

Empowering Corporate Wellness: The Impact of Yoga on Mental and Physical Health in Working Professionals

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Introduction

The highlighting importance of addressing the well-being of employees, especially in light of increasing stress, burnout, and health issues in modern workplaces. The pressures of tight deadlines, sedentary work environments, and constant multitasking have a significant impact on both mental and physical health. In this context, corporate wellness programs are more crucial than ever, and yoga is emerging as a valuable tool for promoting employee health and resilience. The historical benefits of yoga, including physical postures (asanas), breathwork (pranayama), and meditation (dhyana), are well-documented, and modern research supports the idea that yoga can reduce stress, improve mental clarity, and enhance physical endurance. These aspects of yoga align well with the needs of employees who are under constant pressure in their professional lives. By encouraging practices that improve both mental and physical health, companies can foster a healthier, more productive workforce. However, as you pointed out, there is a gap in research on how yoga affects the psychological motivation and physiological endurance of working adults. While many studies have looked at yoga's overall benefits, few have focused specifically on the psychological and physical outcomes of regular yoga practice in the context of a high-stress, professional environment.

Exploring Psychological Motivation and Physiological Endurance

Psychological motivation in the workplace is often influenced by stress levels, job satisfaction, and overall mental health. Yoga's emphasis on mindfulness and self-awareness can help employees better manage stress and improve focus, which can in turn lead to increased motivation and job satisfaction. Physiologically, the sedentary nature of office work, along with the pressure of deadlines, can lead to decreased physical endurance, poor posture, and general fatigue.

Yoga, with its focus on breath control, body awareness, and physical postures, can combat these effects by improving strength, flexibility, and energy levels, making employees feel more physically resilient.

Potential Research Directions

To address the gap in research, studies could explore:

1. Psychological Motivation

- How yoga practice influences key psychological factors such as intrinsic motivation, stress management, and work-life balance.
- Whether regular yoga practice leads to improvements in mood, job satisfaction, and overall engagement at work.

2. Physiological Endurance

- The effect of yoga on physical endurance, energy levels, and recovery from physical or mental fatigue.
- How yoga affects posture, muscle tension, and overall physical well-being in a sedentary work environment.

3. Comparative Studies

- Comparing employees who engage in yoga with those who don't, in terms of their stress levels, productivity, and burnout rates.
- Exploring whether yoga's benefits differ based on the type of work or the level of physical activity required in the job.

Incorporating yoga into corporate wellness programs could be a valuable tool for addressing the physical and psychological challenges employees face in the modern workplace. Not only does it provide a way to reduce stress and improve health, but it can also enhance focus and motivation, ultimately improving productivity and reducing the likelihood of burnout.

Relevance to Working Professionals

The critical issue-stress-related challenges in the workplace that often lead to diminished performance, absenteeism, and poor health outcomes. It's clear that while resilience against stress may offer short-term coping, it ultimately impacts long-term productivity and well-being. Integrating yoga into workplace wellness programs addresses these concerns by providing a holistic approach to stress relief, focus, and overall health, all of which contribute to improved performance and reduced burnout. Focusing your research on achievement motivation and breath-holding capacity in relation to an 8-week yoga program is an excellent way to delve deeper into the physiological and psychological benefits that are often overlooked in workplace wellness studies. Achievement motivation, which drives goal-oriented behavior, can be positively influenced by yoga's stress-relief and mindfulness components. Meanwhile, improving breath-holding capacity, a marker of respiratory efficiency and control, ties directly to the mental clarity and physical endurance that yoga fosters. This research could ultimately bridge an important gap, shedding light on how yoga supports both mind and body in enhancing workplace productivity and employee health.

Methods

This study design is well thought-out and sets up a clear and structured way to evaluate the effects of yoga on achievement motivation and breath-holding capacity in working adults. Using a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) with an experimental group (yoga training) and a control

group (usual activities) is a strong method for isolating the effects of yoga from other variables that might influence performance and well-being etc.

- Pre- and Post-Tests: Administer tests of achievement motivation and breath-holding capacity both before the program begins and at the end of the 8 weeks. This will provide a before-and-after comparison for each group.
- Follow-Up Surveys: Consider adding a follow-up survey to assess how participants perceive the impact of yoga on their work performance, stress levels, and overall well-being. This qualitative data will complement the quantitative results.

Statistical Analysis

- To analyze the results, you could use methods like to compare the pre- and post-intervention scores within each group, and one sample t-tests and descriptive statistics will be applied for changes between the experimental and control groups.
- Additionally, could be done to explore if improvements in breath-holding capacity correlate with increases in achievement motivation, providing insight into how physiological improvements might influence psychological outcomes.

