



A SURVEY ON THE HEALING POWER OF YOGA ON A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

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Abstract:

Background: Yoga, an ancient practice involving physical postures, breathing exercises, and meditation, has been widely recognized for its numerous health benefits. Medical students, especially those in their first year, face significant academic pressures and stress, making them ideal candidates to study the benefits of yoga. The National Medical Commission (NMC) has recently mandated a 12-day yoga program as part of the MBBS curriculum to enhance student well-being. This study aims to evaluate the impact of yoga on the lifestyle and health of first-year MBBS students.

Aims and Objectives: To assess the effects of yoga on stress levels, sleep quality, and overall well-being among first-year MBBS students.

Materials and Methods: The study involved a survey conducted before and after completion of a 12-day yoga program among 110 first-year MBBS students. The participants completed pre- and post-yoga questionnaires to capture changes in their lifestyle and well-being.

Results: Our study showed a significant portion of students reported improvements in sleep quality and reductions in stress levels. Before the yoga sessions, 50.4% of students reported feeling stressed often or always. After the sessions, 48.2% noted a decrease in their stress levels, and 41.1% reported improved sleep quality.

Keywords: Yoga, Medical Students, Stress Reduction, Health, Immunity, Survey

Introduction

The practice of yoga, originating from ancient Indian philosophy, has gained global recognition for its extensive benefits on physical and mental health. It integrates physical postures (asanas), breath control (pranayama), meditation (dhyana), and ethical principles to promote a holistic sense of well-being. Yoga's relevance in contemporary times is particularly noted for its ability to reduce stress, improve mental clarity, and enhance overall health outcomes [1-3]. Medical students, who often face immense academic pressures and stress, can significantly benefit from the regular practice of yoga [4,5].

Yoga has garnered considerable attention for its multifaceted benefits. Defined as a holistic system, yoga offers promising avenues for enhancing well-being and managing stress levels [6-8]. Within the demanding realm of medical education, where stress and burnout are prevalent, integrating yoga into curricular frameworks presents a compelling approach to support students' health and resilience [9-11]. This study focuses on assessing the impact of yoga on the lifestyle of first-year MBBS students, examining changes in stress levels, sleep quality, and overall health outcomes.

Medical education is known for its rigorous curriculum, demanding schedules, and high expectations, which can lead to elevated levels of stress and anxiety among students [12,13]. Chronic stress can negatively impact their academic performance, mental health, and overall quality of life [14,15]. Various studies have shown that yoga can be an effective intervention to mitigate these adverse effects [16-18]. By incorporating yoga into their routine, medical students can develop better stress management skills, improve their focus and concentration, and achieve a healthier balance between their academic and personal lives [19-21].

This study aims to evaluate the effects of yoga on the lifestyle of first-year MBBS students, focusing on changes in stress levels, sleep quality, and overall well-being. By analysing the responses of 110 students before and after the yoga intervention, this research seeks to provide empirical evidence supporting the integration of yoga into medical education [22]. The study analysed and compared the levels of perceived stress in adults before and after completion of yoga training, helping to evaluate whether yoga affects stress at the physiological level [23]. The findings could underscore the importance of such programs and potentially inform further enhancements to the medical curriculum to foster healthier and more balanced future healthcare professionals [24]. Lifestyle changes could also be suggested for individuals affected by stress and anxiety in daily life [25].

Methodology: This study was conducted among first-year MBBS students, involving a total of 110 participants. A 12-day yoga program was implemented, following the latest NMC guidelines, which mandate such an inclusion in the MBBS curriculum. The participants were asked to fill out two sets of questionnaires: one before and one after the yoga sessions. These

questionnaires aimed to capture the students' perceptions of their stress levels, sleep quality, and overall well-being before and after the intervention.

The yoga sessions were conducted over a two-week period, with each session lasting approximately one hour. The pre- and post-yoga questionnaires were designed to assess changes in the students' lifestyle and well-being, focusing on specific metrics such as stress levels, sleep quality, and general health. Pre questionnaire was provided on the first day of yoga session and post questionnaire on the last day of yoga session

Protocol: A STRUCTURED YOGA PROTOCOL WAS DESIGNED AND FOLLOWED BY THE PARTICIPANTS THROUGHOUT THE COUSRE.

