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Knowledge, attitude, and practice (KAP) towards Yoga among Physiotherapy students at Maharashtra Institute of Physiotherapy, Latur: A cross-sectional study

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Abstract
Background: Yoga is increasingly recognized as an effective complementary intervention for promoting physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Physiotherapists are expected to possess adequate knowledge regarding evidence-based health promotion strategies, including yoga. Understanding the knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and practices related to yoga among physiotherapy students is essential for promoting its integration into rehabilitation and preventive healthcare.
Objective: To assess the knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and practice of yoga among physiotherapy students at Maharashtra Institute of Physiotherapy, Latur.
Methods: A cross-sectional, questionnaire-based study was conducted among 179 undergraduate and postgraduate physiotherapy students aged 18-25 years using convenience sampling. A validated self-administered questionnaire assessed demographic characteristics, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, yoga practice, and barriers to participation. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, were used for data analysis.
Results: Most participants demonstrated good knowledge of yoga (82.4%) and favorable beliefs regarding its health benefits (91.3%). Positive attitudes toward yoga were observed in 78.6% of participants. While 87.2% were aware of yoga and 74.9% had practiced it previously, only 43.6% reported regular yoga practice for more than six months, indicating a gap between awareness and sustained participation. The majority believed that yoga improves physical health (82.1%), mental health (78.8%), reduces stress (76.5%), enhances concentration (72.4%), and helps prevent lifestyle diseases (69.8%). Lack of time (53.6%) was the most frequently reported barrier to regular practice.
Conclusion: Physiotherapy students demonstrated good knowledge and positive attitudes and beliefs toward yoga; however, regular practice remained comparatively low. Integrating structured, evidence-based yoga education and practical training into physiotherapy curricula may improve participation and prepare future physiotherapists to incorporate yoga as a complementary rehabilitation strategy.

Keywords: Attitude, Beliefs, Knowledge, Practice, Physiotherapy Students, Yoga.

Introduction

Healthcare workers are constantly working in a stressful environment based on their job description and hierarchy and they often feel tired. [1, 2] Health practices, knowledge, and beliefs that include spiritual therapies, manual techniques, and exercises, all of which can be used alone or in combination to prevent illnesses and maintain well-being. Even though individual aspects of Yoga are beneficial, composite aspects of Yoga such as physical and meditative parts may have greater benefits. [2, 3] Health management habits and choices, particularly among medical students, are developed during their undergrad days and that these practices and intentions are carried over into their professional life. Yoga is an ancient mind-body practice originating in India and is widely recognized for its role in improving physical fitness, mental health, flexibility, balance, and overall quality of life. The increasing prevalence of stress, anxiety, sedentary behavior, and lifestyle disorders among young adults has highlighted the importance of preventive health strategies such as yoga. Despite increasing awareness, the actual knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs regarding yoga among young adults remain variable. Understanding these factors is essential for developing effective interventions that encourage participation in yoga practices. Therefore, this study aimed to assess the knowledge, attitude, and beliefs about the importance of yoga among young adults. Growing research demonstrated that Yoga might improve physical and mental health. Yoga is a holistic philosophy of mind, body, and spirit that encourages practitioners to lead ethical and balanced lives. Yoga is a holistic approach impacting the overall well-being of a person in an integrated manner. Yoga can be easily practiced by young and old, at home and at work. Hence, in order to promote Yoga as a sustainable measure to improve and promote health, barriers and challenges in Yoga practice must be known. The Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices (KAP) survey is done through a quantitative method that provides information about health-related beliefs and behaviors survey also reveals misconceptions or misunderstandings in a target population. This study will help researchers to understand the challenges faced by healthcare professionals of one of the premier health education institutes in practicing Yoga and suggest remedial measures/solutions [4, 5, 6].

Need of the Study

As physiotherapists face increasing demand for non-invasive treatments, effective management, and holistic care, Yoga can play an essential role in improving quality of life, promote better health, relieve pain, and relax muscle

tension. It is a traditional practice increasingly adopted within modern physiotherapy for various disorders management and rehabilitation. Yoga is quite popular in sports medicine and among athletes, but it is not general physiotherapy practice. So, the need arises to assess the level of knowledge, attitude and practices of Yoga among physiotherapy students.

