

Research Paper

Mindfulness and Spiritual Intelligence of Yoga Practitioners

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of yoga practice on mindfulness and spiritual intelligence among young adults. Conducted in the districts of Rishikesh and Dehradun in Uttarakhand, India, the research employed a comparative design involving 300 participants—150 regular yoga practitioners and 150 non-yoga participants—equally divided by gender. The Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) and the Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI) were used as standardized tools to assess mindfulness and spiritual intelligence, respectively. The findings reveal that yoga practitioners scored significantly higher on both mindfulness and spiritual intelligence compared to non-practitioners. Additionally, gender-based comparisons within the yoga group showed no significant differences in either construct, suggesting that the psychological benefits of yoga are gender-neutral. However, among non-yoga participants, females exhibited slightly higher levels of both mindfulness and spiritual intelligence than males. Statistical analysis using t-tests confirmed the robustness of these findings. The study highlights the transformative role of yoga in enhancing present-moment awareness and fostering a deeper sense of purpose, meaning, and connectedness—core elements of spiritual intelligence. These results underscore the value of integrating yoga into psychological wellness programs, educational settings, and holistic therapeutic approaches. By linking ancient yogic practices with contemporary psychological constructs, this research contributes to the growing body of evidence supporting yoga as a powerful tool for mental and spiritual well-being. The study also calls for further longitudinal and qualitative investigations to deepen our understanding of the long-term psychological impacts of yoga.

Keywords: *Yoga, Mindfulness, Spiritual Intelligence, Gender and Psychological Well-being*

In today's fast-paced and hyper-connected society, mental health challenges are increasingly prevalent. The pressures of maintaining a work-life balance, constant digital engagement, and social expectations often contribute to elevated stress, anxiety, and feelings of inner disconnection. Many individuals report being overwhelmed by the demands of modern living, which frequently leads to burnout, emotional exhaustion, and a decline in psychological well-being (World Health Organization [WHO], 2022). Such challenges underscore the need for interventions that extend beyond short-term symptom management. Instead, contemporary mental health care must adopt a holistic approach that emphasizes resilience, personal growth, and self-understanding (Keyes, 2007). Positive

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psychology frameworks highlight flourishing as an essential dimension of well-being, suggesting that interventions should cultivate not only the absence of distress but also the presence of positive emotions, engagement, meaning, and self-realization (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

The Relevance of Yoga in Psychological Well-Being

Yoga, originating from ancient Indian philosophy, provides a comprehensive and integrative framework for enhancing human well-being. Traditionally conceptualized as a path to self-realization, yoga encompasses physical, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of health (Feuerstein, 2008). Beyond physical postures (asanas), yoga incorporates practices such as breath regulation (pranayama), meditation (dhyana), and ethical living through principles such as the yamas and niyamas (Saraswati, 2008). These components work synergistically to cultivate self-awareness, emotional regulation, and inner tranquility, which are critical for maintaining psychological health (Gard et al., 2014).

Empirical research increasingly supports yoga as an effective complementary and integrative therapy. Studies indicate that yoga reduces symptoms of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and also contributes to stress management, addiction recovery, and improved quality of life (Cramer et al., 2013; Khanna & Greeson, 2013). Neurobiological findings suggest that yoga modulates the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis and enhances parasympathetic activation, thereby reducing physiological arousal and promoting calmness (Streeter et al., 2012). Such evidence underscores yoga's role as not merely a physical exercise but a transformative practice supporting psychological and spiritual growth.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness, often described as a state of present-moment, nonjudgmental awareness, has its roots in Buddhist contemplative traditions but has been secularized and widely applied in modern psychology. Kabat-Zinn (1994) defines mindfulness as “paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally” (p. 4). This quality of awareness involves consciously observing thoughts, emotions, bodily sensations, and environmental stimuli without clinging to or rejecting them. Practiced consistently, mindfulness cultivates clarity, equanimity, and emotional stability (Baer, 2003).

Clinically, mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) have gained strong empirical support. These programs have been found to alleviate symptoms of depression, anxiety, and chronic pain while also fostering resilience and emotional regulation (Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2013; Khoury et al., 2013). Neurocognitive studies further suggest that mindfulness practice enhances attentional control, increases activity in brain regions associated with self-regulation, and decreases rumination—factors that are central to mental health and well-being.

Spiritual Intelligence

Spiritual intelligence (SI) expands the understanding of human capacities by focusing on existential questions, moral reasoning, and self-transcendence. Zohar and Marshall (2000) define SI as the capacity to access deeper meanings, values, and transcendent states of consciousness, distinguishing it from cognitive intelligence (IQ) and emotional intelligence (EQ). Spiritual intelligence involves the pursuit of purpose, ethical integrity, interconnectedness, and the ability to transcend personal limitations (King & DeCicco, 2009).

Core components of SI include critical existential thinking, transcendental awareness, and the ability to derive meaning from life events (Emmons, 2000). Unlike religious devotion, SI is not confined to any particular faith tradition; rather, it emphasizes universal human values, ethical living, and conscious awareness of interconnectedness (Vaughan, 2002). Research suggests that higher levels of SI are associated with resilience, greater psychological adjustment, and adaptive coping strategies in the face of adversity (Amram & Dryer, 2008). Thus, SI plays a pivotal role in promoting holistic well-being by integrating personal meaning-making with broader spiritual and ethical perspectives.

The Interrelationship between Yoga, Mindfulness, and Spiritual Intelligence

Yoga, mindfulness, and spiritual intelligence share deep conceptual and practical interconnections. Yoga, through its integration of asanas, pranayama, and dhyana, inherently fosters mindfulness by cultivating awareness of the present moment and enhancing self-regulation (Sahdra et al., 2011). These practices reduce cognitive distractions, sharpen attentional focus, and promote equanimity, thereby laying the foundation for mindfulness-based living (Brown & Ryan, 2003).