YOGA EXERCISE	MINUTES
Warm- up exercises	10 minutes
Yoga Postures	30 minutes
sun salutation	5 minutes
Breathing Exercises	10 minutes
Om Chanting	2 minutes
Prayer	3 minutes

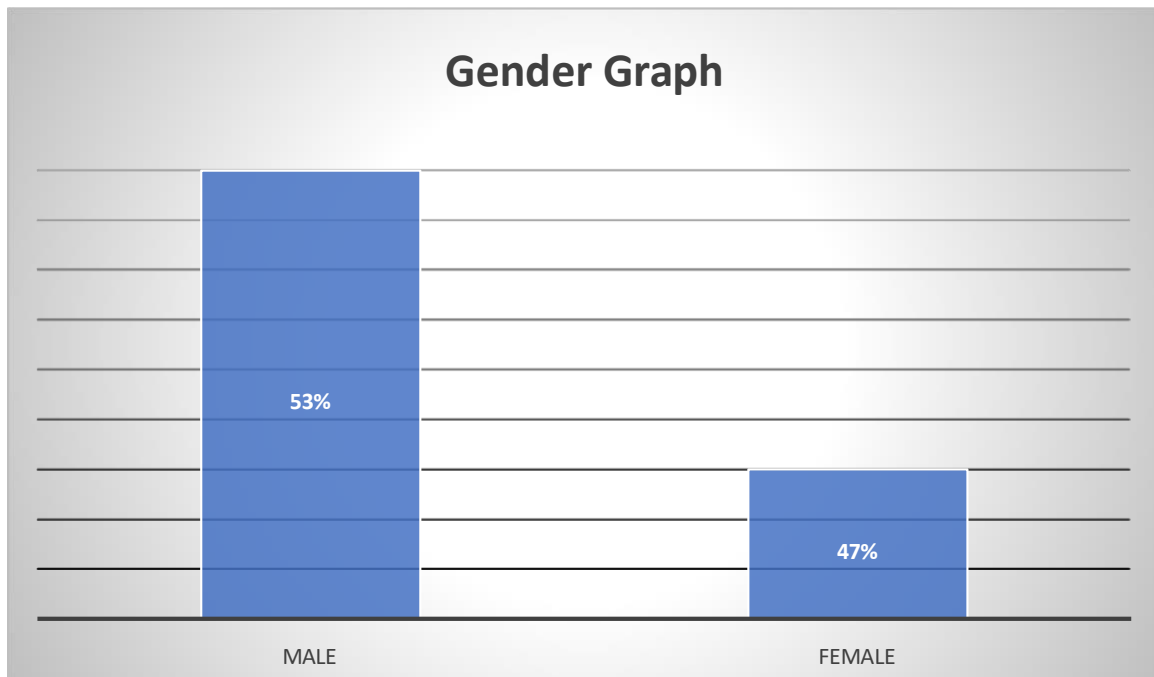
Results: Out of 110 responses recorded (Pre and Post Yoga), the data revealed significant improvements in several aspects of the participants' lifestyles. The analysis showed that before the yoga sessions, 50.4% of the students reported feeling stressed often or always.

After the 12-day yoga program, 48.2% of the students noted a decrease in their stress levels, and 41.1% reported improved sleep quality.

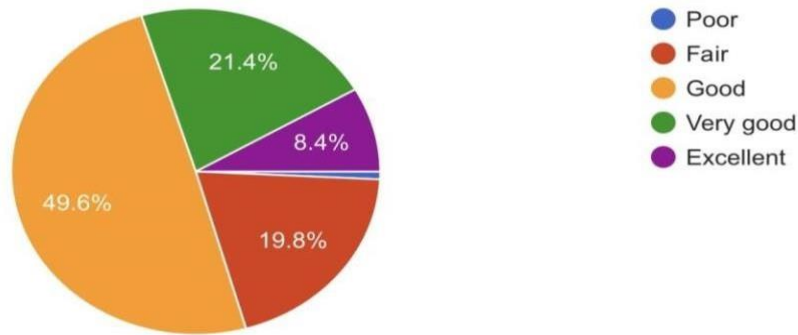
Additionally, there were notable changes in students' overall health ratings before and after practicing yoga.

Survey Responses:

