



Impact Of Yoga On Mental Health During Pandemic

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ABSTRACT:

The World Health Organization (WHO) on march 11, 2020, has declared the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak a Global Pandemic. Since that day, we have all been living through a Mental Anxiety. In many research, researchers found that, the practices of Yoga has been increased after the declaration of Pandemic. Yoga is a group of Physical, Mental and Spiritual practices or disciplines which originated in Ancient India. The main aim of Yoga is control and calm the mind and also Yoga helps us to Focus, Improves your Mood, Build Confidence, Improves Patience etc.

This study tries to describe the impact of Yoga Practices on Mental Health during the Pandemic and also discuss about Effectiveness of different types of Yoga Poses. Also create awareness among the people about Mental Health and to motivate them to do Yoga, which will help them to have healthy Mental Health. This study also emphasizes the importance of Yoga Practices in our daily life.

Key Words: Yoga, Mental Health, Pandemic, Effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION:

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted lives across the globe, causing significant physical, emotional, and mental distress. As the world grapples with the consequences of the pandemic, it is essential to explore various approaches to support mental well-being. In this context, yoga has emerged as a powerful tool for promoting mental health during these challenging times.

Yoga is an ancient practice that combines physical postures, breath control, meditation, and ethical

principles to foster overall well-being. While yoga is known for its physical benefits, its impact on mental health has gained increasing recognition. The practice of yoga encompasses both physical and mental dimensions, addressing the interconnectedness of the mind and body.

The pandemic has imposed a multitude of stressors, including fear of the virus, social isolation, economic instability, and uncertainty about the future. Such stressors can significantly impact mental health, leading to

symptoms of anxiety, depression, and increased levels of stress. In this context, yoga offers a holistic approach that can alleviate the mental burdens imposed by the pandemic.

Through its various components, yoga provides individuals with effective tools to manage stress, enhance self-awareness, and cultivate resilience. The physical postures (asanas) promote relaxation, improve flexibility, and release tension from the body, while the breath control techniques (pranayama) help regulate the nervous system, reducing anxiety and promoting calmness. Additionally, meditation and mindfulness practices in yoga foster present-moment awareness, enhance emotional stability, and promote a sense of inner peace.

Scientific research on the impact of yoga on mental health during the pandemic has yielded promising results. Studies have shown that regular yoga practice can reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety, improve overall psychological well-being, and enhance resilience to stress. Furthermore, yoga has been found to have a positive influence on sleep quality, emotional regulation, and overall quality of life, making it a valuable tool for coping with the mental health challenges posed by the pandemic.

Considering the global scale of the pandemic and the growing mental health concerns associated with it, exploring the impact of yoga on mental

well-being becomes increasingly relevant. This study aims to delve deeper into the relationship between yoga and mental health during the pandemic, examining its effects on various psychological factors and shedding light on its potential as a therapeutic intervention.

By investigating the impact of yoga on mental health during the pandemic, we can gain valuable insights into the mechanisms through which yoga exerts its positive effects. This understanding can inform the development of evidence-based interventions and strategies that can be implemented to support individuals in maintaining optimal mental health during and beyond the pandemic.

In conclusion, as the world navigates the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, understanding and harnessing the potential of yoga as a tool for promoting mental well-being becomes increasingly vital. By exploring its impact on mental health during the pandemic, we can pave the way for integrating yoga into comprehensive approaches aimed at supporting individuals in maintaining resilience, emotional balance, and overall mental well-being in the face of adversity.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

This study tries to describe the impact of Yoga Practices on Mental Health during the Pandemic and also discuss about Effectiveness of different

types of Yoga Poses. Also create awareness among the people about Mental Health and to motivate them to do Yoga, which will help them to have healthy Mental Health. This study also emphasizes the importance of Yoga Practices in our daily life.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To know about the Yoga.
2. To know about the COVID-19.
3. To know about the Mental Health.
4. To know how Yoga can improve our Mental Health.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:

This study will involve a comprehensive review and analysis of secondary data sources such as newspapers, websites, books, and scholarly articles. Considering the objectives of the study, Content analysis will be used to extract information regarding the impact of yoga on mental health during the pandemic from these sources.

ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY:**MEANING & HISTORY OF YOGA:**

Certainly, yoga is an ancient practice that originated in India thousands of years ago. The exact origins of yoga are not known, as it was transmitted orally from teacher to student for many centuries. The earliest written records of yoga are found in the ancient Indian scriptures known as the

Vedas, which date back to around 1500 BCE. These texts describe rituals and practices aimed at achieving a higher level of consciousness and a deeper connection with the divine. The Upanishads, which were written between 800 and 400 BCE, contain more detailed descriptions of yoga practices, including meditation and breath control. The Bhagavad Gita, written around 500 BCE, is another important text that describes yoga as a means of achieving spiritual enlightenment.

The term “yoga” has many different meanings. Yoga comes from the Sanskrit root “yuj” meaning “to join” and therefore denotes at its core “joining” or “uniting.” However, debates persist about what exactly is joined to what: is it the soul that is united with God, or consciousness united with its true identity, or something else? Over time, “yoga” has come to refer to almost any religious practice where an aspirant uses some method to achieve greater knowledge of the spiritual world. Historian of religion Stuart Sarbacker has recently compiled a helpful overview of the different paths that yoga has taken, etymologically and heuristically, in India and beyond over the centuries (Sarbacker 2021). In one of the usages he examines, the word yoga is translated simply as “religious practice,” i.e., as a term ubiquitously referring to practices from all the Indian religions, including Hinduism,

Buddhism, and Jainism. This noted, when the term yoga is used in contemporary parlance, especially in the West, it usually refers to a series of postures, breathing techniques, and modes of meditation emerging out of a system known as Hatha Yoga, translated as the “Yoga of Forceful Exertion,” dating back to the twelfth century and associated with Tantric ideas of the body’s relationship to the cosmos (Sarbacker 2021, p. 172).

In the centuries that followed, yoga continued to evolve, with different schools and lineages developing their own unique styles and practices. The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, written in the 2nd century BCE, is a key text that outlines the philosophy and practices of classical yoga. In the modern era, yoga has become increasingly popular around the world, with many different styles and approaches being developed. Today, yoga is practiced by millions of people worldwide as a means of improving physical health, reducing stress, and achieving a deeper sense of inner peace and well-being.

COVID-19 PANDAMIC:

The COVID-19 pandemic, also known as the coronavirus pandemic, is a global pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The novel virus was first identified in the Chinese city of Wuhan in December 2019. The Chinese

Government completely failed to control the spread of Coronavirus and later its spread all over the World in 2020. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) on 30 January 2020.

- World Health Organization (WHO) fixed some symptoms to identify people infected with Coronavirus which are- Fever, Cough, Shortness of Breath, Fatigue, Muscle or Body Aches, Headache, Sore Throat, Loss of Taste or Smell, Congestion or Runny Nose, Gastrointestinal Symptoms, Chills or Repeated Shaking, Chest Pain or Pressure, Difficulty Speaking or Confusion etc.
- Total number of effected people in the world by the Novel Coronavirus was 694,704,432 and the total Deaths 6,911,899.
- Total number of effected people in India by the Novel Coronavirus was 44,997,326 and the total Deaths 531,930.

MENTAL HEALTH:

Mental health is a situation of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their society. Mental health is a basic human right. And it is crucial to individual, society and socio-economic development. It is an integral

part of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world where we live in. Mental health conditions include mental disorders and psychosocial disabilities as well as other mental states associated with significant distress, impairment in functioning, or risk of self-harm. People with mental health conditions are more likely to experience lower levels of mental well-being, but this is not always or necessarily the case. Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders. It exists on a complex continuum, which is experienced differently from one person to the next, with varying degrees of difficulty and distress and potentially very different social and clinical outcomes.

Good mental health is more than just the absence of mental illness. It means you are in a state of wellbeing where you feel good and function well in the world.

