

Yoga As A Pathway To Psychological Resilience In Adolescents: A Review Of Current Evidence

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Abstract

Adolescent mental health refers to the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of individuals between 10 and 19 years of age. This developmental stage is characterized by rapid physical growth, identity formation, emotional changes, and social pressures, making mental health especially vulnerable. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), adolescent mental health is critically important because it influences immediate well-being, long-term health outcomes, social functioning, and national development. Increasing academic pressure, unhealthy lifestyles, social expectations, and technological dependence have contributed to rising levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and emotional disturbances among adolescents worldwide. Yoga, an ancient mind–body practice integrating physical postures (asanas), breathing techniques (pranayama), and meditation, has emerged as a promising non-pharmacological intervention for improving mental health among adolescents. Evidence from various studies suggests that yoga significantly reduces stress, anxiety, anger, and depressive symptoms while improving emotional regulation, self-esteem, mindfulness, concentration, and academic performance. This systematic review aims to examine the effects of yoga on adolescent mental health through the analysis of available literature. Findings indicate that regular yoga practice contributes positively to psychological well-being and emotional resilience. The review concludes that integrating yoga into school curricula and adolescent health programs may serve as an effective, affordable, and holistic strategy for promoting mental well-being among adolescents.

Keywords: Adolescents, Mental Health, Yoga, Stress, Anxiety, Emotional Well-being.

Introduction

Adolescence can be a particularly demanding phase of life, often accompanied by feelings of stress and pressure [1]. A busy daily schedule—such as waking early for school, studying late into the night, and balancing academics, sports, and personal responsibilities—can be difficult to manage [1]. In addition to these commitments, everyday emotional challenges, like supporting a friend through personal issues, dealing with family conflicts, making important decisions, or worrying about performance in activities such as sports, can further increase stress levels [2]. When faced with multiple concerns at once, experiencing stress is a natural response. Fortunately, there are several effective ways to cope, including talking to friends, engaging in physical activity, or seeking guidance from a school counselor [2].

Yoga is one such approach that can help alleviate stress by encouraging relaxation, which counteracts the physiological and psychological effects of stress [3]. It positively influences three key areas often impacted by stress: the body, the mind, and breathing patterns [3]. As a form of mind-body practice, yoga combines physical movement with mindful awareness, focusing on the connection between the self, breath, and internal energy [4].

The therapeutic framework of yoga is based on four fundamental principles. First, it views the human body as a holistic system composed of interconnected dimensions, where imbalance in one aspect can affect overall well-being [4]. Second, it recognizes that each individual is unique, and therefore yoga practices should be adapted to meet personal needs [4]. Third, yoga emphasizes self-empowerment, encouraging individuals to take an active role in their own healing process [4]. These principles collectively support yoga's role in promoting overall health and stress management.

Yoga engages the student in the healing process; by playing an active role in their journey toward health, the healing comes from within, instead of from an outside source and a greater sense of autonomy is achieved. The

fourth principle is that the quality and state of an individual's mind is crucial to healing. When the individual has a positive mind-state healing happens more quickly, whereas if the mind-state is negative, healing may be prolonged [5].

The present day's human being fully depends on mechanism. Present days we find that many people are just after money & luxurious lifestyles. They do not have any time to think about their health and fitness. Present day's fast food is the major food in modern food habits. We eat is also totally different from what we were eating in Past. We want modernization everywhere right from the kitchen to the office. In the present days most of the people are working of the various companies in shift basis, so they don't have enough time to sleep and physical activity. Due to lack of Physical fitness, faulty good habits and sleeping habits, individualism affected in psychosomatic disorders. The uncountable problems are created by present day's lifestyle when we reach in the age of 40 years. Present days maximum youths are leaded unhealthy lifestyle like poor diet, physical inactivity, smoking and drinking, which put at risk for developing heart disease, diabetes, obesity and cancer. In fact, these are the main problem which is the root cause of various severe diseases, and death of human life [6].

Adolescents generally perceived stress in their daily lives. Family conflicts and academic pressures were the main triggers for increased stress. At the same time, psychological well-being has emerged as a key construct in the field of adolescent health [7].

Presently near about two-thirds of all heart disease deaths worldwide can be attributed to unhealthy lifestyle. Apart from the health diseases mental health also get affected by current days life style and scenario. Stress is a cognitive and physiological response to demands that exceed a person's adaptive capacity has become increasingly prevalent among adolescents. Sources of adolescent stress include academic pressure, family conflict, peer relationships, body image concerns and uncertainty about the future [8]. A large-scale Indian study revealed that over 30% of adolescents experienced severe levels of stress, primarily from parents, academic and social expectations. Stress can significantly impact adolescents' ability to function effectively in their daily lives, interfering with concentration, sleep, decision-making and self-esteem [9].

A study from Dhaka, Bangladesh shows that by self-administered questionnaire among 2355 adolescents from nine secondary school of the respondents, by using 10-item Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10). Sociodemographic information, self-reported body image, a modified Leisure Time Exercise Questionnaire (LTEQ), and the WHO Global Physical Activity Questionnaire (GPAQ) were used to determine the sociodemographic and lifestyle factors associated with stress symptoms among adolescents from the respondents, 2313 completed the PSS-10. Sociodemographic information, self-reported body image, a modified Leisure Time Exercise Questionnaire (LTEQ), and the WHO Global Physical Activity Questionnaire (GPAQ) were used to determine the sociodemographic and lifestyle factors associated with stress symptoms among adolescents, about 65% of adolescents experienced moderate stress symptoms, and about 9% experienced high-stress symptoms. Females (58.7%) suffered more from stress compared to males (41.3%) with associated factors like age, grade, and residential setting [10].

