

IMPACT OF YOGA AND GENDER ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING OF AMONG ADULTS

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ABSTRACT

After the COVID-19 situation everyone is looking for methods and strategies for attaining desired satisfaction and well-being in life. Among all the stress management techniques, the Yoga is one of the best solutions for individual and community as well. Researches indicated that Yoga has ability to resolves many psychological and physical problems of mind and body. The purpose of present research was to study the effect of yoga and gender on the psychological well-being of middle age adults. The sample for the study consisted of 210 male and female subjects belonging to medium socio-economic status. These subjects were taken from Meerut and Baghpat city in the U.P. state of India. The subjects were consisted of three groups of yoga, i.e.; yoga practitioners (70Ss), morning walkers (70Ss) and non-yoga practitioners (70Ss). Each group of yoga was consisted of two gender groups, i.e., male and female with 35 Ss in each cell. A 3x2 factorial design was employed for the accomplishment of the research. PGI General Well-being Scale devised by Verma and Verma (1989) was used for data collection. The data was collected individually after developing healthy rapport and getting written informed consent from each subject. Obtain data were analyzed by Mean, SD and ANOVA.

Results indicated that yoga and gender were found to be significantly effective on psychological well-being of middle age adults. The interaction effect between yoga and gender was also found to be significantly effective on psychological well-being. The existing researches on yoga validated the obtained results and indicated that mean psychological well-being scores of yogic practitioners was significantly highest as compared to other groups. The results also indicated that psychological wellbeing was higher in females than male subjects.

Keywords: - Psychological Wellbeing, Yoga and Gender

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INTRODUCTION

In the present scenario, the world is changing rapidly; consequently, lifestyle is taking different shapes every day. New inventions, wider reach of smart phones, easy access to internet, fast pace of life, multi-cultural societies and much more has brought abrupt changes to the lives of human life. At on hand, it has made life easy, but it has also created demands over, mental and physical health to the human life at another end. The disturbed life style has created problems like, mental conflict, stress, aggression, lack of skills, toxic relationship

etc. are so common that every fifth family of Indian society is living with a mental health condition (M.H.A, 2015). According to W.H.O., 60% of psychological factors predict individual health and quality of life; consequently, people have many diseases, infirmity, disabilities and even death due to unknown reasons. Problems like hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, metabolic diseases, joint and skeletal problems, overweight, and so on, are the result of an unhealthy lifestyle (Hirooka and Kusano, et al., 2021). In the present scenario high drug consumption among adults, i.e., alcohol, smoking, drug abuse, stress and so on, is another

cause of many mental and physical disorders. Moreover, people also struggling with the latest challenges of information technology in the form of overuse of internet, electronic media, and social networks, leading our world to additional health issues like internet addiction, cervical issues, nomophobia, suicide, depression and other mental health conditions influencing the happiness, satisfaction and well-being of human life (Abolghasemi & Varaniyab, 2010; Matheny, roque-tover & Curlette, 2008; Yang & Kim, 2016).

The concept of well-being find its origin in the hedonistic concept of philosophy, defined as a high level of positive effects, a low of negative effects and a high degree of life satisfaction. In addition to it, optimism, a sense of perceived control, extroversion, positive self-esteem, positive social relationship and a sense of meaning purpose in life, are the best predictor of happiness and satisfaction with life (Garaigordobil, 2015; Dissanayake et al., 2017 & Novianti et al., 2020). Psychological well-being also refers to living life in an inclusive and gratifying way and to the improvement and self-realization of the individual (Linley, 2013; Ryff, 1989). Within this perspective, Ryff's model of psychological well-being includes six dimensions, i.e., self-acceptance, positive relation with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth (Ryff & Keys, 1995). Which has negative relationship with mental and physical issues of human life.

The term Yoga comes from the Sanskrit root 'Yuj' meaning of which is union, to join or to concentrate one's attention. Yoga practice makes us feel better and develop our sense of gratitude, quality of life, functional capacity and psychological well-being (Akthar et al., 2013). Yoga produces positive thinking, self-awareness (Luna, 2021), self – relaxation, self-assurance, improvement of memory (Abegunasekara & Karunaratne, 2019), attention (Sethi et al., 2013), reasoning ability (Mondal & Kundu, 2017), reduction of sleep difficulty (Halpern, Cohen, Kennedy et al., 2014) patience, gratitude, endurance, cheerfulness, straightforwardness, discipline and perseverance, as

well development of development of personality (Sarang & Khadse, 2011).