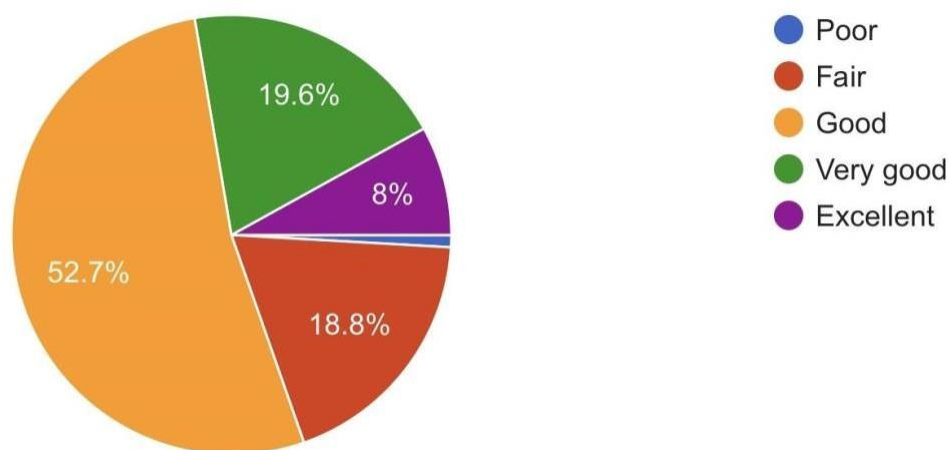
1) What is your gender?



Out of 110 participants included in the study, there was an even distribution of male (53%) and female (47%) students. The analysis of stress levels before and after the yoga program revealed notable changes across both genders.

2) How would you rate your overall health before practicing yoga?

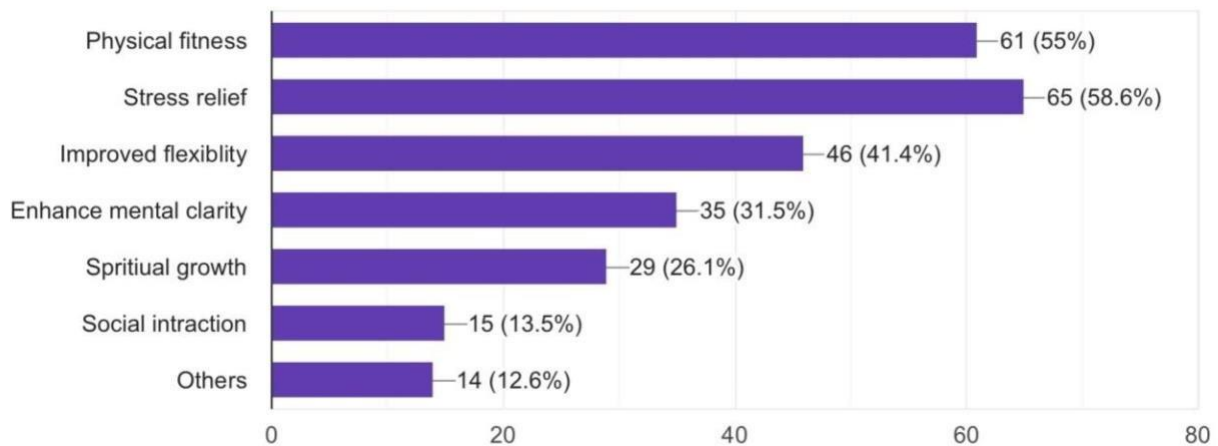
Before practicing yoga, 49.6% of the students rated their overall health positively, indicating a general perception of good health among the majority. Additionally, 21.4% of the students rated their health as very good, suggesting a relatively high level of well-being prior to engaging in yoga. A smaller percentage, 8.4%, reported excellent health, reflecting a high level of pre-existing fitness and well-being in this group. Meanwhile, 19.8% of the students rated their health as fair, indicating areas for improvement and potential benefits from yoga practice. Only 0.8% of the students rated their health as poor, highlighting the need for interventions to enhance their well-being.

3) How would you rate your overall health after practicing yoga?

After practicing yoga, 52.7% of the students rated their overall health as good, showing an increase in positive health perceptions. Additionally, 19.6% of the students rated their health as very good, which, although slightly lower than the initial rating, still represents a significant portion with a high level of well-being. The percentage of students reporting excellent health remained similar at 8%, indicating sustained high levels of fitness and well-being in this

group. Meanwhile, 18.8% rated their health as fair, slightly less than before, suggesting some improvement in health perception. Only a minimal number of students rated their health as poor, indicating a general positive impact of yoga on health.

4) Which aspects of yoga did you find most beneficial?