Yoga Training Program

This 8-week yoga program structure is well-designed, with a clear, progressive approach that allows participants to gradually build both physical and mental endurance. The breakdown of each session into a warm-up, asanas, pranayama, and cool-down is balanced and ensures that participants benefit from both the physical and calming aspects of yoga.

- Warm-Up (10 minutes): A proper warm-up is critical to prepare the body for the physical demands of yoga, help prevent injuries, and enhance flexibility. You can incorporate gentle stretching, joint rotations, and mild breathing exercises like NadiShodhana (alternate nostril breathing) to prepare the participants for the more challenging postures to come.
- Asanas & Pranayama (25 minutes): A combination of asanas (postures) and pranayama (breathing exercises) will ensure that the physical and mental benefits of yoga are addressed.
- Asanas: Focus on poses that balance flexibility, strength, and endurance, such as Tadasana (Mountain Pose), AdhoMukhaSvanasana (Downward-Facing Dog), Virabhadrasana (Warrior Poses), and Utkatasana (Chair Pose). These poses improve strength, stability, and focus, which will help address the mental and physical challenges working professionals face.
- Pranayama: Breathing techniques like Ujjayi breath (Victorious Breath) can help participants calm the mind and increase oxygen intake, while techniques like Kapalabhati (Skull Shining Breath) can energize and detoxify the body.
- Cool-Down (10 minutes): A cool-down is important to help lower the heart rate, relax the muscles, and prevent injury. Savasana (Corpse Pose) is a great way to end each session, allowing the participants to relax fully and absorb the benefits of the practice. Breathing exercises such as Anulom Vilom (alternate nostril breathing) can also be included during the cool-down to help integrate the practice and calm the nervous system.
- This 8-week yoga program is an excellent way to test the potential effects of yoga on key psychological and physiological factors in working adults. The gradual progression in intensity, along with the guidance from a certified instructor, ensures that participants will experience significant benefits while minimizing the risk of injury. By assessing both achievement motivation and breath-holding capacity, your study can make a valuable contribution to understanding the broader impacts of yoga in workplace wellness.

Measured Variables

At baseline and at follow-up, two major constructs were evaluated.

Achievement Motivation and Breath-Holding Time is well-structured, and these variables will provide valuable insights into the effects of yoga on both the psychological and physiological well-being of the participants.

1. Achievement Motivation Assessment

Using anchored scales to measure achievement motivation is a strong choice, as it allows you to capture multiple dimensions of motivation and energy in the workplace, including intrinsic motivation, goal-directed behaviors, and overall drive.

Possible Anchored Scale Components for Achievement Motivation

1. Inner Drives and Intrinsic Motivation

Questions could assess the degree to which participants feel internally motivated to pursue their professional goals. For example:

- “I am driven by a desire to achieve my professional goals.”
- “I find personal satisfaction in accomplishing tasks at work.”

2. Goal-Directed Behaviors

Items here could measure the extent to which participants set and achieve goals. For example:

- “I regularly set clear goals for myself at work.”
- “I actively work toward achieving my work-related objectives.”

3. Workplace Energy and Engagement

This part could measure how energized and engaged participants feel at work, particularly in relation to the demands they face. For example:

- “I often feel mentally energized and engaged during my workday.”
- “I experience a strong sense of accomplishment when completing tasks.”

4. Response to Stress

This could measure participants’ ability to stay motivated and perform under stress. For example:

- “Even under pressure, I remain focused and work toward completing my tasks.”
- “When faced with setbacks, I find ways to stay motivated.”

Breath Holding Time Measurement

Breath-Holding Time (BHT) is a practical and effective way to assess the effects of yoga on respiratory control, lung function, and physical endurance. This measure ties directly to the yoga practice of pranayama, which is known to improve breath control and increase lung capacity.

Breath Holding Test Protocol

1. Pre-Test Preparation:

- Ensure participants are in a comfortable, seated position with their back straight and shoulders relaxed. This minimizes external factors that could interfere with the test.
- Ask participants to take a deep breath, inhaling fully through the nose, and then exhale fully to release any stale air from their lungs.

2. Test Procedure

- After a full exhale, instruct the participants to inhale deeply through the nose, hold their breath, and then hold it for as long as possible.

- Using a stopwatch, record the time in seconds that the participant is able to hold their
- Sing a stopwatch, record the time in seconds that the participant is able to hold their breath before they need to exhale. If a participant is unable to hold their breath any longer, they should exhale gently and the time is recorded.

