

**A STUDY ON EFFECTS OF SELECTED YOGIC PRACTICES ON
PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES OF HEARING AND SPEECH
IMPAIRED CHILDREN**

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The aim of the study was to study the effects of selected yogic practices on psychological variables of hearing and speech impaired children.

Man is a physical, mental and spiritual being; yoga helps promote a balanced development of all the three. Other forms of physical exercises, like aerobics, assure only physical well-being. They have little to do with the development of the spiritual or astral body.

Yogic exercises recharge the body with cosmic energy. This facilitates

- Attainment of perfect equilibrium and harmony
- Promotes self- healing.
- Removes negative blocks from the mind and toxins from the body
- Enhances Personal power
- Increases self-awareness
- Helps in attention focus and concentration, especially important for children
- Reduces stress and tension in the physical body by activating the parasympathetic nervous system

The aspirant feels rejuvenated and energized. Thus, Yoga bestows upon every aspirant the powers to control body and mind.

Everybody in their own field is mentally anxious. Here comes the role of yoga. It can play a vital role in eliminating mental stress from life. The national policy of education had given emphasis on yoga right from the school level. It states, “As a system which promotes as integrated development of body and mind, yoga will receive special attention, efforts will be made to introduce yoga in all schools; to this end, it will be introduced in teachers training courses.^{1”}

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Importance of Yoga in sports:

Yoga for cure of sports injuries

Herbert De. Vries (1961)² has reported the utility of stretching procedure of hath Yoga in relieving certain conditions of muscles due to injuries in sports.

Yoga for the prevention of sports injury

Yoga is the perfect activity for athletes interested in cross training, injury prevention, increasing core strength, and increasing balance. It is not over-stating things to say that yoga can truly be the fountain of youth for athletes and fitness enthusiasts.

Most sports or fitness injuries occur through over-training and repetitive injuries. Performing the same motions over and over again with the same muscles, tendons, and ligaments creates muscle imbalance, tight muscles, and inflammation. Yoga can change all that by creating the proper muscle balance through its stretching movements and balancing postures.

Emotional factors are very important in the performance of sports. If rightly used emotions can contribute to the improvement of the performance in sports. Emotions are governed by the working of the autonomic nervous system. Control over the autonomic nervous system brings the emotional disturbances down. Yogic exercises as a group play a significant role in the training of the autonomic nervous system. Stretching exercises like asanas, relaxation techniques, and breathing exercises in the form of Pranayama are excellent in conditioning the system.

The present study is about the physical and psychological aspect of hearing and speech impaired children through yoga. A lot of work is done on the effect of exercises on various components of motor abilities of a person. Regarding the physical, psychological and physiological variables (vital capacity, pulse rate, flexibility, B.P., cardio vascular endurance, maximum breath holding, maximum expiratory pressure, mental health, self confidence, flexibility, agility, speed, endurance and strength) of hearing and speech impaired children, a very few studies have been conducted.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM:

The present research is conducted with the students of the centres for hearing and speech handicapped, situated in Kolkata. It is been observed that growth and development so such students depends upon their health.

LIMITATIONS:

All the subjects (the students of Kolkata School of Hearing and speech impaired) belonged to economically different status of families having different food habits; hence their diet could not be controlled.

The personal habit of the subject and their state of mind as well as emotional stress and strains, owing to their studies and exams in school could not be controlled.

Extra practice, if any, the subjects with the desire to perform better than other subjects, could not be controlled.

No special motivational techniques were used to encourage subjects to do their best and there was no way to determine whether the subjects have the same degree of motivation during pre and post tests.

However, the nullifying affect of the above factors was accepted for the purpose of the study.

“There is no clear-cut distinction between mental health and mental illness. Those of us who are normal have periods of depression; we lose our tempers and walk blindly in problems leaving no avenue to escape. In the same way, people who have been professionally classified, as mentally ill are that time free of abnormal symptoms”.