The researches indicated that Yoga practice maintain perfect harmony between mind and body, which is helpful to achieve self-realization (Frawley, 1999). Regular practices of yoga increase flexibility, patience, physical strength, consequently promotes characteristics of kindness, higher will power and also the development of a sense of calmness, well-being and life satisfaction (woodyard, 2011; Ross et al., 2013). Researches also indicated that the longitudinal practice of yoga also lead to outcomes like changes in life perspective, self-awareness and an improved sense of energy to live life fully and happily, consequently improving the quality of life, and interpersonal relationship (Rakhshani et al., 2010; Malathi & Damodaran, 1999). Regular practices of yoga increase the cognitive skills and well-being of human beings (Malhotra & Nangia, 2012). Moreover, Yoga practices also improve mental balance, health and concentration (Cattha et al., 2008). In various kinds of researches, the meditation has been found to be very helpful for reducing anxiety, stress and increasing positive affect (Gupta, 2006; Sharma et al., 2004 & Beauchamp-Turner et al., 1992). Thus, we believe that practical evidence indeed exists for the use of meditation to promote psychological well-being. So those people who are regularly involved in morning exercise and yoga practices score higher than those who do not practice morning yoga.

So the above discussion revealed that researches conducted in India and abroad has shown that yoga practices are effective in enhancing wellbeing and life satisfaction for human being. Therefore, the researcher was interested to explore more about effectiveness of Yoga among adults in the western U.P. of India. So the research was conducted under following main research problem and hypothesis guided by previous researches:

The main problem of the present research was to study the effect of gender and yoga on psychological well-being among middle age adults.

Hypothesis

In the view of previous research, this study was guided by the following hypotheses that:

1. There will be a significant effect of gender and yoga on psychological well-being of middle age adults.
2. There will be significant interaction effects of gender and yoga on psychological well-being of middle age adults.

METHOD

Sample

The sample for the study consisted of 210 male and female subjects belonging to medium economic status. These subjects were taken from the Yoga Centre, Parks and University Campus of Meerut and Baghpat city. The total subjects consisted of three groups of Yoga practitioners, i.e.; Yoga practitioners (70Ss), Morning walkers (70Ss), and Non-Yoga practitioner (70Ss). Each group of yoga consisted of two groups of gender, i.e., male and female with 35 Ss in each cell.

In this way, a 3x2 factorial experimental design was employed in the research.

Instruments

1. **Personal Information Schedule:** - It was used to get subjective and demographic details of subjects required for sampling and discussion.

2. **Psychological Well-being Scale:** - General well-being scale developed by Verma and Verma (1989) was used in the research. The test was consisted of 20 items used to measure the level of well-being. Reliability was measured by the K.R.20- formula and a high reliability of .98 ($p < .01$) was obtained (Verma, Dubey & Gupta, 1983), while test-retest reliability was .91 ($p < .01$) (Moudgi et al., 1986).

Procedure of data collection

The data were collected individually after the selection of subjects. After establishing a healthy rapport written consent was taken and after getting consent subjects were given the scale to fill with all the instructions. When subject completed the scale and they were thanked for their valuable cooperation.

RESULTS

The purpose of the present research was to study the effect of gender and yoga on the psychological well-being of middle age adults. For this purpose the sample consisted of 210 Ss of middle-aged adults, were taken from Meerut and Baghpat city. The Psychological Wellbeing Scale was used to obtain data. The data were statistically analyzed by Mean, SD and ANOVA. Obtained results are shown in the following tables and their detailed interpretation and discussion are as follows:

Table 1- Showing Mean Psychological Wellbeing Scores, SD, and F-ratio for the Groups of Yoga and Gender of Middle Age Adults

Variables	Variability	Mean	SD	F-ratio
Yoga	Yoga practitioners	15.55	1.13	322.16**
	Morning Walkers	12.78	1.29	
	Non-Yoga Practitioners	10.7	0.87	
Gender	Male	11.76	1.14	255.32**
	Female	14.26	1.09	
Interaction	Yoga x Gender			40.85**

Main Effects

Yoga and Psychological Wellbeing

The study of Table 1 indicated that the obtained F- value showing that yoga significantly

influences Psychological Wellbeing of middle age adults [$F(204, 2) = 322.16; p < .01$]. The Table-1 also showing that the Mean Psychological wellbeing score of yoga practitioners ($M = 15.55, SD = 1.13$) was significantly higher than other

two groups. Further, it was obtained that the morning walkers group ($M= 12.78, SD= 1.29$) has shown a moderate level of Psychological well-being than the Non-Yoga practitioners ($M= 10.7, SD= 0.87$) group has shown the lowest level of mean Psychological Well-being scores of middle age adult subjects.

Therefore, the directional hypothesis is accepted that there will be a significant effect of yoga on the Psychological well-being of middle age adults.

Gender and Psychological Wellbeing

Table-1 is showing that obtained F-value indicated that gender was found to be significantly effective on the Psychological Well-being of middle age adults [$F(204,1) = 255.32 ; p<.01$]. Table 1- is indicating that female subjects ($M= 14.26, SD= 1.09$) were significantly higher than the male subjects ($M= 11.76, SD= 1.14$) in

Table 2- Showing Interaction effect between Mean the groups of Yoga and Gender on Psychological Wellbeing of Middle Age Adults

Yoga	Yoga Practitioners	Morning Walkers	Non-Yoga practitioners
Male	13.34	11.77	10.17
Female	17.77	13.8	11.22

The Table 2 is showing mean *Psychological Wellbeing* score of interaction groups between Yoga and gender of middle age adults. The mean *Psychological Wellbeing* score of female yoga practitioners ($M= 17.77$) was significantly highest among all interaction groups. The female morning walkers, ($M=13.8$) and male yoga practitioners ($M=11.22$) have shown moderate level of psychological wellbeing. Whereas, male morning walkers ($M= 11.77$), and male non-yoga practitioners ($M= 10.17$) as well as female non-yoga practitioners ($M=11.22$) have shown lowest psychological wellbeing as compared to other groups.

psychological wellbeing. This indicated that gender is influencing Psychological Well-being significantly in middle age adults. Therefore, the hypothesis that there will be a significant effect of gender on psychological well-being of middle age adults is accepted.