Mindfulness, in turn, enhances the capacity for self-reflection, conscious decision-making, and emotional balance—skills that are vital for developing spiritual intelligence. By encouraging nonjudgmental awareness and acceptance, mindfulness nurtures qualities such as compassion, empathy, and resilience, which align with the hallmarks of SI (Vaughan, 2002). Spiritual intelligence further integrates these practices by channeling self-awareness and mindfulness into deeper existential reflection, ethical conduct, and transcendent purpose. The ethical guidelines of yoga philosophy (yamas and niyamas) embody this connection, emphasizing compassion, honesty, self-discipline, and interconnectedness (Saraswati, 2008).

Collectively, yoga, mindfulness, and spiritual intelligence create a cohesive framework that supports psychological well-being and personal transformation. Their integration offers not only therapeutic benefits for clinical concerns but also fosters flourishing, resilience, and inner harmony—key elements of holistic mental health.

Rationale of the Study

Although the physical benefits of yoga—such as increased flexibility, improved posture, and enhanced muscular strength—are well-documented (Field, 2011), its psychological and spiritual contributions remain underexplored. Recent research suggests that yoga's integration of breath regulation, meditation, and ethical practices may profoundly affect mental health, emotional regulation, and spiritual awareness (Gaiswinkler & Unterrainer, 2016; Telles et al., 2020). However, there is a need for more structured empirical investigations that operationalize these effects through validated psychological constructs such as mindfulness and SI.

The present study aims to address this gap by examining whether regular yoga practitioners demonstrate higher levels of mindfulness and SI compared to non-practitioners. Mindfulness, defined as present-moment awareness and non-judgmental observation (Kabat-Zinn, 2003), and SI, which includes meaning-making, transcendence, and compassion, are central to psychological well-being and personal growth (King & DeCicco, 2009). Exploring these associations is essential for extending the application of yoga beyond the physical domain into therapeutic, clinical, and educational settings.

Additionally, the study investigates gender-based differences in mindfulness and SI among both yoga practitioners and non-practitioners. Examining these differences provides nuanced insights into how yoga may differentially benefit individuals based on gender, thereby informing culturally sensitive and inclusive approaches to wellness (Sharma, 2018). By bridging traditional wisdom with contemporary psychological science, this research contributes to the development of holistic health interventions that integrate body, mind, and spirit.

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Gaps in Current Research Although a growing body of literature affirms the psychological benefits of yoga—ranging from reduced stress and anxiety to improved emotional regulation and cognitive functioning—there remains a notable gap in empirical research that directly links yoga practice with both mindfulness and spiritual intelligence as distinct yet interrelated psychological constructs. While studies in Western countries have explored the therapeutic impact of yoga, they often focus on clinical populations or emphasize physical and stress-reduction outcomes, with limited attention to deeper cognitive and spiritual dimensions.

Moreover, within the Indian context—where yoga originated and is deeply embedded in cultural and spiritual life—there is a surprising lack of systematic, empirical research examining these associations in non-clinical, community-based samples. This creates a significant void in understanding how traditional yogic practices influence mental and spiritual faculties in real-life settings, particularly among Indian youth and young adults.

Another underexplored area is the role of gender in shaping the experience and outcomes of yoga practice. While gender differences in psychological traits such as mindfulness and spirituality have been hinted at in global studies, little is known about how these differences manifest among Indian yoga practitioners versus non-practitioners.

This study aims to fill these gaps through a comparative, cross-sectional design that evaluates the levels of mindfulness and spiritual intelligence among male and female yoga practitioners and non-practitioners. By drawing data from culturally significant regions—Rishikesh and Dehradun—known for their spiritual heritage and yogic traditions, the study offers a culturally grounded contribution to the field of positive psychology and integrative wellness.

METHODOLOGY

Objectives

- To measure the mindfulness of yoga practitioners.
- To assess the spiritual intelligence of yoga practitioners.
- To compare male and female yoga practitioners and non-yoga participants on mindfulness.
- To compare male and female yoga practitioners and non-yoga participants on spiritual intelligence.

Hypotheses

- Yoga practitioners will have significantly higher levels of mindfulness than non-yoga participants.
- Yoga practitioners will have significantly higher levels of spiritual intelligence than non-yoga participants.
- There will be no significant gender difference in mindfulness scores.
- There will be no significant gender difference in spiritual intelligence scores.

Sampling

The present study utilized a purposive sampling method to identify and recruit participants who met specific inclusion criteria relevant to the research objectives. A total of 300 individuals were selected and categorized into two distinct groups: 150 yoga practitioners and 150 non-yoga participants, ensuring an equal representation of both genders, with 75 males and 75 females in each group. The participants were drawn from the districts of Rishikesh and Dehradun, located in the state of Uttarakhand, India—regions known for their strong association with yoga and spiritual practices. To be included in the yoga practitioner group, individuals were required to have engaged in consistent and structured yoga practice for a minimum duration of one year. This criterion was established to ensure that the participants possessed adequate exposure and experience in yoga, which could meaningfully influence the variables under study.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria:

- Individuals aged between 22–30 years.
- Regular yoga practitioners, practicing for at least one year.
- Participants free from major physical or mental illness.

Exclusion Criteria:

- Individuals outside the defined age range i.e. 22-30 years
- Those with less than one year of yoga practice.
- Participants with major physical or mental illness.