This emerging need to support the mental health needs of adolescent students has put a strain on schools; many schools do not have sufficient staff to address the increase in the number of mental health concerns [11]. School mental health research in India is critical for personalizing interventions to the specific requirements of the diverse student population, decreasing stigma, and enhancing overall student well-being within the cultural and educational context of the country. Thirty-one studies with a sample size of 30,970 were included in the final quantitative synthesis, of which 14,381 were male. The overall mean age of the school children and adolescents was 14.58 years, with a standard deviation of 1.35. A diverse range of mental health concerns have been documented in school children and adolescents, exhibiting differing degrees of severity and frequency. The analysis showed that depression was the most prevalent mental health issue among children, followed by social, behavioral, and emotional problems, anxiety, psychological distress, internet technology addiction, stress, social phobia, sexual and emotional abuse, violence, and attention deficit hyperactive disorder [12].

Adolescent health, Yoga and Stress

International Research Journal of Ayurveda & Yoga (IRJAY) suggested that structured yoga intervention significantly reduces perceived stress and improves academic grades [13].

Yoga is one of the ancient Indian techniques which help the development physical and mental health of a person. It is a useful silence for life. Yoga comes up as a bridge to narrow the gaps between the mind and body. The modern life style has lost the harmony in mind-body relationship due to the cause of several stress- based diseases [14].

Yoga is not just for adults in fact; it can give children very important life skills that can help them succeed in the world. Yoga teaches discipline and reduces impulsivity. Yoga can reduce challenging behaviours in the classroom by providing a physical outlet for children to express themselves. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines adolescents as individuals aged 10 to 19 years, a period of rapid physical, psychological, and social growth between childhood and adulthood, crucial for establishing long-term health foundations. This phase involves significant developmental changes, posing unique health risks but also opportunities for positive behaviour establishment.

Despite being thought of as a healthy stage of life, there is significant death, illness and injury in the adolescent years. Much of this is preventable or treatable. During this phase, adolescents establish patterns of behaviour – for instance, related to diet, physical activity, substance use, and sexual activity – that can protect their health and the health of others around them, or put their health at risk now and in the future.

Childhood experiences directly dictate adolescent development. Early emotional security, secure attachments, and positive environments build strong emotional regulation and cognitive skills. Conversely, adverse childhood experiences can lead to mental health struggles and maladaptive behaviours during adolescence. Adverse childhood experiences were strongly associated with an earlier onset of major psychiatric conditions in men and individuals diagnosed with obsessive-compulsive disorder and substance dependence [15]. Childhood and adolescence both are critical developmental stages for mental health, and the Environment in which they grow has an impact on their well-being and growth. A systematic search was conducted on the literature published between January 2013 and August 2023 in PubMed, Scopus, Cochrane Library, and Eric database. Thirty-one studies with a sample size of 30,970 were included in the final quantitative synthesis, of which 14,381 were male. The overall mean age of the school children and adolescents was 14.58 years, with a standard deviation of 1.35. A diverse range of mental health concerns have been documented in school children and adolescents, exhibiting differing degrees of severity and frequency. The analysis showed that depression was the most prevalent mental health issue among children, followed by social, behavioural, and emotional problems, anxiety, psychological distress, internet technology addiction, stress, social phobia, sexual and emotional abuse, violence, and attention deficit hyperactive disorder [16].

Many research like this proved that not only stress but also other mental health illness affects a adolescent from childhood only. As the adolescence is a time of continued brain maturation, particularly in limbic and cortical regions, which undoubtedly plays a role in the physiological and emotional changes coincident with adolescence. An emerging line of research has indicated that stressors experienced during this crucial developmental stage may affect the trajectory of this neural maturation and contribute to the increase in psychological morbidities, such as anxiety and depression, often observed during adolescence. In this review, we discuss the short- and long-term effects of preadolescence stress exposure on the structure and function of the brain. More specifically, stress at prepubertal and early adolescent stages of development affect the morphological plasticity of limbic and cortical brain regions, as well as the enduring effects of adolescent stress exposure on these brain regions in adulthood. We suggest that, due to a number of converging factors during this period of maturation, the adolescent brain may be particularly sensitive to stress-induced neuro behavioral dysfunctions with important consequences on an individual's immediate and long-term health and well-being. Effective coping strategies are a necessity in dealing with stress and overcoming challenges. Yoga enhances the ability to cope by making a person more mindful, aware of their thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations. Increased awareness allows a person to respond to stress in a more balanced and adaptive way. Yoga has been proven to enhance coping skills among adolescents by developing emotional regulation and resilience. A study conducted by Telles et al. (2012) shows that yoga enables students to acquire more positive coping mechanisms through reducing their emotional reactivity and improving their stress management ability. These coping mechanisms are essential in coping with the complex social and academic demands of adolescence [17]

Stress in Adolescence worldwide

Today's Youth thrive when they are supported emotionally, socially, and economically. Compassion, collaboration, and capital together create a strong foundation for young people or the adolescence to grow into confident, skilled, and responsible adults [18].

In India, stress levels are increasing steadily among youth. The range of stressors experienced by adolescents, the coping mechanisms they utilize, and the resulting impact on their mental well-being [16]. In Sweden, stress is the most frequently diagnosed reason for long-term sick leave, and adults who experienced chronic stress during childhood suffer most. A 2009 Swedish study on children's living conditions estimated that 60% of female and 38% of male high school adolescents suffer from stress-related problems due to daily life stressors.

