

# A Study of Life Satisfaction among Elderly: A Comparison between those Practicing Yoga and those Not Practicing Yoga

Dr. Suprithy Paliwal

**Abstract---** *The objective of the study was to assess the difference in life satisfaction between those elderly who practiced yoga and those who did not practice yoga. A purposive random sampling technique was used and a sample of 200 elderly people above the age of 60 years were included in the study. Out of the sample, 100 were those who were practicing Yoga at a Yoga Centre daily and the remaining 100 were not practicing yoga. Out of the 100 in each group, 50 were males and remaining 50 were females. Life satisfaction was measured using Life Satisfaction Scale standardized by Prama Singh and George Joseph. To analyze the results, the statistical methods that were used were Mean, Standard Deviation and "t" test. Results indicate that there is a significant difference in life satisfaction ( $t$ -value =15.29, significant at.01 level) among the elderly who practice yoga and those who do not practice yoga. The mean scores of 154.29 and 122.83 are also indicative that the elderly people who practice yoga are more satisfied compared to those who do not practice yoga. The study also shows a significant difference in life satisfaction among males and females of the group practicing yoga ( $t$  -value of 2.72, significant at.01 level).The results indicate that females (157.34) are higher on life satisfaction compared to males, whose mean scores are (151.24). No significant difference ( $t$ -value of.39) was found between males and females of the group not practicing yoga. The mean scores of 122.92 for males and 122.74 for females are also indicative of the same.*

**Keywords---** *Practicing Yoga, Life Satisfaction, WHO.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Ageing is a universal and inevitable phenomenon of life. It refers to a multidimensional process of physical, psychological and social changes. While some dimensions grow and expand over time, others decline. "Old age" refers to a phase of human life known for reduced physical ability, declining mental ability, the gradual giving up of role playing in socio-economic activities, and a shift to a status of economic dependence. The elderly population is large in general and growing due to advancement of health care. Worldwide, the age group of sixty years old and older is growing faster than any other age group(WHO). Old age is the closing period of the life span. It is a period when people 'move away' from previous more desirable periods or times of 'usefulness'. The ageing population globally, is leading to new public health challenges. Within this demographic transition, it is estimated that the number of people aged  $\geq 60$  years will increase from 900million in 2015 to 1400million by 2030, WHO.

This segment of population is more vulnerable to health-related problems including mental health problems. Life-satisfaction is the extent to which a man decidedly assesses the general nature of his or her life all in all. At the end of the day, what amount the individual likes the life he or she leads? Life satisfaction is an appraisal of the general states of presence as got from an examination of one's desire to one's genuine accomplishments. Recent

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years have shown a proliferation of studies using various measures of happiness and life satisfaction, making it perhaps one of the most stimulating new developments in the social sciences (Frey and Stutzer 2005; Kahneman et al. 2004a). Life satisfaction is an important factor in a person's welfare, and there is a close relationship between physical and mental health and life satisfaction. Evaluation of life satisfaction is confirmed as a valid step in the evaluation of the rehabilitation of the elderly people and determination of the effectiveness of the offering of health-care services for them (Niknamy M, Namjoo A, Baghaee M, Atrkar Roshan Z) (2010) One of the positive psychological concepts which recently received attention is the concept of life satisfaction. In fact, life satisfaction is a general concept resulting from a person's (cognitive and emotional) perception of his entire life (Amini F, Farahbakhsh K, Nikoozadehkordmirza E.) (2013)

Due to ageing populations worldwide, the burden of disability is increasing. It is therefore important to develop interventions that improve healthy ageing, reduce disability onset and enhance life quality. Physical activity can promote healthy ageing and help maintain independence, yet many older adults are inactive. Yoga is a form of physical activity that aims to improve health and may be particularly suitable for older adults.

Yoga is a form of physical activity that aims to improve health and may be particularly suitable for older adults. Research indicates positive effects of yoga on several health-related outcomes; however, empirical studies examining the benefits of yoga on well-being among the elderly remain scarce. A recent review indicates that older adults are interested in and able to engage in physical activity interventions. (Devereux-Fitzgerald A, Powell R, Dewhurst A, et al. (2016)) For many, physical activity is a means to enhance well-being and functional abilities that help maintain independence and life quality (Franco MR, Tong A, Howard K, et al. (2015)). Well-being is a multidimensional concept which includes physical, psychological and social components and low ratings of subjective well-being are associated with higher prevalence of chronic disease and lower life quality among the elderly (Stephens A, Deaton A, Stone AA. (2015)) Similarly, activity levels are shown to predict subjective well-being among older adults (Olsson LA, Hurtig-Wennlöf A, Nilsson TK. (2014)). While aerobic exercise is recommended for the prevention of many non-communicable diseases, (Lee IM, Shiroma EJ, Lobelo F, et al. (2012)). Yoga's emphasis on flexibility and balance may help to reduce the risk of fall-related injuries, (Youkhana S, Dean CM, Wolff M, et al. (2016)) which are prevalent among older adults and a leading cause of injury-related hospitalisation. Healthy ageing does not merely correspond to longevity, but also optimising well-being. With a holistic focus that includes physical, mental and spiritual well-being, yoga could be a suitable and appealing health-maintaining activity for adults who find aerobic exercise difficult or impractical (Picorelli AM, Pereira DS, Felício DC, et al. (2014)).

