



Full Length Research Article

INTEGRATED SIMPLIFIED KUNDALINI YOGA FOR IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH IN TEACHERS

***Aruna, S.**

M.Phil Researcher Scholar, WCSC – Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu, India

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to find out the impact of simplified kundalini yoga practices among the mental health of the teachers. It was hypothesized that there would be significant differences on the mental health due to the effect of simplified kundalini yoga practices among the teacher. For the present study the 20 female teachers from Coimbatore district, Tamilnadu were selected at random and their age ranged from 38 to 55 years. The subjects of all 20 underwent simplified kundalini yoga practices. The data was collected before and after 12 days of simplified kundalini yoga practices. The data was analyzed by applying dependent mean and standard deviation test. The level of significance was set at <0.0001 . It was analyzed using general health questionnaire. The simplified kundalini yoga practices had positive impact on the mental health in the teachers. The experimental subjects showed better improvement on mental health in the teachers.

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INTRODUCTION

The present age of speed and competition has increased the stresses and strains resulting in an increasing prevalence of lifestyle-related health problems and specifically teachers' lives have become a never-ending race against time, technology, and targets. This race creates tension, which leads to dissatisfaction and frustration and eventually manifests itself as psychological and physiological stress with mental and emotional drain. This modern lifestyle intensifies the stress leading to "Excessive Tension" and consequent deterioration in "Executive Efficiency." One of the increasingly popular tools to overcome this new challenge is physical activity. There is growing evidence that has established the benefits of physical exercises in preventing lifestyle-related diseases such as primary prevention of diabetes, prevention of cardiac diseases through control over major risk factors such as smoking, lipids, obesity, and stress, better quality of life of cancer patients, positive health in normal persons through better physical fitness, and stress reduction. Yoga, which is considered to be a tool for both physical and mental development of an individual, is being recognized around the globe only in the last century although it has been practiced in India over several centuries to promote

positive health and well-being. It gives solace for the restless mind and can give great relief to the sick. It has become quite fashionable even for the common man to keep fit. With growing scientific evidence, yoga is emerging as an important health behavior-modifying practice to achieve states of health, both at physical and mental levels. Several studies have demonstrated the beneficial effects of yoga on health behavior in many lifestyle-related somatic problems such as hypertension, bronchial asthma, diabetes including some psychiatric conditions such as anxiety neurosis and depressive illness. Simplified Kundalini Yoga found by Spiritual father Vethathiri Maharishi, offers a holistic and integrated stress management program to combat this modern lifestyle problem and thereby one can lead a holistic way of living in health, harmony, happiness and peace. Previous work on stress management educational program reported significant improvement in the subjective well-being inventory scores of the several subjects within the particular periods when compared with controls. These observations suggest that a short lifestyle modification and stress management educational program can make an appreciable contribution to primary prevention and management of lifestyle diseases. Previous study reported decrease in occupational stress levels and baseline autonomic arousal in humans, suggesting significant reduction in sympathetic activity and better emotional well-being in them. Although yoga is getting popular, no previous investigation has systematically evaluated effects of yoga-based program on mental health in teachers. Hence, we have

***Corresponding author: Aruna, S.**

M.Phil Researcher Scholar, WCSC – Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu, India.

designed present study to assess the efficacy of 12 days of simplified kundalini yoga Foundation Course (FC) program on teachers using general health questionnaire (GHQ).

Objectives

The objective of the study is to assess general health status (total health), which includes four domains namely somatic symptoms (SS), anxiety and insomnia (AI), social dysfunction (SF), and severe depression (SP), using a GHQ.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Subjects

The subjects for the study were 20 female teachers with a mean age of 42.75 ± 3.86 years. Routine clinical examinations showed all of them in normal health, and none was using any other wellness strategy. All of them had high-fiber low-fat vegetarian diet and no caffeinated drinks, alcohol, or tobacco in any form during the 12 days simplified kundalini yoga FC program. We got the participants' signed consent to participate in the study after explaining the variables we would record and the study design. The institutional review board also had approved the project. We selected participants of the following inclusion and exclusion criteria to meet the study requirements fully.

Inclusion criteria: Age between 38 and 55 years (females), physically, and mentally fit.

Exclusion criteria: Taking medication, using any other wellness strategy.

Design: A single group pre–post study.

Assessments

The GHQ: A 28-item test using a binary method of scoring (0, 0, 1, and 1) yields an assessment on four robust subscales: SS, AI, SF, and SP. A sum of the scores for these four subscales gives the score for total health. Lower scores in the GHQ indicate better state of the health. The cutoff scores for the GHQ used for this study were 4 or 5 (4/5). It provides information about the recent mental status, thus identifying the presence of possible psychiatric disturbance. This questionnaire has acceptable psychometric properties and has good internal consistency and reliability with Cronbach's alpha of 0.85 and validity of 0.76.

Intervention

All the subjects participated in simplified kundalini yoga FC program for 12 days

Table 1.