Some characteristics of good Mental Health according to World Health Organisation

- **Meaningful activities:** These are any actions that you enjoy or that give you a sense of accomplishment. A meaningful activity could be listening to music you like, or watching a favourite TV show.
- **Healthy thinking:** Examples of healthy thinking include keeping

perspective and talking to yourself with kindness.

- **Goals and plans:** Having goals is important to keep you energised and motivated. Goals give you something to look forward to and can help to prevent dwelling on past problems.
- **Healthy routine:** Keeping up a healthy routine doesn't need to be complicated. It can be as simple as going to bed and waking up at the same time every day, or a routine linked to our roles and relationships.
- **Social connections:** Staying connected to friends and family helps you to feel validated and reminds you that you belong.

YOGA & MENTAL HEALTH:

In today's modern era is fast-paced and full of stress, yoga has emerged among us as a powerful tool for promoting mental health and well-being. By reducing stress, improving emotional regulation, and enhancing mindfulness, yoga helps individuals better navigate the challenges of contemporary life. The practice of yoga combines physical postures, breathing techniques, and mindfulness to create a holistic approach to mental wellness. Its accessibility and adaptability make it a valuable resource for those seeking to find balance and peace amidst the demands of the modern world,

ultimately fostering mental clarity and resilience.

- **Improved Mood:** Practicing yoga increase certain hormones in the body and chemicals in the brain, one of which is gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA). Along with physical benefits, increased levels of GABA can result in improved and uplifted moods.
- **Sharper Brain:** Yoga, particularly Iyengar yoga, is a systematic practice that teaches students body awareness as they move through certain poses. Over time, staying present by focusing on one's body and movements increases mental clarity.

Research suggests that yoga positively affects certain neurological functions in the brain that are linked to focus and concentration. This may be due to the development of a thicker cerebral cortex—responsible for information processing—and hippocampus—involved in learning and memory—that comes with regular practice. Additionally, some studies indicate that yoga may even decrease brain shrinkage in areas of the brain that affect cognition and memory.

- **Stress Reduction:** YOGA includes deep breathing exercises and meditation, which

can active our body's relaxation response, reducing the production of stress hormones. Regular exercise can help manage and reduce stress.

- **Improved Sleep:** Yoga can be effective in treating insomnia and improving sleep quality. Many of the breath exercises taught, known as pranayamas, have been noted as being particularly helpful for those suffering with insomnia. Practicing before bed while lying down shows the body that it's time to relax, slow down, and prepare for sleep.
- **Decreased Symptoms Of Depression:** Research indicates that practicing yoga regularly increases neurotransmitters in the brain associated with elevated moods. One study conducted with seniors showed that engaging in a 12-week yoga therapy program resulted in decreased symptoms of depression in participants.
- **Emotional Well-Being:** Yoga can improve emotional well-being by promoting positive emotions, self-compassion, and gratitude. The combination of physical movement and mindfulness practices can lead to a more positive outlook on life. Etc.

YOGA helps us thousands of way to improve our Mental Health as well as

our Physical Health. In this modern era, YOGA exercises have come as a blessing to us.

Conclusion:

On March 11, 2020 World Health Organisation officially declared COVID-19 as a Pandemic. A total of 6,911,899 people died due to this COVID-19 pandemic worldwide, about 531,930 people died due to this COVID-19 pandemic in our country India. After a long 100 years, this COVID-19 pandemic made our lives to hell. This COVID-19 pandemic did not only have its effects on our body, this COVID-19 pandemic most influence on our Mental Health. Due to this COVID-19 pandemic, all of us have to stay imprisonment between four walls in the house for a long time. During this pandemic period our Mental Health has been damaged for every side.

Almost everyone was suffering from Mental Illness during this COVID-19 pandemic. During this COVID-19 pandemic YOGA has emerged as a blessing for all of us. YOGA practices not only help to keep our physical health active, YOGA helps our Mental Health most of all. YOGA improves our body's immune system, improves our mood, sharpens our brain, reduces stress, improves sleep, relieves depression, etc. Finally, YOGA helps to improve our

mental and physical health as well as our social life.

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