In the study by Mohammad Amin Wani, et al. (2016) the impact of yoga practice and gender on life satisfaction was explored. 60 subjects were selected through random sampling method; these subjects were similarly isolated into yoga practisers and non-yoga practisers, further partitioned into male and female gatherings. Life satisfaction scale standardized by Promila Singh and George Joseph was utilized for information accumulation. Results uncover that yogic practices have huge impact on life satisfaction however gender did not have. According to Shital Naikwade, R. Gopal & Nitin Sippy (2016) The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified India as one of the countries that is going to have most of the lifestyle disorders in the near future. The diseases of civilization are also known as the lifestyle disorders. Nowadays, the diseases of civilization are becoming more common and they are

affecting younger population. Hence, the population at risk shifts from 40+ to maybe 30+ or even younger. According to the doctors, a sedentary lifestyle combined with an increase in the consumption of faulty & fatty food, lethargy, wrong body posture and the imbalance in physiological functioning and alcohol is to blame cases of obesity, diabetes, hypertension Low back pain, Migraine, Hyperlipidemia (High Cholesterol), Constipation, etc. This research would help to understand the awareness level about the diseases of civilization or Life Style based Disorder and to understand the working women's attitude towards both of these systems of medicine in management of the Life Style based Disorder. With the help of this study, one can understand the various attributes which affect the preference of the consumers while the selection of treatment. Satyapal Singh (2016) Yoga provides great options for the prevention of lifestyle disorders. Yoga based lifestyle involves lifestyle modification based on the concepts of promotion of psychomatic and spiritual health and proper living. Mondal, Bela and Sabyasachi Haldar (2017) reported that yoga has great importance. Yoga can help student community in many ways. It helps to attain perfect equilibrium and harmony for body and mind, strengthens internal organs, promotes self-healing, removes negative blocks from the mind and toxins from the body, enhances personal power, increases self-awareness, and helps to attain focus and concentration. In this regard, Academic Institution as well as Academic Library plays a very important role to promote Yoga in student community. **Baranwal, Amrita, Neelma Kunwar,** and Sarita Devi (2016) Infertility treatments and ART (Assisted Reproductive Technology) that have been carried out are very costly and common man of developing countries like India cannot afford the cost of such procedures. Various natural herbs, medicines and yoga are been effective to enhance the pregnancy and prevent the recurrent abortions. M. Govindaraj & T. Tamizhselvan (2019) conducted a study to find out the impact of Yogic practices on Physical well being. It was a 'quasi experimental' study to find out the impact of Yogic practices on Physical well being of the B.Ed., Trainees. 44 B.Ed., Trainees were selected and they were given Yoga practices for three months under the supervision of and guidance of Yoga Masters. The impact was found using the Physical well being Scale and it was found that there is significant impact of Yogic Practices on the Physical well being of the B.Ed., Trainees.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted within the limits of Jaipur city in the state of Rajasthan, India. Purposive random sampling method was used to select the sample of the study. The sample comprised of 200 elderly males and females (60 years and above). They were further divided into two groups on the basis of their practicing yoga daily in different Yoga centers of Jaipur. Group I comprised of males and females practicing yoga daily in a yoga centre., out of which 50 were males and 50 were females. Group II comprised of males and females who were not practicing yoga, out of which 50 were males and 50 were females.

The objectives and hypothesis postulated for the study were:

### *Objectives*

- To study the difference in the life satisfaction between the elderly practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga.
- To study the difference in the life satisfaction between the elderly females and males of those practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga.

### Hypothesis

- There will be a significant difference in the life satisfaction between the elderly practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga.
- There will be a significant difference in the life satisfaction between the elderly females and males of those practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga.

The study used a standardized psychometric tool. Life Satisfaction Scale developed by Promila Singh and George Joseph was used. The scale consists of 35 items covering 5 dimensions, which are rated on a five point scale. The responses were scored by using Likert's summated rating scale. The items relate to the individual's all-round activities. The higher the score on life satisfaction scale, the higher will be the life satisfaction.

