

Yoga and Meditation as an Intervention for Teachers

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Abstract – Exercise is any kind of bodily activity that improves and balances physical and mental health and wellness. Yoga and Meditation is also considered as a very effective exercise to improve the overall well-being of an individual. Dupler and Frey says that, Yoga is considered as a mild form of physical activity or exercise that benefits to improve general health, helps to changes our sedentary lifestyle and acts as a stress management tool. They also considered yoga as a complete exercise program and physical therapy routine to strengthen and rejuvenate the body system.

The purpose of the present study is to assess the effectiveness of Yoga and Meditation as an intervention among Teachers.

Stress and anxiety level of 60 teachers were measured by administering Singh's personal stress source inventory and Beck anxiety inventory. Out of 60 samples, 30 samples were considered as experimental group and 30 as controlled group. Yoga and meditation based intervention was given for only a sample size of 30 who are in experimental group. Pre test and post test was done for both the group to measure their anxiety and stress level.

The finding suggested that yoga and meditation based intervention will help teachers as stress management technique and this has to be a part of daily routine for adults for their physical fitness.

Key words: Yoga, Meditation, Anxiety, Teachers, Stress management

INTRODUCTION

Physical exercise is any bodily activity that enhances or maintains physical fitness and overall well being of an individual. It is performed for various reasons, including increasing growth and development, preventing aging, strengthening our muscles, cardiovascular activity, improve athletic performance, helps in weight loss, and to maintain our homeostasis. Frequent and regular physical exercise boosts the immune system and it helps to prevent infections and diseases.

YOGA

Yoga is commonly perceived as an alternative medicine. In Sanskrit, Yoga means union or unification. Yoga techniques aim to develop and retain a healthy balance between all aspects of body and mind.

Yoga fundamentally offers a means by which individuals are yoga has a impact to enhance the overall development of body and mind.

Many studies have tried to determine the effectiveness of yoga as a complementary intervention for many diseases such as cancer, asthma, physical and mental problems. According to Jacobsen, "Yoga is a techniques of controlling the body and the mind"

Yoga has been studied and is increasingly recommended to promote relaxation, reduce stress and some medical conditions such as premenstrual syndrome. Yoga has also been used as a complete exercise program and physical therapy routine.

MEDITATION

Meditation is that which gives you deep rest. Meditation is an activity in which the practitioner just sits and allows the mind to dissolve. The rest in meditation is deeper than the deepest sleep that you can ever have. When the mind becomes free from agitation, is calm and serene and at peace, meditation happens.

There are **numerous benefits of meditation**. It is an essential practice for mental hygiene. It helps in attention and concentration, perceiving things in a right manner, it calms the mind, helps in verbal and non verbal communication, enhances the skills and personality development, boosts the inner strength, healing, helps in relaxation and rejuvenation.

Stress

Stress is a reaction to a particular stimulus that disturbs our physical and mental status. In other words it is a universal part of our life. Stressful event can trigger the fight or flight response which imbalances the chemical reactions such as hormones and neurotransmitters in our body.

Stress can be both positive and negative. According to Hans Selye's positive stress is termed as eustress ex: marriage and negative stress is termed as distress ex: death.

Stressors are the source of stress that causes stress. They can be frustration, conflict and pressure. The difference between stress and stressor is stress is the feeling we have when under pressure, while stressors are the things we respond to in the environment. Generally, the more stressors we experience the more stress we feel.

When we are under stress, our body experiences increased blood pressure, palpitation, increased breathing, digestive systems slow down, muscles become tensed, sleep irregularities etc., our mind gets affected by showing restlessness, anxiety, irritation and anger, poor concentration, sadness or depression etc., and we show behavioral changes like over eating or under eating, outburst of anger, involvement in drug or alcohol abuse, social withdrawal, and even violence.

ANXIETY

Anxiety is an emotion characterized by an unpleasant state of inner turmoil, often accompanied by nervousness, tension, intense fear and apprehension, restlessness, somatic complaints and rumination. It is a subjective unpleasant feeling. Anxiety can disturb the physical and mental status of an individual by affecting his personal, social, emotional and vocational areas of life.

STRESS AND ANXIETY AMONG TEACHERS

Teachers are more prone to stress and anxiety because of the following reasons. Teachers are concerned over their students, their academic progress, results, attendance and improving teaching aids. Teachers are more involved in preparing for the classes, updating themselves to the current trends

and changes, giving assignments, attending seminars and workshops, participating in FDP etc., other than academic involvement they are also involved in admission and administration works. Teachers are supposed to maintain the details of the students, constant touch with the parents, organizing inter and intra collegiate programs, guest lectures, field visits etc., they also have deadlines to complete their assignments. Because of all these they have to sacrifice time and energy. When they fail to meet all these or if they are burdened with family and vocational responsibilities then they experience stress and anxiety.

METHODOLOGY

Problem:

To assess the effectiveness of Yoga and Meditation based intervention to reduce Stress and Anxiety among teaching professionals.

Objectives:

- To evaluate the effect of yoga and meditation on stress level among teaching professionals.
- To evaluate the effect of yoga and meditation on anxiety level among teaching professionals.

