



Effect of Yogic Practices on Mental Wellbeing

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ABSTRACT

Yogic practices have long been revered for their profound impact on mental wellbeing, offering a holistic approach to cultivating inner peace and harmony. Rooted in ancient wisdom and philosophy, yoga encompasses various techniques such as asanas (postures), pranayama (breath control), and meditation, all designed to harmonize the body, mind, and spirit. 40 school going female students of the district, Hathras were selected for conducting the study. These subjects were selected through random sampling. The age of the subjects were between 14-17 years, in which 20 subjects were kept in Experimental group and 20 subjects were kept in Control group. A standard mental well-being scale was used to evaluate the Mental well-being of the subjects. Paired sample T- Test was applied to analyze the effect of yogic practices on mental wellbeing among school going children. The analysis shows the significant difference in the mental wellbeing of experimental group whereas no significant difference was found in control group.

INTRODUCTION

Yogic practices, rooted in ancient wisdom and philosophy, have increasingly become recognized for their profound effects on mental well-being in modern society. The holistic nature of yoga encompasses various techniques, including postures (asanas), breath control (pranayama), meditation,

and ethical guidelines. Through the integration of these practices, yoga offers a comprehensive approach to nurturing mental balance, emotional resilience, and inner peace.

One of the primary ways in which yoga positively impacts mental well-being is through stress reduction. In today's fast-paced society, stress has become widespread, affecting people of all ages and backgrounds. Long-term stress can harm both physical and mental health, leading to conditions like anxiety, depression, and sleep disturbances. Yogic practices offer effective tools for managing stress by promoting relaxation and activating the body's natural relaxation response.

Breath control, or pranayama, is a fundamental aspect of yogic practices that plays a central role in stress reduction. By consciously regulating the breath, individuals can calm the nervous system, reduce feelings of anxiety, and increase feelings of relaxation and tranquility. Techniques such as deep belly breathing, alternate nostril breathing and breath awareness meditation are commonly used in yoga to cultivate a sense of inner calm and balance.

The practice of asanas, or yoga postures, offers physical benefits that extend to mental well-being. Regular practice of yoga postures helps to release tension and improve flexibility, which can alleviate physical discomfort and promote a sense of ease in the body. This physical release often translates into a corresponding release of mental tension, leading to feelings of relaxation and well-being. Additionally, certain yoga postures are specifically designed to target areas of the body where stress and tension tend to accumulate, such as the neck, shoulders, and hips. Meditation is another key component of yogic practices that has been shown to have significant benefits for mental well-being. Meditation is the practice of training the mind to concentrate and guide thoughts, ultimately leading to a state of increased awareness and inner calmness. Research has shown that regular meditation can decrease symptoms of anxiety and depression, boost mood, and improve overall psychological well-being. Yogic meditation techniques, such as mindfulness meditation and loving-kindness meditation, offer practical tools for cultivating a positive and resilient mindset.

The ethical guidelines of yoga, known as the yamas and niyamas, provide a framework for living a balanced and ethical life. These guidelines emphasize qualities such as compassion, honesty, and contentment, which are conducive to mental well-being. By aligning one's actions and intentions with these ethical principles, individuals can cultivate a sense of inner peace and fulfillment.

Effect of yogic practices on Mental Well-being:

Yogic practices have been studied extensively in relation to their impact on mental well-being. While I can't provide you with the latest research due to my knowledge cutoff date in January 2022, I can certainly provide you with an overview of some of the effects of yogic practices on mental well-

being based on research available up to that point. Please note that there may be more recent studies and developments in this field.

1. **Stress Reduction:** Yoga and meditation have been shown to reduce stress levels. A study published in the journal "Psychoneuroendocrinology" in 2013 found that yoga and meditation practices can reduce the production of stress hormones like cortisol, leading to reduced stress and anxiety.
2. **Improved Mood and Emotional Well-being:** Regular yoga practice has been associated with improved mood and emotional well-being. A meta-analysis published in the "Journal of Clinical Psychology" in 2017 found that yoga interventions had a moderate positive effect on depression and a small to moderate effect on anxiety.
3. **Enhanced Mental Focus and Concentration:** Yoga and mindfulness meditation can improve cognitive function, including concentration and attention. A study in the "Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine" in 2018 demonstrated that a single yoga session can enhance attention and working memory.
4. **Reduction in Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):** Yoga-based interventions have shown promise in reducing symptoms of PTSD. A study published in the "Journal of Traumatic Stress" in 2016 found that yoga was associated with significant reductions in PTSD symptoms and improved psychological well-being in trauma survivors.
5. **Improved Sleep Quality:** Regular yoga and meditation practice have been linked to better sleep quality. A study in the "Journal of Clinical Psychology" in 2017 suggested that yoga interventions can improve sleep quality and reduce insomnia symptoms.

