

Effect of Specific Yogic Asana on Mental Toughness and Stress Level of College Cricketers

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Abstract

Today we see that yoga is being applied in not less than 20 fields quite successfully including other sports like Kabaddi then why not other sports. Remarkably it is also true that many top sports stars are already practicing yoga postures and taking the best advantage. Cricket is long duration playing game which needs mentally strong and tough players to win matches and championships. Due to paramount importance of mental toughness in sports and particular in cricket that present paper focused to compare. Yoga has both preventive and therapeutic benefits. It has been shown to offer both physical and mental benefits to the body and the mind. , the present study was based on a pre-test, post-test design, a total of 100 male subjects were randomly selected from various colleges of Agra university. The subjects were College level batsman, with minimum 5 years of playing experience. The age of the subjects ranged between 20 to 22 years, the mean age was found to be 20.8 years. A pre test was taken of all the selected sports persons on the selected variables of Attention level and stress level, thereafter a yogic Asana program was implemented for 8 weeks and a post test is taken. For the collection of the data mental toughness was checked by Dr. Alan Goldberg (2004) Mental Toughness Questionnaire and stress questionnaire developed by Dave Hompes (2001) were selected. . The collected data was analyzed by computing descriptive statistics followed paired sample t test. A significant difference has been found in the pre and post test values of mental toughness and stress level of the Cricket players due to the yogic practice.

Keywords: Attention, Stress, Batsman.

Introduction

Participation in physical activity such as sports inevitably generates a certain amount of body consciousness. However over indulgence and pre-occupation with bodily needs like heightened concern about diet, nutrition, injuries etc. coupled with a lesser concern about hard work and performance enhancement act as a major psychological block on the path to an athlete's progress towards excellence in sport. Yoga teaches the sports person to "grow beyond" and rise above bodily concern through a strict discipline of the mind.

Most of the people known well that Yoga is the discipline of mind and body. It is a right way of living in the society. Healthy mind in the healthy body is a well-known maxim. Yoga keeps us away from all diseases and deformities and gives strength to all parts of our body. It purifies the blood and avoids constipation. Yoga is the perfection of mind, body and soul.

It is not meant for a small esoteric circle. Its practice does not demand one to live a secluded life in the solitude of mountain caves. Its practice does not invoice becoming a recharge in the solitude of the mountains. It is for the common man, living a normal life whatever his profession, class, religion, nationality or age. There is nothing mysterious about Yoga. It is not a set of religious beliefs or practices. It does not pretend to explain the ultimate meaning of life. Its aim is to develop, through gradual stages, a quality of mind, which can perceive reality and acquire self-knowledge through the healthy functioning of mind and emotions. Yoga maintains that a healthy body is essential for mental and spiritual development and whether you understand or acknowledge the ultimate aims of yoga or not you can, at any rate, derive immense benefit from its rational system of exercises and breathing.

Yoga has many physiological and psychological benefits. Numerous studies have asserted that yoga practice improves flexibility and strength (Cowen & Adams, 2005; Schure, Christopher & Christopher, 2008). In addition, Cowen and Adams (2005) found that yoga lowers blood pressure and

it may have a positive effect on immunity (Schure, Christopher & Christopher, 2008). Schure, Christopher & 2 Christopher (2008) also reported improvements in balance and aerobic capacity. In terms of psychological benefits, Schure, Christopher & Christopher (2008) confirmed that yoga improves perceived quality of life and lowers anxiety and depression. Cowen and Adams (2005) reported that there is a strong correlation between perceived stress and yoga activity and Milligan (2006) recommends yoga as a stress reliever for college students. By the help of Yogic exercise we can increase the flexibility or elasticity of our body (specially spine) and make the body more active and supple. The greater the concentration, the greater the advantage to the body and the mind. By increasing the practice of yoga exercises gradually and by constant practice, the body will become more and more elastic or flexible day by day. All Yoga exercises and processes aim at purification, nervous control and co-ordination of muscles. They give gentle exercise to the body as a whole including individual organs.

Procedure and Methodology:

This study was based on a pre-test, post-test design, a total of 100 male subjects were randomly selected from various colleges of Agra university. The subjects were College level cricketers, with minimum 5 years of playing experience. The age of the subjects ranged between 20 to 22 years, the mean age was found to be 20.8 years. A pre test was taken of all the selected sports persons on the selected variables of Attention level and stress level, thereafter a yogic Asana program was implemented for 8 weeks and a post test is taken. For the collection of the data Mental toughness was checked by Dr. Alan Goldberg (2004) Mental Toughness Questionnaire and stress questionnaire developed by Dave Hompes (2001) were selected. .

