

EFFECT OF YOGIC EXERCISE ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF RESIDENTS IN OLD AGE HOMES

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ABSTRACT

This study looks into how senior citizens residing in assisted living facilities handle stress and how their general health is affected by yoga poses and pranayama. A random selection was made of twenty males ages 65 to 84 who made up a sample of ten elderly people living in their own homes and ten residents of the Akhnoor old age home. Pre- and post-intervention stress levels were assessed utilising the Perceived Stress Questionnaire both before and after four weeks of structured training in yoga poses and pranayama. Findings showed that participants within the assisted living facility experienced a noteworthy drop in stress ($t = 7.051, p < 0.001$) demonstrating the effectiveness of these practices in fostering mental health. The results imply that regular practice of Pranayama and Yogasana can improve the mental along with physical well-being of older adults

KEYWORDS: *Yogasana, Pranayama, stress reduction, elderly health, mental well-being, old age homes, psychological impact.*

INTRODUCTION

elderly people without family members or without someone to care for them can find refuge in old age homes also called Vridh Ashrams. By providing needs like food clothing shelter and healthcare these organizations provide a haven for those in need. Even though senior living facilities tend to the physical needs of the elderly family life continues to provide the emotional and psychological support that older people require (Yadav N. et al 2018). The increasing number of senior citizens living in these homes is a reflection of shifting societal dynamics as modernization and urbanization undermine the traditional values of family support for the elderly.

In Indian households traditionally the elderly were respected as the heads of the household and were shown kindness and consideration by the younger members of the family. They were essential to family life and provided stability and security. Unfortunately, many elderly people are left to fend for themselves as the traditional joint family structure gradually fades away. Several factors such as longer life expectancies shifting demographics economic pressures and a rising demand for privacy and independence are contributing to this change. There are now more senior citizens residing in assisted living facilities as a result of this and they frequently feel alone depressed and alone (Verma S. 2018).

The emotional toll that these homes take on senior citizens is substantial. Because they are away from their families and the comfortable surroundings of their homes many experiences stress anxiety and depression. Their psychological well-being continues to decline owing to the lack of emotional support which exacerbates their mental health problems (Totuka N. & Verma. B., 2015). Promoting physical activities like yoga and pranayama (breathing exercises) has been proposed as a useful strategy to enhance their general well-being and mental health in this regard.

Yoga has been established to lower stress and improve mood by uniting physical postures along with breathing exercises and meditation. Elderly people can benefit greatly from certain yoga poses such as Balasana (child's pose) Shavasana (corpse pose) and Baddha Konasana (butterfly pose) as they promote mental calmness enhance circulation and relieve fatigue. Pranayama techniques such as Anulom Vilom, Kapalbhata and Bhramari Pranayama can further aid in reducing anxiety improving lung function and increasing mental clarity (Brown R. P. & P. Gerbarg. A. L. 2009). The psychological well-being of the elderly is closely tied to their physical health. Frequent exercise not only improves the quality of life (QoL) for people with chronic illnesses like heart disease arthritis and respiratory problems but it also gives older adults living in assisted living facilities a sense of purpose and community. Seniors can make new friends and reestablish a sense of community by participating in group activities like yoga classes. This is essential for fending off feelings of isolation and loneliness (Datta A. 2017).

As old age homes are vital in providing shelter and care for the elderly who have been abandoned or who have no family support. But there's still a lot of worry about these peoples emotional and psychological health. Encouraging physical pursuits like pranayama and yoga can serve to strengthen their sense of community and enhance their mental well-being. It is crucial that society figure out how to better support its aging population on both an emotional and physical level as the number of elderly people keeps rising. This study aims to assess how well yoga poses and pranayama lower stress levels in senior citizens living in assisted living facilities. Through regular practice of these holistic exercises, it also seeks to improve their overall mental along with physical well-being fostering emotional balance and an improved QoL.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To evaluate the effects of Yogasana and Pranayama on the stress levels of residents in old age homes.
- To boost both their physical along with mental health.