AIMS and Objectives

AIM

To find about Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) towards Yoga among physiotherapy students of MIPT, Latur.

Objectives

1. To assess knowledge regarding yoga among young adults.
2. To evaluate attitudes toward yoga practice.
3. To determine beliefs regarding the health benefits of yoga.
4. To identify factors influencing yoga participation.

Review of Literature

a. Sonali Jaiswal *et al* (2024) [2] conducted a study on An Assessment of Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) towards Yoga among Healthcare Professionals of AIIMS, Raipur: A Cross-sectional Study and concluded that adequate knowledge, the familiarity with Yoga, and a positive attitude toward Yoga are found to be present among healthcare professionals. However, future studies are warranted to identify the association between the knowledge and practice of Yoga. [2]

b. Iyer RR, Lakshmi S, Sathyanath D, *et al* (2021) conducted a cross-sectional self-reported online survey to assess the awareness and perceived health benefits of yoga among adult population of Madhya Pradesh. The percentage of people aware about yoga was more and their perception of yoga is as a tool to improve one's health and to be free from any kind of disease. Even if there are many mediums of motivation if one does not get any inspiration from self then they will not be able to perform yoga, so self-motivation is very necessary. Participant think that yoga is very time consuming. [3]

c. Sudhir sase *et al*. (2021) [7] the Prevalence of Yoga Practice: A Survey in the Kolhapur Population and concluded this is the first study on the prevalence of yoga practice in Kolhapur population. Results depict that a considerable number of people knew about yoga, but only a few of them practiced it. Additional studies are thus required for a better deduction of yoga prevalence. [7]

d. Shirley Telles *et al*. (2021) [8] did study on benefits and adverse effects associated with yoga practice: A cross-sectional survey from India and concluded that benefits of yoga practice to physical health were the most common, with soreness and pain the most common adverse effect of yoga. Yoga practice related factors influence the benefits of yoga. [8]

e. Amit Mishra *et al*. (2020) [9] did study on Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice of Yoga in Rural and Urban India, KAPY 2017: A Nationwide Cluster Sample Survey and concluded that the population-wide positive perceptions about yoga as a preventive health tool can not only catalyze consensus disease-specific yoga modules but also bridge the knowledge–practice gap that exists because of limited yoga centers and professionals. [9]

f. Kanchibhotla Divya M.S *et al*. (2019) [10] did study on Yoga in India: a study on perception and practice of yoga among the Indian population and recommends a future path for both practitioners as well as non-practitioners of yoga and also enable policy makers and grassroots organizations to make holistic practices such as yoga more available. [10]

Pilot Study

A pilot survey preceded the main survey. The survey questionnaire was distributed to 40 (20 + 20) students from a college chosen at random. Participants were recruited from those institutions using a Convenience sampling approach from one batch upon meeting the eligibility criteria. 20 samples were collected in this method. The survey questionnaire was prepared based on input from the pilot study. Regarding face validity, some questions have been revised to improve their clarity and correctness of phrasing. The content validity was ensured by an independent review of two practitioners. The reliability and internal consistency of the questionnaire were determined using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (0.80).

Instrument and Measurement

Self-reported questionnaire including informed consent and four sections was used during data collection. Sections 1 included background information. The 2nd section 21 questions regarding knowledge practice of Yoga, involvement in exercise, type of exercise they involved. The entire questionnaire was inputted into Google Forms without any randomization of items for online distribution and tested for usability and technical functionality. The form had 28 questions distributed over two pages. Mandatory items were highlighted with a red asterisk and a relevant non-response option was present. The survey was never displayed a second time once the user had filled it in to prevent duplicate entries.

Materials and Methods

Total population of the study which includes physiotherapy students studying in bachelors and masters were included in the study which was 179. via convenience sampling they were contacted. Semi-structured questionnaires were used to collect the data that consisted of closed-ended questions.

