



Research Article/ Yoga

Yoga's Impact on Personal and Community Development: A Study of Karmayogi Wellness in Pokhara

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Article History:

Submitted 28 March 2024

Reviewed 07 April 2024

Revised 10 April 2024

Accepted 17 April 2024

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Article DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.3126/ajhss.v1i1.64993>

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the influence of yoga on personal and community development. The research was conducted at Karmayogi Wellness in Pokhara and aims to explore the impact of yoga through a survey involving 58 participants, utilizing quantitative methods. The community's positive perception of yoga is evident, highlighting its holistic potential for promoting well-being and community development. The findings are presented visually through the figures depicting responses related to physical fitness, mental health, and lifestyle choices, measured on a Likert scale. Overall, the community maintains a favorable view of yoga's influence, which is further discussed in the subsequent sections. This research provides valuable insights and ideas of yoga for individuals interested in well-being and both personal and community development.

KEYWORDS: Yoga, meditation, well-being, personal development, community development

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to explore the practice of yoga and its influence on personal well-being and community development, particularly among practitioners at Karmayogi Wellness in Pokhara. In today's

dynamic society, yoga plays a crucial role in enhancing individual talent, substantializing strengths, and building the foundation for a connected community while maintaining a balance of the body, mind, and the self. This study aims to unfold how yoga shapes individuals and contributes to both personal and community growths. Yoga has emerged as a transformative practice that significantly influences personal well-being and community development. Yoga serves as a powerful tool against stress, providing

practical methods to handle life's challenges and promoting mental well-being. In Palgi's (2007) perception, yoga enhances body awareness, control, attention, focus, and emotional management through poses, deep breathing, and relaxation. This shared mental and emotional well-being contributes to creating a more connected society. Additionally, yoga is recognized as a therapeutic practice, promoting mental well-being, and aiding in coping with various health challenges, as noted by Griera (2017). Considering the historical context, yoga originated within a specific framework but has evolved into an inclusive practice accessible to people from all walks of life. Karmayogi Wellness Center of Pokhara exemplifies this inclusivity, catering to yoga enthusiasts with diverse backgrounds.

Yoga plays a vital role in enhancing the well-being of individuals, impacting both their internal and external dimensions. The growth and positive changes that occur within a person through yoga naturally extend to their external life. Many scholars stress the importance of ethics and morality in the practice of yoga. At one point, Mulla and Krishnan (2014) argue, "Any growth or development implies movement from a lower state of existence to a higher, more preferred state of existence" (p. 7). Such a gradual shift in the level of existence that as individuals cultivate moral conduct through yoga, they contribute to a higher and more positive state of being. In essence, a morally guided individual becomes an agent of positive change, contributing to the overall well-being and harmonious coexistence of the community.

Joshi (1965) considers yoga as a state where results like success or failure do not matter. This state, called "*samatva*" which means being totally fair and not really caring about getting a specific result. In Joshi's postulation, you are supposed to be calm and composed with whatever happens and not be too attached to success or upset by failure in yoga. Joshi's statement adds to our understanding of yoga, showing how it helps people stay strong in their minds and find inner peace by not getting too caught up in the good or bad things that happens. He further asserts, "Yoga is defined as a state of equipoise (*samatva*) in which opposites like success and failure make little difference" (p. 3). This idea also comes from eastern philosophy, which teaches us to rise above the usual ups and downs of life and keep a balanced and calm outlook.

In Murty's (1961) study, yoga can be a way to break free from suffering. According to him, the pain and troubles people go through are connected to living in the world and being part of the ongoing cycle of existence. He suggests that suffering is linked to the passage of time and the deceptive nature of the world, often referred to as *maya*. He goes on to propose that suffering is not just a personal thing but is a universal part of reality. By delving into these ideas, he contributes to the understanding of yoga as a potential pathway to liberation from the inherent struggles tied to the nature of existence. Murty (1961) further argues that "man's suffering is a result of his being in the world of his being a link in this chain of becomings. His suffering is tied up with temporality and illusion – with *maya*. Suffering is a cosmic necessity; it is one of the modes of reality, a law of worldly existence" (p. 54). This perspective highlights yoga's role in addressing not just individual suffering but also its broader cosmic implications, shedding light on its transformative potential in navigating the complexities of worldly existence.