Deterioration in health, an inevitable result of stress, can take the form of mental fatigue, physical weakness, or cognitive difficulties. Studies have shown that Indian adolescents face additional stressors from cultural influences, such as strong parental expectations, constrictive living arrangements, social hierarchies, and academic concerns. We need to begin with Adolescents” mentioned that Children and adolescents have their fair share as well, who have had to experience the effects of such an unprecedented crisis at a formative period of their life. This makes it an opportunity for the government to expand its policy thrust areas to include mental health too and also mentioned that adolescent should be targeted on a priority basis [14]. Mental health is increasingly recognized as a vital component of public health and individual well-being. Global trends indicate a rise in mental health disorders, including depression, anxiety, and stress-related conditions, driven by socio-economic, environmental, and lifestyle factors. Yoga, an ancient Indian discipline integrating physical postures, breathing techniques, meditation, and ethical principles, has gained empirical support as an effective complementary approach for mental health enhancement. The present study systematically reviews and synthesizes evidence on the role of yoga in improving mental health outcomes [19]. Persistent stress symptoms throughout adolescence can lead to chronic stress, which could have a significant impact on livelihood through factors such as job absenteeism. In Sweden, stress is the most frequently diagnosed reason for long-term sick leave, and adults who experienced chronic stress during childhood suffer most. A 2009 Swedish study on children’s living conditions estimated that 60% of female and 38% of male high school adolescents suffer from stress-related problems due to daily life stressors [5]. Deterioration in health, an inevitable result of stress, can take the form of mental fatigue, physical weakness, or cognitive difficulties. Studies have shown that Indian adolescents face additional stressors from cultural influences, such as strong parental expectations, constrictive living arrangements, social hierarchies, and academic concerns.

Effect of Yoga on Mental Health (Stress)

“Yoga is an ancient Indian science and way of life”, a science that has been practiced for thousands of years. Yoga is an ancient art and science that aims for high-level wellness-physical, mental, and spiritual. Yoga is defined as the physical practice of yoga postures that is a form of exercise the word yoga means "yoke" or "union" and reflects its holistic approach. In pursuit of high-level wellness and self-development, the yogis developed some physical and mental exercises or techniques that can be extrapolated to science like nursing [18].

Yoga has been increasingly recognized for its benefits in helping children and adolescents manage psychosocial stress. Studies have shown that practicing Yoga can significantly reduce stress, anxiety, and anger while promoting emotional regulation. For instance, highlight how Yoga enhances children’s capacity to cope with psychosocial stressors. Controlled studies on adolescents have provided further evidence of Yoga’s psychological benefits. Yoga can reduce anger, decrease stress and negative emotions. Similarly, Berger and Owen emphasized Yoga’s potential to alleviate symptoms of depression, while also helps to improvements in self-confidence among adolescents practicing Yoga [19].

Yoga teaches us to focus on breathing while you hold the poses. This attention to breath is calming it dissolves stress and anxiety. Yoga can help cure insomnia, as regular yoga practice leads to better and deeper sleep. In case of stress many studies observed variability may reflect differences in stressor type and intensity, cultural norms surrounding emotional expression and self-regulation, and the developmental appropriateness of particular coping strategies. Crucially, the perceived adaptiveness of a coping strategy depends not only on the individual, but also on the broader sociocultural and situational environment [20].

The Healing Power of Yoga & Meditation

Yoga is the way of life, the main aim of Yoga is to prepare one for fruitful life and everlasting happiness. It develops our physical health, mental health, social health, spiritual health and self-realizations. The path of yoga is healthy mind in a healthy body. It helps us to overcome difficulties in life through self-confidence and self-determination. The main objectives of yoga are to bring balance and harmony of life. It’s promoting well-being and relaxation, one of the fundamental objectives of yoga is to attain inner peace with holistic approach. If we go back to Covid era there was already a mental health crisis among our young people before Covid arrived. It is now much worse, and more schools are looking for outside provision of mental health support as the effects of the lockdown continue to take their toll on our young peoples’ wellbeing. Many parents are calling therapist for their child if we observed and go through the news from TV, radio and newspapers in recent years, months and weeks [21].

The central idea of yoga is to live happily. Happiness is inherent in everybody and everything. Many people, however, are looking for happiness outside in the external world. In the end, they are disappointed. Holiness

Vishwaguru Paramhans Swami Maheshwarananda, the preceptor and author of 'The Yoga in Daily Life system' whose main goal is to help humanity attain physical, mental, social and spiritual health. health [22]. Incorporating yoga early in life equips children with lifelong behavioral skills, emotional intelligence, and self-confidence. Studies on Therapeutic effects of yoga for children shows that Yoga reduced levels of fear and anxiety for socially or emotionally traumatized adolescent girls, reduced respiration rates in visually impaired adolescents with normal cardiac function but increased levels of anxiety and reduced fears and feelings of helplessness in adolescents with abnormal examination anxiety. Hospitalised children and adolescents with a diagnosis of an adjustment disorder and depression appeared to benefit from the yoga. Yoga interventions in healthy populations of children and adolescents was associated with improvements in self-image and ventricular performance [23].

A study in Indian study investigates the impact of a structured Yoga protocol on perceived stress and academic performance among adolescents. Adolescence is a pivotal developmental stage often accompanied by heightened stress and academic pressures, which can adversely affect mental and physical health. Existing literature indicates that Yoga can effectively reduce stress and enhance cognitive functioning, making it a potential intervention in educational settings. The study evaluated the effectiveness of a specific yoga protocol, including yogāsana, prāṇāyāma, and meditation, on stress management and academic performance among adolescents. Using a pre-test and post-test control group design, results showed that the experimental group experienced a significant reduction in perceived stress and a notable improvement in academic performance compared to the control group. Mindfulness-based strategies have gained popularity in recent years for promoting mental health [24].

