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Mandeep KumarAssistant Professor, SBSBM
Univesity College, Sardulgarh,
Mansa. Punjab, India

A study of effects of yoga asanas on obese girls

Mandeep Kumar

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of ten days' yogic practice on self-control and weight control on obese girls. A sample of 13 ($n = 13$) girls with average age 22 years was selected for this study from Yoga Shivar held at Mukat public school, organized by rotary club Patiala. We have performed pre-test and post-test scale to measure change, before and after asana practice. This scale is made by Narinder kumar and Parveen kumar in English version and we have used its Punjabi version made by Dr. jatinder singh. Department of Psychology, Punjabi University, Patiala. Post observation was made on the last day intervention of yoga Practices included Omkar, Asanas, Pranayama, Kriyas, Dhyana etc. The computed t-value was 0.20. It showed a non-significant improvement at the parameter, but at the mean it showed better impact of Yoga on self-control. Weight-reduction through Yoga was a part of the study. It showed a satisfactory decrease of 1.3 kgs. (Mean) in weight. Thus, the findings indicate the beneficial effect of Yoga for weight-reduction of obese girls to improve their self-control.

Keywords: Yogic practices, self-control and weight reduction

1. Introduction

Accumulation of excessive body fat is known as obesity. Obesity is measured and defined in terms of body mass index (BMI). Body mass index is the numerical way of deciding the appropriate weight range according to the height of an individual. A body mass index of more than $30\text{kg}/\text{m}^2$ indicates obesity. It is further classified as severe, morbid and super obesity in the order as the BMI increases. Obesity is a lifestyle disease which is spreading rapidly worldwide. Individuals of all age, gender and ethnicity are affected by this disease. Still, a general trend has been observed that women are affected more than the men. The tendency to gain weight also increases with the growing age. However, an alarming trend of childhood obesity is being noticed in the recent years. Obesity renders an individual susceptible to various other diseases like hypertension, coronary artery disease, type 2 diabetes, sleep apnoea etc.

Obesity is mainly caused when the intake of the calories exceed the dissipated calories. In simple words, when one tends to eat more than his body requirement the extra fat start depositing in the body tissues giving rise to obesity. Junk food is the main culprit. Children are fonder of such unhealthy food items and hence are getting more affected by the rising incidences of obesity. The other common cause is the lack of physical activity. To properly digest the consumed food, physical exercise is compulsory. But the modern day sedentary life style leaves less time to work out. Thence, lack of exercise is a major contributing factor. However, in certain cases a plateau phase has been noticed. This generally occurs due to hormonal imbalance mainly caused by disturbance in physiological system of the body. Genetic predisposition also plays a major role as a causative factor.

There are as no such presenting symptoms of the disease except the ever increasing body weight. Generally, shortness of breath, fatigue, tiredness, over-sweating, lethargy etc. is the chief complaints of the patient. But most of the times, the patients does not pay much attention towards these changes in the body. They visit the physician only after the serious manifestation of the disease occurs. It has been seen that such medical complications resolve on their own, when the patient starts losing weight.

Obesity can be managed by eating healthy food and increasing physical activity. There is no need to alter the quantity of the food but the quality of the food must be checked and improvised. Avoiding red meat, oily food, extra fats in form of ghee, butter etc.

Correspondence

Mandeep KumarAssistant Professor, SBSBM
Univesity College, Sardulgarh,
Mansa. Punjab, India

can dramatically help to reduce the weight. And if the right eating is accompanied with the physical work out, it becomes the perfect way to lose weight and stay healthy. In some patients surgery is also carried out. The choice of the treatment depends on various factors. And the decision is taken by the physician by thoroughly examining the patient.

WHO has declared obesity as a global epidemic? Earlier, obesity was seen as a disease of high-income countries only. But now, the global trend has been observed. There is an acute need to make the public aware about the morbid effects of obesity. Outdoor sports and activities should be encouraged by both the school authorities and parents to tackle rising cases of childhood obesity. And healthy eating habits and an active life style should be adopted by the individuals of all age groups and gender, to prevent obesity.