Numerous studies demonstrate that even a brief yoga practices are effective in improving emotional well-being and increasing resilience to workplace stress as well. Similarly, Hartfiel et al. (2011) conclude in their research that yoga "enhanced life purpose and satisfaction, along with feelings of increased self-confidence during stressful situations" (p. 71). This suggests that a short yoga program can successfully boost

emotional well-being and developing resilience to workplace stress. Consequently, employers might enhance the personal and communal development of their employees by incorporating yoga programs into the workplace.

Yoga is not a religious practice. Instead, it is a lifestyle that strives for the pursuit of a sound mind in a healthy body. According to Tiwari (2019), "Man is a physical, mental and spiritual being; yoga helps promote a balanced development of all the three" (p. 85). Yoga, more than a religion, is a lifestyle towards achieving a healthy mind in a healthy body. Recognizing that individuals are physical, mental, and spiritual beings, yoga plays a vital role in balanced development in all three aspects. Yoga takes a holistic approach, contributing not only to personal growth but also to the development of a harmonious and interconnected community. The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali emphasizes the holistic approach to personal and community development through its eight limbs or steps to enlightenment, known as ashtanga yoga. He argues, they are ethical restraints, such as non-violence, truthfulness, and non-stealing; behavioral observations, such as cleanliness, contentment, and self-inquiry; asana, the practice of specific physical postures; pranayama, the measured control of breath; pratyahara, sensual detachment; dharana and dhyana, concentration, and meditation; and finally, samadhi, the realization of universal spiritual consciousness (Biswas, 2012). As outlined in the Sutra, the practice involves ethical restraints (*yama*), behavioral observations (*niyama*), specific physical postures (*asana*), measured control of breath (*pranayama*), sensual detachment (*pratyahara*), concentration and meditation (*dharana* and *dhyana*), and ultimately the realization of universal spiritual consciousness (*samadhi*). In this context, physical postures steady and comfortable aligns with the broader goal of personal well-being and spiritual growth.

Centering on the impact of yoga on personal and community development, this research focuses on the personal narratives of yoga practitioners. Through a survey method involving dedicated yoga practitioners, the study seeks to capture their experiences. By understanding how yoga maintains inner peace and mindfulness, this research aims to uncover its potential for positive societal change. In essence, the study aims to shed light on how yoga, with its inclusive practices, contributes to personal and community development.

Despite the substantial body of literature on different aspects of yoga's impact on individuals and society, a research gap exists in the specific examination of how yoga contributes to personal and community development. Previous studies have explored various dimensions of yoga, including its philosophical foundations, impact on mental health, and ethical considerations. However, the translation of personal inner growth into broader community development remains largely unexplored. The research report is designed to bridge this gap by concentrating on the interrelated dynamics between personal development and community development through yoga and its positive influence on community well-being.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research adopted a qualitative approach to explore the impact of yoga on the personal and community development of practitioners. The primary focus was on Karmayogi Wellness in Pokhara, renowned for its commitment to traditional yoga practices. The study explores how yoga contributes to personal and community development within the context of Karmayogi Wellness. This investigation involves exploring the transformative power of yoga on individuals and the community. Participants in this study comprised 58 yoga practitioners from Karmayogi Wellness,

Yoga's Impact on Personal and Community Development

selected through purposive sampling. The primary method of data collection was a survey utilizing a structured questionnaire. The survey incorporated both quantitative and qualitative data, including multiple-choice questions and one open-ended question at the end.

The chosen setting for the research is Karmayogi Wellness due to its reputation for offering traditional yoga practices. Data collection involved the distribution of the survey questionnaire online, using Google Forms. Participants were provided with information regarding the study's purpose, emphasizing voluntary participation, and ensuring the confidentiality of their responses. The questionnaire, comprising both closed and open-ended questions. Ethical guidelines were strictly adhered to throughout the survey process. A potential limitation of the study lies in the use of a survey method, which may not capture the depth of individual experiences as comprehensively as qualitative interviews might. Additionally, the study's findings are context specific to Karmayogi Wellness and may not be universally applicable. By engaging a combination of quantitative methods for analyzing frequency data and qualitative methods for narrative responses, the research aimed to provide a subtle exposition of the transformative power of yoga within the context of Karmayogi Wellness in Pokhara.