These approaches help reduce stress both physiologically, by lowering inflammation (Stuad, 2015), and psychologically, by decreasing negative thinking patterns [25]. Yoga, as a mindfulness-based practice, has been found to involving adolescents also demonstrate that yoga sessions can decrease negative affect and enhance positive affect [26]. Furthermore, even a single session of yoga has been shown to significantly reduce negative affect compared to counseling or control groups, although no significant improvement was observed in optimism, reduce negative affect and improve emotional well-being [27].

Overall, mindfulness-based interventions like yoga can effectively improve adolescents' mental health and may contribute to better academic performance by reducing stress and emotional difficulties.

An Indian study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of a specific Yoga protocol on stress management and academic performance in adolescents. Participants were divided into an experimental group practicing a specific Yoga protocol (Yogāsana, Prāṇāyāma, and meditation) and a control group engaging in non-specific physical activities. Utilizing a pre-test and post-test control group design, the study assessed perceived stress using the perceived stress questionnaire and academic performance through the Academic Performance Rating Scale. Results showed that the experimental group experienced a significant reduction in perceived stress, with pre-test mean values decreasing from 0.645 to 0.493, compared to a minor reduction in the control group from 0.617 to 0.550. Similarly, academic performance improved markedly in the experimental group, whose mean scores increased from 2.829 to 3.351, while the control group saw a smaller increase from 2.914 to 3.117. In recent decades, mindfulness and mindfulness-based strategies have become a popular way of addressing mental health as prevention and intervention to address concerns when they arise [24]. The effectiveness of a single session of yoga in decreasing negative affect and increasing positive affect with adolescents compared to a group counseling session, the standard treatment for mental health concerns in schools, and to a history tutoring session control. Research has linked optimism to greater positive affect and improvements in perceived well-being. A compile of twenty-seven studies involving youth with varying health statuses were reviewed. Intervention characteristics varied greatly across studies revealing multiple factors that may impact intervention efficacy, however 70% of the studies overall showed improvements. For studies assessing anxiety and depression, 58% showed reductions in both symptoms, while 25% showed reductions in anxiety only. Additionally, 70% of studies assessing anxiety alone showed improvements and 40% of studies only assessing depression showed improvements, studies reviewed that yoga, defined by the practice of postures, generally leads to some reductions in anxiety and depression in youth regardless of health status and intervention characteristics [27].

In another study participants are self-selected into three groups representing Hatha yoga, group counseling, and the tutoring comparison group. Participants were then led in a warm-up section of the practice followed by a vinyasa flow session and ending with a brief cool-down session (savasana). Participants during savasana were guided to reflect on feelings of openness and peace. The second intervention was led by a licensed mental health counselor at the school. The counselor facilitated students in a coping skills group. Students were able to express

stressors and anxieties they experienced over the previous few weeks. The time had been set aside for students to engage in remedial and extracurricular activities. Data from the yoga condition were collected over a 2-week time span involving three different sessions. The counseling data were collected over 3 weeks and included four sessions. Control group data were collected over two sessions during a single week. Positive and Negative Affect Schedule, a widely used psychological tool (PANAS) to measure mood can be used for a single 45-minute session of yoga for high school students does significantly influence self-reported negative affect [5].

Specifically, many studies showed that the yoga group used to report least negative affect in comparison with counseling group as well as the control group. There were no other significant mean differences used to be found. Results of the PANAS comparisons are consistent with research that showed yoga's effectiveness in reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety such as negative affect who showed that physical education activities in schools can reduce negative affect also found that a single session of Hatha yoga can be effective in reducing negative affect and increasing positive affect in a single session. Mindfulness-based interventions such as yoga can improve adolescents' mental health by reducing negative affect. All schools can use a holistic method to reduce negative affect; interventions like meditation can reduce the likelihood that students' mental health concerns will persist into early and later adulthood. Managing these struggles in students could have an impact on academic success.

Medical yoga is defined as the use of yoga practices for the prevention and treatment of medical conditions. Beyond the physical elements of yoga, which are important and effective for strengthening the body, medical yoga also incorporates appropriate breathing techniques, mindfulness, and meditation in order to achieve the maximum benefits. Multiple studies have shown that yoga can positively impact the body in many ways, including helping to regulate blood glucose levels, improve musculoskeletal ailments and keeping the cardiovascular system in tune. It also has been shown to have important psychological benefits, as the practice of yoga can help to increase mental energy and positive feelings, and decrease negative feelings of aggressiveness, depression and anxiety [28].

