

Efficacy of Yoga and Swimming in Reducing Anxiety: A Comparative Study

Manish V. Sawane, *Shilpa S. Gupta

Department of Physiology, NKP Salve Institute of Medical Sciences, Nagpur, *V.N.
Government Medical College, Yavatmal

Abstract:

Different exercise modules and yogic practices have been claimed to reduce anxiety. However, there are very few longitudinal studies to assess and to compare improvement in mental health of subjects performing yogic asanas and breathing exercises versus those performing endurance exercises like swimming. Therefore, present study was designed to compare reduction in anxiety levels with yogic postures and breathing exercises with that of swimming. This study was conducted in the Department of Physiology. Study design used was prospective randomized comparative Study. Hundred volunteers were included in the study and randomly divided into two groups; one practiced yogic asanas and breathing exercises and other practised swimming for 12 weeks. Beck's Anxiety Inventory was used to assess anxiety level of subjects. Anxiety levels were assessed prior to the training and then after 12 weeks of training. The total score was calculated from 21 items and high scores indicated higher anxiety levels. The average anxiety scores decreased significantly ($p < 0.0001$) in both the groups after training. In yoga group. average pretraining score of 24.25 decreased to post training score of 20.27, whereas in swimmer group it decreased from 23.57 to 20.8. However, the decrease in anxiety was similar with both modalities of exercise ($p > 0.05$).