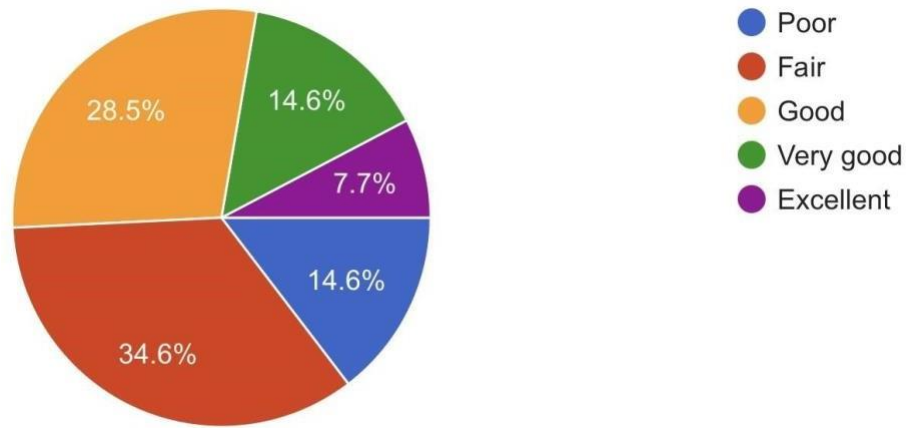


The positive aspects of yoga as reported by students were also highlighted. A significant number of students found physical fitness (55%), stress relief (58.6%), improved flexibility (41.4%), enhanced mental clarity (31.5%), spiritual growth (26.1%), and social interaction (13.5%) to be the most beneficial aspects of yoga (Fig. 3).

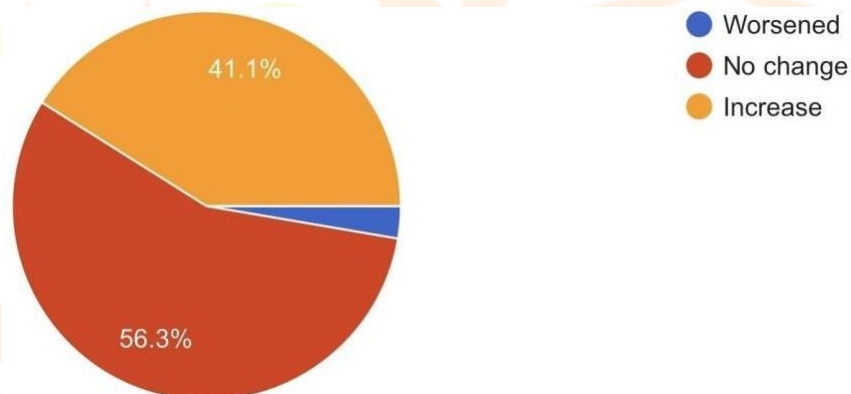
These changes in the students responses before and after the yoga sessions highlight the positive impact of the yoga program on their well-being.



5) How would you describe your current sleep quality?

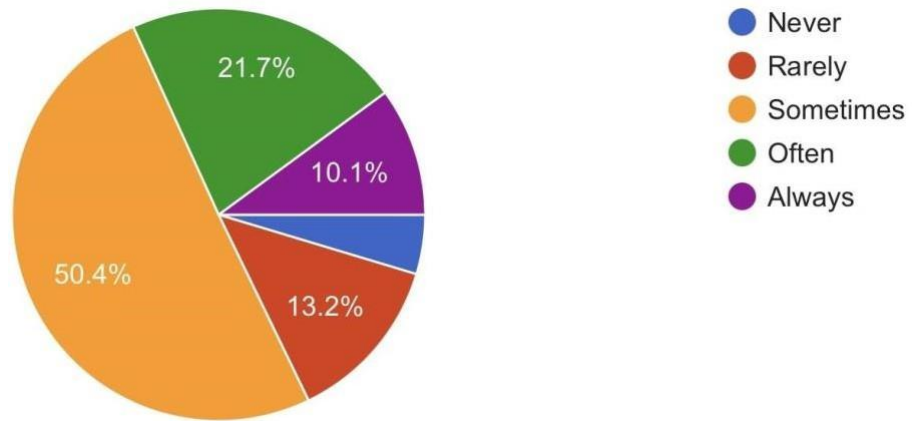


6) How has your sleep quality changed since starting yoga?



Trend shows that 41.1% reported improved sleep quality after the yoga sessions highlighting the positive impact of the yoga program on their well-being.

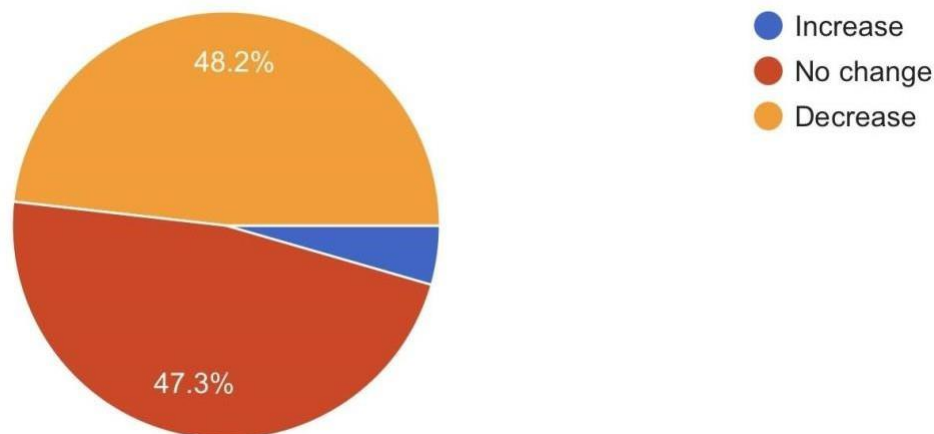
7) How often do you feel stressed?