Wallace Wallin has defined mental hygiene as “.....the application of a body hygienic information and technique, culled from the science of psychology, child study, education, sociology, psychiatry, medicine and biology for the purpose of (1) the preservation and improvement of the mental health of the individual and of the community, and (2) for the prevention and cure of minor and major mental diseases and defects and of mental, educational and social maladjustment.”³

“Our psychology is normally characterized by continual disturbances of varying degree of severity. Some of the common disturbances are fear, anxiety, suspicion, depression, insecurity, restlessness, anger and jealousy etc. Up to certain extent; such disturbances are considered

“Normal”. But the disturbances experienced by an individual exceed what is regarded as normal, the person is said to be suffering from lack of “Mental Health”. When disturbances significantly and in extreme proportion disable an individual, the person is deemed to be suffering from mental illness. Thus mental health is generally understood as absence of marked psychological disturbances.”⁴

The World Health Organization defines mental health as "a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community".⁵ It was previously stated that there was no one "official" definition of mental health. Cultural differences, subjective assessments, and competing professional theories all affect how "mental health" is defined.⁶ There are different types of mental health problems, some of which are common, such as depression and anxiety disorders, and some not so common, such as schizophrenia and Bipolar disorder.⁷

Most recently, the field of Global Mental Health has emerged, which has been defined as “the area of study, research and practice that places a priority on improving mental health and achieving equity in mental health for all people worldwide”.⁸

Six popular indices of mental health were selected for inclusion in the present study:

Over-all Adjustment – It refers to individual achieving an overall harmonious balance between the demands of various aspects of environment, such as home, health, social, emotional and school on the one hand and cognition on the other.

Emotional Stability – It refers to experiencing subjective stable feeling, which has positive or negative values for the individual.

Security-Insecurity – It refers to a high (or low) sense of safety, confidence, and freedom from fear, apprehension or anxiety particularly with respect to fulfilling the person’s present or future needs.

Autonomy – It refers to a stage of independence and self-determination in thinking.

Intelligence – It refers to general mental ability, which helps the person in thinking rationally, in behaving purposefully in environment.

Self-Concept – It refers to the sum total of a person’s attitudes and knowledge towards himself and evaluation of his achievements.

Some proud men have had notable political, military or religious careers. Their flattering opinions of themselves kept them performing at their maximum ability, and inspired confidence in them”⁹

On the basis of the analyses of data as given, it is found that the subjects of experimental group significantly improve the self confidence after yogic practice. Comparison in mean scores between the groups clearly shows that post test mean scores of experimental group has the higher mean value has recorded significant improvement in self confidence of hearing and speech impaired children. There is significant improvement in self confidence is compared post test mean score of experimental group and post test mean score of controlled group. Studies of Brown et Al (1975), Deshmukh (1971, 1972) and Hittlemen (1962 – 63) have been confirmed the results of present study.

On psychological variables also there is no statistically significant difference ($P < 0.5$) on self-confidence, emotional stability, overall adjustment, autonomy, intelligence and mental health with $t = 0.19, 0.21, 0.64, 0.19, 0.47, 0.39, 0.41$ and 0.37 respectively.

It is found that the subjects of experimental group significantly improve the emotional stability after yogic practice. Comparison in mean scores between controlled and experimental the groups clearly shows that post test mean scores of experimental group has the higher mean value has recorded significant improvement in emotional stability of hearing and speech impaired children. Brown et Al (1975), Gharote (1971), Deshmukh (1971, 1972) and Hittlemen (1962 – 63) have confirmed the results.

There were better results found on psychological fitness in comparison to physical fitness on post test mean scores of experimental group. Experimental group has been found to be significantly different on psychological fitness except autonomy, security-insecurity and self concept. But improvements have been observed on these variables. While post test mean scores were compared of experimental and controlled group, significant difference has been found on other psychological variables i.e. over all adjustment, emotional stability, IQ and mental health. On self-confidence the difference was significant.

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