Statistical analysis:

- The collected data was analyzed by computing following statistical techniques:

Descriptive Statistics

1. Mean
2. Standard Deviation
3. Paired Sample ‘t’ Test
4. The level of Significance was set at 0.05 level.

Table No. 1: Descriptive Analysis of the Mental toughness and Stress of the College level Cricketers.

| | Variables | N | Mean | | Standard deviation | |
|---|------------------|-----|-------|-------|--------------------|------|
| 1 | Mental toughness | 100 | 64.22 | 72.15 | 3.88 | 3.74 |
| 2 | stress | 100 | 71.17 | 62.85 | 5.99 | 4.25 |

Table No. 1 clearly depicts the descriptive analysis values of Attention and stress level of the College level cricketers, which shows that the mean and standard deviation values of attention and stress for the pre and post test are found to be $64.22 \pm 3.88 / 71.17 \pm 5.99$ and $71.17 \pm 5.89 / 63.85 \pm 4.25$ respectively. The graphical representation has been shown in fig no.1

Table No.2: Paired sample t test between pre and post test of attention and stress level of College level Cricketers.

| | Variables | N | Sig(2 tailed) | ‘t’ |
|---|------------------|-----|---------------|--------|
| 1 | Mental toughness | 100 | 0.002 | 3.109* |
| 2 | Stress | 100 | 0.002 | 2.224* |

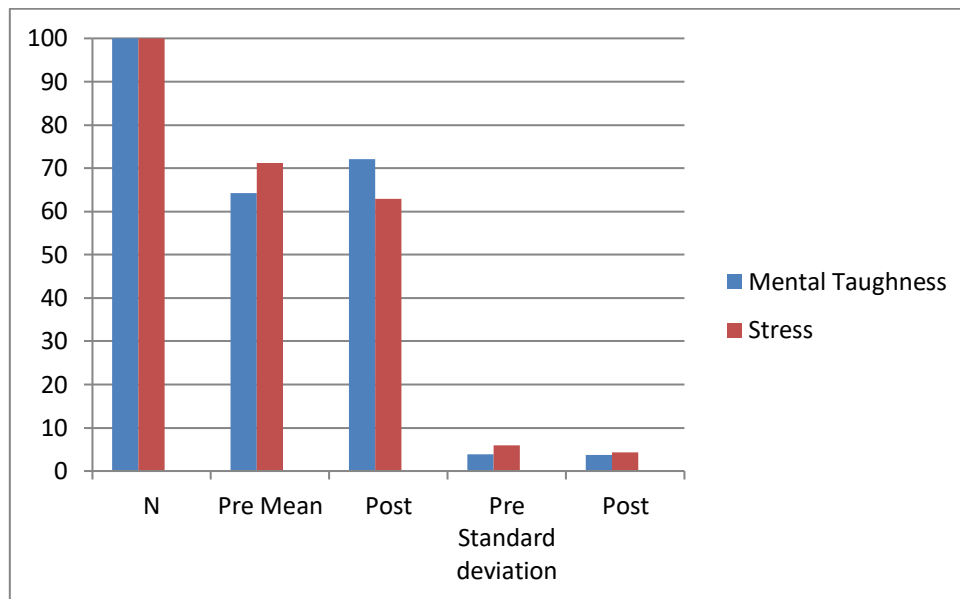


Fig No. 1: Graphical representation of descriptive Analysis of the Attention and Stress level of College Cricketers

Conclusions:

The following conclusions can be drawn from the obtained results:

1. A significant difference has been found in the pre and post test values of mental toughness of the college cricketers due to the yogic practice.
2. A significant difference has been found in the pre and post test values of stress level of the college cricketers due to the yogic practice.
3. Yoga helps in retaining information better and for a longer period of time due to its focus on concentration and meditation.
4. By breathing right, concentrating and meditating, more blood flows to the brain, making it supple and ready to accept more information and reproduce that information when required.
5. Dissolves pre competition anxiety and stress. Helps to balance & manage emotions that could cloud focus, concentration & judgment.

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