

Awareness about Yoga and its Benefits among Undergraduate and Post-Graduate Dental Students

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Abstract

Introduction: Students of all professional courses are under stress amongst which dental and medical curriculum is rated as highest. Many studies have indicated that the students experienced a reduction in stress and anxiety levels after inclusion of regular practice of yoga and can have a significant change in the lifestyle of a dentist by allowing them to maintain their health as well as relieving them from their day-to-day stress. Considering the long-term effects of the dental profession on one's health, it is crucial to know the awareness levels about yoga and its benefits amongst dental undergraduate and post-graduate students towards ensuring physical, mental and psychological well-being. **Methodology:** Google Forms were created where section one was for informed consent; the section two consisted of the questionnaire. It consisted of four items to assess the student's knowledge about awareness and benefits about yoga. The statistical analysis was done after collecting all the responses. **Results:** The total number of students participated was 206. Among 206 students, 35% had the habit of doing yoga and 65% did not have the habit of doing yoga. Ninety-two percent of the students had the knowledge of benefits of yoga; 6% had no knowledge of benefits of yoga. **Conclusion:** Ninety-two percent of the students had the knowledge of benefits of yoga, but only 35% had the habit of doing yoga. Based on the findings of the study, a sensitisation program on benefits of yoga shall be planned in small groups and the students should be motivated to take up yoga in their daily life.

Keywords: Awareness, back pain, dentist, yoga

INTRODUCTION

Yoga is one of the most wonderful gifts India has given to the humankind. It dates back to 5000 years. The inclusion of regular practice of yoga into one's life has been known to bring physical and mental well-being. Yoga is being practised in many countries of the world and gaining wide acceptance and popularity.

Students of all professional courses are under stress amongst which dental and medical curriculum is rated as highest.^[1] Dental education can be a significant source of stress among dental students, and studies have observed higher levels of stress among dental students than in the general population.^[2] A large body of literature examining stress in undergraduate dental students has revealed a significant increase in stress that intensifies with students' year of study.^[3,4]

As the dental profession is also physically demanding, the dentist faces one important problem related to posture, that is pain. The pain can vary from mild discomfort in the neck,

shoulder and back region to excruciating one, so much so that it leaves with no choice but for placing a halt on professional work and then rushing to the concerned specialists for management and respite.^[5] The prevalence of lower back pain among dentist has been found to be very high.^[6]

Many studies have indicated that the students experienced a reduction in stress and anxiety levels after the inclusion of regular practice of yoga^[7] and yoga can have a significant change in the lifestyle of a dentist by allowing them to maintain their health as well as relieving them from their day-to-day stress.^[8]

Most of the dentists encounter problems related with posture

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Submitted: 22-05-2020

Accepted: 10-08-2020 **Published:** 22-09-2020

Access this article online

Quick Response Code:



Website:
www.aihbonline.com

DOI:
10.4103/AIHB.AIHB_44_20

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How to cite this article: Nadig P, Shah M. Awareness about yoga and its benefits among undergraduate and post-graduate dental students. *Adv Hum Biol* 2020;10:125-8.

as a professional hazard in the form of musculoskeletal pain. The most affected body areas among dentists are the neck, shoulder and back regions; it is important to strengthen the muscles in those areas. A meta-analysis of randomised control trial examined the current literature for the strongest evidence of the efficacy of yoga as a potential treatment for chronic lower back pain.^[9] It was also found that 82% of undergraduate students and 90% of post-graduate students reported body pain in at least one region. The most prevalent pain locations were the chest/shoulder (46.9%), head/neck (41.8%), middle back (33.9%) and right hand (25.4%).^[10]

Considering the long-term effects of the dental profession on one's health, it is crucial to know the awareness levels about yoga and its benefits amongst dental undergraduate and post-graduate students. The data will help us to know the extent of awareness of yoga among the undergraduate dental and post-graduate students and its benefits towards ensuring physical, mental and psychological well-being.

Although yoga plays an important role in the physical and mental well-being of individual, limited numbers of studies have been carried out to assess the awareness regarding benefit of yoga in the population comprising of dental students.

METHODOLOGY

The proposed study was initiated after the Sumandeep Vidyapeeth Institutional Ethics Committee approval. Permission from the head of the institutes, K M Shah Dental College and Hospital, Sumandeep Vidyapeeth, for conducting a questionnaire survey amongst the students was obtained. The list of the students on roll, their E-mail id and contact number in the institutes were procured. Participant's information sheet was shared with the participants through E-mail.