Hypothesis:

- There is a significant difference in stress level among teachers before and after yoga and meditation based intervention
- There is a significant difference in anxiety level among teachers before and after yoga and meditation based intervention

Sample:

The present study examined the stress and anxiety level among 30 teachers. Yoga and meditation based intervention sessions were given for them for 3 days in a week from 7.00 am to 9.00am (Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday) for a period of two months. The subjects were administered Singh's personal stress source inventory developed by Arun Kumar Singh, Ashish Kumar Singh and Arpana Singh (1971) and Beck's anxiety inventory developed by Aaron T Beck to measure the stress and anxiety. The obtained data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and 't' test.

MATERIALS:

Information schedule: It elicits demographic details and other information like number of years of experience in the institution, working hours, work load, etc.,

The Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI), created by Aaron T Beck and other colleagues, is a 21-question multiple-choice and it's a self report inventory that is used for measuring the severity of anxiety for children and adults. The questions used in this measure ask about common symptoms of anxiety that the subject has had during the past week (including the day you take it) (such as numbness and tingling, sweating not due to heat, and fear of the worst happening). It is designed for individuals who are of 17 years of age or older and takes 5 to 10 minutes to complete. Several studies have found the Beck Anxiety Inventory to be an accurate measure of anxiety symptoms in children and adults.

Singh Personal Stress Source Inventory (SPSSI) by Arun Kumar Singh, Ashish Kumar Singh and Arpana Singh, consists of 35 statements belongs to our personal life. This can be administered in a group of 20-25 or to one person at a time. This inventory has no time limit but ordinarily 12 to 15 minutes are sufficient for completion of the inventory.

PROCEDURE:

The present study examined the stress and anxiety level among 30 teachers. Yoga and meditation based intervention sessions was given for them for 3 days in a week from 7.00 am to 9.00am (Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday) for a period of two months. Personal detail was obtained from individuals and explained about the purpose and importance of the study. The questionnaire was administered individually with proper instructions for two times with a time gap of two months. After the response given by the subjects, the questionnaires were collected. The interaction with the subjects and the authorities was cordial. Institution and other supporters were thanked for their cooperation to do this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

A data sheet has been prepared and computed mean, SD and 't' value. The following tables shows the obtained scores .

Table-1: Mean, SD and 't' value for stress level of teaching professionals before and after Yoga mediation based intervention.

Stress level	Mean	SD	't' value
Before	63.83	16.37	5.02**
After	50.93	15.79	

*P< 0.05; **P<0.01

Table 1 reveals the scores obtained by teaching professionals before and intervention in Stress inventory. Before intervention Teachers have obtained mean score of 63.83 with the corresponding SD of 16.37 and after intervention the mean scores are 50.93 with the corresponding SD of 15.79. The obtained 't' value 5.02 which is statistically significant at both the level. This result shows that 1st hypothesis which states that "There is a significant difference in stress level among teaching professionals before and after yoga and meditation based intervention" has been accepted.

Based on the above results we can infer that the stress level of teaching professionals have reduced after attending the intervention program. Hence the results proved that yoga and meditation based intervention has a positive effect on their stress level. The obtained result supports the previous studies done by Alyson Ross and Sue Thomas(2010) which says yoga is effective to reduce stress.

Table-2: Mean, SD and 't' value of by institutionalized widows and non widows in life satisfaction. Pre and post test

Anxiety level	Mean	SD	't' value
Before	36.06	13.50	9.20**
After	19.33	4.81	

Table 2 reveals the scores obtained by teaching professionals before and intervention in Anxiety inventory. Before intervention Teachers have

obtained mean score of 36.06 with the corresponding SD of 13.50 and after intervention the mean scores are 19.33 with the corresponding SD of 4.81. The obtained 't' value 9.20 which is statistically significant at both the level. This result shows that ^{2nd} hypothesis which states that "There is a significant difference in Anxiety level among teaching professionals before and after yoga and meditation based intervention" has been accepted.

Based on the above results we can infer that the Anxiety level of teaching professionals have reduced after attending the intervention program. Hence the results proved that yoga and meditation based intervention has a positive effect on their Anxiety level. The obtained result supports the previous studies done by Chris Kyriacou (2009) which says that yoga and meditation has a positive effect on anxiety stress and emotion.

SUMMARY:

The stress and anxiety level of the teaching professionals were calculated by administering Stress and Anxiety inventories which showed that they were having a high level of stress in their profession. Corresponding to this few teachers were also scored high in the anxiety inventory. To reduce their anxiety and stress level the yoga meditation based intervention was scheduled for them over a period of 2 months based on their convenient timings. After completing the scheduled intervention period the same inventories were administered again to know whether the stress and anxiety has reduced after the intervention. Results were analyzed and it revealed that stress and anxiety level had drastically reduced after the intervention by showing a positive effect on their physical and mental health.

CONCLUSION:

- Yoga-meditation based intervention has a significant positive effect on the Stress level of teaching professionals.
- Yoga-meditation based intervention has a significant positive effect on the Anxiety level of teaching professionals.
- Thus through the above results it is clear that they are in need of continuous intervention to maintain their physical and mental health.

LIMITATIONS OF PRESENT STUDY:

- The preferred group for the study was limited to only teaching professionals .
- The sample size was limited to 30 which is difficult to generalize.

- The sample is restricted to urban background.
- The sample was given intervention only for a period of 2 months.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FURTHER STUDY:

- The study can be conducted on a larger sample.
- The study can be compared by taking gender into consideration.
- The study can be conducted by taking rural and urban institutions.
- The study can be done by comparing teaching and non teaching professionals.
- The study can be further extended by taking different age group.
- The present results show that there is a need for intervention.

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