According to figures, being obese can take up to nine years off the lifespan. It also makes a person far more likely to develop a range of health related problems or psycho-somatic disease, including: Heart Disease, Arthritis, Hypertension, Diabetes Mellitus, Spondylitis, Infertility, Depression etc.

Besides all these facts, there are so many complications in obese girls like anger, aggressiveness, stress, anxiety, constipation, pre or post menstruation syndrome menopausal disorders etc and also we find lack of capacities like facing adverse circumstances, self-confidence, self-control etc.

Self-control is not just affected by how we are thinking at a specific moment that would be too easy. Everyone has a developed different amount of self-control. Some people seem to find it easy to resist temptation while others can be relied on to always yield to self-gratification. To a certain extent we have to accept our starting point on the self-control sliding scale and do the best we can with it. It is observed in obese women that their self-control in different situations is not sufficient. Although a few obese women have very high level of self-control but others have very low level. Due to lacking of self-control, they face many critical problems like Hypertension, Heart attack, poor family life, destroyed inter-personal relationship etc. at not only on physical level but on mental level also.

2. Concept

Yoga is worldwide accepted for its beneficial effects on different ailments. Asanas, Pranayamas, Kriyas, Bandhas, Mudras, Dhyana and Mantras are advantageous at all the levels of personality. Due to researches and advantages, now Yoga is being applied as a therapy around the world. It has observed that Yoga is very beneficial for obese people to remain healthy and also to reduce the weight. As we find, Yoga brings a very positive change in attitude and behavior and increases mental capacities. It can convert outlook towards the life and its complications in a positive direction, it may improve the level of self-control also. Because a person's identity recognizes through his or her responses in different situations and reactions and actions are based on self-control power we have inspired to investigate the impact of Yoga to improve weight control and self-control in obese girls.

3. Objective of the study

1. To study the effect of a specific Yogic Program on self-control at psychological level in obese girls.
2. To find effect of a specific Yogic Program for weight reduction in obese girls.

4. Method

Obese girls having average age 22 years were selected for this

study from a ten days' Yoga Shivar held at Mukat public school, organized by rotary club Patiala. Pre and post observations through medical check-up were employed for data collection and Yogic Program under study was intervened for ten days among subjects. Through questionnaire method, we have performed pre and posttest scale to measure change, first and last day of Yoga practice respectively. This scale is made by Narinder kumar and Parveen kumar in English version and we have used its Punjabi version made by Dr. jatinder singh. Department of Psychology, Punjabi University, Patiala.

5. Tools

I have applied a specific Yogic Program on subjects, designed for weight-reduction. They have practiced each Asana once for 30 seconds and required relaxation after each practice either in Shavasana or in Makarasana. Yoga Program was conducted for one and half an hour daily for 10 days under well qualified Yoga Instructors. The Yoga Program was: Warm up with stretching, joints movements, rotation etc.

1. Surya Namaskar - 5 rounds
2. Shavasana
3. Pawan-Muktasana
4. Ardha-Halasa
5. Kati-Vakrasana
6. Ardha Dronasana
7. Setu Bandhasana
8. Ardha Naukasana
9. Bhujangasana
10. Shalabhasana
11. Dhanurasana
12. Parvatasana
13. Shanshankasana
14. Yoga-Mudra
15. Ushtrasana
16. Kati Chakrasana
17. Tadasana
18. Vrikshasana
19. Utkatasana
20. Trikonasana
21. Shavasana
22. Kapalbhathi - 3 rounds each 60 strokes
23. Anuloma-Viloma Pranayama (Puraka-Rechaka)-15 rounds
24. Bhramri Pranayama (Puraka-Rechaka)-10 rounds
25. Omkar 3time

