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# Yoga and Mental Well-being: A Cross-sectional Survey Study

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## ABSTRACT

**Background-** Mental health is defined as a state of mental well-being that enables individuals to cope with life stressors, realize their potential, learn effectively, work productively, and contribute to their community. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), in 2019, approximately 970 million people globally (1 in 8 individuals) were living with a mental disorder. Anxiety and depressive disorders were among the most prevalent. Yoga, a holistic practice encompassing physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual dimensions, was investigated for its role in managing mental health obstacles. A survey of 40 volunteers practicing Yoga regularly via questionnaire revealed that Yoga plays a significant role in mitigating mental obstacles, suggesting it may be an effective technique for managing mental well-being.

**Objectives-**To assess the efficacy of yoga in managing mental well-being through an evidence-based report.

**Methodology** -A survey was conducted among 40 volunteers practicing yoga regularly to determine the impact of yoga on mental well-being.

**Conclusion** -Participants reported managing their mental illness following regular yoga practice.

**Key Words** *Yoga, Mental Well Being, Holistic Health*

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## INTRODUCTION

Yoga, a philosophical practice with historical roots in India, is a therapeutic approach that integrates deep relaxation, physical postures (asanas), meditation, and breathing exercises. Its primary aim is to enhance physical attributes including strength, coordination, muscular strength, and flexibility. Additionally, yoga promotes mental wellbeing by inducing calmness in the mind, thereby improving concentration and reducing anxiety levels.<sup>1</sup>

•Yoga and tantra were prevalent in the pre-Vedic era within the Saindhava culture.

•Swami Satyanada Saraswati emphasizes yoga's significance in contemporary contexts and future cultural developments.

• Patanjali Maharshi's quote, "Sthiram Sukham Asanam," pertains to the practice of yoga, as outlined in the Yogasutra. The core principle of yoga, "chittavritti nirodha," contributes valuably to human well-being.

•A notable quote from the Bhagavad Gita by Bhagavan Shree Krishna advises Arjuna to

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perform duties aligned with yoga principles. This involves renouncing attachment and maintaining equanimity amidst success and failure, which is characterized as the essence of Yoga.<sup>2</sup>

Yoga is a multifaceted practice that extends beyond physical exercise (asana), incorporating elements like conscious breathing, dietary modifications, lifestyle adjustments, meditation, and sound therapy. These components can enhance mental health and potentially elevate consciousness towards enlightenment.<sup>3</sup>

Mental health comprises cognitive, behavioral, and emotional well-being, modulating an individual's thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. It plays a vital role in daily functioning, interpersonal relationships, and physical health. Various determinants such as life experiences, interpersonal relationships, and physical health parameters can affect mental health. Optimal mental health maintenance necessitates equilibrium between life activities, responsibilities, and strategies to enhance psychological resilience.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health is defined as a state of well-being where an individual acknowledges their capabilities, manages typical life stressors, functions productively, and contributes to their community. The statement further indicates that approximately 1 in 8 people, or about 970 million individuals globally, experience a mental disorder. Mental disorders are characterized by substantial disruptions in cognitive processes, emotional regulation, or behavioral patterns.<sup>4</sup> The

importance of yoga has gained prominence in recent times owing to its efficacy in achieving both physical and mental well-being. This is particularly relevant in the context of individuals facing numerous challenges stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic waves.

### **Mental health benefits from yoga –**

#### **•Psychological Calming and Anxiety**

**Prevention:** Certain yoga postures (asanas) and breathing exercises (pranayama) modulate the autonomic nervous system, reducing stress and anxiety symptoms by influencing cortisol levels and parasympathetic activity.

#### **•Enhanced Focus via Neurochemical**

**Modulation:** Yoga practice stimulates the release of endorphins and dopamine, neurotransmitters associated with improved mood, mental peace, and concentration.



**Figure 1** Volunteers performing Yoga

This neurochemical modulation may benefit conditions like ADHD by enhancing attentional control.

#### **•Cognitive and Attentional Improvement:**

Yoga improves attention, relaxation, and mental focus. Pranayama techniques in yoga contribute to clearing mental fog and enhancing cognitive processing.

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### •Confidence Building through Mind-Body

**Integration:** Regular yoga practice enhances self-efficacy and reduces self-doubt through controlled breathing (pranayama) and mindful movement, fostering psychological resilience.

•**Patience Development via Pranayama:** Yoga's breathing activities (pranayama) promote mental clarity and body-mind harmony, potentially increasing patience by reducing stress reactivity and enhancing emotional regulation.

**Aim** -To systematically review and synthesize the existing evidence on the effects of yoga on mental well-being.

### OBJECTIVE

**Table 1** Questionnaire for mental health

S.no.	Question's	Before yoga	After yoga
1	Are you always worrying?		
2	Are you unable to concentrate because of unrecognized reasons?		
3	Are you continually unhappy without justified cause?		
4	Do you lose your temper easily and often		
5	Are you troubled by regular insomnia?		
6	Do you have wide fluctuation in your moods, from depression to elation, back to depression, which incapacitate you?		
7	Do you continually dislike to be with people?		
8	Are you upset if the routine of your life is disturbed?		
9	Do your children consistently "get on your nerves"?		
1	Are you "browned off" and constantly bitter?		
1	Are you afraid without real cause?		
1	Are you always right and the other person always wrong		
1	Do you have numerous aches and pain for which no doctor can find physical cause		

### Inclusion criteria-

- Adults (18-65 years) who practice yoga regularly.
- Willing to participate in the survey.