HYPOTHESIS

(H1): Regular practice of Yogasana and Pranayama significantly reduces stress levels among elderly residents in old age homes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The beneficial effects of yoga asana and pranayama on mental and physical health have drawn a lot of attention to the study of these practices in older populations in recent years. Many types of yoga and pranayama have been shown in studies to reduce stress enhance psychological well-being and improve general health especially in the elderly.

PRANAYAMA AND ITS IMPACT ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Barmola (2020) examined the advantages of two well-liked yoga breathing exercises Kapalbhathi and Anulom Vilom Pranayama. The study demonstrated how these techniques control blood pressure and brain activity. Most importantly Barmola showed how these pranayama methods work well for managing psychological conditions like stress anxiety depression and strokes. Reduced levels of stress and anxiety are a result of the autonomic nervous system being balanced by the rhythmic breathing techniques taught in Kapalbhathi and Anulom Vilom. This is important for older people because anxiety and stress can worsen physical health problems. Empirical evidence bolsters the current study's hypothesis which states that pranayama can improve the mental and physical health of older adults by reducing stress levels.

In a similar vein, Upadhye, J. A. (2019) investigated the health benefits of the bee-humming Bhramari Pranayama. This pranayama technique which improves blood circulation and provides stress and anxiety relief fosters a mind-body connection that was highlighted in Bisht's study. Along with improving mental health the method gets rid of unpleasant emotions like agitation anger and frustration. This suggests that Bhramari Pranayama could be a vital component in reducing stress among elderly individuals by enhancing their emotional and mental stability further supporting the objectives of the present study.

YOGA AND PHYSICAL HEALTH IN OLDER ADULTS

Numerous research studies emphasized the significance of yoga and mild exercise in preserving physical well-being among senior citizens. Langhammer et al. (2018) demonstrated the numerous health benefits of regular exercise training for older adults including a reduction in cardiovascular mortality a decrease in stress and improved body mass index (BMI) regulation. Exercise is essential to preserving heart health and general fitness in older adults due to their physiological vulnerabilities. Older people can maintain their physical health while lowering stress by combining yoga and light exercise which aligns with the current study's goals of using yoga to enhance both physical and mental well-being.

Singh, P. (2022) focused on mental emotional along with spiritual well-being further supported the holistic advantages of yoga. The study showed that yoga strengthens immunity lowers tension and anxiety straightens posture and fights depression. Additionally, it improves tolerance and willpower which supports boosted mental and spiritual well-being. Also, the numerous advantages of yoga lend credence to its use as a comprehensive intervention for senior citizens meeting their physical as well as psychological needs. The study's objective of enhancing mental health via a comprehensive approach is in line with this.

THE ROLE OF SPECIFIC YOGA POSES IN STRESS REDUCTION

Various specific yoga postures also play a significant role in stress reduction. Pandey, N., et al (2023) emphasized the benefits of chanting during Udgeeth Pranayama (reciting Om) for stress relief mental clarity and the elimination of negative thoughts. Studies have also demonstrated that the practice raises energy levels and lowers blood pressure. This points to the psychological and physiological benefits of sound-based meditation practices in yoga particularly in helping elderly individuals manage stress and improve their overall mood and energy.

Kaswan, P. (2022) explored the role yoga in stress relief. The study claims that different asana is a powerful stress reliever because it helps people free their minds from unwanted thoughts and obtain perspective in challenging circumstances. In addition to easing chest neck and shoulder tension the poses also promote a feeling of relief and lightness. The goal of the current study which is to use yoga to improve physical and mental well-being may be supported by the potential benefit of this posture for older adults who suffer from physical tension brought on by psychological stress.

