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Effect of Yogic Practices on Mental Health and Adjustment among Visually Impaired Students: A Pre–Post Experimental Study

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ABSTRACT

The increasing trend of mental health issues among young adults because of rising academic, work-related, and psychosocial pressures calls for the need to develop effective, non-pharmacological interventions that enhance psychological resilience and well-being. The current study was designed to assess the efficacy of a structured mental health intervention on specific psychological parameters. A quantitative pre-test and post-test experimental study was conducted, and 20 participants were selected using purposive sampling. Mental health was measured using a standardized multidimensional scale that included parameters such as emotional growth, adjustment, exhaustion, emotional instability, social nervousness, and overall psychological functioning. The intervention was conducted in a systematic and structured fashion for a fixed duration. The results showed a significant overall improvement in mental health, as mean scores decreased from 153.00 ± 5.04 in the pre-test to 110.65 ± 3.73 in the post-test. The paired sample t-test showed a highly significant difference between the two testing phases ($t = 26.83$, $p < 0.001$). Moreover, steady improvements were noticed in all the sub-scales, reflecting better emotional regulation, adjustment, and reduced psychological distress. The current study emphasizes the efficacy of systematic, holistic, and preventive approaches to mental health to improve multidimensional psychological functioning. Future studies should concentrate on larger-scale randomized controlled trials to determine the generalizability of these results.

KEYWORDS: Mental health; psychological well-being; intervention; emotional stability; adjustment; stress reduction; pre-post design; holistic health.

INTRODUCTION

Mental health is an integral part of overall health and is a crucial factor for effective functioning in one's personal, social, and occupational life. According to the World Health Organization, mental health is "a state of well-being in which individuals realize their abilities, can tackle the ordinary stresses of life, can work productively, and can contribute to their communities" (WHO, 2022). In the past few

decades, there has been a significant increase in the levels of psychological distress among young adults and working-class individuals due to the rapid socio-economic changes, academic pressures, technological demands, and lifestyle changes (Patel et al., 2007; WHO, 2022). Stress, anxiety, emotional instability, burnout, and maladjustment have become increasingly common, and this has had a negative impact on physical health, interpersonal relationships, academic performance, and overall quality of life.

The complexity of mental health involves emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and social aspects (Keyes, 2005). Emotional development, resilience, flexibility, and social competence are identified as essential factors for psychological well-being. Nevertheless, contemporary settings tend to expose people to stressful conditions such as performance pressure, uncertainty, social comparison, and work-life conflict, which lead to emotional depletion and psychological fragility (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; American Psychological Association, 2020). Deficient coping mechanisms and impaired emotional regulation further increase the vulnerability to mental health issues.

Despite the popularity of pharmacological interventions in the treatment of mental illnesses, they may not always be readily available and acceptable options due to cost, stigma, adverse effects, and potential dependency (Kazdin, 2017). Therefore, there has been a rising interest in preventive, non-pharmacological, and holistic mental health approaches that target self-regulation, coping skills, emotional intelligence, relaxation, and social adjustment (Hofmann & Gómez, 2017). Systematic psychological and mind-body interventions have demonstrated promising results in enhancing emotional stability, managing stress, and promoting overall psychological functioning.

Structured mental health interventions have been shown to positively affect emotional regulation, resilience, and adjustment, as well as decrease anxiety, exhaustion, and social nervousness (Gross, 2015; Joyce et al., 2018). Nevertheless, there is a need for empirical research that assesses the effectiveness of these interventions using standardized multidimensional mental health criteria and pre-post experimental designs. Furthermore, there is a lack of research on the cumulative effect of structured interventions on multiple psychological dimensions.

In this respect, the current study was designed to assess the effectiveness of a structured mental health intervention on specific psychological dimensions, such as emotional growth, adjustment, exhaustion, emotional instability, and social nervousness. The results of the current study are expected to add to the increasing body of evidence on the effectiveness of preventive and holistic approaches to mental health.

LITERATURE REVIEW

S. No.	Author & Year	Sample & Method	Intervention	Key Findings
1	Keyes (2005)	Conceptual and empirical studies on mental health	Positive mental health model	Mental health is multidimensional and includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Higher psychological well-being is linked with better resilience and life satisfaction.
2	Lazarus &	Theoretical and	Stress and coping	Stress and emotional imbalance