Measures and Tools

- **Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS):** Developed by Brown & Ryan (2003), the MAAS is a 15-item self-report scale designed to measure dispositional mindfulness. Participants rate items on a 6-point Likert scale from "almost always" to "almost never." Higher scores reflect greater mindfulness and attentional awareness in daily life.
- **Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI):** Proposed by King (2008), the SISRI measures spiritual intelligence across four domains— Critical Existential Thinking, Personal Meaning Production, Transcendental Awareness, and Conscious State Expansion. The inventory consists of 24 items rated on a Likert scale, with higher scores indicating greater spiritual intelligence.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher initiated the data collection process by approaching the Heads of Departments (HODs) of various private universities in Rishikesh and Dehradun, particularly those housing Yoga Departments, to seek formal permission for conducting the study among yoga practitioners. Written approval was obtained from the respective institutions, authorizing the use of their premises for data collection. Following institutional consent, meetings were scheduled with potential participants at designated locations. During these sessions, the researcher established rapport and provided a clear explanation of the study's purpose, objectives, and procedures. Verbal consent was obtained from individuals who voluntarily agreed to participate. Participants were assured of complete confidentiality and anonymity throughout the research process. Standardized instruments assessing Mindfulness and Spiritual Intelligence were administered to all participants. A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure the selection of individuals who met the inclusion criteria aligned with the study's objectives. The data collection was carried out in a calm, comfortable, and distraction-free setting, allowing participants ample time to complete the questionnaires at their own pace. Upon completion, participants were debriefed and thanked for their valuable time and contribution. They were also informed that their responses would remain strictly confidential and be utilized solely for academic and research purposes. The collected data were subsequently organized and subjected to systematic statistical analysis, yielding meaningful insights into the influence of yoga practice on mindfulness and spiritual intelligence.

Ethics Approval

The study involved human participants; however, only self-administered paper-pencil tests were used, and participation was entirely voluntary. The questionnaire items pertained solely to everyday experiences and did not include any sensitive or invasive content. Therefore, formal ethical clearance was not deemed necessary. Nonetheless, permission was obtained from the respective institutions and informed consent was secured from all participants.

RESULTS

This section presents the results obtained through independent sample t-tests comparing yoga practitioners and non-yoga participants across the variables of mindfulness and

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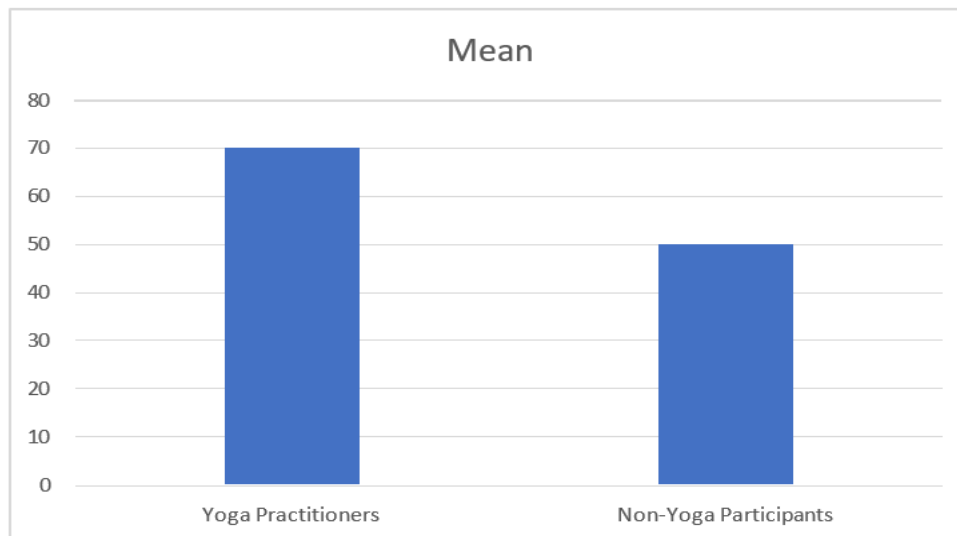
spiritual intelligence. The data is also analysed for gender differences within and between groups.

Table 1: Comparison between Yoga Practitioner and Non-Yoga Participants on Mindfulness

Group	Mean	SD	t-value
Yoga Practitioners	70.87	5.03	32.48**
Non-Yoga Participants	51.28	5.40	

The results reveal a statistically significant difference between yoga practitioners and non-yoga participants on mindfulness ($t = 32.48$, $p < .01$). The mean mindfulness score for yoga practitioners ($M = 70.87$) is substantially higher than for non-yoga participants ($M = 51.28$), indicating that those who practice yoga regularly tend to exhibit a significantly greater capacity for present-moment awareness and attentional regulation. This supports the first hypothesis that yoga practice enhances mindfulness.

Figure 1 Representing Mean difference between Yoga and Non Yoga Practitioners on Mindfulness



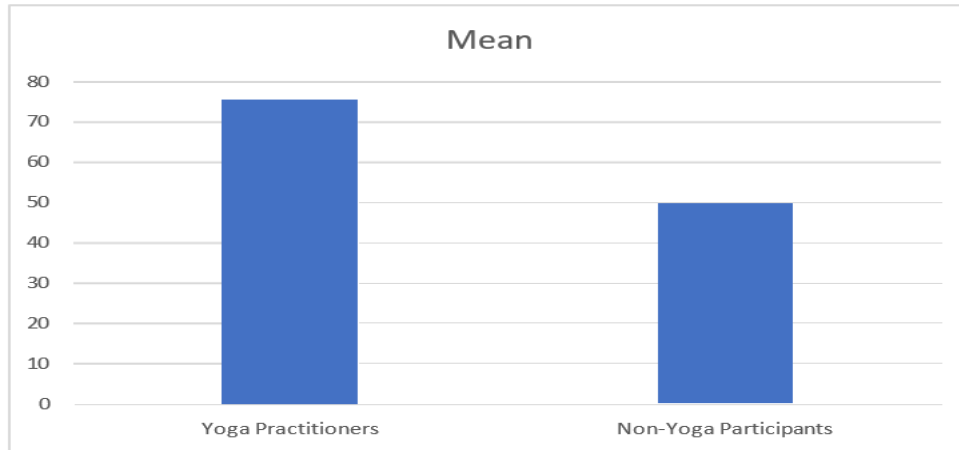
The graph suggests that individuals who regularly practice yoga demonstrate greater mindfulness compared to those who do not engage in yoga. This indicates a positive impact of yoga practice on mindfulness levels.

