rests mainly on the construct validity obtained from the factor analyses. There are also empirical validities. The score is reported to have high correlation with an objective test factor (U. I. 24) identified as anxiety.

Beck's Depression Inventory: The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) is a 21-item, self-report rating inventory that measures characteristic attitudes and symptoms of depression (Beck, et al., 1961) [5]. The BDI takes approximately 10 minutes to complete, although clients require a fifth – sixth grade reading level to adequately understand the questions. Internal consistency for the BDI ranges from .73 to .92 with a mean of .86. The BDI demonstrates high internal consistency, with alpha coefficients of .86 and .81 for psychiatric and non-psychiatric populations respectively

Procedure: The College going students studying in degree rural and urban colleges constituted the sample for the present study. The total sample consisted of 60 students of whom 30 students were practicing yoga and 30 students were not practicing yoga. Both male and female students were considered for the study. Those students who volunteered for the study were administered general health questionnaire, anxiety scale and depression scale.

Analysis of the results

The results were scored and independent 't' test was computed to study the general health, anxiety and depression of the students practicing yoga and not practicing yoga.

Result and Discussion.

Table 1: Showing the Mean SD and 't' for General Health among Yoga Students and Non-Yoga students.

Area	Sample	N	Mean	SD	t
General Health	Yoga Students	30	3.73	0.44	4.11**
	Non-Yoga Students	30	4.33	0.66.	
**Significant at 0.0 level					

The result in the table indicates that the yoga students have obtained mean score of 3.73 and SD is 0.44. The non-yoga students have obtained mean score of 4.33 and SD of 0.66. The t value is 4.11 which is significant at 0.01 level. The result shows that there is significant difference with regard to general health among yoga students and non-yoga

students. The mean value and SD shows that the students practicing yoga did not have psychological morbidities when compared to the students who were not practicing yoga. Arndt Büsing *et al.* (2012) [4] have reviewed various articles on effect of yoga on mental and physical health. The results obtained from different studies have shown that the beneficial effects of yoga interventions and several randomized clinical trials of relatively high quality indicates beneficial effects of yoga for pain-associated disability and mental health. DerebailGururaja (2011) [7] conducted a study on Effect of yoga on mental health: Comparative study between young and senior subjects in Japan. Salivary analysis of senior and young subjects was made and the results revealed that there was a reduction in state and trait anxiety scores which signifies that yoga has both immediate as well as long-term effect on anxiety reduction. Thus yoga helps to improve the mental health in both the groups. Lei Xu (2011) [10] conducted a study on "Effects of yoga on female college students' physical and mental health" and concluded that through yoga practice, female college students improved their physical health, were able to balance physical and mental condition, and relieve stress. Practice of yoga enhanced the quality of physical function and mental health.

Table 2: Showing the Mean SD and 't' for Anxiety among Yoga Students and Non-Yoga students.

Area	Sample	N	Mean	SD	t
Anxiety	Yoga Students	30	6.46	0.50	8.42**
	Non-Yoga Students	30	7.56	0.50	
**Significant at 0.0 level					

The result in the table indicates that the yoga students have obtained mean score of 6.46 and SD is 0.50. The non-yoga students have obtained mean score of 7.56 and SD of 0.50. The t value is 8.42 which is significant at 0.01 level. The result shows that there is significant difference with regard to anxiety among students practicing yoga students and students not practicing yoga. The mean value and SD shows that the students practicing yoga have less anxiety when compared to the non-yoga students. The obtained result has been supported by the study conducted M. Javnbakht, *et al.* (2009) [8], conducted a study on "Effects of yoga on depression and anxiety of women". It examined that yoga has often been recognized as a method of stress management tool that can assist in reducing depression and anxiety disorders and the study results that the women who practiced in yoga classes showed a significant decrease in state anxiety and trait anxiety. Amber W Li and Carroll-Ann W Goldsmith (2012) [2] in their study on "The effects of yoga on anxiety and stress" found that anxiety and stress symptoms decreased when a yoga regimen was implemented. Virginia Lemay *et al.* (2019) [14] conducted a study on "Impact of a yoga and meditation intervention on students' stress and anxiety levels". The authors concluded that students experienced a reduction in stress and anxiety levels after completing a six-week yoga and meditation program.

Table 3: Showing the Mean SD and 't' for Depression among Yoga Students and Non-Yoga students.

Area	Sample	N	Mean	SD	t
Anxiety	Yoga Students	30	10.33	0.71	9.90**
	Non-Yoga Students	30	12.23	0.77	
**Significant at 0.0 level					

The result in the table indicates that the yoga students have obtained mean score of 10.33 and SD is 0.71. The non-yoga students have obtained mean score of 12.23 and SD of 0.77. The t value is 9.90 which is significant at 0.01 level. The result shows that there is significant difference with regard to depression among the students practicing yoga and students' not practicing yoga. The mean value and SD shows that the students practicing yoga students were not depressed when compared to the students not practicing. The obtained result has been supported by the study conducted Alison Woolery, *et al.* (2004) ^[1] conducted a study on "A yoga intervention for young adults with elevated symptoms of depression". The results of the study revealed that subjects who participated in the yoga course demonstrated significant decreases in self-reported symptoms of depression and trait anxiety. In another study conducted by Mosoumeh Shohani *et al.* (2018) ^[11] on "The effect of yoga on stress, anxiety, and depression in women" have concluded that depression, anxiety, and stress decreased significantly in women after 12 sessions of regular hatha yoga practice. In another study carried out by Angela Gallagher *et al.* (2020) ^[3] on "Effects of yoga on anxiety and depression for high-risk mothers on hospital bed rest" the authors concluded that the high-risk pregnant women on hospitalized bed rest showed significant impact in reducing anxiety and depression in just three yoga sessions.

Conclusion

1. The obtained result indicates that the students practicing yoga have better general health than student's not practicing yoga
2. The result shows that students not practicing yoga are more anxious than students practicing yoga.
3. The result from the above table shows that students not practicing yoga are more depressed than students practicing yoga.

Limitations

1. The sample size was small
2. The sample was restricted to Bangalore city.
3. Rural students were not considered for the study.
4. Students below the age of 18 years were not considered for the study

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