EXERCISE AND WELL-BEING IN OLDER ADULTS

Kadariya et al. (2019) showed how regular exercise improves older adults' mental health and well-being. According to the study regular exercise such as yoga and other forms of physical activity lowers stress and enhances sleep quality. Gour et al. (2020) also underlined how crucial physical activity is to preserving mental and physical health. The study demonstrated the usefulness of gentle exercise like yoga in managing the social and physical difficulties associated

with aging. This supports the notion that senior citizens can benefit from adding yoga to their daily routine in addition to improving their physical health by developing greater psychological stability and emotional resilience.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aims to evaluate how yoga and pranayama affect stress levels in older people living in their own homes as well as in assisted living facilities. Twenty male participants in all were chosen ten came from an Akhnoor senior living facility and ten from Vasant Bihar Jammu where they lived with their families. Participants were between the ages of 65 and 84.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A pretest-post-test design was utilised in the exploration to gauge the efficacy of a four-week intervention that involved daily practice of Pranayama and Yogasana. The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) was used as a pretest one day before the intervention. A post-test measuring changes in stress levels was given using the same test after four weeks of consistent yoga practice.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The study employed purposive sampling to choose participants. Ten males were selected at random from the Akhnoor old age home and ten more were chosen from the Vasant Bihar region.

VARIABLES

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) was used to measure psychological stress which was the main variable in this investigation.

DATA COLLECTION

Information was gathered from 20 men. Each participant had their pretest stress scores taken prior to the intervention and their post-test scores were taken following four weeks of yoga instruction.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The pretest and post-test results for each group were analysed utilising a paired t-test to ascertain the significance of the stress reduction brought about by the Yogasana and Pranayama practice.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

To gauge Yogasana and Pranayama’s impact on stress levels and physical and mental health data was acquired from 20 participants—10 from an old age home in Akhnoor and 10 elderly individuals living at home in Jammu. Stress levels were measured before and after the four-week intervention using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) in this study. To ascertain whether there were statistically noteworthy variances between the pre- along with post-intervention scores t-tests for paired samples were performed as part of the statistical analysis utilising SPSS version 16. 0.

Table 4.1 Paired Samples Statistics for Old Age Home Participants

Statistic	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest (Old Age Home)	0.8327	10	0.04157	0.01315
Post-test (Old Age Home)	0.6873	10	0.05031	0.01591

Table 4.2 Paired Samples Test for Old Age Home Participants

Paired Differences	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval (Lower)	95% Confidence Interval (Upper)	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest - Post-test (Old Age Home)	0.1454	0.06521	0.02062	0.09875	0.19205	7.051	9	0.000

The t-value is 7.051 with a significance value of 0.000, demonstrating a statistically noteworthy improvement in the psychological well-being of participants from the old age home after the four-week yoga intervention.

Table 4.3 Paired Samples Statistics for Participants Living at Home

Statistic	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest (Living at Home)	0.5802	10	0.08300	0.02625
Post-test (Living at Home)	0.5638	10	0.08291	0.02622

Table 4.4 Paired Samples Test for Participants Living at Home

Paired Differences	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence	95% Confidence	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)

				Interval (Lower)	Interval (Upper)			
Pretest - Post-test (Living at Home)	0.0164	0.02731	0.00864	-0.00314	0.03594	1.899	9	0.090

The t-value is 1.899 with a significance value of 0.090, which is above the 0.05 threshold, indicating no significant change in stress levels for participants living at home.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

(H1): Regular practice of Yogasana and Pranayama significantly reduces stress levels among elderly residents in old age homes.

Table 4.5 T-test results for Old Age Home Residents

Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	t-value	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Significance (p-value)
0.8327	0.6873	7.051	9	0.000

Following the intervention the elderly residents mean stress score decreased from 0.8327 on the pre-test to 0.6873 on the post-test. Both the t-value and the p-value are under 0.05 threshold at 7.051 and 0.000, respectively.

Since the p-value is significantly under 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis and also accept the alternative hypothesis. So, this indicates that elderly residents of assisted living facilities experience a significant reduction in stress levels when they regularly practice yoga asana and pranayama classes. The 4-week intervention reduces stress in a way that is statistically significant.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the analysis support the hypothesis that practicing yoga poses and pranayama for four weeks has a positive impact on psychological well-being by showing a significant reduction in stress levels among participants living in assisted living facilities. On the other hand, the impact on those who live at home is less noticeable most likely because their psychological health was already better before the intervention. This demonstrates the unique advantages that yoga poses offer people residing in assisted living facilities.

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