It is recommended by studies that further descriptive studies need to be conducted to evaluate awareness of the health benefits of yoga in diverse settings that can indicate Yoga is also effective in reducing stress levels among adolescents, including rural and urban schools. Sixty numbers of adolescents had been selected using a non-probability purposive sampling method from a specific government school. It revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean pre-test stress score (129.26) and the mean post-test stress score (89.20). It was found that, in the pre-test assessment, 17 adolescents (28.33%) had exhibited mild stress, 40 (66.67%) had experienced moderate stress, and 3 (5%) had severe stress. It further reported that, following the intervention, 20 adolescents (33.3%) had reported low stress, 37 (61.7%) had experienced mild stress, and only 3 (5%) had shown moderate stress levels. The study also stated that there was a significant association between adolescents' age and their previous knowledge of yoga asanas, which had influenced the pre-test stress scores. The findings indicated that yoga. If we observe in urban schools' region, students aged 13-16 years to evaluate that academic stress is major source of anxiety and depression, addition to that increased pressure from peers, social comparison, and the increasing use of social media enhance feelings of insecurity and self-doubt, which further aggravate mental health problems. Psychological concerns of adolescents are mainly found in anxiety and depression. Nearly 30% of secondary school-going children suffer from symptoms of anxiety and experience episodes of depression in about 20%, unaddressed. These states lead to adverse consequences that manifest as poor academic performance and withdrawal from social circles, often ultimately giving way to suicidal idealizations at an extreme level [29].

In case of Emotional Intelligence (EI) if we see this is the ability of an individual to appropriately and successfully respond to a variety of vast emotional stimuli being elicited from the inner self and immediate environment. Yoga transforms automatic emotional reactions into deliberate, balanced responses, thereby supporting human intelligence [30].

The Yogic structure for EI is- Emotional Sensitivity- Recognizing and interpreting sensory and emotional inputs from your internal state and immediate surroundings. Emotional Competency- The learned skills required to process and handle those emotions tactfully, avoiding impulsive reactions and Emotional Maturity- The psychological flexibility and wisdom to respond appropriately to different emotional stimuli without losing balance. Emotional intelligence (EI) is a vital asset for teenagers, acting as a "rudder" during the turbulent transition from childhood to adulthood. While their cognitive brain is still catching up to their emotional brain, developing EI helps them navigate intense hormonal shifts and social pressure.

A popular UK based children magazine named Om Yoga Magazine published an article in 2009, by Charlotta Martinus and Dr Nick Kearney, directors and researcher of the Teen Yoga Foundation (teenyogafoundation.com)

mentioned on “Teen Yoga ambassadors” a new ambassador scheme from Teen Yoga is looking to make yoga and its many benefits available to more young people as the mental health fallout from the pandemic snowballs. For 16 years the trainer researcher has been training people to bring yoga to teens and there is now a community of 1400 extremely devoted, highly trained and motivated TeenYoga teachers working all over the world (90% of them in the UK), delivering fabulous, deep and broad teen yoga classes to an estimated 140,000 young people a year. So, with a steady flow of young people having had access to yoga now since primary school, there is a greater literacy and acceptance around yoga.

There are many young boys and girls, who are not interested in yoga, and are therefore missing the mental health and other benefits it can bring. When asked why they aren’t interested, a common answer is that they perceive it as something mums do. Interestingly, though there are many role models such as celebrities and sports people who do yoga and speak of its benefits many remain unpersuaded. Until they see a peer doing it. Teenagers listen most to other teenagers. It is increasingly accepted that when taught correctly, following best practice for yoga for young people (as we teach our teachers on the TeenYoga course), yoga offers a solid emotional and embodied intelligence which remains in the students’ toolkit throughout life, promising emotional foundation to draw from in the workplace and in the home, over three years of conversations, evidence gathering, trialling and discussions with young people, psychiatrists., doctors, youth workers and teachers, the idea took shape and they built a course that incorporates the buddy principle and trains young people to become ‘champions’ of yoga, or Teen Yoga Ambassadors. The training course has the full support of Dr Michael Dixon, Chair of the College of Medicine, who suggested that trial the scheme in his GP surgery in Cullompton, Devon and in an inner-city school. The two schemes would be measured with various stress related scales by the GP surgeries and then continually supported as part of the preventative and therapeutic mental health provision for young people, which is currently lacking, within the social prescribing network of the NHS and then rolled out nationally. In the Teen yoga Ambassador Scheme the young people will learn how to share specific evidence-based techniques with their friends that help them to alleviate specific mental issues, such as overwhelm, anxiety, and sleeplessness in the first instance. They will then be invited to join the second and third levels of the course, which take them to the level of half a teacher training course. The second level can be taken immediately after the first and will train the young people to deliver short 10-minute sessions targeted at alleviating mental health issues directly or simply raising the sense of well-being among their peers. The third and final level is a one-week retreat or a 10-week online course that takes them to the level of delivering a 30-minute class to peers.

The recent Lancet Commission on adolescent health and well-being recommended that health policies should broaden their focus beyond infectious diseases to also address non-communicable diseases, such as mental health issues and substance use. Mental health and substance use problems are the leading cause of years lived with disability (YLD) among adolescents and young people (10–23 years) accounting for 22.9% of the total global YLDs.

These problems have significant adverse impacts on individual, family and society and are frequently associated with poor academic, occupational, and psychosocial functioning, and contribute to premature mortality through their association with suicide and accident-related mortality, both the leading causes of death in this age group. Further, more than half of the burden of mental disorders in adulthood has its onset in adolescence. However, evidence shows a lack of comprehensive policy response to the mental health needs of adolescents in both low- and high-income countries. There has historically been little explicit attention to adolescent mental health in India but, in the past decade, both mental health and adolescent health have received increasing attention in policy and programs.

An Indian study was conducted to evaluate the policy landscape for addressing adolescent mental health in India. The country has the largest adolescent population in the world, with approximately 243 million individuals, accounting for nearly one-fifth of its total population. A meta-analysis found that 6.5% of adolescents in community samples and 23.3% in school-based samples experience significant mental health issues [31]. The rate of suicide among young people is rising due to several factors such as stress, depression, anxiety, social pressure, substance abuse, bullying, family problems, and lack of emotional support. One of the most important causes is the lack of mental health awareness. Many adolescents do not recognize the signs of mental illness, and they may feel afraid or ashamed to seek help because of stigma and misunderstanding in society. In many communities, mental health services and counselling facilities are also limited or inaccessible. As a result, untreated mental health problems can become severe and may lead to self-harm or suicide.

