



INFLUENCE OF YOGIC TRAINING ON SELECTED PSYCHOLOGICAL PARAMETERS AMONG CRICKETERS

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of yogic training on selected psychological parameters among cricketers. Fifty male cricket-specialization students (aged 18-22 years) from the Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, Annamalai University, were randomly assigned to an experimental group (n = 25) and a control group (n = 25). The experimental group underwent yogic training five days per week for six weeks, while the control group did not receive any intervention. Anxiety and aggression were assessed pre- and post-intervention using standardized scales (IPAT Anxiety Scale and C. Smith Aggression Scale). Data were analyzed using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). Results revealed that yogic training produced a significant reduction in both anxiety and aggression compared with the control group ($p < 0.05$). These findings suggest that yogic practices can be an effective strategy for enhancing psychological well-being and emotional control among cricketers.

Key Words: Yogic Training, Anxiety, Aggression, Psychological Variables and Cricketers

Introduction:

Yoga is one of the oldest known sciences of self-development, addressing the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of human life. Through its practices, particularly asanas (postures) and pranayama (breath regulation), yoga promotes harmony between bodily systems and fosters relaxation by influencing the autonomic nervous system. This coordination enhances metabolic efficiency, improves nourishment, and contributes to overall well-being.

Historically, yoga has been an integral part of Indian tradition for more than two millennia. Its philosophical foundations are rooted in the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, and epics such as the Ramayana and Mahabharata, within which the Bhagavad Gita emphasizes the importance of discipline and self-mastery. Patanjali's Yoga Sutras later provided a systematic framework that continues to guide yoga practice. Beyond its spiritual origins, yoga has evolved into a practical discipline with wide applications in health, education, and sports.

In the context of physical education, yoga contributes not only to physical fitness but also to psychological stability. The principle of "a sound mind in a sound body" underscores the interdependence of mental and physical well-being. Practices such as asanas and pranayama stabilize the mind, reduce restlessness, and improve emotional balance.

Anxiety is a common psychological state characterized by apprehension or uneasiness, often unrelated to specific stimuli. Persistent or uncontrolled anxiety can interfere with digestion, circulation, sleep, and overall performance (Neil, 1981). Similarly, aggression, often observed in youth and athletes, can arise from frustration, competition, or learned behavior. While aggression may sometimes serve as an instrumental strategy to achieve goals, excessive or uncontrolled aggression can negatively impact team dynamics, performance, and well-being.

Research suggests that yogic practices can reduce anxiety and aggression by promoting relaxation, enhancing self-control, and improving emotional regulation. This is particularly relevant in sports such as cricket, where psychological stability plays a crucial role in maintaining focus, discipline, and performance. Thus, yoga can add a valuable dimension to athletic training by supporting both psychological and physiological development.

Methodology:

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of the present investigation was to examine the influence of yogic training on selected psychological parameters and performance among cricketers.

Methodology:

A total of fifty cricket specialization students from the Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, Annamalai University, were selected at random as subjects for the study. The participants were between 18 and 22 years of age. They were further classified at random into two equal groups of 25 subjects each.

- Group I (Experimental Group): Underwent yogic training for five days per week over a period of six weeks.
- Group II (Control Group): Did not participate in any additional training and continued with their regular routine.

The selected psychological variables were anxiety and aggression. These variables were assessed before and after the training period using standard testing procedures:

- Anxiety: IPAT Anxiety Scale
- Aggression: C. Smith Aggression Scale

The data collected from both groups before and after the training period were statistically analyzed using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). All statistical computations were carried out with the SPSS software package, and the level of significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

Yogic Training Intervention:

The yogic training program consisted of selected asanas aimed at improving psychological variables and overall performance among cricketers.