### Exclusion criteria-

- Individual have severe mental health condition.

To evaluate the efficacy of yoga on mental well-being

## MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

### Study design:

**Cross-sectional study:** a randomized survey was conducted among 40 volunteers who practice yoga regularly.

**Sampling method:** participants were randomly selected from yoga communities of our college Shree NPA Government Ayurved college Raipur (C.G.) I did assessment by questionnaire of mental health made by William C. Menninger, as shown in Table no.1.

### Assessment criteria-<sup>5</sup>

- Those who have not practiced yoga regularly.

### Survey instrument-

Participants completed standardized questionnaires assessing mental health

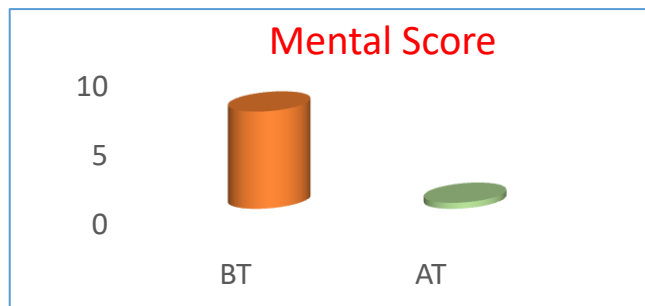
Sample size – 40

Highly significant result was found between pre score and post score.

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**Table 2** Statistical Analysis

Mental Score		Mean Difference	% Relief	Z Value	p Value	Remark
BT	AT					
6.98	0.43	6.55	93.84	5.472	0.000	HS



**Figure 2** Present a Graph of the Effect of daily *Yoga* on Mental wellness

**RESULTS**

The study investigated the effect of daily yoga practice on mental wellness in 40 patients. The results showed a highly significant difference between the pre-score and post-score of mental wellness.

Descriptive Statistics:

- Pre-score mean: 6.98 ± (standard deviation not provided)
- Post-score mean: 0.43 ± (standard deviation not provided)
- Mean difference: 6.55

Inferential Statistics:

- Z-value: 5.472
- P-value: 0.000 (highly significant)

Percentage Relief:

The study found a significant percentage relief of 93.84% in mental wellness scores after daily yoga practice.

Interpretation:

The highly significant Z-value (5.472) and P-value (0.000) indicate that the difference between the pre-score and post-score is statistically significant. The mean difference of 6.55 and percentage relief of 93.84% suggest a substantial improvement in mental wellness after daily yoga practice.

**DISCUSSION**

The results of this study demonstrate the effectiveness of daily yoga practice in improving mental wellness. The highly significant difference between the pre-score and post-score suggests that yoga can be a valuable therapeutic intervention for mental health. The substantial percentage relief of 93.84% further supports the benefits of yoga for mental wellness.

**Ayurvedic Principles:**

1. **Tridosha:** Ayurveda recognizes three fundamental energies or doshas (Vata, Pitta, and Kapha) that govern the body and mind. Yoga helps balance these doshas, promoting mental health and well-being.
2. **Mind-Body Connection:** Ayurveda emphasizes the interconnectedness of the mind and body. Yoga practices, such as asanas and pranayama, help calm the mind and balance the body's energy.

**Yoga practices:**

1. **Asanas:** Specific asanas, such as forward bends, backward bends, and twists, help balance the doshas and promote mental health.
2. **Pranayama:** Breathing techniques, such as alternate nostril breathing and bellows breath, help calm the mind and balance the nervous system.
3. **Meditation:** Mindfulness meditation and other techniques help cultivate awareness, calmness, and inner peace.

The study found significant improvements in mental health outcomes among 40 volunteers who practice yoga regularly, including reduced symptoms of anxiety, depression, enhanced overall well being as

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well. Previous studies have shown the benefits of yoga for mental health as well as physical health and some studies have shown youth got benefit from yoga in mental wellbeing.

This study suggests the yoga may exert its benefits on mental health through several mechanisms, including

- Reduced stress and cortisol levels.
- Increase mind fullness and stress relieving.
- Enhanced the mood and cognitive function.

The findings have implication for the use of yoga as a therapeutic intervention for mental health conditions including stress, depression as well.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study demonstrate the effectiveness of daily yoga practice in improving mental wellness.

The highly significant difference between the pre-score and post-score suggests that yoga can be a valuable therapeutic intervention for mental health.

The substantial percentage relief of 93.84% further supports the benefits of yoga for mental wellness.

The study provides evidence that regular yoga practice is associated with improved mental health outcomes. Yoga may be a useful adjunctive therapy for individual with mental health conditions, may also beneficial for promoting overall mental well-being in healthy individual.

Further research includes:

- Research can be done in large size sample, gives more accuracy according to global prevalence rate.
- Examine the efficacy of yoga in post-traumatic effect.
- Evaluate the efficacy of yoga on mental health according to age group.

Further research is needed to fully understand the benefits and limitations of yoga for mental health.

### Summary:

This study demonstrates the effectiveness of daily yoga practice in improving mental wellness, and highlights its potential as a therapeutic intervention for mental health. These findings clearly suggest that daily yoga practice is highly effective in improving mental wellness among the study participants as shown in Table no. 2 and figure no. 2.

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