

EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF REGULAR YOGIC EXERCISES ON MENTAL HEALTH OF SPORTSPERSONS RECOVERING FROM INJURIES

Tejsiha L. Jagdale

Nabira Mahavidyalaya, Katol

sanjayjagdale093@gmail.com

Abstract

Sports-related injuries are an unavoidable reality for athletes, often disrupting their training routines, competitive schedules, and overall performance. While physical rehabilitation is a critical component of recovery, the journey back to full fitness involves more than just healing the body—it requires addressing the mental and emotional challenges that accompany injury. In recent years, yoga has emerged as a powerful complementary therapy for athletes recovering from sports-related injuries. Combining physical postures, breathing techniques, and mindfulness practices, yoga offers a holistic approach to rehabilitation that goes beyond traditional methods. It not only aids in restoring physical strength, flexibility, and balance but also promotes mental resilience, emotional well-being, and stress management. This study explores the multifaceted benefits of yoga in sports injury recovery, highlighting its potential to accelerate healing, prevent re-injury, and support athletes in regaining their peak performance. The study was conducted by using a standard methodology and the data collection was done through a survey. All the data was subjected to statistical treatment using SPSS 18.0 software. The study results show that by integrating yoga into rehabilitation programs, athletes can experience a more comprehensive and sustainable recovery process, ensuring they return to their sport stronger, both physically and mentally.

Keywords: Sports-related injuries, rehabilitation, yoga, mindfulness practices

1.0 Introduction

Injuries are an inevitable part of a sportsperson's life, often bringing not only physical pain but also emotional and psychological challenges. The recovery process can be daunting, as athletes face the pressure of returning to peak performance while dealing with the frustration of being sidelined. In recent years, yogic exercises have gained recognition as a holistic approach to rehabilitation, offering benefits that extend beyond physical healing. Sportspersons often derive their identity and self-worth from their athletic performance. When injured, they may experience a range of negative emotions, including anxiety, depression, frustration, and even a sense of loss. The uncertainty of recovery timelines, fear of re-injury, and isolation from teammates can exacerbate these feelings. Traditional rehabilitation programs focus primarily on physical recovery, often neglecting the psychological toll of injuries. This gap underscores the need for interventions that address both the body and the mind. Injuries can disrupt an athlete's mental focus, making it difficult to stay motivated or visualize a successful return to sport. Meditation and mindfulness practices in yoga improve concentration and mental clarity, helping athletes set realistic goals and stay committed to their recovery journey. Recovery is often a slow and non-linear process, requiring patience and perseverance. Yoga teaches athletes to embrace the present moment and accept their limitations, fostering a mindset of resilience. This mental fortitude is invaluable for navigating the ups and downs of rehabilitation.

Yoga, an ancient practice rooted in Indian philosophy, combines physical postures (asanas), breathing techniques (pranayama), and meditation (dhyana) to promote harmony between the mind, body, and spirit. For sportspersons recovering from injuries, yoga offers a unique blend of physical rehabilitation and mental healing. Its gentle yet effective nature makes it suitable for individuals at various stages of recovery. It has been reported that injuries often lead to heightened stress levels due to the disruption of routines and the pressure to recover quickly. Yogic exercises, particularly pranayama and meditation, activate the parasympathetic nervous system, promoting relaxation and reducing cortisol levels. Techniques like deep breathing and guided imagery help athletes manage stress and maintain a calm mindset during recovery. Here, yoga encourages mindfulness, which involves staying present and accepting one's current state without judgment. This practice helps sportspersons process negative emotions like frustration and anger, fostering emotional stability. By cultivating self-awareness, yoga enables athletes to respond to challenges with resilience rather than reactivity. Physical inactivity during recovery can lead to feelings of sadness or depression. Yoga stimulates the release of endorphins, the body's natural "feel-good" hormones, which can uplift mood and combat depressive symptoms. Additionally, the sense of accomplishment from mastering yoga poses can boost self-esteem and motivation. In view of the above this study explores the impact of regular yogic exercises on the mental health of sportspersons recovering from injuries, highlighting how yoga can serve as a powerful tool for emotional resilience, stress management, and overall well-being.

2.0 Research Methodology

In the present investigation, a careful collection of facts was undertaken to ensure the validity of the facts. The scope of the study was restricted to study the impact of regular yogic exercises on mental health of sportspersons recovering from injuries. In this study only the sportspersons belonging to Nagpur District were considered. The study used a random group design. The sample size for this study was 75, where the criterion for selection of the samples was based on the fact that only those sportspersons were selected who had chronic injuries (injury time in excess of 2 months). In this study, all the data generation was done by using standard procedures and through a survey and by using a structured questionnaire. Prior to its use reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using test-retest method and also the validity of the questionnaire was also established by using standard procedure. All the data generated during this study was processed using various statistical tests and with the aid of SPSS 18.0 Software. The significance level was chosen to be 0.05 (or equivalently, 5%).

