



## Awareness about yoga asana and its benefits among undergraduate medical students: A descriptive study

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### Abstract

**Background:** India has a vast diversity of Yoga practices, which can be traced back as early as past 5000 years when Ayurveda was being practiced. In spite of India being the birth place of “Yoga”, the benefits of Yoga have not reached each and every one of us. The reason could be lack of awareness, interest and misconceptions about the practice of Yoga.

**Aim:** This study aims to know the extent of awareness of Yoga Asana among the undergraduate medical students and its benefits towards ensuring physical, mental and psychological well-being.

**Materials & Methods:** It will be a descriptive cross-sectional study conducted among undergraduate medical students of Shri Sathya Sai Medical College and Research Institute for a period of 2 months. Universal sampling method will be employed.

**Sample Size:** Based on the study conducted in Mangalore among pre-clinical medical students, a prevalence of 50% was observed with regard to knowledge and benefits about Yoga. Taking that into account, sample size will be:  $N = 4 pq / L^2 = 4 \times 50 \times 50 / 8 \times 8 = 123.45 = 156.25$  (approximately 150).

**Inclusion and Exclusion criteria:** 150, 1 year undergraduate students of Shri Sathya Sai Medical College will be included. Unwilling students will be excluded. A close ended questionnaire will be used to collect the data regarding awareness and benefits of yoga. A pre designed and pre tested proforma was used to collect data about the participants knowledge about the awareness and benefits of Yoga. Data analysis will be done by SPSS version 26 and excel 2007 software.

**Implications:** Considering the fact that the medical students are more prone for stress during their curricular training, knowledge and awareness about Yoga Asana can play an immensely significant role. Further, based on the study findings, a sensitization program about YOGA may be planned for the benefit of the students.

**Keywords:** awareness of yoga, undergraduate medicos, benefits of yoga, stressed students

### Introduction

India has a vast diversity of Yoga practices, which can be traced back as early as past 5000 years when Ayurveda was being practiced [1]. In spite of India being the birth place of “Yoga”, the benefits of Yoga have not reached each and every one of us. The reason could be lack of awareness, interest and misconceptions about the practice of Yoga [2, 3]. It was believed for ages that the concept of Yoga is for Yogis and Sadhus, but after acknowledging the numerous benefits associated with Yoga, the present scenario is gradually improving [4, 5]. Yoga has gained its popularity worldwide in recent years, as evidenced by the widespread practice as Complementary and Alternative Medicine [6]. The Quantum of influence towards Yoga for a common man is the topic of interest nowadays.

### Aim

This study aims to know the extent of awareness of Yoga Asana among the undergraduate medical students and its benefits towards ensuring physical, mental and psychological well-being.

### Materials & Methods

It will be a descriptive cross-sectional study conducted among undergraduate medical students of Shri Sathya Sai Medical College and Research Institute for a period of 2 months. Universal sampling method will be employed.

### Sample Size

Based on the study conducted in Mangalore among pre-clinical medical students, a prevalence of 50% was observed with regard to knowledge and benefits about Yoga [7]. Taking that into account, sample size will be:

$$N = 4 pq / L^2 \\ = 4 \times 50 \times 50 / 8 \times 8 = 156.25 \text{ (approximately 150)}$$

### Inclusion and Exclusion criteria

150, 1 year undergraduate medical students of Shri Sathya Sai Medical College will be included. Unwilling students will be excluded. A close ended questionnaire will be used to collect the data regarding awareness and benefits of yoga (Table 1-4). A pre designed and pre tested proforma was used to collect data about the participants knowledge about the awareness and benefits of Yoga (proforma enclosed) [8]. Data analysis will be done by SPSS version 26 and excel 2007 software.

**Table 1:** Habit, Knowledge, previous consultation about Yoga

S. No	Items	Yes	No
1.	Habit of doing Yoga		
2.	Knowledge of benefits of Yoga		
3.	Have you ever consulted a Professional/Therapist about Yoga		

**Table 2:** Reasons for doing Yoga

S. No:	Reasons for doing Yoga	Yes	No
1	Fitness		
2	Good for body (external)		
3	Good for internal organs		
4	Good for mind		

**Table 3:** Timing for doing Yoga

S. No:	Time for doing Yoga	Yes	No
1	Early morning		
2	Afternoon		
3	Evening		
4	Night		

**Table 4:** Motivation for doing Yoga

S. No:	Motivation for doing Yoga	Yes	No
1	Self		
2	TV/Media		
3	Family members		
4	Friends/Relatives		
5	Doctors/Professionals		
6	Dissatisfaction with body image		

**Table 5:** Habit, Knowledge, previous consultation about Yoga

Attributes	Yes	No	No response
Habit of doing Yoga	46	101	2
Knowledge of benefits of Yoga	132	17	0
Have you ever consulted a Professional	38	109	2