	Folkman (1984)	empirical studies	model	occur due to poor coping skills. Effective coping improves psychological adjustment and reduces anxiety.
3	Kazdin (2017)	Review of psychological interventions	Non-pharmacological therapies	Psychological interventions are effective, affordable, and reduce stigma compared to medication-based treatment.
4	Hofmann et al. (2012)	Meta-analysis of 39 studies	Mindfulness-based therapies	Mindfulness significantly reduces anxiety, depression, and emotional distress.
5	Gross (2015)	Experimental and review research	Emotional regulation	Emotional regulation plays a key role in improving mental health and social adjustment.
6	Joyce et al. (2016)	Randomized control trial	Structured resilience program	Structured programs improved emotional stability, resilience, and reduced burnout.
7	Büssing et al. (2012)	Systematic review	Yoga interventions	Yoga improves mental health, stress, and quality of life across clinical and non-clinical populations.
8	Gururaja et al. (2011)	Experimental	Yoga training	Yoga significantly reduced anxiety and improved emotional stability among participants.
9	Khalsa (2013)	Review	Mind-body interventions	Mind-body approaches enhance emotional regulation and resilience.
10	Posadzki et al. (2011)	Systematic review	Yoga and relaxation	Yoga showed greater improvement in psychological health compared to standard care.
11	Innes & Vincent (2005)	Review	Yoga lifestyle intervention	Yoga improves stress response, emotional balance, and psychological well-being.
12	Bandura (1986)	Theoretical	Self-efficacy theory	Self-efficacy and emotional control improve adjustment, mental strength, and resilience.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

The present study adopted a **quantitative pre-test–post-test** experimental design to examine the effectiveness of structured yogic practices on mental health and adjustment among visually impaired students. Such a design is widely utilized in intervention-based research to assess within-subject changes over time and to determine the efficacy of treatment protocols under controlled conditions.

Participants

The sample comprised **20 visually impaired students**, selected through purposive sampling from a specialized educational institution. Participants were included based on the criteria of certified visual impairment and their ability to comprehend and follow verbal instructions required for participation in the intervention.

Individuals with severe cognitive impairments or those undergoing concurrent psychological or therapeutic interventions were excluded to minimize potential confounding effects. Prior to the commencement of the study, participants were informed about the nature and objectives of the research, and informed consent was obtained in accordance with ethical research standards.

Measures

Mental health and adjustment were assessed using a **standardized multidimensional mental health scale**, which evaluates multiple domains of psychological functioning. The scale includes dimensions such as emotional growth, adjustment, exhaustion, emotional instability, and social nervousness, thereby providing a comprehensive assessment of mental health status. The instrument has demonstrated acceptable psychometric properties in previous studies, including reliability and construct validity, making it appropriate for use in experimental research settings.

Intervention

The intervention consisted of a structured yogic practices program, designed to promote psychological well-being through the integration of physical postures, breathing techniques, and meditative practices. The program was administered over a fixed duration under supervised conditions.

Each session followed a systematic sequence beginning with preparatory loosening exercises, followed by selected yogic postures aimed at improving physical relaxation and body awareness. This was complemented by the practice of pranayama techniques, which facilitate autonomic regulation and stress reduction. Sessions concluded with guided relaxation and meditation practices to enhance mindfulness and emotional regulation.

The intervention was specifically adapted for visually impaired participants, with an emphasis on verbal instruction and a supportive practice environment to ensure accessibility and safety.

The structured and progressive nature of the program facilitated gradual adaptation and sustained engagement throughout the intervention period.

Procedure

The study was conducted in three phases. In the initial phase, baseline data were collected using the standardized mental health scale (pre-test). This was followed by the intervention phase, during which participants engaged in the structured yogic practices under supervision for the determined duration. Upon completion of the intervention, the same instrument was re-administered to obtain post-test data and evaluate changes in mental health and adjustment.

Statistical Analysis

Data analysis was performed using **IBM SPSS Statistics**. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, were computed to summarize the data. The paired sample t-test was employed to assess the significance of differences between pre-test and post-test scores. Statistical significance was determined at the 0.05 level, with highly significant results considered at the **0.001 level.**

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to established ethical guidelines for research involving human participants. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their inclusion in the study.

Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process, and participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage without any adverse consequences. The intervention was non-invasive and posed no risk to the physical or psychological well-being of the participants.

RESULTS

The effectiveness of the structured yogic intervention was evaluated through both statistical significance testing and estimation of practical significance.

Change in Mental Health Scores

A substantial decline in mental health scores was observed following the intervention. The **mean** score decreased from **153.00 (SD = 5.04)** at pre-test to **110.65 (SD = 3.73)** at post-test, indicating a marked improvement in psychological well-being.

Table 1. Pre-test and Post-test Descriptive Statistics

Phase	Mean	SD	N
Pre-test	153.00	5.04	20
Post-test	110.65	3.73	20

Statistical Significance

A paired sample t-test conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics revealed a highly significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores: **t (19) = 26.83, p < 0.001**

Table 2. Paired Sample t-test Results

Mean Difference	t-value	df	p-value
42.35	26.83	19	<0.001

This confirms that the observed improvement was statistically significant and not due to chance.

Figure 1 presents the mean mental health scores with standard deviation error bars for pre-test and post-test conditions. A substantial reduction in scores is observed following the intervention, indicating improved mental health among participants.