Suicide death rates in India are among the highest in the world. A large proportion of adult suicide deaths occur between the ages of 15 years and 29 years, especially in women. Public health interventions such as restrictions

in access to pesticides might prevent many suicide deaths in India. It is the leading cause of death in older adolescents. While mental health is acknowledged in health, education and adolescent health documents, and adolescent mental health in mental health documents, there is inadequate depth (for example, in addressing the full range of mental health problems) and detail (for example, on addressing the major barriers in implementing the proposed interventions). It describes the approach taken in current policies and programs in India to address the mental health of adolescents, and the challenges in implementing these policies and programs [32]. Health policy analysis is a multi-disciplinary approach to public policy that aims to explain the interaction between institutions, interests and ideas in the policy process. It is useful both retrospectively and prospectively, to understand past policy failures and successes and to plan for future policy implementation [33].

Many countries are now recognizing the importance of integrating mental health promotion into national health policies. One effective and low-cost strategy is the inclusion of yoga and mindfulness practices within mental health programs. Yoga has been shown to improve emotional well-being, reduce stress, enhance self-control, and promote relaxation through physical postures, breathing exercises, and meditation. Countries such as India have incorporated yoga into school health and wellness initiatives to support mental health awareness and suicide prevention. The implementation of yoga-based interventions through schools, community health centers, and public health campaigns can help adolescents cope with emotional challenges and reduce suicidal tendencies. Therefore, health policies should focus on strengthening mental health awareness, increasing access to counseling services, and promoting evidence-based practices such as yoga to improve mental well-being and reduce suicide cases. SHS Web of Conferences 222, (2012 (2025) clearly mentioned that, practicing mindful breathing meditation can help lower stress, anxiety, and depression. This meditation is very affordable health intervention that is available to everyone because it may be done anywhere and at any time. This study also suggests that meditation training can be incorporated into school curricula, which can help protect students' mental health [15].

Mindfulness meditation originates from the Buddhist tradition and refers to practices that promote awareness and presence in the present moment. With some adaptations, it is now used for medical purposes. Mindfulness meditation is a mental training practice that calms the body and mind [34].

For the effects of mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) on anxiety and depression in adolescents a study used a randomized controlled trial (RCT) design, and participants were aged 18 years or older and did not have severe mental disorders, which was verified during the recruitment process. Participants were randomly divided into two groups, an intervention group participated in mindfulness breathing meditation, and the control group (CG) did not participate in mindfulness activities during the study and carried out their daily activities as usual, but the participants in the CG received mindfulness practice guides and tutorials after the study. The intervention consisted of a four-week mindfulness meditation intervention, focusing on mindful breathing meditation. Participants in the intervention group were required to practice mindful breathing meditation for 15 minutes per day and received professional structured guidance via online platforms such as Zoom for the first two weeks. In the following two weeks, participants continued to practice independently and were able to choose a time and place to perform the meditation training that suited their schedule, which demonstrated the flexibility of its intervention. The intervention was carried out for 4 weeks with 15 min practice in each session. As results there was an effect of mindfulness breathing meditation on decreasing the mean scores for depression, anxiety, and stress in the intervention group. However, only stress ($p = 0.007$) and anxiety ($p = 0.042$) showed a significant difference in the post-test results of the intervention and control groups. In addition, there was no difference in the scores of stresses, anxiety, and depression for the pre-post-tests in each group based on religion. The study suggests that meditation training can be incorporated into school curricula, which can help protect students' mental health. The benefits of a yoga and mindfulness intervention (MI) on the symptoms of anxiety and depression in adolescents were examined in a significant study by Bazzano et al. where they confirmed the feasibility of implementing mindfulness and yoga in a school environment, which not only reduced the anxiety and depression of participating students but also helped them build psychological confidence and emotional regulation ability [34].

Mindfulness is a therapy that involves the mind as well as the body to be fully present and accept the present experience to gain calm and wisdom in dealing with stressors. Mindfulness is a systematic procedure that sharpens and awakens the natural human capacity to be fully present in the present, welcomes and acknowledges, as well as possible, all the series of events that have occurred, whether pleasant, sad, or neutral events, and produce results regarding wisdom in behaviour. During the COVID-19 pandemic a large number of

events of stress, depression, and anxiety in global students, makes it important to prevent and deal with health approaches, present experience to gain calm and wisdom in dealing with stressors [35].

If we observe worldwide also mental health conditions in childhood and adolescence are increasing in the U.S. population as well. Universal preventive programs at school serve as an important strategy for equipping youth with coping skills to address current and future social and emotional challenges. Yoga and mindfulness programs have emerged as a promising preventive approach for schools and have proven feasible and acceptable. A study to evaluate a universal, school-based mindfulness and yoga program among youth aged 11-14 in a racially diverse, urban setting in the United States come with the outcomes of interest included symptoms of anxiety and depression. Anxiety and depression symptoms decreased in the intervention group, although these differences were not statistically significant. In the control group, anxiety symptoms decreased but depression symptoms increased. The resulting time effect indicated a significant decrease in anxiety symptoms, while the time by group effect revealed a strong trend in depression symptoms. Future research should investigate the utility of yoga and mindfulness interventions for early adolescents in a larger population, and the differences in intervention effect among subgroups, with attention to longer term outcomes [35].