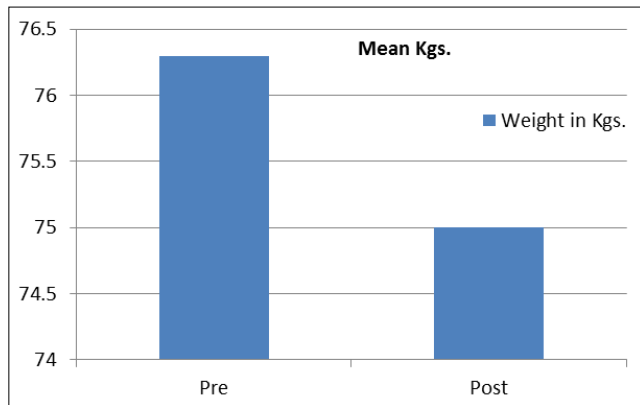
6. Design of the study

24 obese girls have joined Yoga Shivar, organized by rotary club at Mukat public school Patiala. They were examined by our Medical Officer on first and last day of the Shivar. Participants have answered questionnaire of psychological test-scale which we have used for this study on the first and the last day as pre-test and post-test respectively. We have received 13 post-test questionnaires only on last day. During the ten days, all participants have practiced complete Yogic Program daily for one and half hour conducted by qualified Yoga Instructors. After completion of Yoga Shivar, we have prepared data and findings to investigate the impact of Yoga.

7. Result

Table 1: Impact of yoga to reduce fat

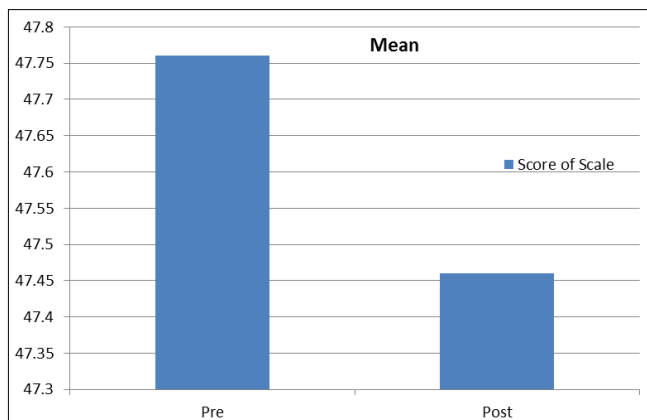
Yoga to reduce weight Sr. No.	Variables	N	Weight (Mean in KGS.)	Difference in KGS.
1	Pre	13	76.3	1.3
2	Post	13	75	



In Table-1, mean weight of all the subjects is 76.3 Kgs. before starting *Yoga* collected through pre-test and mean weight of all the subjects is 75 Kgs. after practicing *Yoga* for ten days, collected through post-test. Thus we find that the specific *Yogic Program* for weight reduction has reduced 1.3 Kgs. (mean) weight very effectively within 10 days without any other restrictions and advices.

Table 2: Impact of yoga on self-control

S. No.	Variables	N	Mean	Std. Div.	t-Value
1	Pre	13	47.76	3.98	0.2
2	Post	13	47.46	3.86	



In Table-2, computed t-value (0.2) shows a non-significant change at the parameter to investigate the effect of *Yoga* to improve self-control but, at mean level, data shows a difference of 0.30 which indicates a good improvement in a very short time.

8. Discussion

The result shows a very good impact of *Yoga* on obese girls for weight-reduction. In fact, this is noticeable that the result is achieved within ten days which is comparatively very short time span. The result may more effectively present the beneficial effects of *Yogic Program* if it is followed for a long time and with dietary control and brisk walking etc. So, it is recommended that *Yoga* should be practiced for a long time for weight reduction and advised to reduce calories intake to get fruitful result earlier. Non-significant change in t-value

also shows the need of continuity of *Yogic Program* for a longer period because at the mean, a very valuable difference is present which shows improvement in self-control of all the subjects.

9. Conclusion

Obesity is a big social problem which leads to many psychology-somatic disorders or diseases. It is noticed that obese girls have many other problems and complications at emotional and psychological levels. Lack of self-control creates many imbalances in their lives as explained above. At the conclusion, it can be asserted that intervened *Yogic Program* caused a very good decrease in weight and a beneficial effect to improve self-control on the subjects.

This study indicates to apply *Yoga* for a long time with patience and regularity so that obese girls can receive more advantages at various levels of the personality

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