To analyze the results, the statistical methods that were used were Mean, Standard Deviation and "t" test.

### III. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

**Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant difference in the life satisfaction between the elderly practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga.**

Table 1: Table showing Life Satisfaction among Elderly Practicing and not Practicing Yoga

| Group               | Life Satisfaction |        |       |     |         | Level Of Significance |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------|-------|-----|---------|-----------------------|
|                     | N                 | Mean   | S.D.  | df  | t-value |                       |
| Practicing Yoga     | 100               | 154.29 | 11.56 | 198 | 15.34** | .01                   |
| Not Practicing Yoga | 100               | 122.83 | 17.01 | 198 |         |                       |

\*\* Significant at.01 level.

**Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant difference in the life satisfaction between the elderly females and males of those practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga.**

Table 2: Table Showing Life Satisfaction between the Elderly Females and Males of those groups Practicing Yoga and those Not Practicing Yoga

| Group               | Male Mean SD |       | Female Mean SD |       | df | t-value | Level of significance |
|---------------------|--------------|-------|----------------|-------|----|---------|-----------------------|
| Practicing Yoga     | 151.24       | 12.72 | 157.34         | 9.45  | 98 | 2.72**  | .01                   |
| Not Practicing Yoga | 122.92       | 18.28 | 122.74         | 15.83 | 98 | .39     | NS                    |

\*\* Significant at.01 level.

Out of the 200 elderly people 100 were males and 100 were females. They were assigned to two groups- One practicing Yoga and the other group not practicing Yoga. Data was collected across both the groups. The first hypothesis, stating that there will be a significant difference in the life satisfaction between the elderly practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga was verified using the data. The means and standard deviations are summarized in Table no.1.

A glimpse of table no.1 shows that there is a significant difference in life satisfaction (t-value =15.29, significant at.01 level) among the elderly who practice yoga and those who do not practice yoga. The mean scores of 154.29 and 122.83 are also indicative that the elderly people who practice yoga are more satisfied compared to those who

do not practice yoga. Yoga appears to enhance physiological, psychological and transpersonal well being. Moreover its primal task is to give satisfaction by better adjustment in life. Such well being makes oneself open, truthful and positive, which can be seen in one's life. Whereas people who do not in any type of yoga or meditation have less control on their physical, social, psychological aspects that results in giving them dissatisfaction in life.

The means and standard deviations for the second hypothesis, that there will be a significant difference in the life satisfaction between the elderly females and males of those practicing yoga and those not practicing yoga are summarized in Table no.2. The table shows a significant difference in life satisfaction among males and females of the group practicing yoga (t -value of 2.72, significant at .01 level). The results indicate that females (157.34) are higher on life satisfaction compared to males, whose mean scores are (151.24). No significant difference (t-value of .39) was found between males and females of the group not practicing yoga. The mean scores of 122.92 for males and 122.74 for females are also indicative of the same.

With this study it was aimed to explore the effects of yoga on the life satisfaction of elderly. Life satisfaction is defined as a cognitive evaluation of one's life as a whole and or of specific life domains (Huebner, Valois, Paxton, & Drane, 2005; Myers & Diener, 1995). Myers and Diener (1995) refer to life-satisfaction as one of the three key aspects of psychological well-being, the others being positive and negative affect. Life satisfaction stands together with the affective elements to yield a relatively comprehensive picture of psychological well-being (Diener et al., 1999). Life satisfaction is one among a range of concepts that is assumed to reflect the conditions of 'a good life'. Practicing yoga may improve subjective well-being and mental health and may result in significant improvement in depression, pain and sleep quality. Furthermore, regular yoga practice can increase mindfulness of the body state and can restore the mind-body balance among elderly people, Keadle, S.K. et.al. Advocates of yoga believe that yoga improves both physical and mental health and wellbeing. For instance, yoga practitioners cite benefits such as improved physical and psychological health, weight loss, improved relationships with romantic partners and family members, and treatment of clinical disorders like ADD and depression (Rosin, 2006). In spite of the increasing numbers of individuals who practice and teach yoga and their beliefs about yoga's benefits, there is not much of research to validate what has been said. "Clear and reproducible evidence supporting efficacy from large, methodologically sound studies is lacking" (Arias, Steinberg, Banga, & Trestman, 2006, p. 817). In the study by Mohammad Amin Wani, et.al (2016) the impact of yoga practice and gender on life satisfaction was explored. 60 subjects were selected through random sampling method; these subjects were similarly isolated into yoga practisers and non yoga practisers, further partitioned into male and female gatherings. Life satisfaction scale standardized by Prama Singh and George Joseph was utilized for information accumulation. Results uncover that yogic practices have huge impact on life satisfaction however gender did not have.

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