S.No	Activities	Time
1.	Prayer	5mins
2.	Introduction	10mins
3.	Practical Explanation & Demo - 1	30mins
4.	Tea Break - 1 (Ayurvedic Tea)	10mins
5.	Practical session - 1 (Exercise)	40mins
6.	Lunch (Veg)	60mins
7.	Practical session – 2 (Meditation)	40mins

Practical session during simplified kundalini yoga FC.

Program: Cyclic Meditation, a combination of stimulating and calming practices based on yoga was given to the participants.

Data collection

The GHQ data were collected before (Pre) and after (Post) the 12 days of simplified kundalini FC program.

Analysis

Statistical analysis was done with the help of statistical package. The test showed that the data were not normally distributed. We used the rank test to compare means of the data collected before (Pre) and after (Post) simplified kundalini yoga FC program.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data analysis [Table 2] showed 68.25% significant decrease ($P < 0.001$) in somatic symptoms (GHQ_SS), 66.29% significant decrease ($P < 0.001$) in anxiety and insomnia (GHQ_AI), 65.00% significant decrease ($P < 0.001$) in social dysfunction (GHQ_SF), 87.08% significant decrease ($P < 0.001$) in severe depression (GHQ_SP), and 71.47% significant decrease ($P < 0.001$) in all medical complaints [Figures 1 and 2] (GHQ Total).

Table 2. Data Analysis

Variables	Mean ± Standard Deviation Pre FC	Mean ± Standard Deviation Post FC	\hat{p}
GHQ - SS	2.43 ± 0.64	0.63 ± 0.59	0.0001*
GHQ - AI	2.27 ± 0.79	0.63 ± 0.59	0.0001*
GHQ - SF	2.5 ± 0.75	0.87 ± 0.68	0.0001*
GHQ - SP	2.02 ± 0.45	0.16 ± 0.43	0.0001*
GHQ - Total	9.24 ± 1.67	2.55 ± 1.31	0.0001*

FC – Foundation Course; GHQ – General Health Questionnaire

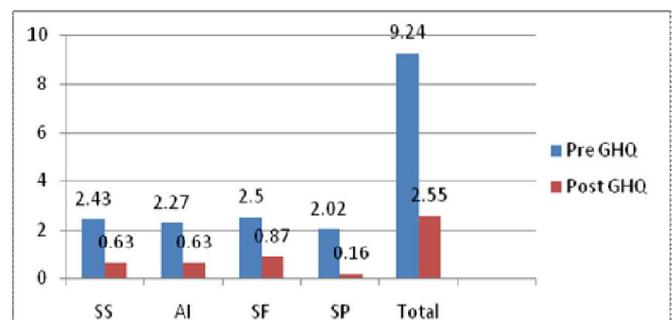


Figure 1.

GHQ Mean of before and after simplified kundalini yoga FC Program

The idea of mental health is closely related with the concept of emotional intelligence. A manager with less medical complaints will be mentally healthy and emotionally balanced and can perform better in his workplace which will reflect in the organizational effectiveness.

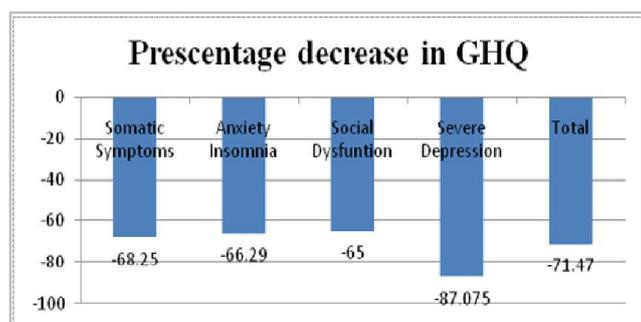


Figure 2.

Percentage decrease in GHQ after the simplified kundalini yoga FC program

Moreover, teachers with low medical complaints are happier, healthier, and more successful in their relationships which are signs of high emotional intelligence. Persons with high emotional intelligence may strike a balance between emotion and reason, are aware of their own feelings, show empathy and compassion for others, and have high self-esteem which may be instrumental in many situations in the workplace and can help achieve organizational effectiveness. Recent research has shown a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace success. Previous studies on yoga reported enhanced mental health as a result of the practice of yoga way of life. The results indicate the importance of yoga as an integral element in improving managerial performance in organizations. Our study is consistent with these findings, indicating that a systematic adoption of the simplified kundalini yoga FC program can result in better health among teachers for their "Educative Efficiency," thus paving the way for their better performance as teachers.

Conclusion

Any exercise, if it has to be of lasting value, must fulfill certain conditions viz., it should be simple, similar and synchronous. The system of simplified kundalini yoga FC program is may be fulfils all the above conditions. The results from the present study suggest that participation in a simplified kundalini yoga FC program may be associated with improvement in mental health and may have implications for "Educative Efficiency." Because before and after designs limit inferences about intervention effects, further research is warranted to explore the effects of simplified kundalini yoga FC program for stress management using a larger, randomized controlled trial.

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