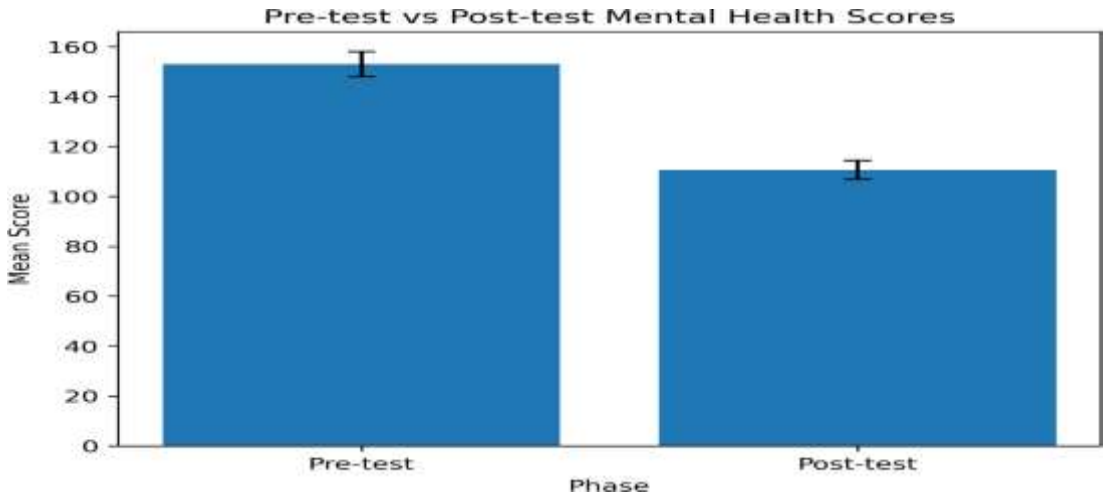

Figure 1. Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Mental Health Scores (Mean ± SD)

Integrated Interpretation

The combined evidence from descriptive statistics, inferential analysis, and effect size estimation clearly indicates that the structured yogic intervention produced robust improvements in mental health and adjustment among visually impaired students. The reduction in variability (SD decreased from 5.04 to 3.73) further suggests that the intervention contributed to greater emotional stability and consistency across participants.

Summary of Findings

- Significant reduction in mental health scores
- Highly significant t-test results ($p < 0.001$)
- Extremely large effect size ($d = 6.01$)
- Improved consistency in post-test scores
- Strong practical and clinical significance

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of structured yogic practices on mental health and adjustment among visually impaired students. The findings revealed a highly significant improvement in mental health, as evidenced by the substantial reduction in mean scores from pre-test to post-test. The paired sample t-test confirmed that this change was statistically significant, and the exceptionally large effect size further indicated strong practical significance.

The observed improvement in mental health can be attributed to the holistic nature of yogic practices, which integrate physical, physiological, and psychological mechanisms. Yogic interventions are known to regulate the autonomic nervous system, particularly by enhancing parasympathetic activity, which leads to reduced stress, improved emotional stability, and better cognitive functioning. The incorporation of pranayama and meditation likely facilitated relaxation responses and improved emotional regulation, thereby reducing psychological distress among participants.

The findings of the present study are consistent with earlier research that highlights the effectiveness of yoga and mind-body interventions in enhancing psychological well-being. For instance, studies within the domain of yoga-based interventions have reported significant reductions in anxiety, stress, and emotional instability, along with improvements in resilience and overall mental health. These findings support the notion that structured yogic practices serve as an effective non-pharmacological approach for promoting psychological well-being.

Furthermore, the improvement observed across multiple dimensions of mental health—such as emotional growth, adjustment, and reduced social nervousness—suggests that yoga has a multidimensional impact. This aligns with theoretical perspectives in psychology that conceptualize mental health as an integrated construct involving emotional, behavioral, and social components. The intervention appears to have enhanced participants' ability to cope with stressors, regulate emotions, and adapt to their environment more effectively.

A notable finding of the present study is the **extremely large effect size**, indicating a very strong impact of the intervention. While such a large effect size is uncommon in behavioral research, it can be explained in the context of the study population and intervention design. Visually impaired students often experience higher baseline levels of psychological distress due to social, environmental, and functional challenges. Therefore, structured interventions that provide relaxation, self-regulation, and emotional support may lead to more pronounced improvements. Additionally, the controlled nature of

the intervention, consistent participation, and the absence of competing treatments may have contributed to the magnitude of the observed effect.

Another contributing factor may be the **novelty and engagement level** of the intervention. Since participants may not have been previously exposed to structured yogic practices, the intervention could have produced a strong initial response, resulting in significant changes in mental health outcomes. Moreover, the use of guided instructions and a supportive environment likely enhanced adherence and effectiveness.

The reduction in variability observed in post-test scores further suggests that the intervention contributed to **greater consistency in mental health outcomes** among participants. This indicates that yogic practices not only improved overall mental health but also helped stabilize emotional responses across individuals. Despite the promising findings, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The study employed a relatively small sample size and did not include a control group, which may limit the generalizability of the results. Additionally, the short duration of the intervention may not capture long-term effects. Future research should consider larger samples, randomized controlled designs, and longitudinal follow-ups to validate and extend the present findings.

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