**Table 6:** Reasons for doing Yoga

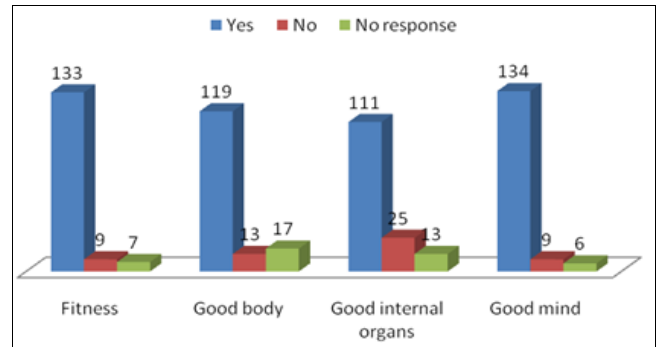
Attributes	Yes	No	No response
Fitness	133	9	7
Good for body (external)	119	13	17
Good for internal organs	111	25	13
Good for mind	134	9	6

**Table 7:** Timing for doing Yoga

Attributes	Yes	No	No response
Early morning	127	13	9
Afternoon	14	100	35
Evening	29	68	22
Night	18	98	33

**Table 8:** Motivation for doing Yoga

Attributes	Yes	No	No response
Self	108	27	14
TV/Media	68	59	22
Family members	74	54	21
Friends/Relatives	62	67	20
Doctors/Professionals	82	45	22
Dissatisfaction with body image	66	61	22

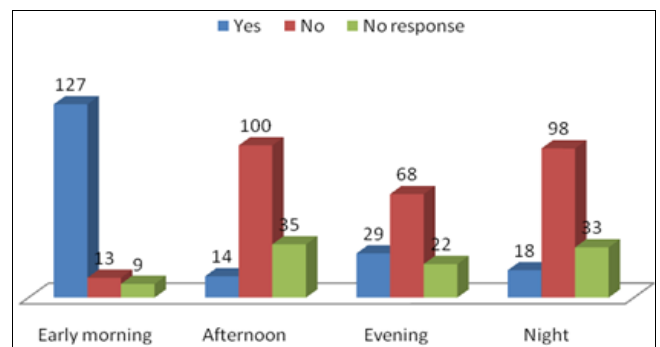


**Fig 2:** Reasons for doing Yoga

**Results**

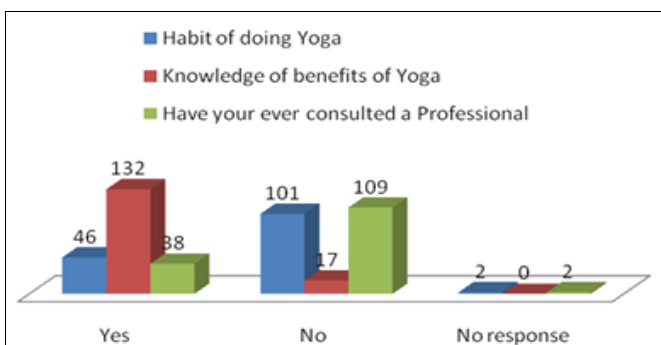
The total number of students participated were 149. The results were recorded in a tabular column (Table 5-8). Among 149 students 30.87% had the habit of doing Yoga, 67.79% did not have the habit of doing Yoga and 1.34% of them did not respond. 88.59% of the students had the knowledge of benefits of Yoga, 11.41% had no knowledge of benefits of Yoga. 25.50% of the students consulted a professional/therapist about Yoga in their past, 73.15% of students did not have the chance of consulting a professional/therapist and 1.34% of them had not responded (Fig.1)

With respect to the reasons for doing Yoga in their life, 89.26% of the students had said Yoga will provide fitness for their body was their prime reason, 79.86% said by doing Yoga they will be provided good body was the reason for doing Yoga, 74.50% of students said the Yoga was the reason for wellbeing of the internal organs and 89.93% of the students felt that regular Yoga practice is the reason for good mind. 6.04% of the students said no to fitness, 8.72% of the students said no to good body, 16.78% of students said no to internal organs and 6.04% of the students said no to good mind because of Yoga. 4.70% of students did not respond for fitness, 11.41% of the students did not respond for good body, 8.72% of the students did not respond to good internal organs and 4.07% of the students did not respond for good mind as the reasons for doing Yoga regularly (Fig. 2).



**Fig 3:** Timing of doing yoga

Regarding the timing of Yoga 85.23% of the students said early morning was the ideal time for performing Yoga, 8.72% of the students said no to early morning performance of Yoga and 6.04% of the students did not respond. 9.40% of the students said afternoon was the ideal time for doing Yoga, 67.11% of the students said no for doing Yoga in the afternoon and 23.49% of the students did not respond doing Yoga in the afternoon. 19.46% of the students said doing



**Fig 1:** Habit knowledge, previous consultation about Yoga

Yoga in the evening was good, 45.64% of the students said no for doing Yoga in the evening and 14.77% of the students did not even respond for doing Yoga in the evening. 12.08% of the students said yes for doing Yoga at night, 65.77% of the students said no for doing Yoga at night and 22.18% of the students did not respond to the concept of doing Yoga at night time (Fig. 3).