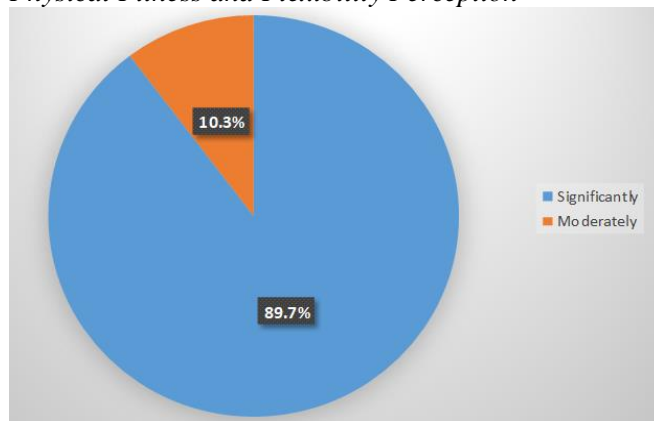
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The outcome of a survey particularly focuses on the impact of yoga on personal and community development, based on the participants of Karmayogi Wellness School. The survey, completed by 58 participants, engages a combination of qualitative approaches to examine the diverse aspects of yoga's influence on the personal and community levels. This research explores the ways in which yoga shapes individual lives and contributes to communal well-being. The discussion examines the responses obtained through 15 multiple-choice questions and one open-ended inquiry which aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the transformative role of yoga within the wellness center.

Figure 1

Physical Fitness and Flexibility Perception



Note: Participants' responses to the question regarding how yoga enhances physical fitness and flexibility.

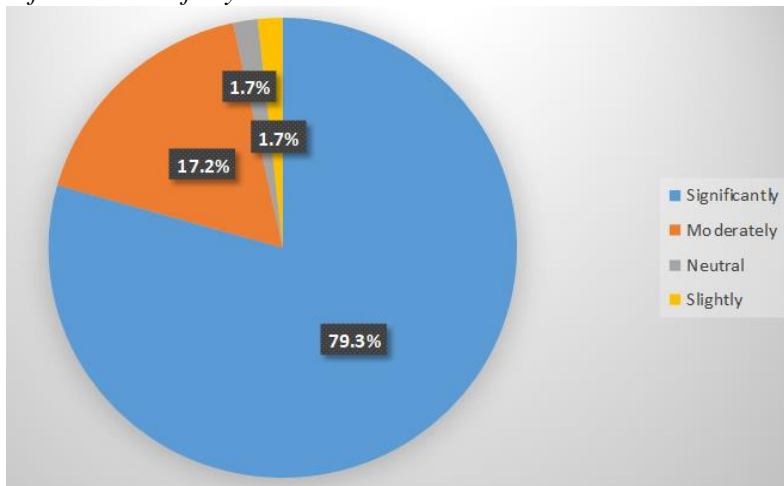
An overwhelming positive response to the first question on the impact of yoga on physical fitness and flexibility underscores the significance of yoga within the community members in the wellness center (Figure 1). An alarming reward 89.7% of

Yoga's Impact on Personal and Community Development

respondents in favor of the influence of yoga on physical fitness indicates to a widespread belief in the transformative power of this practice. This alignment of perspectives indicates of a collective understanding within the community about the vital role yoga plays in enhancing physical well-being. The outcomes of the first question in the survey, probing the influence of yoga on physical fitness and flexibility. A substantial member of respondents has mentioned a significant impact, while a minority, constituting acknowledged a moderate influence. Notably, none of the participants opted for neutral, slight, or no impact. This agreement shows that most of the people in the wellness community strongly believe that doing yoga is good for making us healthier.

The positivity in response to the first question on the impact of yoga on physical fitness and flexibility underlines the significance attributed to yoga within the wellness center. This common perspective signifies a collective recognition within the community regarding the integral role of yoga in improving physical well-being. The assurance of yoga's considerable impact on physical fitness and flexibility suggests its vital role in the collective perception of health and well-being. Later stages of the analysis will involve a more detailed look, using specific measurements to support personal views. The harmonious agreement provides a strong foundation for further exploration into the varied contributions of yoga to personal and community development.