School-based universal programming for mental health programme has a number of advantages as an approach to prevention and mitigation of behavioural health morbidity among young people. Providing programming at school partly relieves the burden of accessing care for parents/guardians, many of whom have day to day stressors of their own, and makes programming widely available to a range of students. In addition, such universal programs provided to all students within a school are likely to be less stigmatizing compared with targeted programs, as students need not be selected on the basis of existing problems for inclusion]. In populations where poverty and social determinants of health create grave disparities in access to care, general population programs aimed at preventing or improving behavioural health problems may surmount many of the challenges to access rooted in such disparities (long wait times to see providers, expenses associated with treatment, transportation to providers, and time commitment by caregivers who may be working multiple jobs [36]. By intervening earlier in adolescence, through universal social and emotional care programs at school youth may become better equipped with coping skills and techniques to combat stress and mitigate negative emotional states to protect future health and developmental trajectory.

In addition to all other mental health problems another most importance emotional misbalance is 'anger'. Meditation is only the method to regain calmness and control. Mastering meditation will keep the mind and body in balance while providing protection from the negative effects of anger. Meditation is a helpful tool for managing anger. When we meditate, we focus on our breath and allow thoughts to come and go without attaching to them. This can help us to become more aware of our thoughts and emotions, and we learn to let them go rather than dwelling on them. Meditation can also help to calm the mind and body, which can be helpful in managing angry outbursts [37].

Different Yoga poses that help to redirect energy

Shavasana-also referred to as "the corpse pose," this asana requires a person to lie still, concentrate on deep breathing, and removing all thoughts from the mind. Lying flat on the back with arms at the sides and legs slightly parted does the pose. The palms must be facing upwards, and the muscles of the face slack. The person should slowly relax every muscle in the body to become calm and centered. Ardha Dhanurasana (Half Bow Pose), Sarvangasana (Shoulderstand) and explain lastly how Meditation can use for Inner Calm. The blog have mentioned that addition to Yoga poses, meditation is a method to regain calmness and control. Mastering meditation will keep the mind and body in balance while providing protection from the negative effects of anger. It is a helpful tool for managing anger. When we meditate, we focus on our breath and allow thoughts to come and go without attaching to them. This can help us to become more aware of our thoughts and emotions, and we learn to let them go rather than dwelling on them. Meditation can also help to calm the mind and body, which can be helpful in managing angry outbursts [18]. There are certain poses that are especially helpful for releasing anger. For example, the flow pose is a great way to let go of built-up anger. To do this pose, start in a standing position with your feet together. Then, take a deep breath in and raise your arms over your head. As exhale, bend forward from the waist and let arms hang down. Repeat this several times. The person should feel the anger dissipating with each breath. And need to practice this during Sun Salutations. At the same time, flowing movement releases tension during Moon Salutations. According to Yogic theory: Energy blockages can limit the free flow of prana, or essential energy, through the body. When this happens, emotions become unbalanced. When the blockage occurs in the navel area, it can interfere with personal power. Higher up, in the

heart area, blockages can occur in the emotional core of the body. Finally, throat area blockages can be revealed by problems with self-expression. Any of these blockages can damage emotional health.

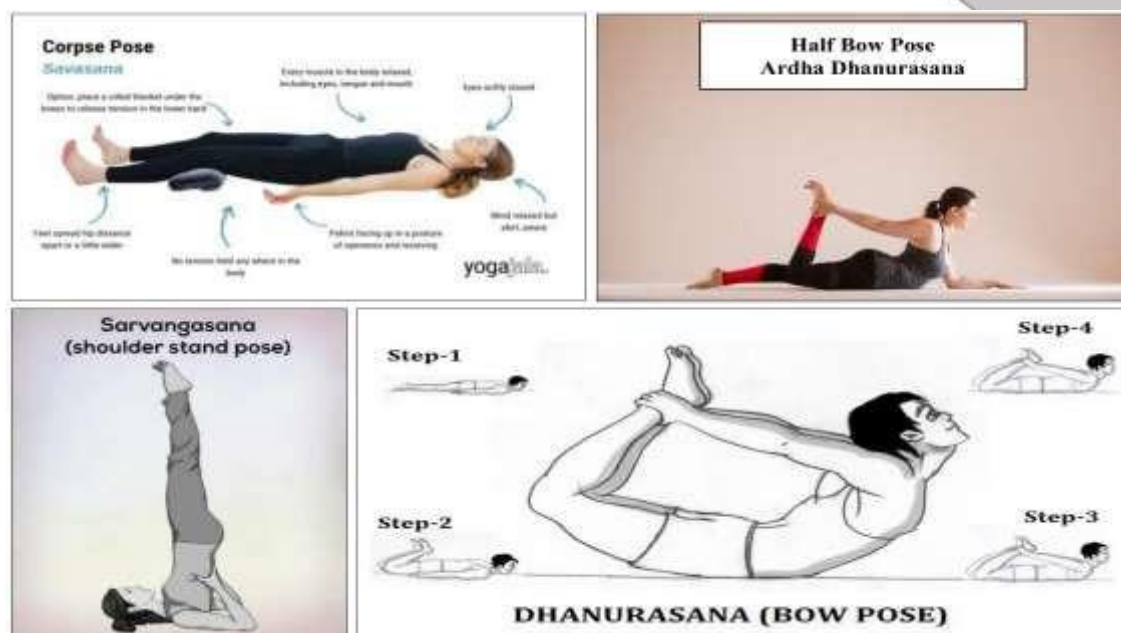


Fig 1: Different Yoga Poses

Teens had both positive and negative attitudes toward, and experiences with, hatha yoga. They commented on “who does yoga;” many responses suggested a limited group (e.g., moms; people with money and time). Participants agreed that yoga could be potentially beneficial for depressed or stressed teens. Self-consciousness while being in a yoga class was a major concern. Overall, teens reacted favourably to the study-created yoga video. Teens had varied opinions about class logistics including class duration and size. Teens cited barriers to class, such as transportation, as well as barriers to home yoga practice [19].