Asanas Practiced:

Śavāsana (Corpse Pose), Dhanurāsana (Bow Pose), Bhujangāsana (Cobra Pose), Paścimottānāsana (Seated Forward Bend), Halāsana (Plough Pose), Yogamudrā, Supta Vajrāsana (Reclined Thunderbolt Pose), Sarvāṅgāsana (Shoulder Stand), Śalabhāsana (Locust Pose)

General Guidelines for Practice:

Asanas were performed in a clean, separate space using a mat or rug. Sessions were scheduled either early in the morning or in the evening, ensuring practice was done on an empty stomach (3-4 hours after meals). Women were advised to avoid practice during menstruation. Each asana was performed slowly, without compulsion, and followed by relaxation in Śavāsana for 5-10 minutes at the beginning and end of each session. Asanas were not combined with strenuous exercises.

Statistical Analysis:

The effect of yogic training on anxiety was analyzed using ANCOVA. The results of the analysis for the control and experimental groups are presented in table 1.

Table 1: Analysis of Covariance on Control Group and Yogic Training Group in Terms of Anxiety

	Control Group	Yogic Training	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Squares	Obtained 'F' ratio
Pre-Test Mean	40.88	38.80	Between	54.08	1	54.08	0.68
Standard Deviation	8.49	9.27	Within	3792.64	48	79.01	
Post-Test Mean	40.16	36.40	Between	176.72	1	176.72	2.05
Standard Deviation	9.18	9.38	Within	4135.36	48	86.15	
Adjusted Post-Test Mean	39.10	37.46	Between	32.73	1	32.73	9.81
			Within	156.82	47	3.34	

Table 1 shows that the pre test means of anxiety of control group and yogic training group are 40.88 and 38.80 respectively. The obtained 'F' ratio value of 0.68 for pre test means on anxiety is lesser than the required table value of 7.28 for significance at 0.05 level of confidence with degrees of freedom 1 and 48. The post-test means on anxiety of control group and yogic training group are 40.16 and 36.40 respectively. The obtained 'F' ratio value of 2.05 for post-test data on anxiety is less than the required table value of 7.28 for significance at 0.05 level of confidence with degree of freedom 1 and 48. The adjusted post-test means on anxiety of control group and yogic training group are 39.10 and 37.46 respectively. The obtained 'F' ratio value of 9.81 of adjusted post-test data on anxiety is greater than the table value of 7.28 required for significance at 0.05 level of confidence with degree of freedom 1 and 47.

The results of the study showed that there was significant difference among the adjusted post-test means of control group and yogic training group.

The analysis of covariance on aggression of control group and yogic training group were statistically examined and presented into table 2.

Table 2: Analysis of Covariance on Aggression of Control Group and Yogic Training Group

	Control Group	Yogic training	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Squares	Obtained 'F' ratio
Pre-Test Mean	14.96	12.72	Between	62.72	1	62.72	4.66
Standard Deviation	3.73	3.60	Within	646.00	48	13.46	
Post-Test Mean	14.20	11.32	Between	103.68	1	103.68	8.96*
Standard Deviation	3.21	3.58	Within	555.44	48	11.57	
Adjusted Post-Test Mean	13.19	12.33	Between	8.57	1	8.57	11.88*
			Within	33.91	47	.72	

Table 2 shows that the pre test means of aggression in terms of control group and yogic training group are 14.96 and 12.72 respectively. The obtained 'F' ratio value of 4.66 for pre test means on aggression is less than the required table value of 4.20 for significance at 0.05 level of confidence with degrees of freedom 1 and 48. The post-test means on aggression of control group and yogic training group are 14.20 and 11.32 respectively. The obtained 'F' ratio value of 8.96 for post-test data on aggression is greater than the required table value of 4.20 for significance at 0.05 level of confidence with degree of freedom 1 and 48. The adjusted post-test means on aggression of control group and yogic training group are 13.99 and 12.93 respectively. The obtained 'F' ratio value of 11.88 of adjusted post-test data on aggression is greater than the table value of 4.21 required for significance at 0.05 level of confidence with degree of freedom 1 and 47.

The results of the study showed that there was significant difference among the adjusted post-test means of control group and yogic training group.

Conclusion:

It may be concluded from the results of the study that significant differences were found on anxiety between control group and yogic training group. This study also shows that yogic training group had significant impact on anxiety of the cricketers.

It may be concluded from the results of the study that significant differences were found on aggression between control group and yogic training group. This study also shows that yogic training group had significant impact on aggression of the cricketers.

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