1. Study Design

Cross-sectional, observational, questionnaire-based survey.

2. Study Population

Young adults aged 18–30 years.

3. Study duration

2 months from 08/06/2025 to 15/08/2025

4. Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling.

5. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

5.1 Inclusion Criteria

- Young adults aged 18 - 30 years.
- adequate knowledge of English or Hindi language to give consent and fill the questionnaire.
- Willing to provide informed consent.

5.2 Exclusion Criteria

- not willing to give consent to participate in the study
- Incomplete questionnaire responses.

6. Data Collection Tool

A structured self-administered questionnaire consisting of:

- Demographic information.
- Knowledge-related questions.
- Attitude-related questions.
- Belief-related questions.

7. Ethical Considerations

The participant consent form was taken at the time of data collection. Information provided by participants was kept confidential and this study was submitted for ethical permission from Institutional ethical committee of Maharashtra institute of physiotherapy. After obtaining the Institutional Ethics Committee's approval the study was started. The informed written consent form shall be filled out through online forms.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics (N = 179)

Sr. No	Courses (Physiotherapy)	Age (Yrs)	Number of Subjects		Total	%
			Males	Females		
1	First year Undergraduates	18-19	12	37	49	27.4
2	Second year Undergraduates	19-20	06	19	25	14
3	Third year Undergraduates	20-21	04	21	25	14
4	Final year Undergraduates	21-22	03	25	28	15.6
5	Undergraduates Interns	22-23	04	21	25	14
6	First year Postgraduates	23-24	03	14	17	9.5
7	Second year Postgraduates	24-25	03	07	10	5.6
	Total participants		35	144	179	100

8. Data Collection

Once the individuals were ascertained of meeting the inclusion criteria and consented to voluntary participation in the study, a link to a web-based survey created by Google Forms was sent via whatsapp making it a closed survey. Subjects were selected according to inclusion and exclusion criteria. Study was explained and consent was taken. The survey wasn't announced or advertised anywhere else. Of the 200 eligible participants who agreed to participate, 179 participants completed the entire questionnaire (completion rate: 94.7%)

Statistical Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Frequency (n). Percentage (%). Mean ± SD (for continuous variables if applicable). Formula: Prevalence (%) = (Frequency / Total Sample Size) × 100. Statistical significance was considered at $p < 0.05$ where inferential analyses were performed. Analysis was done for 178 participants with 100% value.

1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

A total of 179 physiotherapy students participated in the study, comprising 35 males (19.6%) and 144 females (80.4%). The majority of participants were female, indicating a higher representation of women in the study population. The age of participants ranged from 18 to 25 years. First-year undergraduate students were predominantly aged 18–19 years, while second-year, third-year, and final-year undergraduate students were mainly between 19–22 years. Undergraduate interns were primarily aged 22–23 years. Postgraduate students were distributed between 23–25 years, corresponding to their academic level. Regarding academic distribution, the largest group of participants consisted of first-year, equal distribution of second, third and interns, undergraduate students. Postgraduate students constituted a smaller proportion of the sample.

2. Knowledge about yoga

87.2% participant found to have knowledge about yoga. 7.8% had knowledge that yoga cannot cure diseases. 2.8% participants felt that yoga is harmful for body. 20.1% felt that no regular practice of yoga is needed. 34.7% participants felt that yoga is painful for body. Most participants (87.2%) were aware of yoga, indicating a high level of general awareness. Most participants acknowledged the multidimensional benefits of yoga. Most respondents considered 20–30 minutes of daily yoga adequate. Most participants were neutral regarding the cognitive benefits of yoga. Most respondents recognized the need for consistent yoga practice. The majority did not consider yoga painful.

