

Yogic Management of Psychological Disorders Related to BPO Sector

Dr. Arun Kumar Sao

Assistant Professor, Department of Yoga Education, Dr Harisingh Gour Central University, Sagar, India

Abstract: Psychiatrist notice, that there has been an increase in the number of people visiting them with an increase in the awareness about mental health. Stress, anxiety and its effect have been felt by the fast changing society due to fatigue. People trying to cope with the changes within the nature of work they are involved. Also Depression has been the common reason why people come to a psychiatrist. The large young population work in shifts and these frequent rotational shifts create many psychological problems for them when they try to adjust their job responsibility with the social demands of their concerns. Stress, anxiety, depression and fatigue are well-known psychological parameters in young working generation which are also found here. Yoga is considered as the best remedy for these psychological disorders. It has various gentle asanas, pranayama, and relaxation techniques. Two groups of 40-40 (experimental and control) subjects (18-35 years) were randomly selected for study from a call center in New Delhi. Yogic management programme consisted of regulated breathing, physical postures (asanas) and relaxation for 45 minutes 5 days weekly over a period of 2 months. Psychological characteristics were assessed by using Eight State Questionnaire (8SQ) before (at zero time) and after yogic intervention (after 2 months). Significant reductions were shown for stress ($p < 0.05$), depression ($p < 0.05$), anxiety ($p < 0.01$), and in fatigue ($p < 0.05$) was observed in the experimental group (yoga group). There was no significant change ($p > 0.05$) in any parameters in the control group (non-yoga group). This yogic management programme is considered useful for the young employee who work in rotational shifts and are suffering from psychological problems which might create problem in their future.

Key word: BPO sector, pranayama, asana, yoga nidra, stress, depression, anxiety, fatigue.

Introduction

The Business Processing Outsourcing (BPO) popularly known as the Call Centre Industry, or even Knowledge Process Outsourcing (KPO) generating a new age lifestyle among the youth of those countries that have profited from this industry, Undoubtly India is also the country reaped a lot of benefits.

A call center is a centralized office used for the purpose of receiving and transmitting a large volume of requests by telephone. People with basic minimum qualification and good communication skills are getting in the BPO industry for a better life and lifestyle, fat pay cheques, overseas assignments, pick-ups, office parties. At the same time the Indian way of living getting affected due to the work culture like long and irregular working hours, permanent night shifts, high work targets, reading pre-scripted conversations on the phone endlessly, every single second of an employee's time is recorded, measured and automatically logged onto a

computer for praise or censure on a weekly basis. Walking down to the water cooler for a drink and a chat with a friend messes up performance metrics, salaries, and hikes. The three acts of listening, watching and talking - all at the same time - never get a break. This performance monitoring also puts enormous stress on the employees.

Researches shows that 80-85% of the employees facing physical and mental health problems as stress, anxiety, depression, insomnia, digestive disorders, 32% had sleep disorders, 25% had digestive disorders and 20% had an eye-sight problem and 30-40% of the employees complaining computer related ailments due to their job. Further these problems were found to have significant positive correlations in case of call centre employees (Vashistha & Gupta, 2008). Depression, anxiety and lifestyle that are noted in the BPO workers (Suri, Sen & Singh 2007).

“In fact, BPO employees generally prefer to work for the UK shifts—which normally ends by 10pm—rather than the US shifts, which means working all night,” says E. Balaji, CEO, Ma Foi Management Consultants Ltd, a firm which mainly hires for BPOs. Sharma, V. Assistant Professor, Singh, T. B. Professor and Head(Dept. of Clinical Psychology, IHBAS, Delhi) and Kumar, D. Consultant Clinical Psychologist(Apollo Clinic, GZB) showed clearly in the research analysis that the BPO Customer Service Executives were having moderate to high depression and also manifested moderate anxiety (Arora & Sandhu 2007). Chronic Fatigue and Chronic Depression are absolutely systemic in our society today (Brian, M. 2001).

Through this research we want to draw the public interest towards the work culturally psychological problem like stress, anxiety, depression and fatigue faced by the BPO employees because over long periods of time, the person starts to feel unproductive and burnt out while work pressure is still there.

In fact there is a need to bring equilibrium to the mind and body together of employee to overcome these problems. For this there is a need to go back to the nature and age old practices that worked on the concept of balancing our energies at various levels. These practices are considered as yoga which creates harmony between man and nature by balancing the five elements that are considered to be our basic composition. The main aim of Yoga is to heal the mental health through relaxation and controlled breathing and then goes on to the asanas. They are basically gentle stretching movements designed to help balance the mind and body.