Figure 2
Influence on Lifestyle Choices

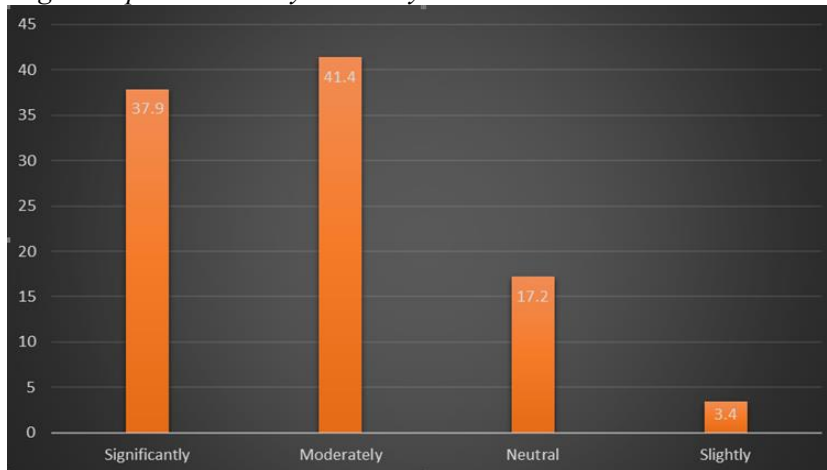


Note: It represents participants' viewpoints on how yoga positively influences their overall lifestyle choices. It offers a visual depiction of the diverse perspectives.

Figure 2 shows the impact of yoga on overall lifestyle choices within the community. A substantial 79.3% of respondents assert that yoga has significantly contributed to their lifestyle choices. Additionally, 17.2% express a moderate impact. A marginal 1.7% each report a neutral and slight impact, indicating a predominantly positive association between participating in yoga and making positive lifestyle choices among most respondents.

The strong affirmation regarding the positive contribution of yoga to overall lifestyle choices aligns with broader narratives. This aligns with broader narratives connecting mindfulness practices, such as yoga, with positive shifts in lifestyle choices. The findings emphasize the unique context of Karmayogi Wellness, illustrating a prevalent belief in the power of yoga not only on physical and mental well-being but also on the overall lifestyle choices within the community.

Figure 3
Yoga's Impact on Family Harmony

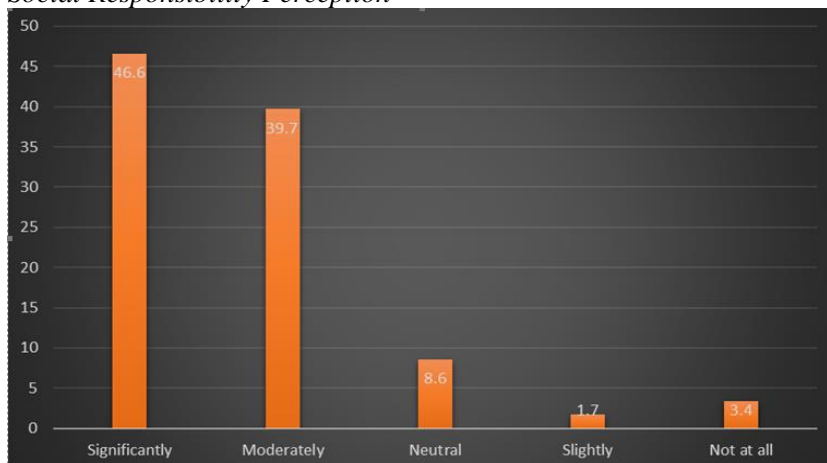


Note: This chart presents participants' evaluations of how yoga influences unity and cooperation within their families.

Figure 3 delves into participant responses regarding the influence of yoga in promoting unity and cooperation within families. Within the group, 37.9% of respondents believe that yoga significantly contributes to family unity, while 41.4% express a moderate impact, reflecting a substantial acknowledgment of yoga's positive role in family dynamics. A notable 17.2% adopt a neutral stance, and 3.4% perceive a slight influence.

The diverse responses highlight varying viewpoints on the impact of yoga on family unity. While a significant portion recognizes its positive influence, a considerable group holds a more moderate view, indicating a range of opinions. This diversity suggests that individuals perceive the influence of yoga on families differently, with varying levels of importance attributed to it. The presence of those who feel neutral or slightly influenced hints further exploration into the factors shaping these perspectives.

