

## Impact of Yoga and Gender on Life Satisfaction of Middle Age Adults

Anupma<sup>1\*</sup>, Sanjay Kumar<sup>2</sup>

### ABSTRACT

The Purpose of the present research was to study the effect of yoga and gender on life *satisfaction* of middle age adults. The sample for the study consisted of 150 male and female subjects belonging to medium socio-economic status. These subjects were taken from Meerut city. These subjects consisted of three groups of yoga, i.e.; yoga practitioners (50Ss) morning walkers (50Ss) and evening walkers (50Ss). Each group of yoga consisted of two gender groups, i.e., male and female with 25 Ss in each cell. A 3x2 factorial design was used for the accomplishment of the research. The life Satisfaction Scale constructed by Alam and Shrivastava was used for data collection. Obtain data were analyzed by Mean, SD and ANOVA. Results indicated that yoga and gender were found to be significantly effective in *Life Satisfaction* of Middle age adults. The result was discussed in light of previous empirical research conclusions and theoretical orientation in the area of variables under study.

**Keywords:** *Life Satisfaction, Yoga and Gender*

In the present scenario, the life of human beings has become more complex. The complexities are the results of contemporary technology. (Wang, Shu, & Tu, 2008) New technologies such as communication and transportation systems have made the world even smaller. The life of individuals become fast-paced because of this progress toward technology. The individuals are not capable to have a hassle-free, peaceful state of mind and enjoy life. Instead, they are facing negative consequences like stress, anxiety, blood pressure, depression, emotional imbalances and not being able to manage their relationships with family, friends and the workplace, and suffering from various physical and psychological problems. O'Driscoll et, al. (2010). To come out of these negative consequences and to find out a peaceful and happy life they are searching for different methods. In ancient times there were a number of methods to improve physical as well as psychological, mental health, or psychological well-being. The important among those methods were yoga, meditation, breathing exercises and many more. (Desai, 2021) These practices helped the Individual to control his mind, and overcome anxiety and stress or thereby maintaining physical and psychological health. (Baer, 2003; Shapiro & Carlson, 2009). Yoga is known to be an effective coping strategy and management technique for

<sup>1</sup>PhD. Scholar, Department of Psychology. Chaudhary Charan Singh University Meerut

<sup>2</sup>Professor, Department of Psychology. Chaudhary Charan Singh University Meerut

\*Corresponding Author

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## Impact of Yoga and Gender on Life Satisfaction of Middle Age Adults

problems such as stress, anxiety, and even depression etc. Additionally, it is known as the main tool for improving one's well-being. In this association, huge research focuses on yoga and its relationship with life satisfaction, academic performance, sleep quality, perceived stress, quality of life, work productivity, and so on. Research reveals that meditation and yoga is an effective intervention for cardiovascular disease (Schneider et al., 2005; Zamarra, Schneider, Besseghini, Robinson, & Salerno, 1996) chronic pain (Kabat-Zinn, 1982) anxiety and panic disorder (Edwards, 1991; Jazaieri et al., 2012; Miller, Fletcher, & Kabat-Zinn, 1995), substance abuse (Gelderloos, Walton, Orme-Johnson, & Alexander, 1991). In recent times Psychologists, as well as humanities, are showing more attention to conducting research on yoga, and meditation and their benefits on diverse positive aspects of life. In meditation, a human being learns to focus more and more upon less and less (Slagter et al., 2007). It makes an individual able to maintain his attention in whichever he or she requires. This focusing of the mind drags the energies of the mind from disturbing things to whatever the individual wants to focus on. Meditation increases psychological flexibility ((Kashdan and Rottenberg, 2010., Creswell, Way, Eisenberger, & Lieberman, 2007., DeYoung, Peterson, & Higgins, 2005; Ochsner & Gross, 2008)) creativity (Langer, Pirson, & Delizonna, 2010)) attention and concentration (Lazar et al., 2005) love, compassion and interpersonal relationship (Walsh, 1999) and developed of optimal states of psychological well-being and consciousness. It helps us to renovate within ourselves. (Walsh, 1983). This makes the individual experiences enhance awareness that brings unbiased and true knowledge.