This is not to say that one should completely give up modern medicine. Instead, one should look at ways and means to create a balance between the two and let the alternative therapies complement regular allopathic

treatments. Vinod et. al. (1998) claimed that Yogic intervention (Shavasana- Meditation) revealed significant reduction in anxiety and improvement in overall personality. Yoga appears to be a promising intervention for depression; it is cost-effective and easy to implement. It produces many beneficial emotional, psychological and biological effects on person practicing yoga (Banerjee, B. et al. 2009)

Yoga itself does not create health; rather, it creates an internal environment that allows the individual to come to his own state of dynamic balance, or health. Yogic practices help to detract our attention from chronic worrying, giving us a respite from daily distress or current problems all of which help to reduce heart rate, brain wave activity, blood pressure, and other symptoms caused by stress. When people perform yogic practices, he tries to focus on breath, various body parts or infinity which is controlling the mind and taking it away from the stressful thoughts and emotions, this balances the mind resulting in calm and peaceful state. This reduced the mental activity: reduces cortex activity and increases dopamine secretions in the blood. (Dopamine is happy neurotransmitter produced by the brain and is responsible for happiness.) This sends positive signals to the hypothalamus which then leads to more effective function.

In these cases the natural unblocking effected by yoga postures are helpful. When one rests between postures, abdominal tension is released from the body promoting deep breathing. The benefits of yoga postures (*asana*), breathing (*pranayama*), and meditation (*dhyana*) include increased body awareness, release of muscular tension and increased coordination between mind and body.

Self created sounds such as chanting will cause the left and right hemispheres of the brain to synchronize. Such chanting will also help oxygenate the brain, reduce person's heart rate, blood pressure and assist in creating calm brainwave activity (Jonathan Goldman 2006) Om Chanting affects person's emotions, and emotions, in turn, affect person's body.

Research Objectives:

To see the effect of yogic practices on psychological parameters (Stress, Anxiety, Depression and Fatigue) among people working in BPO sector.

Methodology:

Total numbers of subjects enrolled from the BPO were 80, randomly grouped in control (40 subjects) and experimental (40 subjects) groups. Pre-Post test is designed here. The subjects were informed about the study and the baseline assessments of study were performed before starting the yogic session. Subjects of

experimental group were instructed about the yogic session of 45 minutes per day for five day in a week over a period of 60 days. The Yogic management programme consisted of regulated breathing, physical postures (asanas) and relaxation.

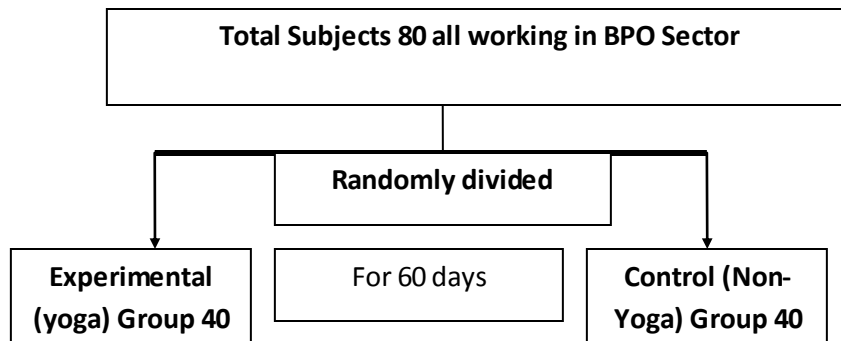


Table1. Name and duration of various yogic practices included in yogic management Programme

S.No.	Yogic Practice	rounds	Duration
1	Gayatri mantra	1	2 minute
2	Surya namaskara	5-10	5-15 minutes
3	Nadisodhan pranayama	2-5	7 minutes
4	Bhramri pranayama	2-5	7 minutes
5	Shavasana	--	10 minutes
6	Shanti path	1	2 minute

Measurement:

Cattell & Barton (1972) The Eight State Questionnaire (8SQ) was used for assessing the emotional states and moods. Baseline data was collected from the subjects before starting yogic session and post data was collected after 60 days of the yogic programme. For assessing the emotional state and moods of the subjects we provide questionnaire to the subjects and told them norms and rules of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was filled by the subjects at same time and in same environment before and after the yogic management programme. All the answer sheets were evaluated by us carefully. Then calculate the mean and Standard Deviation (σ) compared Pre and post values by applying the student t-test.