Undergraduate students, post-graduate students and interns on roll of K M Shah Dental College and Hospital, Sumandeep Vidyapeeth, during the study period were included in the study. The link for the Google Form was sent to individual participants through E-mail. Participants were contacted personally to fill the Google Forms every week for three times. The participants not responding after three reminders and those not giving consent to participate were excluded from the study.

Google Forms consisting of two sections were created where section one was for informed consent which was mandatory to agree to participate in the survey. The section two consisted of the questionnaire. It consisted of four items to assess the student's knowledge about awareness and benefits about yoga. The questionnaire was adopted from a study conducted on undergraduate medical students in the year 2019 [Tables 1-4].^[11]

The first part of the questionnaire consisted questions to assess students' knowledge and habit for yoga [Table 1]. The second part of the questionnaire consisted questions regarding their awareness where participants can respond in yes, no or don't know [Table 2]. The third part of the questionnaire consisted questions regarding their knowledge where participants can

Table 1: Habit, knowledge and previous consultation about yoga

	Yes	No
Habit of doing yoga		
Knowledge of benefits of yoga		
Have you ever consulted a professional/therapist about yoga?		

Table 2: Reasons for doing yoga

	Yes	No
Fitness		
Good for body (external)		
Good for internal organs		
Good for mind		

Table 3: Time for doing yoga

	Yes	No
Early morning		
Afternoon		
Evening		
Night		

Table 4: Motivation for doing yoga

	Yes	No
Self		
TV/media		
Family members		
Relatives/friends		

respond in yes, no or can't say [Table 3]. The last part of the questionnaire consisted questions regarding their motivation where participants can respond in yes or no and others will be considered as no response for the question [Table 4]. The statistical analysis was done by the SPSS version 26 and Excel 2007 software after collecting all the responses after 1 month of the first E-mail.

RESULTS

The total number of students participated was 206. Among 206 students, 35% had the habit of doing yoga and 65% did not have the habit of doing yoga. Ninety-two percent of the students had the knowledge of benefits of yoga; 6% had no knowledge of benefits of yoga. Thirty-six percent of the students consulted a professional/therapist about yoga in their past [Figure 1]. With respect to the reasons for doing yoga in their life, 93% of the students had said yoga will provide fitness for their body was their prime reason, 88% said that by doing yoga, they will be provided good body was the reason for doing yoga, 87% of the students said that the yoga was the reason for well-being of the internal organs and 96% of the students felt that regular yoga practice is the reason for good mind [Figure 2]. Regarding the timing of yoga, 96% of the students said early morning

was the ideal time for performing yoga, 5% of the students said afternoon was the ideal time for doing yoga, 31% of the students said doing yoga in the evening was good and 7% of the students agreed for doing yoga at night [Figure 3]. Sixty-eight percent of the students felt that they were motivated for yoga by themselves [Figure 4].

DISCUSSION

Yoga is practised in the whole world for its proven mental and physical benefits. When we talk about mental and physical benefits, the dental students experience stress as well as problems related to posture. The prevalence of lower back pain amongst dentists has been found to be very high. The present study was conducted to know the awareness about yoga and its benefits amongst dental undergraduate and post-graduate students so that the results can be analysed and used to gain the utmost benefits to students. Ninety-two percent of the participants were having the knowledge about the benefits of yoga, whereas only 35% had the habit of doing yoga and only 36% had ever visited a professional or therapist. This vast difference between knowledge and practicing yoga exists in spite of studies reporting chronic musculoskeletal pain appearing early in dental careers, with more than 70% of dental students of both sexes reporting pain by their 3rd year.^[12] Ramamoorthy *et al.* reported that despite musculoskeletal pain and stress being the most common occupational hazard

prevalent among dentists, over 50% of the participants surveyed did not seek any measure to treat these occupational hazards.^[13] Similar results were also found in the present study where 63% of the participants in the present study never visited professional or therapist.

Majority of the participants were aware of the positive effects of yoga on the mind and body. Ninety-three percent of the students had said yoga will provide fitness for their body was, 88% said that by doing yoga, they will attain good body, 87% of the students said that the yoga was the reason for well-being of the internal organs and 96% of the students felt that regular yoga practice is the reason for the good mind. This significant awareness of positive effects is crucial in motivating the individual to practise yoga regularly and avail the benefits of the practice.