Figure 4
Social Responsibility Perception



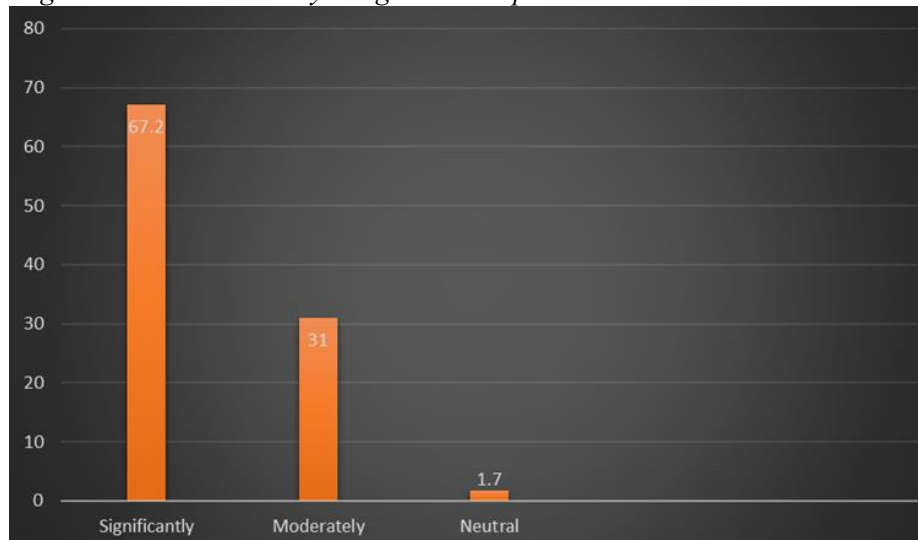
Note: This chart reflects participants' perspectives on whether practicing yoga encourages social responsibility and community service. It visually captures diverse viewpoints within the participants.

Yoga's Impact on Personal and Community Development

Figure 4 gives us insights into what people think about whether practicing yoga encourages social responsibility and community service. Almost half, or 46.6%, say that yoga significantly helps in developing a sense of social responsibility and community service. Another 39.7% believe it has a moderate impact in promoting values that are good for the community. Interestingly, 8.6% feel neutral, 1.7% see a slight impact, and 3.4% think yoga does not contribute at all to social responsibility and community service. These different opinions show that people have varied views on how yoga plays a role in creating a sense of social duty and involvement in the community.

The responses about the impact of yoga on social responsibility and community service highlight the diversity of opinions within the surveyed group. Many feel that practicing yoga has a big impact on promoting values that benefit the community. Others see it as moderately influential, showing that many recognize yoga's role in encouraging social responsibility. However, there is a group that feels neutral, slightly influenced, or not impacted at all. To understand why people have these different views, future studies will closely look into and analyze the reasons behind these perspectives.

Figure 5
Yoga's Role in Community Progress Perception



Note: This chart depicts participants' perspectives on whether yoga holds the potential to positively influence community development.

Figure 5 is about participants' opinions regarding whether yoga can positively impact community development. Many respondents believe that yoga has the potential to significantly contribute to positive community development. Additionally, a slightly smaller number of participants express a moderate impact on community development. A minor 1.7% adopting a neutral position suggests a predominantly positive perception regarding the potential of yoga to positively impact community development.

The idea that yoga can significantly impact community development aligns with the positive sentiments identified throughout the survey. The majority's belief that yoga holds substantial influence on communities reflects a shared acknowledgment of its positive potential for community development. Furthermore, the group expressing a moderate impact adds weight to this notion. The presence of those who stay neutral hints at diverse opinions and invites further exploration into the factors influencing individuals' perspectives on the relationship between yoga and community development.

Table 1
Yoga's Influence on Worldview Transformation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Significantly	34	58.6	58.6	58.6
	Moderately	19	32.8	32.8	91.4
	Neutral	4	6.9	6.9	98.3
	Slightly	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Note: This table is about participants' reflections on whether practicing yoga has led to positive changes in their relationships with the world. It visually represents the varied responses within the participant group.

Table 1 provides findings that participants' perspectives on the influence of yoga practice on their relationships with the external world. A significant 58.6% of respondents believe that they have observed positive changes in their relationships with the world after practicing yoga. Additionally, 32.8% express a moderate impact of the positive influence of yoga on personal connections with the world. A combined 6.9% adopt a neutral or slight impact, regarding the transformative effects of yoga on individuals' relationships with the world.

Many individuals agree that engaging in yoga can make a positive difference in how they perceive and connect with the world. The majority, experiencing significant changes, believe that yoga holds the power to transform their worldview and connections. Those expressing a more moderate view also support this idea. On the other hand, a segment of respondents feels a small or no impact, reflecting diverse opinions and suggesting variability in how individuals perceive the transformative effects of yoga on their relationship with the world.