Life satisfaction can be defined as one aspiration from life and positive affect can be defined as the feelings that reveal a level of satisfying engagement with the surroundings. The more happy people are more focused on the positive aspects of life or less focused on the negative or tend to like others more, which produced overall happiness (Seligman). Bottom-up theories of life satisfaction have recommended that life satisfaction represents an overall attitude, composed of a portion of satisfaction in various domains of life (Brief, Butcher, George & Link, et al., 1993) It is the way of showing their feelings, emotion, moods and many more. It is how they feel about their directions and alternative for the future and an overall estimation of their emotions, feelings, behaviours, and attitude by one's own from ranging positive to negative (Diener, 1984). Positive emotional experiences are positively correlated to life satisfaction (Kuppens, Realo & Diener, 2008). Cohn et al. (2009) concluded that positive emotions are a strong predictor of an increasing level of life satisfaction, It is defined as how a person asses their life as being positive in accordance with his/her own criteria, it is also known as a cognitive and hypercritical process (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985). Satisfaction with life is an outcome fulfilled by a person comparing what they have and want to have (Altay & Avcı, 2009). Many terms have been used for life satisfaction by which happiness and quality of life are one of them (Diener et al., 1999. It involves an approving attitude towards one's life—rather than an evaluation of current feelings. It has been measured in relation to economic standing, Mikucka, Sarracino, & Dubrow, (2017) degree of education, Jiménez, Caselles, & Jiménez, (2011) Experiences, and many other topics. Life satisfaction is a key part of subjective and psychological well-being. There are many factors; such as socio-demographic and psychosocial both internal and external that contribute to one's well-being and life satisfaction. Socio-demographic factors include gender, marital status, age, income, occupation and education. Psychosocial factors include functional ability, health and illness, activity level, and family or social relationships (Fernandez-Ballesteros, Zamarron, & Ruiz, 2001). People are more likely to experience higher levels of life satisfaction when they become older (Diener, Ed; Suh, Eunkook M.; Lucas, Richard E.; Smith, Heidi L. (1999).

## Impact of Yoga and Gender on Life Satisfaction of Middle Age Adults

The yoga group scored higher in all areas of quality of life, had higher life satisfaction and improved sleep quality (Hariprashad, Korpode, Shivkumar, Thirthalli, Varambally, et al., 2013). Yoga practioner who practice for over a period of one year were more satisfied and happy with their life compared to those who had practised only once (Saper, et al., 2004). Yoga practice was associated with increased positive effects, body consciousness and life satisfaction and reduced negative effect (Impett, Daubenmier and Hirschman, et al., 2006). So those people who are regularly involved in morning exercise and yoga practice score higher than those who do not practice morning yoga. Similar research has been done in large numbers but the nature of human behaviour in the western U.P of India on this issue was not observed so the present study aims to investigate the effect of gender and yoga practice on psychological wellbeing.

### METHODOLOGY

The main objective of the present research was to study the effect of gender and yoga on life satisfaction of middle age adults. The study was guided by a two-tailed hypothesis that there will be a significant effect (and interaction effects) of gender and yoga on life satisfaction of middle age adults.

#### *Sample*

The sample for the study consisted of 150 male and female subjects belonging to medium economic status. These subjects were taken from the Yoga centre, parks and locations of Meerut city. The total subjects consisted of three groups of Yoga, i.e.; Yoga practioner (50Ss), Morning walkers (50Ss), and evening walkers (50Ss). Each group of yoga consisted of two groups of gender, i.e., male and female with 25-25Ss in each cell. In this way, a 3x2 factorial experimental Design was employed in the research.

#### *Procedure of data collection*

The data were collected individually after the selection of subjects.

#### *Instruments*

- **Personal Information Schedule:** It was used to get subjective and demographic details of subjects required for sampling and discussion.
- **Life satisfaction Scale:** Life satisfaction scale developed by Alam and Shrivastava consist of 60 items related to six areas of life viz. health, personal, economic, Marital, social and job used to measure the level of life satisfaction. Test-retest reliability was 0.84. The validity of the scale was .74 and .84 respectively.