Table 2: Comparison between Yoga Practitioner and Non-Yoga Participants on Spiritual Intelligence

Group	Mean	SD	t-value
Yoga Practitioners	75.71	4.18	39.94**
Non-Yoga Participants	50.00	6.68	

There is a very high statistically significant difference in spiritual intelligence between the two groups ($t = 39.94$, $p < .01$). Yoga practitioners scored markedly higher ($M = 75.71$) compared to non-yoga participants ($M = 50.00$). This implies that regular yoga practice fosters a deeper understanding of existential questions, enhances personal meaning-making, and supports transcendental awareness. The results validate the second hypothesis.

Figure 2 Representing Mean difference between Yoga and Non-Yoga Practitioners on Spiritual Intelligence



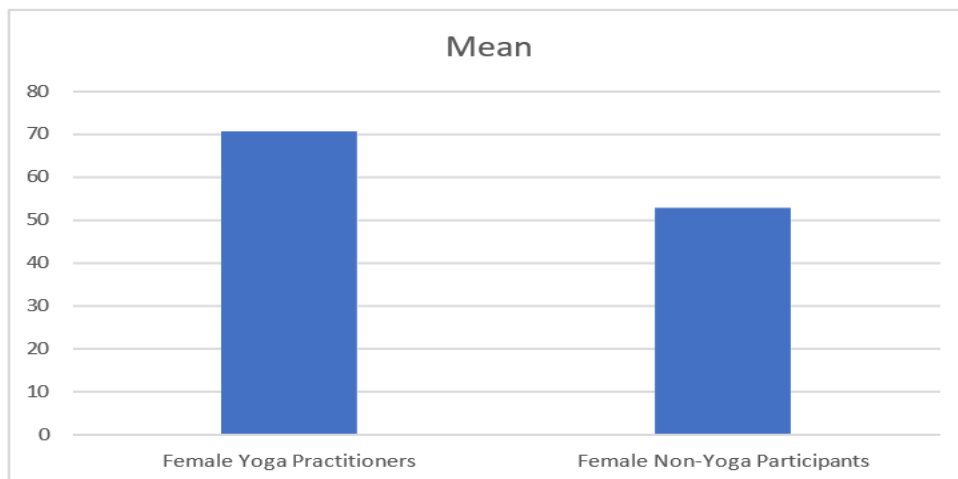
Graph suggest that yoga practice is associated with higher levels of spiritual intelligence, indicating that regular engagement in yoga may enhance individuals' spiritual awareness and inner growth compared to those who do not practice yoga.

Table 3: Comparison between Female Yoga Practitioners and Female Non-Yoga Participants on Mindfulness

Group	Mean	SD	t-value
Female Yoga Practitioners	70.67	4.91	
Female Non-Yoga Participants	52.85	5.03	21.92**

A statistically significant difference exists between female yoga practitioners and female non- yoga participants on mindfulness ($t = 21.92$, $p < .01$). The higher mean among yoga-practicing females ($M = 70.67$) indicates enhanced attentional awareness and emotional regulation compared to their non-practicing counterparts ($M = 52.85$). This reflects the influence of consistent yoga practice on mindfulness among women.

Figure 3 Shows Mean difference between Female Yoga and Female Non Yoga Practitioners on Mindfulness

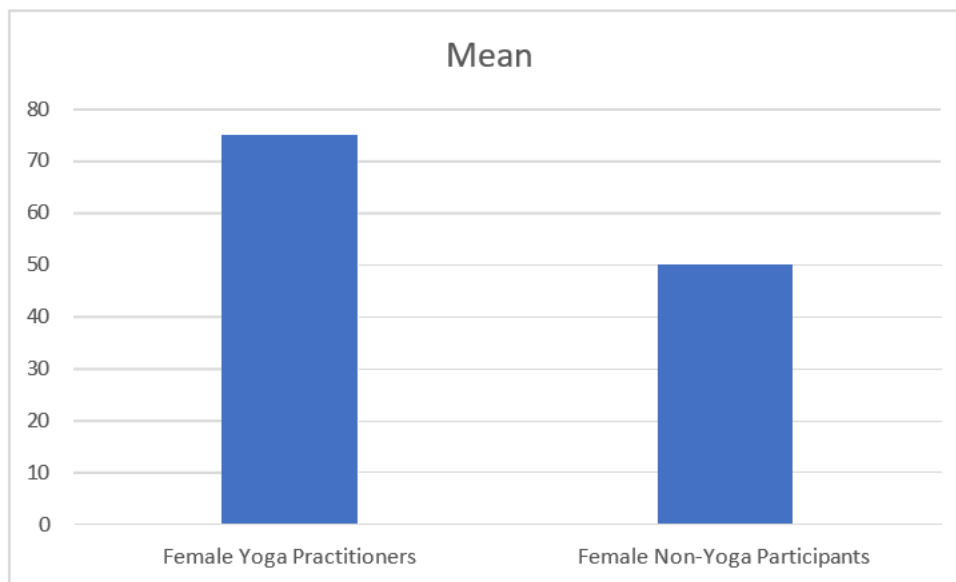


The results indicate that female yoga practitioners exhibit greater mindfulness compared to their non-yoga counterparts.