Table 2
Yoga's Impact on Empathy and Compassion

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Significantly	37	63.8	63.8	63.8
	Moderately	17	29.3	29.3	93.1
	Neutral	4	6.9	6.9	100.0
	Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Note: Participants were asked about the influence of yoga on the development of empathy and compassion towards others in their community. The table illustrates the diverse viewpoints within the surveyed group.

Table 2 provides insightful findings regarding the influence of yoga on the development of empathy and compassion towards others in the community. A substantial 65.5% of respondents believe that yoga significantly influences the development of empathy and compassion towards others. Additionally, 27.6% express a moderate impact, while a minor 6.9% adopt a neutral stance.

The agreement that yoga has a huge impact on developing empathy and compassion aligns with the overall positive sentiments. Those strongly believing in this influence suggest that many see yoga as transformative in enhancing emotional and

interpersonal abilities within the community. The group expressing a more moderate view further supports this idea, highlighting a shared belief in the positive role of yoga in developing empathy and compassion towards others in the community.

Table 3
Likelihood of Recommending Yoga

Likelihood of Recommending Yoga					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Significantly	48	82.8	82.8	82.8
	Moderately	8	13.8	13.8	96.6
	Neutral	2	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Note: Respondents were asked to their likelihood of recommending yoga to others based on the positive impact they personally experienced.

Table 3, focusing on the probability of participants recommend yoga to others based on their positive experiences. A remarkable 82.8% of respondents express a high likelihood of recommending yoga to others. This overwhelming majority signals a widespread belief in the transformative and beneficial nature of yoga. Additionally, 13.8% indicate a moderate likelihood of recommendation, revealing a sizable portion of respondent. The diversity of responses, ranging from high to moderate likelihood, reflects the varied ways in which individuals perceive and consider recommending yoga to others based on their own positive experiences.

Most individuals who strongly recommend yoga believe in its power to bring positive changes to others. This common belief underlines the transformative potential attributed to yoga, with the majority recognizing its positive influence. Those expressing a more moderate view further support this idea, emphasizing a widespread acknowledgment of yoga’s positive impact. However, a segment of respondents stays neutral, reflecting diverse opinions and suggesting varying levels of enthusiasm in recommending yoga to others.

Table 4
Yoga’s Social Impact Perception

Yoga’s Social Impact Perception					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Significantly	18	31.0	31.0	31.0
	Moderately	29	50.0	50.0	81.0
	Neutral	8	13.8	13.8	94.8
	Slightly	3	5.2	5.2	100.0
	Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Note: Respondents shared their perspectives on the capacity of yoga to address social issues within the community.

Table 4 delves into the participant perspectives on the potential of yoga to address social issues within the community. The findings reveal that 31% of respondents believe that yoga can significantly address social issues. Additionally, a substantial 51.7% express a moderate belief in its potential, showcasing a majority that recognizes yoga’s capacity to contribute meaningfully to social issues. On the findings, 13.8% adopt

Yoga's Impact on Personal and Community Development

a neutral outlook and 3.4% perceive a slight potential for yoga to address social issues within the community. These responses indicate a range of perspectives within the community regarding the potential impact of yoga on social issues.

The varied opinions within the community about how much yoga can contribute to addressing social issues highlight the importance of understanding these differences. This understanding is crucial for creating interventions and initiatives that align with community values and effectively harness the potential of yoga as a tool for addressing social challenges.

Discussion

The cumulative analysis of data offers a detailed exploration into the impact of yoga within the Karmayogi Wellness community. Harmony across various dimensions represent the role of yoga, associating it not only with physical and mental well-being but extending its influence beyond. The collected data presented in the figures reflects a diverse picture of how yoga is perceived within the community. Overall, the community strongly believes in the positive impact of yoga, encompassing not only physical and mental well-being but various aspects of life.

Participants shared diverse perspectives on how yoga has positively impacted their personal development and communities. Themes emerging from their responses include physical and mental well-being, community bonding, enhanced self-awareness, and positive lifestyle changes. The final open-ended question also suggested that people agree with the positive impact of yoga on personal and community development. Here are a few examples of what the participants said:

Through the regular practice of yoga, one will be able to experience a positive transformation in their personality, fostering a similar positive change in the community. For instance, an awakened person can inspire others. Like a small flame turning into a large fire, yoga burns away negativity, transforming it into light where darkness ceases to exist. This way, positivity prevails. - Swabhiman Rana