Table 2: Knowledge of yoga

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Both	125	69.8
Spiritual path for mind calmness	40	22.3
Physical exercise for fitness	11	6.1
None of the above	3	1.7

Table 3: Knowledge about Yoga duration

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20–30 minutes	76	42.5
Half an hour	65	36.3
One hour	33	18.4
1.5 hours	4	2.2
Other	1	0.6

3. Attitude

Participants overwhelmingly perceived yoga as safe. Most participants understood the broad physical benefits of yoga. The findings indicate a generally positive attitude toward yoga among the participants. Most respondents agreed that yoga is beneficial for maintaining physical fitness, improving mental well-being, and promoting a healthy lifestyle. A large proportion of participants believed that regular yoga practice can reduce stress, enhance concentration, and improve overall quality of life. Furthermore, many respondents expressed willingness to recommend yoga to others, reflecting favorable perceptions regarding its effectiveness and usefulness.

Table 4: Attitude Towards Yoga

Attitude	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Positive	128	71.5
Neutral	34	19.0
Negative	17	9.5

Table 5: Attitude Towards types of training

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
All of the above	160	89.4
Flexibility	13	7.3
Missing	4	2.2
Endurance	1	0.6
Muscle toning	1	0.6

Table 6: Attitude towards Yoga benefits for Mental and physical health

	Mental health		Physical health	
Response	Frequency	Percentage(%)	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Neutral	130	72.6	74	41.3
Agree	30	16.8	28	15.6
Strongly disagree	19	10.6	77	43.0

4. Belief

The majority viewed yoga as both a physical and spiritual practice. Most participants believed yoga plays a role in preventing health problems. A large majority believed yoga has therapeutic benefits in disease management. Regarding the recommended duration of daily yoga practice, the majority of respondents (42.5%, *n*=76) believed that practicing yoga for 20 minutes to half an hour is sufficient. Similarly, 36.3% (n = 65) suggested that half an hour of daily yoga is appropriate. About 18.4% (*n*=33) recommended one hour of yoga practice per day, while only 2.2% (*n* = 4) felt that 1.5 hours is necessary. One participant (0.6%) suggested that the duration can vary from 15–20 minutes to 1–2 hours depending on individual needs and circumstances.

Table 7: Beliefs Regarding Benefits of Yoga

Belief Statement	Agree (%)
Improves Physical Health	82.1
Improves Mental Health	78.8
Reduces Stress	76.5
Enhances Concentration	72.4
Prevents Lifestyle Diseases	69.8

5. Practice of yoga and Exercise involvement

5.1 Aerobic and resisted training practice

Nearly three-fourths of respondents reported participation in exercise or sports activities. Involvement in exercise or sports was 71.5%. in exercise, 47.5% aerobic training, 15.6% resisted training and 36.9% dint not find involvement in any of exercise or sports. 77.1% participants did not involve in any fitness session before. 17.3% found to do Regular exercise more than 5 sessions per week. 14.5 % found to do Regular exercise 2-3 sessions per week. 28.5% found to do Regular exercise one session per week. 17.3% Participants do not feel that they should workout. 20.7% were unsure and 62% were disagree. Aerobic exercise was the most common form of physical activity among participants. Only about one-fourth of participants attended a gym or fitness session in the previous month. regular exercise participation was variable, with many respondents reporting infrequent exercise. Most respondents recognized the importance of exercising regularly.

5.2 Yoga practice

approximately three-fourths of respondents had previous experience with yoga. Although awareness and beliefs regarding Yoga were high, actual participation and regular practice were comparatively lower. Less than half of participants reported sustained Yoga practice, indicating a gap between knowledge and implementation. Lack of time was the predominant barrier to yoga practice. Nearly all respondents rejected the notion that yoga is a waste of time. Participants generally recognized that yoga offers benefits beyond weight loss. participants, the most commonly reported reason for not practicing yoga was lack of time. Nearly 53.9% (96 participants) stated that they do not practice yoga because they do not have sufficient time. Another 15.7% (28 participants) reported that they do not have access to proper yoga learning resources, while 14.6% (26 participants) indicated that they lack knowledge about yoga. A smaller proportion of participants expressed concerns about injury (4.5%), and 3.4% reported that they simply do not like yoga. The remaining responses accounted for less than 1% each and included reasons such as laziness, personal issues, existing injuries, lack of belief in yoga, and being in the learning stage of yoga.

