

ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND

Ancient scripture like Hatha yoga pradeepika, Patanjali yoga sutra, and many other texts explains that practice of various yogic techniques improves cognitive functions. In this study, we have compared the cognitive function and heart rate variability in yoga practitioner and non-yoga practitioner.

METHOD

Fourty normal healthy male subjects with age range 18-21 years were recruited in this study, among which twenty subjects were yoga practitioner (yoga group) and remaining eighteen, were a non-yoga practitioner (control group). The computerized version (super lab) of Stroop color and word test was used to assess cognitive function of the participants. Participants were asked to perform all tasks as fast as possible without doing any mistake. For any mistake, the participants were asked not to stop the practice and keep continuing. The participants were given thirty seconds for each task. Detailed instructions for each task were given to the participants before starting the test.

RESULT

Reaction time was significantly less in yoga practitioner compare to non-yoga practitioner in all three tasks. Accuracy was non-significant in first two tasks but in third task yoga practitioner group has significantly more accuracy than non-yoga practitioner.

CONCLUSION

In this study, we considered long term yoga practitioners (more than 1-year experience) and control group (who never exposed to yoga), did not show the significant result in cognitive function. But the trend of all outcome measure suggests, yoga practice helps in improvement in cognitive functions.

KEY WORDS: Yoga, Stroop, Cognitive functions.