### RESULTS

The purpose of the present study was to study the effect of gender and yoga on life satisfaction and psychological well-being of middle age adults. For this purpose Sample consisted of 150 Ss middle-age adults, who were taken from Meerut city. Life satisfaction was used to obtain data. The data was statistically analyzed by Mean, SD and ANOVA. Obtained results are shown in the following tables and their detailed interpretation and discussion are as follows-

**Table1: Showing F-ratio, SD and Mean Life Satisfaction Scores for the Groups of Gender and Yoga of Middle age adults**

Variables	Variability	Mean	SD	F-ratio
Gender	Male	36.41	2.94	110.72**
	Female	41.04	2.62	
Yoga	Yoga practioner	43.9	2.65	181.53**
	Morning Walkers	38.64	2.44	
	Evenings Walkers	33.64	3.19	
Interaction				0.83 NS

**Main Effects**

- Yoga and Life Satisfaction:** The study of Table 1 indicated that the obtained F-value showing that yoga significantly influences life satisfaction of middle age adults [F, 144, 1 = 110.72; p<.01)]. The Table-1 also showing Mean Life satisfaction scores indicated that the Mean *life satisfaction* score of yoga practioner (M= 43.9, SD= 2.65) was significantly higher than other two groups. Further, it was obtained that the morning walkers group (M= 38.64, SD=2.44) has shown a moderate level of life satisfaction than the evening walkers (M=33.64, SD=3.19) group who has shown the lowest level of life satisfaction of middle age adult subjects. Therefore, the directional hypothesis is accepted and it can be said that there will be a significant effect of yoga on Life Satisfaction in middle age adults.
- Gender and Life Satisfaction:** The Table-1 is showing that obtained F-value showing that gender was found to be significantly effective in Life Satisfaction of middle age adults (F, 144,1 = 26.99; p<.01). Table 1- is also showing mean Life Satisfaction scores which indicated that female subjects (M= 41.04, SD= 2.62) were significantly higher than male subjects (M= 36.41, SD= 2.94). This indicated that gender groups were significantly different in Life satisfaction of middle age adults. Therefore, the hypothesis that there will be a significant effect of gender on Life satisfaction of middle age adults is accepted.

**DISCUSSION**

The result indicated that gender was significantly effective in life satisfaction of middle age adults. It was found that the life satisfaction scores of female subjects were significantly higher than male subjects.

Life satisfaction is higher in females because females have good adjustment levels in various areas of life like home, income, education, personal, social and occupational etc. (Joshi & Jovanovic, 2020). The expectation level is not so high in females because they have more patience and strength and also practice social and family work. This means that they can easily adjust good emotional levels and change their attitude to increase life satisfaction and also become satisfied and happy. Women have been found to be less access than men to power, authority, job opportunities and decision-making positions in spite these women are still capable to be more personally satisfied with their lives compared to men (Land, 2011). Some studies have found that women have more satisfaction with their life compared to men (Tay et al., 2014; stone et al., 2010).

So, life satisfaction can sift all the time for events, situations, family and friend implication and many different things that all must be taken into consideration.

## Impact of Yoga and Gender on Life Satisfaction of Middle Age Adults

The result of the present study shows that yoga was significantly effective on life satisfaction of middle age adults. Life satisfaction score of yoga practioner was significantly higher than morning and evening walkers. Morning walkers' scores are lower than yoga practioner because people are involving meditation, exercise and yoga etc, in their lives so that they remain happy and satisfied in their life. If the person is feeling better and making concentration then he would also be satisfied.

Hartfiel et al., (2011) revealed that the yoga groups reported greater self-confidence and psychological well-being in stressful circumstances. Yoshihara et al., (2011) found that yoga practioner indicated a lower score on mental health turbulence. Aminabhavi (1996) found that yoga has a significant effect on increasing positive attitudes and upgrading mental health. Practice of yoga by showing us the right way of right thinking, right conduct, physical well-being, detachment and other moral values, helps in removing several physical and psychological disorders of modern society (Metha & Sharma, 2010). Regular practices of yoga have a positive effect to increase subjective well-being (Malathi et al., 2000). Therefore, the desirability of leading a yogic lifestyle is more relevant today than in the past. So, it may be the reason yoga practioner have more life satisfaction compared to morning and evening walkers.

So, from the above discussion, it can be said that some social factors are highly effective with women and influence life satisfaction and psychological wellbeing in female subjects. Similarly, yoga is an effective technique for modern man to attain life satisfaction the same was proved by various kinds of research in the concerned area.

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## Impact of Yoga and Gender on Life Satisfaction of Middle Age Adults

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## Impact of Yoga and Gender on Life Satisfaction of Middle Age Adults

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### **Conflict of Interest**

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