Table 8: Reason for not practicing Yoga

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No time to do	96	53.6
No access to learn	28	15.6
No knowledge of Yoga	26	14.5
Fear of injury	8	4.5
Don't like Yoga	6	3.4
Other individual responses	15	8.4

Table 9: Participation of Yoga among Students

Indicator	Positive Practice (%)
Participate in exercise/sports	71.5
Perform aerobic or resistance exercise	63.1
Attended fitness session/gym	22.9
Exercise regularly during the week	31.8
Practiced Yoga previously	74.9
Practicing Yoga currently (>6 months)	43.6

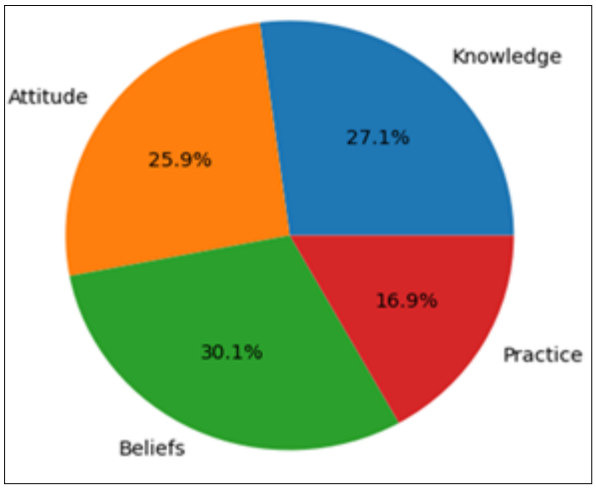
Table 10: Previous Practice of Yoga

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Not practicing at all	101	56.4
< 6 months	31	17.3
6 months–1 year	22	12.3
> 3 years	14	7.8
1–3 years	11	6.1

5.3 Domain-wise Analysis

Beliefs showed the highest score (91.3%), indicating strong confidence in Yoga's benefits. Knowledge was good (82.4%), suggesting widespread awareness of Yoga and its health effects. Attitude toward Yoga was positive (78.6%). Practice had the lowest score (51.3%), revealing that awareness does not necessarily translate into regular Yoga participation. The findings suggest the need for

interventions focusing on improving adherence and reducing barriers such as lack of time and access to Yoga instruction. discrepancy between awareness and actual implementation of Yoga practices. These findings highlight the need for structured awareness programs and accessible Yoga interventions to improve regular participation among young adults.