Results:

Table: 2 Pre-post statistical values (experimental group)

S. No.	Parameter	N	Pre assessment value(mean±Sd)	Post assessment value(mean±Sd)	t-value	Level of significance
1	Stress	32	3.95±.85	3.58±.49	2.0757	.05
2	Anxiety	32	4.91±.73	4.43±.35	3.354	.01
3	Depression	32	2.84±.76	2.49±.52	2.15	.05
4	Fatigue	32	2.96±.83	2.58±.67	2.0152	.05

Graph: 1 Pre-post mean values (experimental group)

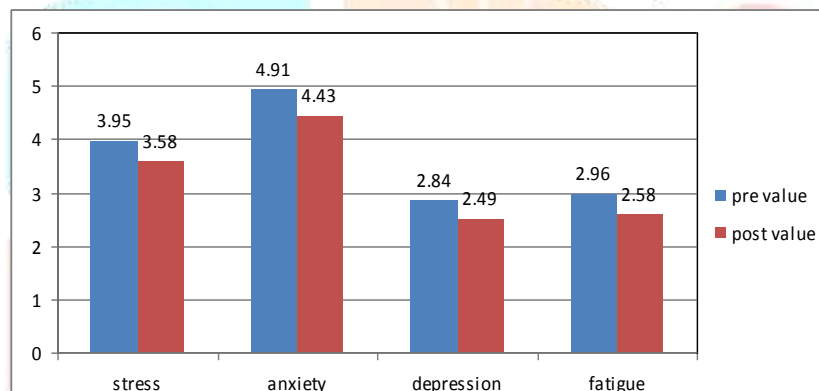
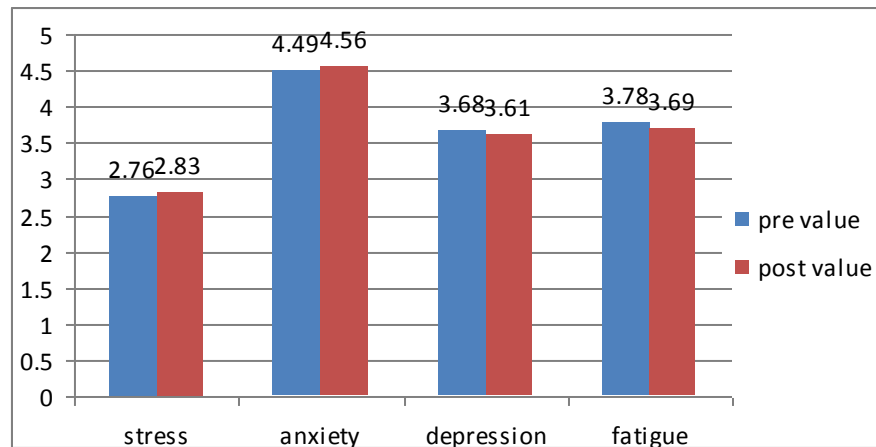


Table: 3 Pre-post statistical value (control group)

S. No.	Parameter	N	Pre assessment value(mean±Sd)	Post assessment value(mean±Sd)	t-value	Level of significance
1	Stress	32	2.76±.78	2.83±.89	.3346	<.05
2	Anxiety	32	4.49±.68	4.56±.72	.3998	<.05
3	Depression	32	3.68±.86	3.61±.79	.3434	<.05
4	Fatigue	32	3.78±.76	3.69±.72	.4863	<.05

Graph: 2 Pre-post mean values (control group)

In present study, level of stress ($p < 0.05$), anxiety ($p < 0.01$) depression ($p < 0.05$) and fatigue ($p < 0.05$) were decreased significantly in experimental group. There was no significant change ($p > 0.05$) in any parameters in the control group.