Table 4: Comparison between Female Yoga Practitioners and Female Non-Yoga Participants on Spiritual Intelligence

Group	Mean	SD	t-value
Female Yoga Practitioners	75.12	4.77	24.62**
Female Non-Yoga Participants	51.13	6.95	

There is a highly significant difference in spiritual intelligence between female yoga practitioners and female non-practitioners ($t = 24.62$, $p < .01$). The findings show that yoga-practicing women ($M = 75.12$) demonstrate significantly higher spiritual awareness, self-reflection, and values-based living than non-practicing females ($M = 51.13$). The results highlight the potential of yoga in developing spiritual maturity in women.

Figure 4 Shows Mean difference between Female Yoga and Female Non-Yoga Practitioners on Spiritual Intelligence

The graph suggest that female yoga practitioners demonstrate greater spiritual intelligence than their non-yoga counterparts.

Table 5: Comparison between Male Yoga Practitioners and Male Non-Yoga Participants on Mindfulness

Group	Mean	SD	t-value
Male Yoga Practitioners	71.07	5.17	24.89**
Male Non-Yoga Participants	49.71	5.33	

A significant difference is observed between male yoga practitioners and non-practitioners male on mindfulness ($t = 24.89$, $p < .01$). The higher mean score among yoga-practicing males ($M = 71.07$) compared to non-practicing males ($M = 49.71$) suggests that yoga enhances attentional focus, emotional regulation, and awareness in men as well.

Figure 5 Representing Mean difference between Yoga and Non-Yoga Practitioners on Spiritual Intelligence

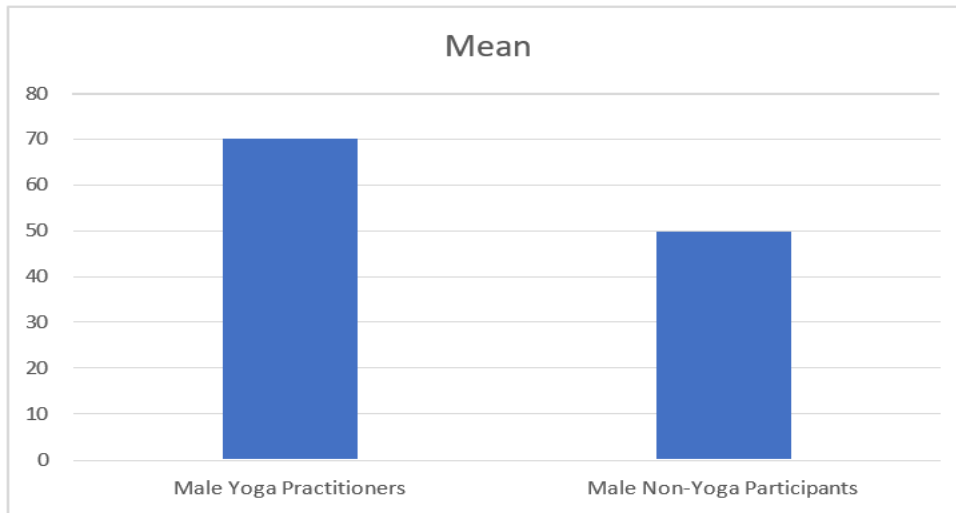


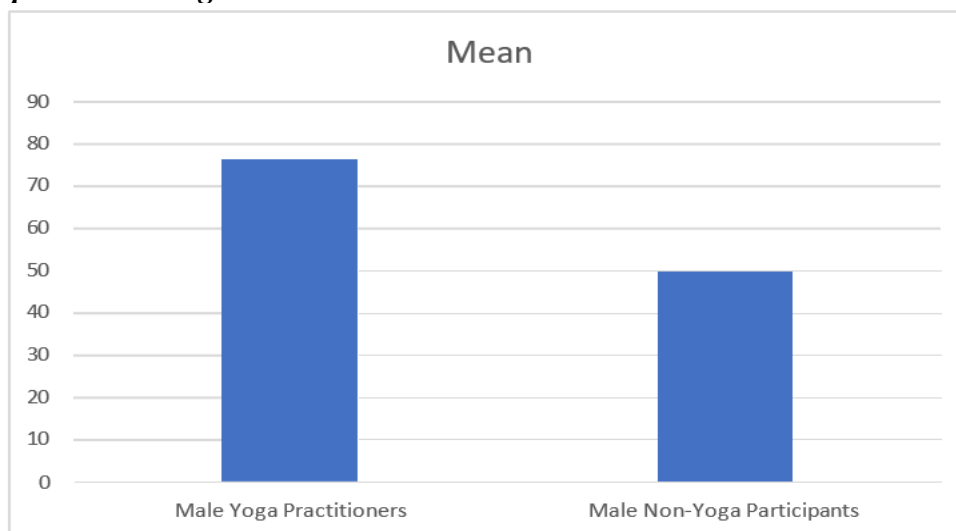
Figure 5 suggests that Male yoga practitioners demonstrate greater than their non-yoga counterparts, highlighting the positive influence of yoga practice.

Table 6: Comparison between Male Yoga Practitioners and Male Non-Yoga Participants on Spiritual Intelligence

Group	Mean	SD	t-value
Male Yoga Practitioners	76.31	3.42	33.37**
Male Non-Yoga Participants	48.87	6.24	

There is a robust statistically significant difference in spiritual intelligence between male yoga practitioners and non-practitioners ($t = 33.37$, $p < .01$). Males engaged in yoga ($M = 76.31$) demonstrate higher spiritual intelligence than those not practicing yoga ($M = 48.87$), reflecting yoga's capacity to nurture self-awareness, transcendence, and meaning-making in men.

