

# EFFECT OF YOGA PRACTICES ON WELLBEING

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## ABSTRACT

*The main aim of yoga is to harmonize the body, mind and soul which exhibit a good personality. Yoga is an intangible force which question on its objective. Yoga is a fantastic remedy for overcoming problems that a modern man is facing in its daily life. The present study was a comparative study of general wellbeing among yoga practitioners and non- yoga practitioners. Review of literature demonstrates that so many factors are associated with general wellbeing. Therefore; present investigation was designed to study the effect of yoga practice on wellbeing. A sample of 80 participants (male and female) was chosen from Karnal and Kurukshetra district of Haryana, with mean age of 38. 40 volunteers who participated in the practice of yoga over a period of 4 months and 40 who were not doing yoga were assessed on general Well-being Inventory by Santosh, K., Verma and Amita Verma (1986). Data was analyzed by using Independent t-test. The results of the study showed that yoga practitioners have significantly higher wellbeing. The paper thus, reiterates the beneficial effects of regular practice of yoga on general wellbeing.*

**Keywords:** Yoga and Wellbeing.

Yoga is an important branch of Indian Philosophy which was originally developed by an Indian sage *Patanjali* who lived in 400 B.C. '*Patanjala yoga sutra*' by sage *Patanjali*, is the earliest written record of yoga and one of the oldest text in existence. *Patanjali's 'Astanga yoga'* consists of eight components namely *Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Prathyahara, Dharana, Dhyana* and *Samadhi*. Although the system was initially developed to help the practitioner to attain spiritual goals, some of the components of yoga like *asana* (posture), *pranayama* (breathing) and *dhyana* (meditation) can be very effectively used to provide relief from several physical and psychological symptoms associated with chronic human diseases and also to provide good health, strength, balance, vitality

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and clarity of mind, all of which help to enhance the quality of life, at all stages of human life.

Yoga has no specific religion connotations its appeal is universal and is practiced by many. Yoga provides the health benefits of physical exercise. It promotes relaxation and emotional control. Yoga provides structured social opportunities. In 1980's yoga becomes popular system of physical exercise across the western world, but yoga in Indian traditions is more than physical exercise, it has a meditation and spiritual core with the ultimate goal in *moksha* or liberation. 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. Yoga in its original form consists of a system of ethical, psychological and physical practices; although of ancient origin, it transcends cultures and languages. A meta-analysis study found that yoga based intervention produced substantial and highly significant reductions in smoking, alcohol consumption, and illicit drug use (Alexander, Robinson, & Rainforth, 1994). Malathi et al, 2000 found that regular yoga practice improve subjective wellbeing. Yoga is one of the methods by which a goal of positive mental health can be achieved (Verma, 1984)

Wellbeing the terminology denotes the physical, mental and social health of the individual in their respective society. Wellbeing may be characterized as the subjective feeling of contentment, happiness, satisfaction with life experience. And one's role in the modern world of works, sense of achievement, belongingness and no distress, dissatisfaction or worry. WHO (2001) has proposed that mental health is a state of wellbeing in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can works with the normal stress of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to community. Anger (2008,2010,2011) stated that even the philosophical literature refers to the simple notion of wellbeing(i.e. 'a life going well') in a variety of ways including a person's good, benefit, advantages, interest, prudential values, welfare , happiness, flourishing, utility quality of life and thriving(e.g. Seed house,1995:65). Shin and Johnson (1978) have defined wellbeing form of happiness as "a global assessment of a person's quality of life. Hafner-Holter etal (2009) found the significant improvement in physical and emotional wellbeing. Lucia, Danielle (2014) found yoga participants experience higher levels of perceived wellness than non-Yoga participants. Sharma, Gupta and Bijlani (2008) suggested that a short lifestyle modification and stress management education program lead to remarkable improvement in the subjective wellbeing scores of the subjects and can therefore make an appreciable contribution to primary prevention as well as management of lifestyle diseases. Jadhav and Havalappanavar (2009) results revealed a significant decrease in both state and trait anxiety levels and positive change in the subjective wellbeing of the students.Kamakhya (2004) noticed remarkable positive change in P.G. yoga student's anxiety and subjective wellbeing after practice of yoga *nidra* daily, half an hour for months.

The review of literature indicates that happiness, quality of life wellbeing directly related with peaceful mind .In India, a limited number of research work have been reported in the area of well-being. Taking this perspective in mind, the present investigation is a further attempt to find out whether yoga practice has any effect on wellbeing.

**Objective:** To studies the effect of regular yoga practice on wellbeing.

**Hypothesis:** There would be significant difference on wellbeing between yoga practitioners and non-yoga practitioners.

### METHOD

**Design:** A two group design was adopted in the present study. Group I comprised respondents who were practicing Yoga and group II consisted of respondents who were not practicing Yoga.

**Sample:** The study was carried out among 80 adults. The sample consisted of yoga participants (n=40) and non- yoga participants of 30 to 40 years of age and they were selected purposively from *Karnal* and *Kurukshetra* district of Haryana. Subjects doing *yog abhyas* daily for a period of one hour for five days in a week under the trained yoga instructor's supervision of *Bharatiya Yog Sansthan*.