Discussion & Conclusion

Yoga is considered to be one of the most important, effective and valuable tools available for man to overcome various physical and psychological problems. According to Kuvalayananda and Vinekar (1968) yoga includes cultivation of correct attitudes and reconditioning of the neuromuscular systems. Yoga helps the whole body to enable it to withstand greater stress and strain. Yoga proposes healthy diet and encourages the natural process of elimination, whenever it is necessary. Yoga aims at an integrated and harmonious development of all the potentialities of man. Yoga appears to be a promising intervention for depression; it is cost-effective and easy to implement. It produces many beneficial emotional, psychological and biological effects on persons practicing yoga (Banerjee B et al.2009). Relaxation exercises aim at reducing stress and thereby help prevent unwanted outcomes. The widely used relaxation practices are yogasanas and yogic breathing (Kjellgren A et al 2007). The combination of yogasana, pranayama and om chanting, effects on physiological, psychological and emotional levels of the subjects practicing yoga. The physiological methods are especially useful as they provide objective markers of the processes and effectiveness of treatment. These observations may help guide further clinical application of yoga in depressed mood and other adjustment related disorders, and future research on the processes and mechanisms (Shapiro et al. 2007).

Studies conducted by Vicente Pedro (1987) and Bhushan (1998) found significant reduction in the State Trait Anxiety of the subjects due to regular practice of yoga. In another study Malathi et al. (1998) conducted a yoga intervention study on MBBS students and tested them before and after the examination, and found Anxiety reduction in the students at the time of examination.

The recommendations for asana practice to change the stress response are different in different traditions. A Yoga practice that focuses only on physical remedies is limited, for it deals only with physiology and not psychology. Similarly, a practice that is formed around moral precepts and exhortations to change one's lifestyle has distinct limitations, for behavior modification is not simple. K.N. Udupa (1992) suggests, "Thus, a combined practice of physical postures, breathing exercises and meditation in a sequence is the best compromise to meet the present day needs of the society.

Thus, at conclusion it can be asserted that intervened yoga practices caused significant beneficial effect on the psychological disorders in BPO sector.

References:

Arora, R.; Sandhu, K. S. (2007). Amity Journal of Behavioral and Forensic Sciences 2007, Vol : 3, Issue : 2 Pp. 25-31, ISSN : 0973-175X.

Banerjee B et al. Prakash Hande M Genome Stability Laboratory, Department of Physiology, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore.

Banerjee, B. et al Prakash Hande M (2009). Genome Stability Laboratory, Department of Physiology, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore.

Bhushan, L. I. (1998). Yogic Lifestyle and Psychological Well-being. Paper presented as S. P. East West Psychology National Award lecture on 4 Jan. at Hyderabad

Brian, M. (2001). Social Science & Medicine Vol. 43, Issue 5, Sept. 1996, Pp. 605-608.

Cattell, Barton, Cattell & Conner (1972). Institute for Personality and ability testing, 1602 Coronado Drive, Champaign, Illinois, 1972

Jonathan Goldman (2006). An Interview with Jonathan Goldman, www.healingsounds.com/.

Kjellgren A et al (2007). BMC Complement Altern Med. 2007 Dec 19; 7(1):43.

Kuvalyananda, S., & Vinekar, S. L. (1968). Yogic Therapy, Yoga Mimamsa, Press. In Vishal, Singh, and Madhu (1987) A Study of The Effect of Yogic Practices On Certain Psychological Parameters. Indian Journal of Clinical Psychology, 14, 80-83.

Malathi A. Damodaran N., Shah G., Krishnamurthy, Nama-Joshi P. & Ghodake S. (1998). Psychological Changes at the time of Examination in Medical Students Before and After the Practice of Yoga and Relaxation. Indian Journal of Psychiatry, 40, 35-40

Shapiro, D.; Cook, I. A.; Davydo, D. M. (2007). Yoga as a Complementary Treatment of Depression: Effects of Traits and Moods on Treatment Outcome, Evidence Based Complementary Alternative Medicine, December 2007; 4: 493 - 502.

Suri, J.C.; Sen M. K.; Singh, Padam (2007). Sleep patterns and their impact on lifestyle, anxiety and depression in BPO workers. The Indian Journal of Sleep Medicine 2007, Vol: 2, Issue: 2 ISSN: 0973-340X.

Udupa, K.N. (1992). Stress and Its Management by Yoga, pp.135, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi 1985

Vashistha, K.C.; Gupta, P (2008). An exploration of occupational hazards in BPO industry. Amity Journal of Behavioural and Forensic Sciences 2008, Vol : 4, Issue : 1 ISSN : 0973-175X.

Vicente Pedro. (1987). Role of Yoga Therapy in Anxiety, Neurosis and Depression. Yoga Mimamsa, XXVI, 1-14

Vinolod, S.D. et. al.(1998). Abstracts and Bibliography of articles on yoga, Kaivalyadham Lonavala, Pune India, from Jan 1985-1998.