This depicts the distribution of reported stress levels before the initiation of yoga sessions:

- 50.4% of participants reported feeling stressed "Sometimes".
- 21.7% felt stressed "Often".
- 13.2% felt stressed "Rarely".
- 10.1% reported "Always" feeling stressed.
- 4.7% indicated they "Never" felt stressed.

8) How has your stress level changed since starting yoga?



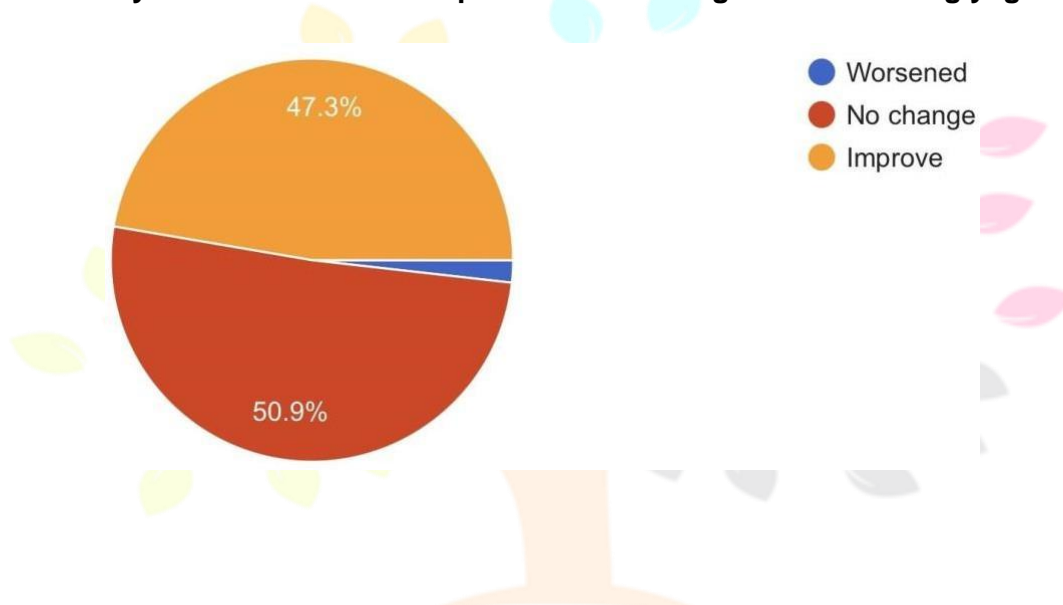
After the completion of the 12-day yoga program, Figure 8 illustrates the changes in reported stress levels:

The data on how the students stress levels changed after the 12-day yoga session is presented:

- 48.2% of participants reported a decrease in their stress levels.
- 47.3% observed no change in their stress levels.
- 4.5% experienced an increase in their stress levels.

These results highlight that nearly half of the participants experienced a reduction in stress levels among both male and female participants following the yoga intervention. The observed improvements suggest that yoga may effectively contribute to stress management suggesting a positive impact of yoga on managing stress among first-year MBBS students, regardless of gender.

9) How has your academic or work performance changed since starting yoga?



Among the participants, 47.3% reported feeling improvement in their academic or work performance after the 12-day yoga session, while 50.9% noted no change. Yoga's potential for enhancing academic and work performance extends beyond immediate effects observed in this study. Research suggests that regular practice of yoga can lead to sustained improvements in cognitive function, concentration, and mental clarity (21,22). These benefits are particularly valuable for medical students facing high cognitive demands and rigorous study schedules.

Conclusion: The study provides strong evidence supporting the benefits of yoga in enhancing medical students' understanding, clinical skills, and professional attitudes. Despite these advantages, challenges such as inadequate faculty support and logistical issues need to be addressed to optimize the implementation of yoga. The findings suggest that integrating yoga

effectively into the medical curriculum can significantly improve the quality of medical education and better prepare students for their future roles as healthcare professionals.

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