Sound mind and sound body of the present youth is the antidote to many woes faced by the modern world. Properly guided youth can be boom to the nation and the same youth can also be curse if they go astray. Yoga can lead a person towards wholesome personality development by integrating the mind and body. As the child crosses the threshold of puberty, he suddenly finds himself caught in a biological upheaval, psychological chaos and emotional disequilibrium. He faces many problems such as physical problem, mental problem, behavioural problem, emotional problem, social problem etc. Psychological variables may be influenced by yogic practice. Some selected Asanas if we include for yogic training program: Surya Namaskar, Shavasana, Halasana, Sarvangasana, Matsyaasna, Chakrasana, Shalabhasana, Bhujangasana, Ardha-matsyendrasana, Vajrasna, Yogamudra, Standing Kati-chakrasana and Tadasana, and Pranayamas like- Anulom Vilom, Bhramari Pranayama, Bhastrika Pranayam and ‘Om chanting’ college going students which improving emotional intelligence. The Yogic Exercises that improve Emotional Intelligence can be included in the life of general population for their psychological well-being.

In recent years, yoga has emerged as an effective mind–body practice that contributes significantly to the development of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and regulate one’s own emotions as well as those of others. It plays a crucial role in personal well-being, social relationships, and professional success. A structured yogic training program was administered to the experimental group for twelve weeks, with one-hour sessions conducted five days per week to examined the impact of a twelve-week yogic training program on the emotional intelligence among 50 male students from Satyawati College (Morning), University of Delhi, aged between 17 and 25 years, were randomly selected as participants, emotional intelligence served as the dependent variable. The training program included various asanas such as Surya Namaskar, Shavasana, Halasana, Sarvangasana, Matsyasana, Chakrasana, Shalabhasana, Bhujangasana, Dhanurasana, Paschimottanasana, Ardha Matsyendrasana, Vajrasana, Yogamudra, Standing Kati Chakrasana, and Tadasana. It also incorporated pranayama techniques including Anulom Vilom, Bhramari, Bhastrika, and Om chanting. Data collection was carried out at four stages: before the start of the training (pre-test), and then after 4 weeks, 8 weeks, and 12 weeks of the program. The results indicated statistically significant

differences across the time intervals. with F-values were found to be significant ($p < 0.05$), and post-hoc analysis confirmed meaningful differences between the measurement points. In case of college students, a complete twelve-week yogic training program has a significant positive effect on the emotional intelligence.

Peace, balance, and a positive outlook are the side effects of a regular Yoga training routine. Yogic methods give practitioners a better sense of how the mind and body work together to keep them healthy physically and emotionally. Yoga can be beneficial for those struggling with anger management. Through various poses and breathing exercises, Yoga can help to calm the mind and body. It can also help to increase focus and concentration, which can be helpful in managing outbursts of anger. In addition, Yoga can help to improve flexibility and strength, both of which can be beneficial in managing stress levels [37].

Yoga is a systematic practice for the realization of higher perceptions. It is the science of life and an ideal way of living, providing rhythm to the body, melody to the mind, harmony to the soul and thereby symphony to life. In short, Yoga is a way to achieve total health, peace, bliss and wisdom. Physical, mental and spiritual aspects of yoga help to make one's life purposeful, useful and noble. Thus, Yoga is an art, science and philosophy, which influence the life of man at each level. Therefore, the effect of yoga must be felt in every movement of our day-to-day lives. Yoga is an ancient Indian science which teaches man how to live in unity within himself and with those around him. It is recognized as one of the most important and valuable heritages of India. More than 2000 years ago, our ancestors developed it to bind the body, mind and spirit, as a harmonious whole. It has been growing in popularity with unbelievable rapidity over the years. Today the whole world is looking towards yoga for answers to the various problems the modern man is facing [38].

Conclusion

Adolescence is a time of continued brain maturation, particularly in limbic and cortical regions, which undoubtedly plays a role in the physiological and emotional changes coincident with adolescence. Chronic stress during this time can alter developmental trajectories, increasing the long-term risk of psychiatric disorders such as depression and anxiety. Research consistently highlights yoga as a transformative tool for managing adolescent stress, offering both physical and psychological benefits like cortisol regulation, autonomic balance, brain function. Clinical studies using EEG show that specific practices like pranayama and Yoga Nidra increases alpha and theta brain waves, which are directly linked to focused attention and deep relaxation.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes yoga as a valuable, evidence-based, and cost-effective approach to promoting mental health and preventing non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in adolescents. It acts as a holistic therapy, enhancing emotional regulation, reducing stress and anxiety, and boosting self-esteem, self-confidence, and cognitive functioning during this critical developmental stage.

Regular practice of yoga helps in calming the mind, improving concentration, reducing stress, and enhancing emotional balance. Techniques such as asanas, pranayama, and meditation promote self-awareness and resilience, enabling adolescents to cope better with daily challenges. Therefore, incorporating yoga into the daily routine or school curriculum also can play a significant role in supporting the mental well-being and overall healthy development of adolescent.

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