Yoga can have a positive impact on both personal and community developments. It fosters a sense of belonging, builds relationships, and contributes to the overall well-being of individuals and the community. - May Chen

Yoga has changed my habits, my priorities, and my life. It has brought balance within me, which enabled me to approach people in my community with unconditional love, patience, and compassion. – Sama

These are a few examples that show how yoga has a positive impact on individuals and, consequently, on the community. The responses provide insights into the influence of yoga on both individuals and communities. These examples illustrate how yoga not only positively impacts individuals but also extends its transformative effects to the broader community. Overall, the physical benefits, such as improved flexibility and strength, contribute to overall well-being. Mental well-being, stress management, and enhanced self-awareness emerge as significant outcomes, affecting how individuals perceive and engage with the world. Participants express how yoga has instilled a sense of responsibility, connection, and positive lifestyle changes. The narratives highlight the holistic nature of yoga, emphasizing its potential to create positive transformations at both personal and community levels.

The positive influence of yoga on physical fitness, mental health, and family dynamics implies a holistic well-being perspective among the participants. This aligns with the evolving perception of yoga, not merely as an exercise routine but as a

transformative practice influencing diverse aspects of daily life. The findings highlight widespread agreement on yoga benefiting physical fitness, mental health, and family unity. Positive responses to questions about stress management and lifestyle choices further support the idea that yoga is seen as a tool for overall well-being. It is not just about exercises but about improving life in various ways.

The overall data reveal the impact of yoga on stress management and lifestyle choices. Positive correlations between yoga and personal development, social responsibility, and societal harmony emphasize its integral role in shaping individual and communal dynamics. The study suggests that yoga plays a significant role in personal development, contributing to a sense of social responsibility and a harmonious society. Positive responses indicate that people see yoga as more than just a physical activity. It positively influences how they relate to others and the world around them.

However, the study has its limitations. It provides a general overview but lacks detailed stories and experiences. To truly understand why people feel the way they do, future research should delve deeper into personal stories and specific aspects of yoga that individuals find most helpful. The study's limitations, leaving gaps in understanding individual experiences and the specific attributes of yoga practices. Future research initiatives should incorporate more qualitative methodologies to expose the intricate within these perceptions.

Precisely, the findings signify the fundamental role of yoga within the Karmayogi Wellness School. The collective belief and a deeper exploration into individual narratives enhance our understanding of how yoga contributes to holistic community development. As yoga gains fame, future studies should focus on unraveling these subtleties through qualitative lenses, enabling a deeper understanding of yoga. Overall, the findings underline the broad impact of yoga in the community.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, this research highlights how yoga positively affects both individuals and communities, based on the experiences of Karmayogi Wellness practitioners in Pokhara. The study shows that yoga contributes to physical fitness, mental well-being, positive lifestyle choices, and personal development within the community. The comprehensive exploration of participants' perspectives on the impact of yoga within the context of personal and community development. The tremendous consensus among respondents on the positive influence of yoga across various dimensions, including physical health, mental well-being, and community bonding, underline its holistic potential. From self-awareness and resilience to building a sense of connection and responsibility, yoga emerges as a transformative practice with the capacity to shape individuals and communities positively. While some participants highlight personal growth and lifestyle changes, others emphasize the communal aspects of yoga. These findings provide an understanding of the diverse ways in which yoga is perceived and embraced. It offers valuable insights for practitioners, educators, and policymakers interested in promoting holistic well-being and community development.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

I hereby wish to declare that I do not have any conflict of interests to disclose. However, I declare that the manuscript has not been published before and is not being considered for publication elsewhere.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

I declare that this manuscript is originally produced by me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the practitioners of Karmayogi Wellness in Pokhara for generously sharing their valuable experiences. Special thanks to Professor Dr. Min Pun for continuous support throughout the research, providing reading materials that greatly facilitated the preparation of my report. My heartfelt appreciation extends to the Karmayogi Wellness Center for promoting inclusivity throughout the research, with special thanks to Yakraj Rokaya, the center's owner, who consistently supported my outreach to yoga practitioners without hesitation. This research is a collective effort, and each acknowledgment is a recognition to the collaborative team that made this exploration possible.

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Yoga's Impact on Personal and Community Development

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To cite this article [APA 7th edition style]:

Basnet, D. (2024). Yoga's impact on personal and community development: A study of Karmayogi Wellness in Pokhara. *Academia Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences*, 1, 42-54. <https://doi.org/10.3126/ajhss.v1i1.64993>