Figure 6 Representing Mean difference between Yoga and Non-Yoga Practitioners on Spiritual Intelligence



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Figure 6 male yoga participants show higher spiritual intelligence than non-yoga male participants, highlighting the beneficial role of yoga in fostering spiritual growth.

Table 7: Comparison between Male and Female Yoga Practitioners on Mindfulness

Group	Mean	SD	t-value
Male Yoga Practitioners	71.07	5.17	0.48
Female Yoga Practitioners	70.67	4.91	

No statistically significant difference was found between male and female yoga practitioners on mindfulness ($t = 0.48$). Both genders in the yoga group report nearly equivalent mindfulness levels, suggesting that gender does not play a major role in how yoga influences present-moment awareness and attentional control.

Figure 7 Shows Mean difference between Yoga and Non-Yoga Practitioners on Spiritual Intelligence

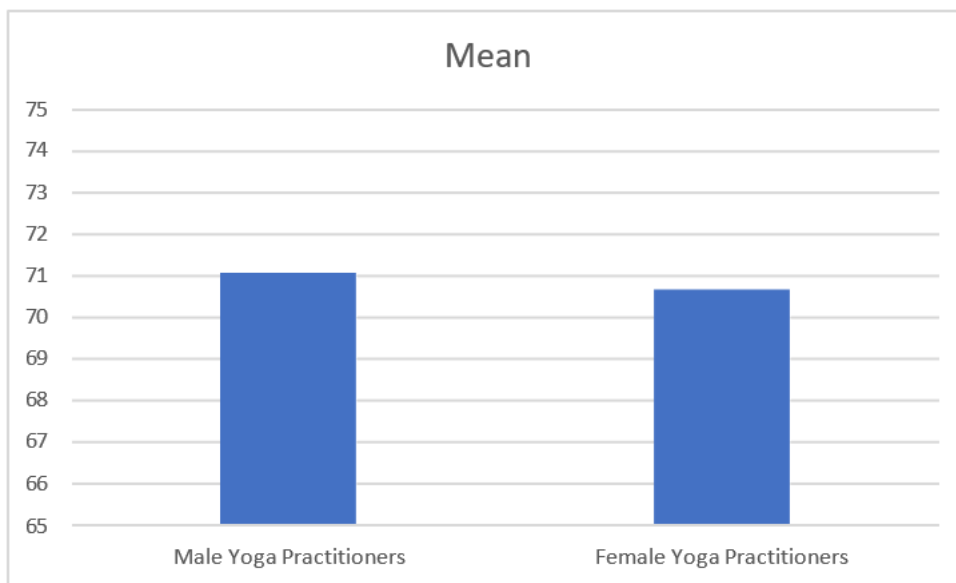


Figure 7 shows that both male and female yoga practitioners demonstrate high mindfulness

Table 8: Comparison between Male and Female Yoga Practitioners on Spiritual Intelligence

Group	Mean	SD	t-value
Male Yoga Practitioners	76.31	4.77	1.75
Female Yoga Practitioners	75.12	3.42	

The difference in spiritual intelligence between male and female yoga practitioners is minimal and statistically non-significant ($t = 1.75$). Both male and female practitioners exhibit comparably high levels of spiritual intelligence, indicating that yoga enhances spiritual development irrespective of gender.

Figure 8 Representing Mean difference between Male and Female Yoga and Practitioners on Spiritual Intelligence

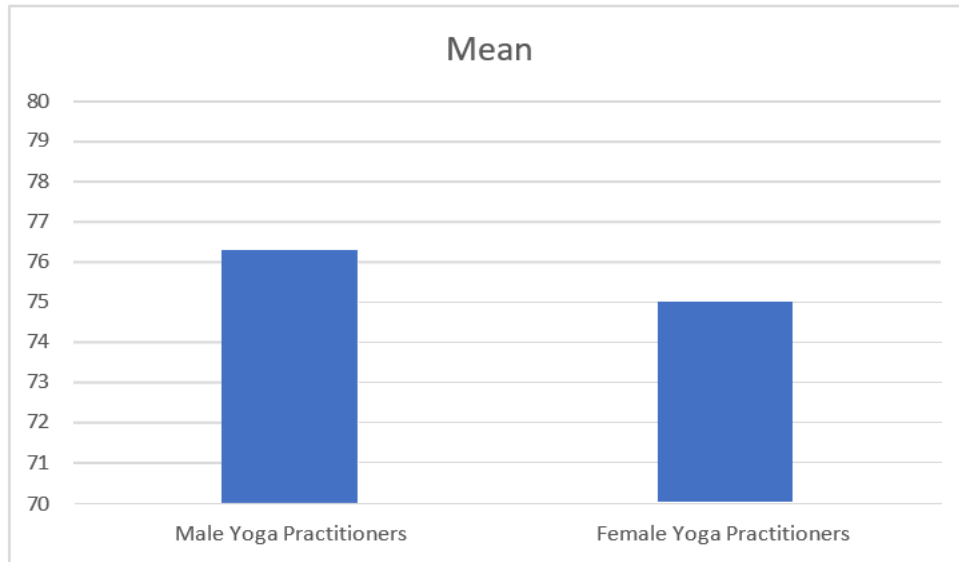


Figure 8 denotes Both male and female yoga practitioners demonstrate high mindfulness.

Table 9: Comparison between Male and Female Non-Yoga Participants on Mindfulness

Group	Mean	SD	t-value
Male Non-Yoga Participants	49.71	5.33	3.71**
Female Non-Yoga Participants	52.85	5.03	

A statistically significant difference was found between male and female non-yoga participants on mindfulness ($t = 3.71$, $p < .01$), with females ($M = 52.85$) scoring slightly higher than males ($M = 49.71$). This could be due to differences in baseline emotional awareness or coping strategies.