Interaction Effect

Yoga and Gender

The Keen study of Table 1 is showing that the F ratio for interaction between Yoga and gender is indicating a significant interaction effect between yoga and gender on Psychological well-being at a .01 level of significance [$F(204, 2)=40.85; >.01$]. This means that yoga and gender interact together to influence psychological well-being of adult subjects. For more clarity of data, the investigator has compared the mean interaction scores of gender and yoga is showing in table 2.

Therefore the hypothesis that there will be a significant interaction effect between Yoga and gender on *Psychological well-being* of middle age adults is accepted.

DISCUSSION

In reference to gender and psychological well-being the result indicated that gender was significantly effective on the psychological well-being of middle age adults and psychological well-being score of female subjects was significantly higher than male subjects. It may be because the females show that they have a good interpersonal relationship they are more conscious to their self in every situation of life. They are more capable of dealing with their

emotional issues as compared to male counterpart (Brody & Hall 1993; Fischer,1993). It would be protecting women from mental and physical health problems and consequently, improve their overall well-being. Women find meaning and purpose in their lives in a different way than men (Reker et al.,1987). They obtain power and manage through their interpersonal relationship and faith but most often fail to share their negative feelings influencing their subjective well-being and health as well. The research also supports the view that males scored higher in self-sufficiency, while women scored higher in personal growth and positive relationship with others (Matud, Curbelo & Fortes, 2019). Men have a higher self-reported level of ego and cognitive strength, whereas women express themselves as stronger in social, emotional and spiritual aspects, so it may be the reason that females have higher psychological well-being compared to males (Aherens & Ryff, 2006).

Moreover, in the studies by Ryff and colleagues, it was found that women score higher than men in positive relations with others and personal growth (Ryff & Keys, 1995). Female participants reported significantly higher scores in daily religious experience, relationship with fathers, and peers, positive relationships with others and purpose in life. However, males reported higher autonomy as compared to females (Perez, 2012). Some studies have shown that male has higher psychological well-being compared to females and other found that females have better psychological well-being than male (Croese et al., 1992; Hasida Ben-Zur,2003; Singh and Udainiya, 2009). This may be due to the cultural and regional factors influencing the personal wellbeing of the person..

Results also indicated that yoga was found to have a significant effect on the psychological well-being of middle age adults. The study shows that the psychological well-being scores of yoga practitioners were significantly higher than morning walkers. Yoga practitioner was significantly higher

on psychological wellbeing because the main cause is related to their improved flexibility of mind and body due to routine practices and self control which reduces stress, depression, anxiety and many health-related issues (Shohani et al., 2018). Yoga had a significantly positive effect on all aspects of subjective well-being. It is observed that now days women engaged in yoga more often than men, have a higher level of positivity, strength and overall sense of transcendence consequently have the lowest rates of anxiety, depression, unhappiness, irritability and negative aspects of life (Moliver,2013).

The Practice of yoga increases psychological stability in brain waves (Streeter et al., 2010) hormonal functioning and stabilities, cardio-respirations and autonomic activity of individuals (Mason et al., 2013). It increases metabolic rate (Yadav & Tadang, 2013) and endorphins are released in the brain to develop positive feelings and happiness (Yogi, 2020) and consequently good psycho-physical health, good level of life satisfaction and well-being in a person (Wallace et al., 1971). Also though it needs an adequate amount of practice, the minimum amount of yoga and meditation on a regular basis can play a very constructive role in having good health and psychological well-being of a persons life (Jadav and Havalappanavar, 2009). Prior research shows that psychological well-being improved after brief yoga intervention (Khalsa, 2004; Kirkwood et al., 2005; Lipton, 2008; Pikington et al., 2005; Chong, 2011 & Danhauer,2009).

Yoga not only increases the well-being, it helps in developing concentration and focusing of thoughts. The quality of concentration and focusing of thoughts on a target and objective does not develop easily. It needs a lot of practice. However, yoga can play very constructive role in well-being if it is practiced regularly. Thus, gender and yoga were significantly effective on psychological well-being and positive attitude in life of middle age adults.

CONCLUSION

So, from the above discussion, it can be concluded that some personal, social and biological factors are highly effective with women and influence psychological well-being in female subjects as compared to males. Similarly, yoga is an effective technique for modern man to enhance psychological well-being and the same has been observed in the present research and validated by various other researches as well.

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