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The Effects of Integrated Yoga Program on Continuous Stress Among Disaster Recovery/ Major Incident Managers working in Technology operations at an Information Technology Organization in India: An Experimental Research Study

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Abstract
This experimental research study is aimed to observe the effect of an integrated yoga therapy on continuous workplace stress among disaster recovery/major incident managers working in technology operations at an information technology organization in India. The study employed a pretest-posttest design. Participants were assigned to the experimental group, which engaged in a 2 Month yoga intervention. Measurements of Mindfulness, Awareness, Attention, Burnout levels and Task Load levels were taken before and after the intervention. The findings revealed significant reduction in Burnout levels and improvements in Mindfulness among participants. These results suggest that integrated yoga therapy can be an effective practice for promoting overall well-being among professionals undergoing continuous stress.

Keywords: Yoga, Information Technology Sector, Major Incident Managers, Disaster Recovery Managers, Workplace Stress, Continuous Stress, Mindfulness, Burnout, Task load

Introduction

Workplace stress is reported by almost 40 % of the workers. (Global healthcare resources, 2023). Continuous stress is an aspect common to certain professions such as a Nurse working in a Hospital. (Rostami K & Ghodsbin, 2022). Information Technology sector workers are subject to a high risk of developing NCDs in India (Banerjee Paromita & Reddy Bhanuprakash et al., 2023)

Integrated yoga therapy is a holistic mind-body practice that has gained increasing popularity in recent years due to its potential benefits for management of stress and related ill health. The practice of yoga involves a combination of physical postures, breathing exercises, diet and meditation techniques. Previous research has suggested that integrated yoga therapy at each level can help patients with different disorders deal with their problems. (Villacres et.al 2014).

While numerous studies have explored the effects of yoga on different populations, there is a need for

further research specifically targeting workplace stress on roles involving continuous stress in the Information Technology sector. The assessed parameters indicate a high risk of developing NCDs among employees in the IT industry in India. This shows the need for the modification of lifestyle and workplace food and physical activity environments. (Banerjee et al., 2023) Thus, investigating the potential benefits of yoga in this specific population is crucial.

The present study aimed to examine the effects of a 2- Month yoga intervention on the parameters of Mindfulness, Awareness, Attention , Burnout levels and Task Load levels of a group of Disaster recovery/ Major incident Managers working in an Information Technology industry. The research questions addressed in this studywere as follows:

Does participation in a 2 Month yoga intervention lead to improvements in Mindfulness among Disaster recovery/ Major Incident Managers ?

Does participation in a 2- Month yoga intervention lead to decrease in the Burn out levels and task load levels among Disaster recovery/ Major Incident Managers ?

Method Participants

The sample consisted of 22 Major Incident Managers selected from various regions in India and genders. The participants were of age group between 25 to 40 years consisting of 16 Men and 6 Women.

Procedure

Participants in the experimental group attended a 60-minute yoga class five days a week for a duration of 2 Months during early mornings on an empty stomach, The integrated yoga therapy sessions consisted of a combination of physical postures (asanas), breathing exercises (pranayama), and relaxation techniques (savasana). All participants completed pretest and posttest measures assessing Mindfulness, Awareness, Attention , Burnout levels and Task Load levels.

Measures

Mindfulness Attention, Awareness Scale (MASS) : Was measured using the MAAS Tool which assesses individual differences in the frequency of mindful states over time. The scale is a 15-item (1-6 Likert scale) questionnaire to assess dispositional (or trait) mindfulness. (Brown, Ryan, 2003)

Burnout Inventory: Was measured using The Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI) which is a 19-item self-reported measure of burnout that was developed to measure burnout in different domains. It contains three sub-scales measuring personal burnout, work-related burnout, and client-related burnout. (Kristensen et. al 2007)

Task Load Index: Was measured using the NASA-TLX Task load index, a tool for measuring and conducting a subjective mental workload (MWL) assessment. It allows you to determine the MWL of a participant while they are performing a task. It rates performance across six dimensions to determine an overall workload rating. (Hart.2006)

Data Analysis

Pretest-posttest was conducted to compare the values across all the parameter of the experimental groups.

Results

The results showed a significant improvement of reduction in Burnout Inventory (p=0.003), an improvement in Mindful Attention Awareness (p=0.02), and a reduction in Task load levels (p=0.10) among participants in the yoga intervention group.

Discussion

The findings of this experimental research study provide evidence for the positive effects of integrated yoga therapy on improving the ability of the Major incident/ disaster recovery Managers to better cope with the continuous workplace stress in their Information technology work environment. The aspects of increase in mindfulness, decrease in Burnout levels and Task load levels were observed after a 2 Month yoga intervention. These results are consistent with previous research highlighting the benefits of yoga on improving mindfulness (Botha & Purpora, 2015) and decreasing Burn out levels (Hasmukh et.al, 2010)

Limitations of this study include the relatively small sample size as availability of professionals working in this specialized area of Major incident / disaster recovery managers were limited. Hence, we were unable to obtain the control group due to this factor. Future research should consider larger sample sizes and inclusion of a control group. In conclusion, this study adds to the growing body of literature supporting the beneficial effects of yoga on addressing continuous workplace stress in the Information technology sector. The findings suggest that incorporating integrated yoga therapy can provide a relevant solution to increase mindfulness, reduce the burnout levels and reduce the task load index produced in a constant stress environment of Major incident / disaster recovery managers.

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