Pic 1: Domain wise distribution scores

Discussion

The present study evaluated the knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs regarding yoga among physiotherapy students. Overall, the findings demonstrated a high level of awareness and favorable perceptions of yoga, with most participants recognizing its importance in promoting physical and mental health. As future rehabilitation professionals, physiotherapy students are expected to possess sound knowledge of evidence-based health promotion strategies. The positive perceptions observed in the present study indicate that yoga is increasingly recognized as a valuable complementary approach within physiotherapy practice. These findings are in, agreement with Mishra *et al*. (2020) [9], who reported widespread awareness and positive attitudes toward yoga among the Indian population, although regular practice remained relatively low[9]. Similarly, Sase *et al*. (2021) [7] observed that awareness of yoga was considerably higher than its actual practice among individuals in the Kolhapur population.[7] A major finding of the present study was the high level of awareness regarding the preventive and therapeutic benefits of yoga. Most participants believed that regular yoga practice contributes to improved physical fitness, mental well-being, flexibility, and overall health. These findings are consistent with those of Kanchibhotla and Rau (2019) [10], who reported that the majority of Indians perceived yoga as an effective strategy for maintaining health and well-being and recommended wider implementation of yoga through educational institutions and community-based initiatives.[10] Likewise, Telles *et al*. (2021) [8] demonstrated that physical health benefits were the most frequently reported outcomes among yoga practitioners in India, with improvements in flexibility, fitness, stress reduction, and quality of life being commonly perceived. The attitude-related findings further demonstrated strong acceptance of yoga among physiotherapy students. Nearly all participants disagreed that yoga is a waste of time and considered it a safe and beneficial practice when performed correctly. Such positive perceptions are encouraging because healthcare professionals' attitudes influence future clinical recommendations and patient counseling. A systematic review of yoga interventions among healthcare professionals and healthcare students concluded that yoga consistently reduces stress, anxiety, depression, burnout, and musculoskeletal discomfort while improving overall well-being, thereby supporting the incorporation of yoga into healthcare education. An interesting finding of the present study was that a substantial proportion of participants believed yoga could cure diseases. Although yoga has demonstrated significant therapeutic benefits in the management of musculoskeletal disorders, chronic pain, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, anxiety, depression, and several lifestyle-related conditions, current evidence supports its use as a complementary intervention rather than a replacement for conventional medical management. Therefore, this misconception highlights the importance of strengthening evidence-based education within physiotherapy curricula so that students understand both the therapeutic potential and the limitations of yoga. Telles *et al*. (2021) [8] similarly emphasized that while yoga provides numerous physical and psychological benefits, it should be practiced appropriately under proper guidance to maximize benefits and minimize adverse events. Most participants in the present study believed that yoga improves flexibility, endurance, muscle conditioning, posture, balance, and overall wellness, and recognized that regular practice is essential to obtain these benefits[8]. This observation is supported by previous reviews demonstrating that sustained yoga practice improves musculoskeletal function, physical fitness, stress management, and psychological well-being. Furthermore, integrative reviews among healthcare students have concluded that yoga contributes to improved resilience, emotional health, and academic well-being, making it an appropriate wellness strategy within healthcare education. Despite the favorable perceptions observed, lack of time emerged as the most common barrier to regular yoga practice. Similar barriers have been reported among university and healthcare students, where academic workload, clinical responsibilities, and examination schedules reduce participation in health-promoting activities. Recent evidence continues to show that structured yoga interventions effectively reduce stress and anxiety among healthcare students, suggesting that incorporating short, institution-based yoga sessions into academic schedules may improve participation and long-term adherence. The demographic profile of the present study showed a predominance of female participants, reflecting the gender distribution commonly observed in physiotherapy education. Inclusion of students from all academic years provided a comprehensive understanding of perceptions across different stages of professional training, thereby improving the representativeness of the findings. [8] Overall, the present study demonstrates that physiotherapy students possess good knowledge and positive attitudes and beliefs regarding yoga. However, practical barriers to regular practice and certain misconceptions regarding its therapeutic role continue to exist. Incorporating evidence-based yoga education, practical training sessions, and structured wellness programs into undergraduate physiotherapy curricula may improve students' knowledge, promote regular yoga practice, and enhance their competence in integrating yoga as a complementary

rehabilitation strategy. Recent evidence supporting yoga interventions among healthcare students further strengthens the recommendation for curriculum integration and institutional wellness initiatives.

Strengths of The Study

- Inclusion of participants from undergraduate and postgraduate physiotherapy programs.
- Assessment of multiple domains, including knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and practice-related barriers.
- Provides baseline data for planning yoga promotion programs among healthcare students.

Limitations of The Study

- Cross-sectional design limits causal interpretations.
- Self-reported responses may be subject to recall and social desirability bias.
- The study was conducted in a single institution, limiting the generalizability of findings.
- Female participants were overrepresented, which may influence the overall results.

Future Recommendations

Future studies should include larger multicenter samples, explore factors influencing actual yoga practice, and evaluate the effectiveness of educational interventions aimed at improving evidence-based knowledge and regular participation in yoga among physiotherapy students.

Conclusion

The present study concludes that physiotherapy students possess generally good knowledge and positive attitudes and beliefs regarding yoga. Most participants recognized yoga as an effective approach for promoting physical fitness, mental well-being, flexibility, and overall health. The findings demonstrate a high level of acceptance of yoga, with participants acknowledging its value as a health-promoting practice and expressing favorable perceptions toward its incorporation into daily life.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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