3. Measurement Conditions

- Ensure that participants do not engage in any other physical activity or strenuous exercise for at least 30 minutes before taking the test, as this could affect their breath-holding capacity.
- Perform the breath-holding test in a quiet and calm environment, as anxiety or external stressors may influence the results.

Repeated Trials

- For accuracy, you may consider allowing participants to perform two or three trials (with rest periods in between) and record the best time. This helps account for any variability in performance on a given day.
- An increase in breath-holding time in the experimental group would suggest that yoga, specifically pranayama practices, is improving participants' respiratory control, lung capacity, and physical endurance. If the control group shows no significant change, it would further support the idea that the improvements in the yoga group are due to the intervention rather than other external factors.

Statistical Analysis

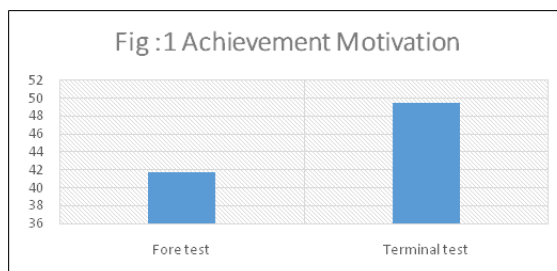
One-sample t-tests for analyzing your data is a solid approach, particularly when you're evaluating the improvement of each group (experimental and control) in terms of achievement motivation and breath-holding time. By performing one-sample t-tests, you are comparing the pre- and post-intervention scores against a known value-often the baseline measurement in your case. This approach allows you to assess whether there are significant changes in motivation and breath-holding time within the experimental group and control group independently.

Table 1 T-Test on Achievement Motivation

Group	Test	Mean	Std. Deviation	T-Test
Experimental Group	Foretest	20.80	2.69	6.83
	Terminal test	28.64	2.03	
Control Group	Foretest	20.96	3.79	0.27
	Terminal test	20.80	3.75	

Significance level at 0.05 (degrees of freedom: 2.14, df: 1 and 14)

Figure 1 Shows T-Test on Achievement Motivation



Experimental Group (t-ratio = 6.83, $p < 0.05$):

- A t-ratio of 6.83 indicates that the difference between the pre-program and post-program achievement motivation scores for the experimental group is highly significant.
- Since the p-value is less than 0.05, you can confidently reject the null hypothesis, which means there is a statistically significant improvement in the achievement motivation of participants who engaged in the yoga program.
- This result suggests that the yoga intervention—likely the combination of asana practice, pranayama, and meditation—had a positive impact on participants’ intrinsic motivation, goal-setting behaviors, and overall work energy. It shows that yoga can enhance motivation and drive in working adults.
- Control Group (t-ratio = 0.27, $p > 0.05$):
- The t-ratio of 0.27 for the control group indicates that there was virtually no difference in achievement motivation scores between the baseline and follow-up measurements.
- With a p-value greater than 0.05, you fail to reject the null hypothesis, meaning that there was no statistically significant change in motivation for participants who did not participate in the yoga program.
- This suggests that any changes in motivation in the experimental group were likely due to the yoga intervention rather than any external factors, confirming that the yoga practice was responsible for the observed improvements in motivation.

Table 2 T-Test on Breath-Holding Time

Group	Test	Mean	Std. Deviation	T-Test
Experimental Group	Foretest	35.23	1.06	24.53
	Terminal test	39.33	1.34	
Control Group	Foretest	35.20	0.96	1.79
	Terminal test	35.01	0.61	

Significance level at 0.05 (degrees of freedom: 2.14, df: 1 and 14)

- Table no 2: T-test of -24.53 for the experimental group is highly significant. It indicates that the participants in the experimental group (who participated in the yoga intervention) experienced a substantial improvement in their ability to hold their breath.
- $p < 0.05$ means that the change in breath-holding time is statistically significant, and we can reject the null hypothesis that there is no change.
- This result provides strong evidence that the yoga intervention, particularly the pranayama (breathing exercises), contributed to a marked improvement in breath-holding capacity and lung function. In essence, yoga not only improved participants’ physical endurance but also enhanced their ability to regulate and control their breath.

Control Group (t-ratio = -1.79, $p > 0.05$)

- The t-ratio of -1.79 for the control group is much lower than that of the experimental group, and with $p > 0.05$, it indicates no significant improvement in breath-holding time.
- The lack of statistically significant change in the control group suggests that the breath-holding ability of those who did not participate in the yoga program remained largely unchanged, implying that the changes observed in the experimental group were likely due to the yoga intervention rather than any external factors or natural variation over time.