Figure 9 Shows Mean difference between Male and Female Non-Yoga Participants on Mindfulness

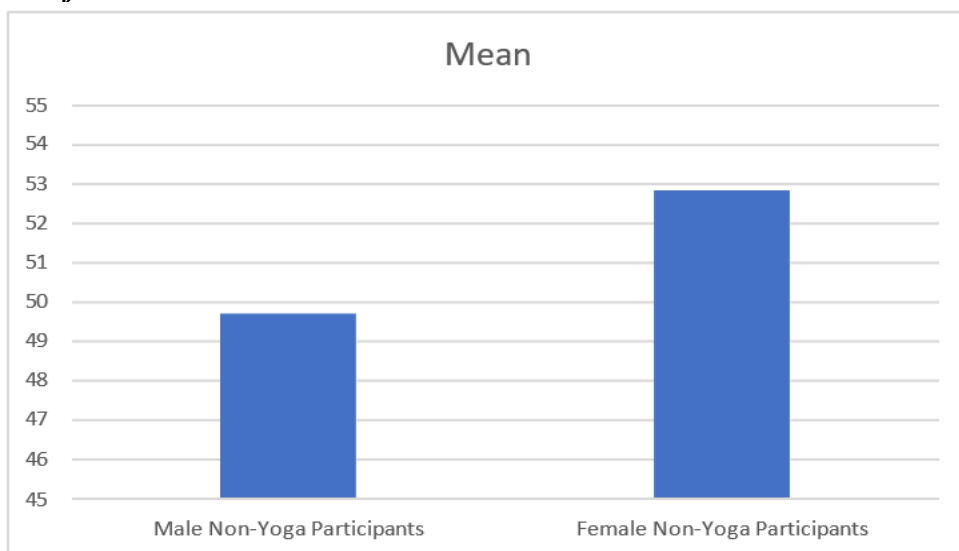


Figure 9 shows that Non-yoga females have somewhat higher mindfulness than non-yoga males.

Table 10: Comparison between Male and Female Non-Yoga Participants on Spiritual Intelligence

Group	Mean	SD	t-value
Male Non-Yoga Participants	48.87	6.24	2.65**
Female Non-Yoga Participants	51.13	6.95	

The difference in spiritual intelligence between male and female non-yoga participants is also statistically significant ($t = 2.65$, $p < .01$). Female participants exhibit marginally higher spiritual intelligence ($M = 51.13$) than their male counterparts ($M = 48.87$). It suggests that even in the absence of yoga, females may have a slightly stronger disposition toward spiritual awareness as compare to their male counterparts.

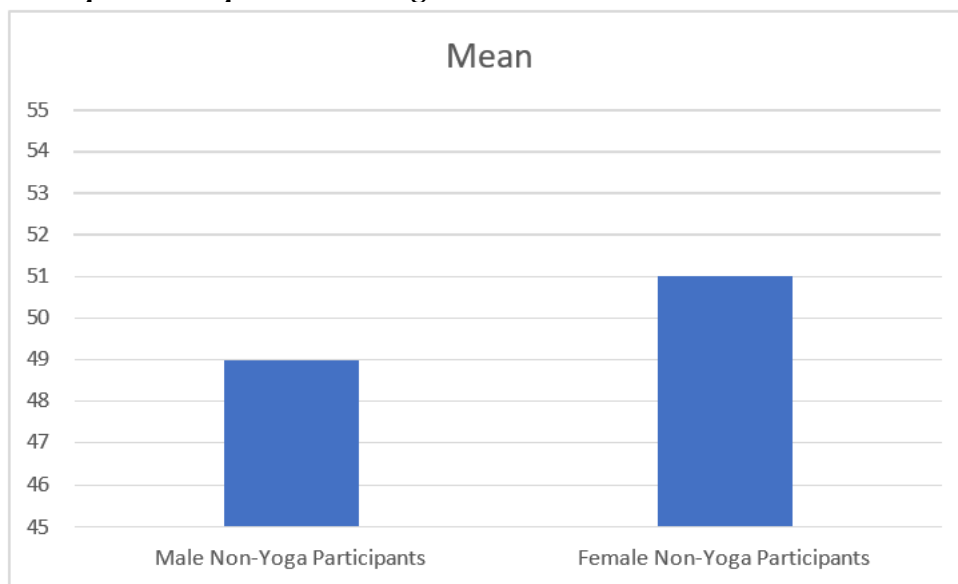
Figure 10 Representing Mean difference between Male and Female Non-Yoga Participants on Spiritual Intelligence

Figure 10 depicts that Non-yoga females demonstrate somewhat higher spiritual intelligence than non-yoga males Discussion.

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to explore the influence of yoga practice on mindfulness and spiritual intelligence among participants from Rishikesh and Dehradun, comparing yoga practitioners with non-yoga participants, and examining gender differences within both groups.

Yoga and Mindfulness

The results clearly support the hypothesis that individuals who regularly engage in yoga practice exhibit significantly higher levels of mindfulness than those who do not. The yoga practitioners in the study had a mean mindfulness score of 70.87, in contrast to 51.28 among non-yoga participants. This substantial difference, verified by a high t-value (32.48), echoes existing psychological and neuroscientific findings (Khalsa et al., 2015; Shapiro et al., 2011). The regular integration of breath control (pranayama), meditation, and body awareness in yoga likely leads to enhanced attentional regulation, emotional clarity, and non-reactive presence— all central components of mindfulness.

The finding aligns with Brown & Ryan's (2003) conception of mindfulness as present-moment attention, and with research suggesting that yoga fosters neural adaptations in regions associated with self-awareness, such as the anterior cingulate cortex. Importantly, both male and female yoga practitioners scored equally high on mindfulness, suggesting that gender does not moderate the effect of yoga on mindful awareness.