#### Tool:

i) **PGI General Wellbeing Scale:** PGI General Wellbeing measure by Verma and Verma (1986) was used to assess the wellbeing of the subject. This scale consists of 20 items. The scoring was easy-just counting the number of ticks right with scores ranging from 0 to 20. Numbers of ticks is counted and constitute the wellbeing score. The scale showed good inter-rater (.86,  $p < .01$ ) and inter-scorer (1.0,  $p < .01$ ) reliabilities (Moudgil etal 1986).Test-retest reliability was .91 for the English version and .86 for the Hindi version (Moudgil et al.1986).

ii) **Yogic Practices:** The detail of yogic practices is as follows

**Table 1: List of yogic practice**

1. suksham abhyash	8. dhanuraasan
2. ashwathan aasan	9. makar aasan
3. tri-kon aasan	10. salabh aasan
4. ardhchandakar aasan	11. sav aasan
5. manduk aasan	12. anulom vilom
6. tadasan	13. kapalbhathi
7. ushth aasan	14. ujjai
8. surya namaskar	15. bharamri
9. Go muckh aasan	16. om chanting etc.

- iii) Procedure:** All the subjects were informed about the purpose of the research, rapport was established with each of the subjects and all the doubts regarding the study were assured that the information would be kept confidential and used only for academic purpose. The subjects who were willing to participate only considered in this study. First of all rapport was established individually and proper instructions were given to them. PGI General Wellbeing scale was individually administered to each respondents. After a formal introduction, the scale was filled by them, and the dully filled scale was collected with a word of thanks for their support. Scoring and data analysis was done. Descriptive statistics and t-test was used for the analysis of data.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study was intended to investigate the comparison between yoga participants and non-yoga participants on wellbeing. To achieve this aim, obtained data was analyzed by using simple t-test for the significance of difference. The mean scores, standard deviations and t-value of two groups on wellbeing have been depicted in table no.2. It is observed from the above table that the scores of wellbeing are significantly higher among yoga practitioners than non-yoga practitioners. That indicates that yoga practitioners have significantly higher wellbeing than non-yoga practitioners. Higher mean score on wellbeing of yoga practitioners shows that they are more able to monitor their wellness. Hence hypotheses 'there is a significant difference on wellbeing between yoga practitioners and non-yoga practitioners has been accepted.

**Table 2: Mean comparison of wellbeing on the bases of yoga practice and non-yoga practice**

<i>Groups</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>	<i>t-value</i>
Yoga	40	16.47	4.20005	.66409	5.08**
Non-yoga	40	11.65	11.65	4.28204	.67705

\*\*significant at 0.01 level

Health and wellbeing in true sense are dynamic processes of establishing equilibrium in the state of flux, it has been concluded that yoga process plays a significant role in the psychological management of wellbeing. Subjects practicing yoga were calm, cheerful, considerable and courageous in all dealings. Also the study suggests that the practice of yoga is strongest foundation for the building of stage of one's positive mental health. Lucia, Danielle (2014) supported the present results yoga participants perceived higher levels of mental wellness, physical wellness and subjective well-being. Auty etal (2015) suggested that yoga and meditation have favorable effects on prisoners Mehta and Taneja (2013)

concluded that there is a marked improvement in psychological wellbeing of students after performing short-term yoga practices. Weinber and Thomas et al (2013) suggested that laughter yoga shows promise as an effective intervention to temporarily increase wellbeing. Moliver, Mika and Chartand et al (2013) results showed does response effect with yoga experience exercising an increasing protective effect against low levels of SWB and vitality.

### CONCLUSION

The findings revealed that the significant wellbeing difference between the adults with respect to their yoga practice. This study is very fruitful which suggests that more emphasis should be given in yoga therapy to improve the positive approach of thinking. The present study could be more effective with a large sample size covering different physical and mental training programs. This study provided a great insight in the area of concern and the way for future research.

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Yoga is one of the most popular physical activities and group classes in the United States, although it wasn't always that way. Yoga's reputation started out in the West as something that hippies did for spiritual enlightenment after consuming one of several mind-altering drugs; however, today it is a much more mainstream and respected practice that centers on the physical and mental well-being of practitioners. If you've given yoga a try, you know that it has the potential to be very effective in treating and soothing a wide range of illnesses, issues, diagnoses, and stressful situations. Hypothesized Effects of Yoga-based Practices on the Regulation of Allostatic Load and the Integration of Bottom-up and Top-down Processes. Conclusion. Conflict of Interest Statement. Self-reported wellbeing as measured by the Subjective Well-Being Inventory (Sell and Nagpal, 1992), was assessed in a self-selected group of health care practitioners who underwent a 4 months long yoga program consisting of five one-hour yoga classes per week (Malathi et al., 2000). Though the participants reported increased levels of well-being by the end of the program, there was no control group to rule out external factors that may have promoted the effect.