Yogic practices encompass a wide range of techniques, including physical postures (asanas), breathing exercises (pranayama), meditation, and mindfulness. These practices can be tailored to individual needs and preferences, and their effects on mental well-being may vary from person to person.

METHODOLOGY:

A study was conducted in the Hathras district involving 40 female students attending school. Random sampling was employed to select the participants, aged between 14 and 17 years. These students were divided into two groups: an Experimental group consisting of 20 individuals and a Control group with another 20.

The Experimental group engaged in a regimen of selected yogic practices, including asanas, Kriya, pranayama, and Yog-nidra, for 50 minutes per session. The duration of holding the final posture

of each asana ranged from 10 to 20 seconds initially, adjusted according to individual capacity, and increased gradually throughout the 12-week period. The frequency of the practices also increased, with asanas being performed two to three times more frequently after every four weeks.

Shavasana and Makarasana were performed following each asana in a lying position to regulate heart rate and breathing back to normal levels. This structured yoga program was carried out over the course of 12 weeks, aiming to evaluate its impact on the participants' physical and mental well-being.

RESULTS

TABLE NO. – 1

Effect of yogic practices on mental wellbeing of female students

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	TIME	N	MEAN	S.D.	T-RATIO
	PRE	20	52.40	4.33	2.56*
	POST	20	54.75	5.64	

*Significant at 0.05 level of confidence at df-20, t-value- 1.729

Table no – 1 shows the average score of Mental Wellbeing scale (Experimental group) of the subjects which are 52.40 (PRE) and 54.75 (POST) respectively. It shows the significant difference in Mental Wellbeing as the obtained t-ratio 2.56 was found higher than the required table value 1.729 at 0.05 level of confidence. It indicates the increment in the level of Mental Wellbeing.

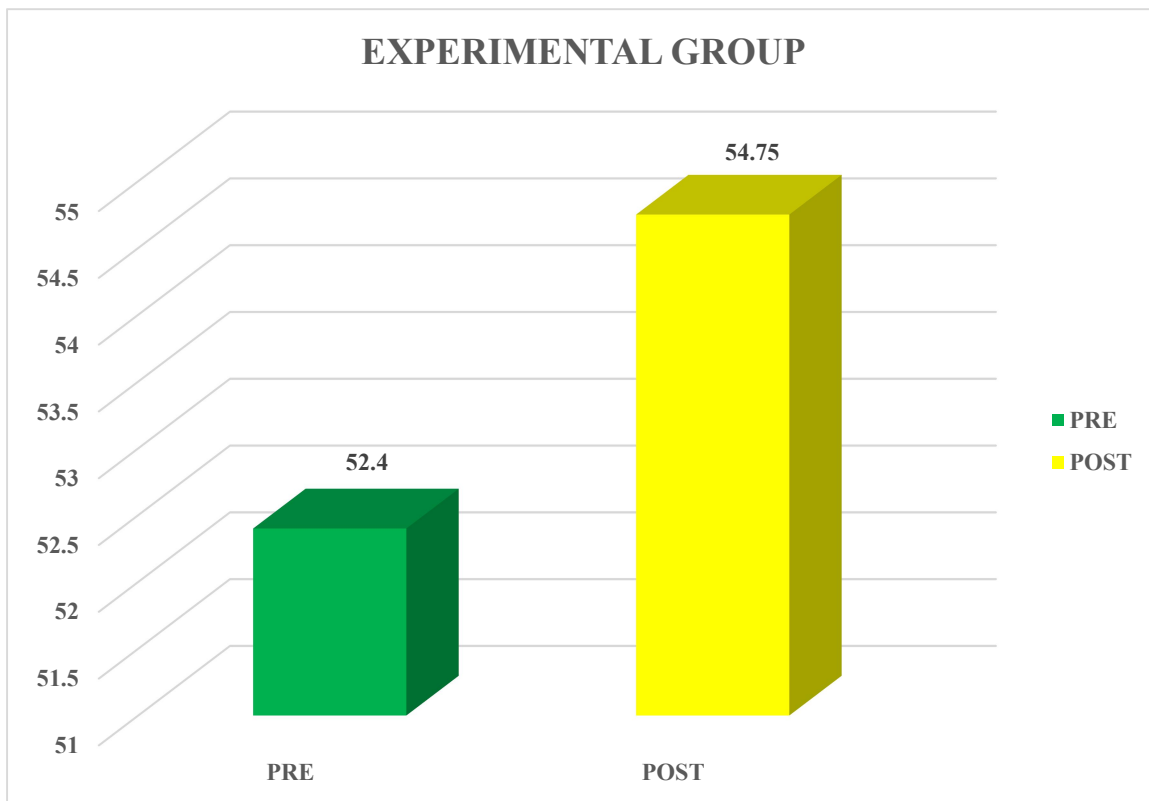


Figure No: 1 Graphical representation of Mental Wellbeing Scale of Experimental group