Yoga and Spiritual Intelligence

Spiritual intelligence, a more recently recognized construct in positive psychology, also showed significantly higher levels among yoga practitioners ($M = 75.71$) than non-practitioners ($M = 50.00$), with a remarkably high t -value (39.94). This strongly supports the hypothesis that **yoga enhances spiritual intelligence**, a trait encompassing transcendence, existential meaning-making, and compassion (Zohar & Marshall, 2000; Emmons, 2000).

The regular practice of yoga immerses individuals in introspection, ethical principles (Yamas and Niyamas), and contemplation, contributing to the development of spiritual capacities like compassion, equanimity, and a connection with the higher self. The findings are also supported by research such as Mousavinasab et al. (2017), which linked yoga to improved self-awareness and meaning in life.

Gender Differences

The **gender-wise comparison within the yoga group** revealed **no significant differences** in spiritual intelligence, confirming that both men and women equally benefit from yoga's spiritual aspects. However, within the non-yoga group, females had slightly higher SI than males, indicating a natural predisposition among women toward self-reflection and meaning-making, even without formal spiritual practice.

Contrary to some assumptions in existing literature, this study found **no significant gender differences among yoga practitioners** in either mindfulness or spiritual intelligence. This suggests that **the positive effects of yoga transcend gender boundaries**, reinforcing the universality of yogic benefits.

However, within the non-yoga group, **females outperformed males** in both constructs—though the gap was narrower than between yoga and non-yoga groups. This supports the view that women, due to socio-cultural conditioning or psychological dispositions, may exhibit greater emotional awareness and existential sensitivity (Shapiro et al., 2006).

Implications of the Study

The findings of the present study carry significant implications across multiple domains, including psychological practice, education, research, and public health. By highlighting the positive association between yoga practice, mindfulness, and spiritual intelligence, the study underscores the value of integrating traditional contemplative practices within modern psychological and educational frameworks.

• **Implication for Clinical Psychology**

The results suggest that clinical psychologists can benefit from incorporating yoga-based interventions into therapeutic settings, particularly when addressing issues such as stress, anxiety, and existential concerns. The integration of yoga modules can facilitate the cultivation of mindfulness, enhance emotional regulation, and foster spiritual awareness, thereby promoting holistic well-being. Such interventions may complement conventional

therapies, offering clients a more comprehensive approach to mental health and personal growth.

• Implications for Education and Training

For educators, counsellors, and organizational trainers, the inclusion of yoga and mindfulness practices within academic institutions and workplace wellness programs can serve as a powerful tool for fostering emotional resilience, enhancing attention and creativity, and nurturing a values-oriented lifestyle. Embedding these practices within daily routines can contribute to improved psychological well-being, ethical awareness, and overall productivity among students and professionals.

• Implications for Research and Policy

The study reinforces the importance of adopting integrative and interdisciplinary research approaches that examine traditional spiritual practices, such as yoga, through empirical and psychological frameworks. Future research can build upon these findings by exploring longitudinal effects, cross-cultural comparisons, and the integration of neuropsychological measures to deepen the understanding of yoga's impact on mental health. Policymakers and health professionals may also consider supporting yoga-based programs as preventive and promotive strategies in community mental health initiatives.

CONCLUSION

- Yoga practitioners show significantly **higher levels of mindfulness** than non-practitioners.
- Yoga practitioners also exhibit **greater spiritual intelligence**, especially in areas like meaning-making and transcendence.
- Both male and female yoga practitioners demonstrate **comparable levels** of mindfulness and spiritual intelligence—indicating **gender-neutral benefits** of yoga.
- Non-yoga females slightly outperform non-yoga males in mindfulness and spiritual intelligence, though the differences are modest.
- Regular yoga practice emerges as a **powerful tool for psychological and spiritual well-being**.
- The study reinforces the **integration of yogic practices in mental health interventions**, personal growth programs, and educational curricula.
- Mindfulness and spiritual intelligence are **interconnected developmental outcomes** of holistic practices like yoga.

Limitations of the Study

While the present study offers valuable insights into the relationship between yoga, mindfulness, and spiritual intelligence, several limitations should be acknowledged:

- **Limited Age Range:** The study focused on individuals aged 22 to 30, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to other age groups such as adolescents or older adults.
- **Geographic Scope:** Participants were selected from only two districts in Uttarakhand (Rishikesh and Dehradun). Cultural and regional differences may affect how yoga is practiced and experienced in other areas of India or globally.
- **Self-Report Measures:** The use of self-report instruments (MAAS and SISRI) introduces potential biases such as social desirability, self-perception errors, and response fatigue.

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- **Purposive Sampling:** The non-random selection of participants may reduce external validity. Individuals who voluntarily practice yoga may already possess a greater interest in personal development.
- **No Qualitative Data:** The absence of qualitative interviews or open-ended responses limits a deeper understanding of participants' lived experiences with yoga, mindfulness, and spirituality.

Suggestions for Future Research

Based on the limitations and emerging areas of interest, the following suggestions are made for future research:

- **Broaden Demographics:** Include participants from a wider age range, diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, and different cultural or geographic regions for more comprehensive results.
- **Longitudinal Studies:** Conduct longitudinal or experimental designs to track changes in mindfulness and spiritual intelligence over time and establish causal relationships.
- **Incorporate Qualitative Methods:** Adding interviews, reflective journals, or thematic analyses can help explore subjective experiences and spiritual transformations among yoga practitioners.
- **Explore Additional Variables:** Include other psychological constructs such as emotional intelligence, resilience, life satisfaction, or stress levels to examine mediating or moderating factors.
- **Compare Different Yoga Styles:** Future studies could examine the differential impact of various yoga styles (e.g., Hatha, Kundalini, Ashtanga) on mental health and spirituality.

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Conflict of Interest

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