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Impact on Anxiety Levels

Table 1: Impact of Regular Yogic Exercises on anxiety level of sportspersons recovering from Injuries

Response	Nos.	Per
Decreased	58	77.3
No change	13	17.3
Increased	4	5.3
Total	75	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 66.96; \text{df: } 2; \chi^2_{\text{crit}} = 5.99; p < 0.05$$

Table 1 shows information pertaining to impact of Regular Yogic Exercises on anxiety level of sportspersons recovering from Injuries. Study results show that 77.3% respondents indicated decrease in anxiety level after practicing yogic exercises regularly, while 17.3% indicated no change. However, 5.3% respondents felt increase in anxiety level after practicing yogic exercises regularly.

3.2 Impact of yogic exercises on maintaining optimism

Table 2: Impact of Regular Yogic Exercises on maintaining optimism of sportspersons recovering from Injuries

Response	Nos.	Per
High	17	22.7
Moderate	48	64.0
Low	10	13.3
Total	75	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 32.72; \text{df: } 2; \chi^2_{\text{crit}} = 5.99; p < 0.05$$

Table 2 shows information pertaining to impact of Regular Yogic Exercises on maintaining optimism of sportspersons recovering from injuries. Study results show that 22.7% respondents indicated high impact of practicing regular yogic exercises on maintaining optimism while 64.0% indicated moderate impact. However, 13.3% respondents felt low impact of practicing regular yogic exercises on maintaining optimism.

3.3 Impact of yogic exercises on emotional regulation

Table 3: Impact of Yogic Exercises on emotional regulation of sportspersons recovering from injuries

Response	Nos.	Per
High	52	69.3
Moderate	21	28.0
Low	2	2.7
Total	75	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 50.96; \text{df: } 2; \chi^2_{\text{crit}} = 5.99; p < 0.05$$

Table 3 shows information pertaining to impact of Yogic Exercises on emotional regulation of sportspersons recovering from injuries. Study results show that 69.3% respondents indicated high impact of practicing regular yogic exercises on emotional regulation while 28.0% indicated moderate impact. However, 2.7% respondents indicated low impact of practicing yogic exercises on emotional regulation.

3.4 Impact of yogic exercises on resilience

Table 4: Impact of Yogic Exercises on resilience of sportspersons recovering from injuries

Response	Nos.	Per
High	16	21.3
Moderate	23	30.7
Low	36	48.0
Total	75	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 8.24; \text{df: } 2; \chi^2_{\text{crit}} = 5.99; p < 0.05$$

Table 4 shows information pertaining to impact of Yogic Exercises on resilience of sportspersons recovering from injuries. Study results show that 21.3% respondents indicated

high impact of practicing yogic exercises on resilience while 30.7% indicated moderate impact. However, 48.0% respondents indicated low impact of practicing yogic exercises on resilience.

3.5 Impact of yogic exercises on stress management

Table 5: Impact of Yogic Exercises on stress management of sportspersons recovering from injuries

Response	Nos.	Per
High	38	50.7
Moderate	24	32.0
Low	13	17.3
Total	75	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 12.56; \text{df: } 2; \chi^2_{\text{crit}} = 5.99; p < 0.05$$

Table 5 shows information pertaining to impact of Yogic Exercises on stress management of sportspersons recovering from injuries. Study results show that 50.7% respondents indicated high impact of practicing yogic exercises on stress management while 32.0% indicated moderate impact. However, 17.3% respondents indicated low impact of practicing yogic exercises on stress management.

3.6 Impact of yogic exercises on patience and acceptance

Table 6: Impact of Yogic Exercises on patience and acceptance of sportspersons recovering from injuries

Response	Nos.	Per
High	19	25.3
Moderate	44	58.7
Low	12	16.0
Total	75	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 22.64; \text{df: } 2; \chi^2_{\text{crit}} = 5.99; p < 0.05$$

Table 6 shows information pertaining to impact of Yogic Exercises on patience and acceptance of sportspersons recovering from injuries. Study results show that 25.3% respondents indicated high impact of practicing yogic exercises on patience and acceptance while 58.7% indicated moderate impact. However, 16.0% respondents indicated low impact of practicing yogic exercises on patience and acceptance.

4.0 Conclusions

4.1 Impact on Anxiety Levels

- In view of the study results it is evident that most of the sportspersons recovering from injuries felt decrease in anxiety level after practising yogic exercises regularly.

4.2 Impact of yogic exercises on maintaining optimism

- In view of the study results it is evident that most of the sportspersons recovering from injuries have moderate impact of practising regular yogic exercises on maintaining optimism.

4.3 Impact of yogic exercises on emotional regulation

- In view of the study results it is evident that most of the sportspersons recovering from injuries have high impact of practising yogic exercises on emotional regulation.

4.4 Impact of yogic exercises on resilience

- In view of the study results it is evident that most of the sportspersons recovering from injuries have low impact of practising yogic exercises on resilience.

4.5 Impact of yogic exercises on stress management

- In view of the study results it is evident that most of the sportspersons recovering from injuries have high impact of practising yogic exercises on stress management.

4.6 Impact of yogic exercises on patience and acceptance

- In view of the study results it is evident that most of the sportspersons recovering from injuries have moderate impact of practising yogic exercises on patience and acceptance. Thus, the study results show that regular participation in yogic exercises has positive impact on mental health of sportspersons who are recovering from injuries.

5.0 Bibliography

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