TABLE NO. – 2

Observation of Mental Wellbeing on female students

	TIME	N	MEAN	S.D.	T-RATIO
CONTROL GROUP	PRE	20	58.65	6.37	1.29
	POST	20	58.10	5.34	

*Significant at 0.05 level of confidence at df-20, t-value- 1.729

Table no – 2 shows the average score of Mental Wellbeing scale (Control group) of the subjects which are 58.65 (PRE) and 58.10 (POST) respectively. It shows the insignificant difference in Mental Wellbeing as the obtained t-ratio 1.29 was found lower than the required table value 1.729 at 0.05 level of confidence. It indicates that there is no change in Mental Wellbeing of control group.

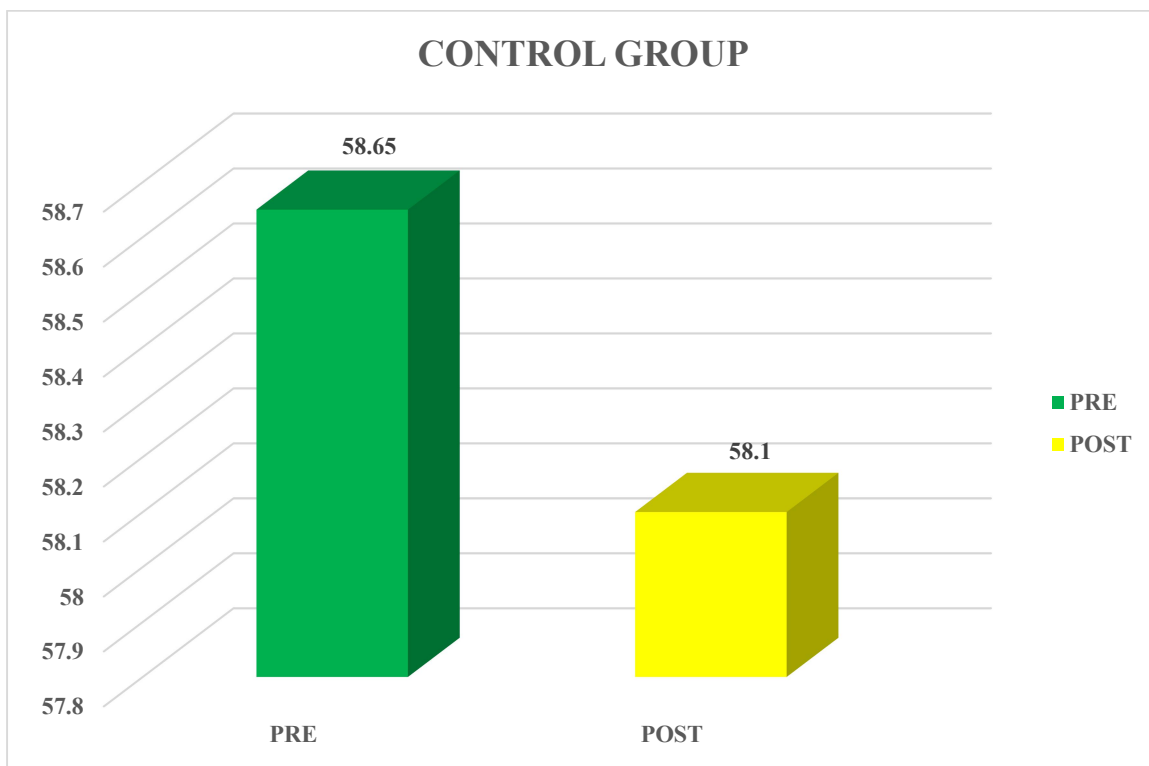


Figure No: 2 Graphical representation of Mental Wellbeing Scale of Control group

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, yogic practices offer a multifaceted approach to promoting mental well-being in today's fast-paced world. Through techniques such as breath control, yoga postures, meditation, mindfulness, and ethical living, individuals can reduce stress, enhance emotional resilience, and cultivate inner peace. By integrating yoga into their daily lives, individuals can empower themselves to

navigate life's challenges with grace and equanimity, ultimately leading to greater overall well-being. It concludes that yoga helps to improve mental wellbeing in the female students.

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