Results

Achievement Motivation

Interpretation

- The t-value of 6.81 indicates a highly significant increase in achievement motivation after the 8-week yoga intervention. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, you can confidently reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the difference in scores is statistically significant.
- The mean score for the experimental group improved from 20.80 to 28.64, suggesting a substantial improvement in intrinsic motivation, goal-setting behavior, and workplace energy after engaging in the yoga program.
- This result implies that the yoga program, likely including asanas, pranayama, and meditation, helped participants better manage stress, focus their efforts, and feel more driven and motivated to achieve their goals at work.

Breath-Holding Time

- The t-value of 24.64 is extremely significant, indicating a highly substantial improvement in breath-holding time after the 8-week yoga intervention. Given that the p-value is less than 0.05, you can reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the increase in breath-holding time is statistically significant.
- The mean breath-holding time improved from 35.23 seconds to 39.33 seconds, suggesting a 4.10-second improvement due to the yoga intervention. This improvement demonstrates that yoga, particularly pranayama (breathing exercises), contributed to stronger respiratory capacity and enhanced breathing control over the 8-week period.
- This result supports the idea that yoga, with its emphasis on controlled breathing and mindful breathing techniques, can lead to enhanced lung function, respiratory strength, and overall physical endurance.
- The t-value of 1.82 suggests that there was no statistically significant change in the control group's breath-holding time, as the difference between their pre-test and post-test scores was minimal.
- The control group's mean breath-holding time only slightly decreased from 35.20 seconds to 35.01 seconds, which is a negligible difference that is unlikely to be due to any intervention. The p-value greater than 0.05 further confirms that there was no significant change.
- This lack of improvement in the control group, in contrast to the significant increase observed in the experimental group, reinforces the conclusion that the yoga intervention played a critical role in enhancing breath-holding time and improving respiratory strength.
- The significant increase in breath-holding time in the experimental group ($t = 24.64$) shows that the yoga intervention was effective in enhancing respiratory strength and breath control, which are important for both physical endurance and stress management.
- The lack of significant change in the control group further reinforces the efficacy of the yoga program, underlining that the observed improvements were due to the intervention and not merely the passage of time or other unrelated factors.

Implications for Workplace Wellness Programs

Improved Psychological Well-being

- Achievement Motivation: The experimental group showed a significant increase in intrinsic motivation, goal-setting behavior, and workplace energy after the 8-week yoga program. This suggests that yoga can help employees stay focused, feel more driven, and maintain higher levels of energy throughout the workday.

- Enhanced Mental Clarity and Focus: Yoga practices, especially pranayama (breathing exercises) and dhyana (meditation), are known to reduce stress and improve cognitive function, helping employees stay more mentally sharp and focused on tasks. This could result in better decision-making, increased productivity, and a positive work atmosphere.

Improved Physical Health and Stamina:

- Breath-Holding Time: The significant improvement in breath-holding time among the experimental group shows that yoga can increase respiratory strength, which is a key factor in overall physical endurance. This could help employees feel more energetic, resilient, and better able to handle physical and mental stress throughout the day.
- Reduced Physical Fatigue: With the enhancement in physical stamina, employees may feel less fatigued, potentially leading to fewer instances of absenteeism due to physical exhaustion or burnout.

Positive Impact on Workplace Morale

- By incorporating yoga into wellness programs, organizations can provide employees with tools to manage stress, improve focus, and promote both mental and physical health. This can result in higher employee morale, increased satisfaction, and a sense of well-being, which in turn can create a more positive work culture.
- As employees feel better physically and mentally, their overall happiness at work improves. Happier employees tend to be more engaged, motivated, and likely to stay longer with the company.

Reduction in Forgetfulness and Cognitive Decline

- Yoga has been linked to enhanced memory, better concentration, and increased cognitive clarity. By improving brain function and reducing stress levels, yoga may help reduce cases of forgetfulness, distraction, or mental fatigue in employees.
- This can lead to fewer errors or oversights in tasks, helping employees perform better and more efficiently.

Conclusions

This study provides compelling evidence that pranayama (breathing exercises) and other yoga practices can significantly enhance both breath-holding performance and physical health in working adults. The positive impact of yoga on mental well-being and psychological resilience is also notable, particularly in a work environment. As organizations increasingly prioritize employee wellness, incorporating yoga into the workplace is a strategy that can not only improve psychomotor skills but also promote a healthier, more productive workforce..

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