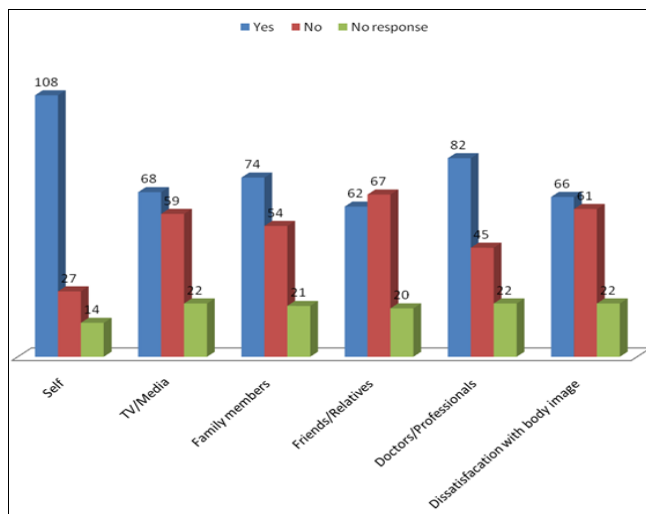


Fig 4: Motivation for doing Yoga

72.48% of the students felt that they were motivated for Yoga by their self, 18.12% of the students said they were not motivated by their self and 9.40% of the students did not respond. 45.64% of the students responded that the motivation factor for doing Yoga was TV/Media, 39.60% of the students felt that either TV or the media was not the motivating factor for doing Yoga and 14.77% of the students did not respond. Family members were the motivating factor for the practice of Yoga for 49.66% of the students, for 36.24% of the students family members were not the motivating factor and 14.09% students never responded.

For 41.61% of the students friends/relatives were the motivating factor for doing Yoga, for 44.97% of the students friends/relatives were not the motivating factor for doing Yoga and 13.42% of the students never responded. For 55.03% of the students either doctors/professionals were the motivating factors for doing Yoga, for 30.20% of the students doctors/professionals were not the motivating factors for doing Yoga and 14.77% of the students did not respond. For 44.30% of the students dissatisfaction with their body image was the major motivating factor for doing Yoga, for 40.94% of the students dissatisfaction with their body image was not the major motivating factor for doing Yoga and 14.77% of the students among 149 did not bother to respond the questionnaire.

### Discussion

Each professional course is precious for the concerned faculties and the curriculum builders. It is pertinent that the medical profession is the most stressed one among all other professional courses. Moreover the first year undergraduate students are the most stressed group as per this study indicates (shree lakshmi V Hegde) *et al.* The present study substantiates that eventhough 89.26% of the students had said Yoga will provide fitness for their body, 79.86% said by doing Yoga they will be provided good body, 74.50% of

students said the Yoga was the reason for well being of the internal organs and 89.93% of the students felt that regular Yoga practice is the reason for good mind, only 30.87% of the students were doing Yoga and 67.79% of the students did not have the habit of practicing Yoga. Being born in the birth place of Yoga not doing Yoga is a negligent attitude among the students. Unlike other exercises, it proven that by doing Yoga you gain energy. Moreover for performing Yoga no one needs to spend extra money or time or space. It could be performed in a well ventilated room over a bed sheet/Yoga mat and the ultimate investment is one's body, a practical cost free practice for whole body and mind.

Today is the era of Yoga, since 2015 every 21<sup>st</sup> June is celebrated as the International Yoga Day as declared by the United Nations General Assembly during 2014 as requested by our Hon. Prime Minister of India. The practice of asana was an intuitive feeling that these movements were not just "stretching"; they seemed to have some greater connection with my soul. Now, after years of study, I believe that each asana represents an aspect of myself and as such offers a powerful doorway inward to deeper awareness. This deeper awareness occurs because when I practice a pose, I am focusing on the feelings and thoughts that arise rather than just on completing the movement. I may notice tightness in my legs or emotional resistance to certain movements. This daily intense period of focus helps to create a habit of paying attention which follows me through the rest of my day. As I pay attention to what arises, I learn to see myself and my reactions more clearly; as I see myself more clearly, I begin to understand that my reactions are habits that I can let go of. This process is at the core of spiritual practice (Judith Lasater, AUG 28, 2007) clearly states that the Yoga derived from the word YUJ meaning to unite, definitely unites body and mind.

### Implications

Considering the fact that the medical students are prone for stress during their curricular training, knowledge and awareness about Yoga Asana can play an immensely significant role in one's life. Further, based on the study findings, a sensitization program about YOGA may be planned for the benefit of the students. It a good and welcome initiative by the Hon. Health and Family welfare department of India and Medical Council of India and University Grants Commission jointly drafted a plan to implement Yoga as a part of Competency Based Undergraduate Curriculum form 2019-2020 onwards.

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