Regarding the timing of doing yoga, there is no particular time to do or not to do, but the important point to consider is that yoga is not advisable to practise within 2 h of having a meal. Considering the above fact, practicing yoga in the morning will be the most appropriate, followed by evening and afternoon and night will be the least appropriate. The result of this study showed that 96% of the participants felt that early morning was the appropriate time for doing yoga, followed by 36% in the evening, but 60% and 55% of the participants said that afternoon and night were not appropriate for yoga, respectively, which is also recommended by many yoga therapists/instructors.^[14]

TV and mass communication works good to increase awareness regarding many social issues and other health-related matters,

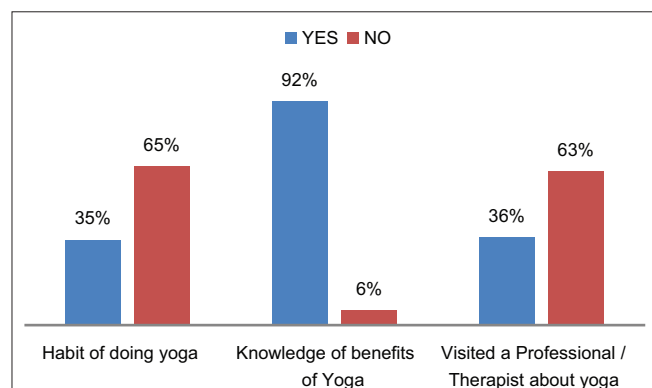


Figure 1: Habit, knowledge and previous consultation about yoga.

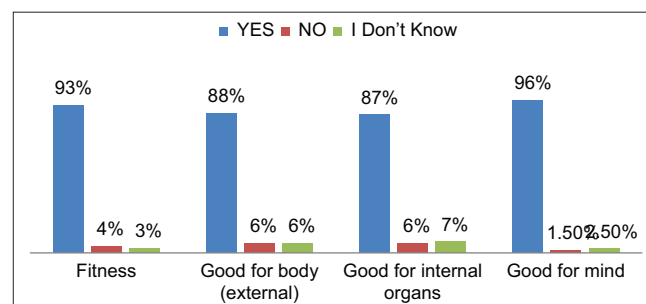


Figure 2: Reason for doing yoga.

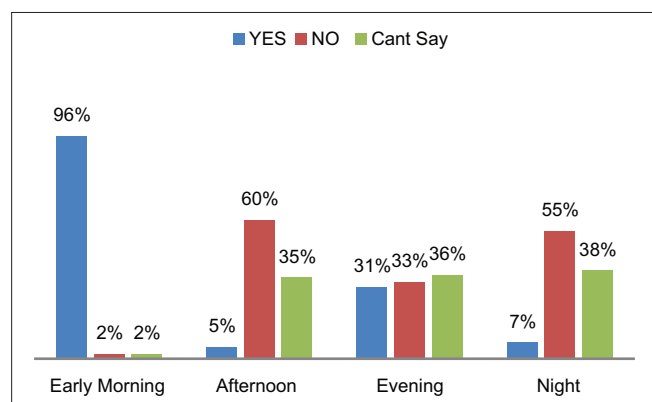


Figure 3: Appropriate time of doing yoga.

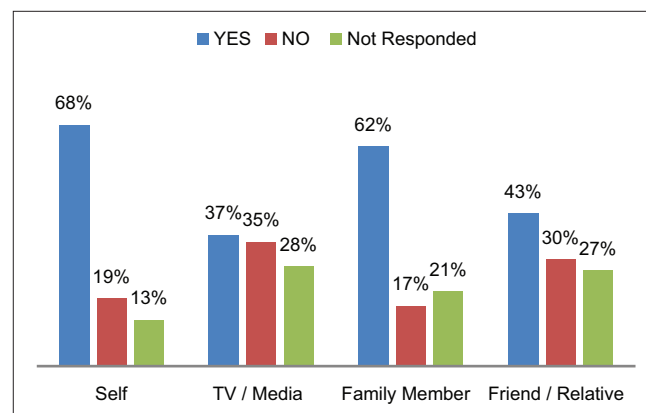


Figure 4: Motivation for doing yoga.

but when it comes to personal health habits like yoga, it does not show major influence. It might be because of lack of personal interaction. 68% and 62% of the participants were motivated by self and family, respectively, whereas only 43% and 37% were motivated by friends/relatives and TV/media, respectively. Based on these findings, any awareness program or sensitisation program on yoga shall be targeted in a small group where personal interaction can be achieved.

CONCLUSION

Considering the fact that dental students are more prone to stress and back pain. Knowledge and awareness about yoga and its benefits can play an immensely significant role in one's life. Based on the findings of the study, a sensitisation program on benefits of yoga shall be planned in small groups and the students should be motivated to take up yoga in their daily life.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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