

## Effect of One Month Yoga Program on Perceived Stress of Practicing Lawyers of District Court, Jhajjar

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### Abstract

The legal profession is intellectually demanding, with extended working hours, client's high expectations, and emotionally taxing responsibilities are the some identified root causes of occupational stress. Long term stress facing by lawyers is related to burnout, impaired decision-making, and low well-being score. Yoga is well known alternative therapy for managing the stress. **Objective:** This study is designed to see the effect of a one-month structured yoga program on perceived stress levels among attorneys who are practicing District Court Jhajjar. **Methods:** 75 lawyers, aged 26–65 years, from the District Court, Jhajjar, were selected for the study. Participants practice yoga for one hour daily for five days a week and this intervention program was for four weeks. Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) scores were checked before and after of yoga program. **Results:** A significant reduction in perceived stress was observed post-intervention. The mean pre-yoga PSS score was 23.41, which decreased to 20.01 after the four-week program ( $p < 0.0001$ ). Standard deviation analysis also confirmed consistency of results across participants. **Conclusions:** Yoga plays important role in reducing stress levels of practicing lawyers. These findings suggest yoga as an effective, accessible, and non-pharmacological strategy management of stress among practicing lawyers.

**Keywords:** stress, lawyers, yoga training, perceived stress scale

### Introduction

Profession such as legal is generally viewed as most cognitively demanding and emotionally draining occupations, and long term stress has been recognized as a major occupational risk factor (Wallace, 2005). Lawyers who practice in district court, face stress due to continuous and intensive demands which are associated with their work. Because for practicing lawyer there very much workload, adversarial interactions with opposing counsel or parties, time constraints, and pressures to win the cases for their clients, stress level become high. This prolonged exposure of stress increase rates of anxiety, burn-out, depression, and psychosomatic illness (Organ, Jaffe, & Bender, 2016). The court backlogs and delays in proceedings in India are common; and these factors contribute to creating stress and impact negatively the work-life balance of attorneys. As a result, there is an increasing demand for evidence-based, non-pharmacological methods to help to managing the stress and building the resilience competency in attorneys.

Although there are many techniques available for stress management, but yoga offer a potentially effective tool in reducing stress. Yoga, which is rooted in ancient Indian traditions, has become popular worldwide as a preventive technique. In yoga methods, the practice of physical postures (asanas), controlled breathing exercises (pranayama), and mind control (dhyana) helps to manage the autonomic nervous system, decrease the level of stress hormones, and promote psychological well-being (Sengupta, 2012). Studies have confirmed that regular yoga practice helps to reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression (Sharma et al., 2020); improves emotional regulation (Sengupta, 2012); and increases heart rate variability (HRV) (Sengupta, 2012).

Considering this background of yoga benefits, this study was planned with aim to see the impact of a structured yoga program included asana, pranayama, and meditation, on the perception of stress experienced by practicing lawyers working in District Court Jhajjar. By using the perceived stress scale

before and after the intervention, this research will provide the observed evidence supporting the feasibility of yogic practices as a mental health resource in the workplace for practicing attorneys

## Review of Literature

Many of researches have showed the occupational stress in the legal profession, even some researchers identifying this stress in legal sector as a major mental health problem. Krill et al., (2016), conducted a study to examine this stress level in legal profession and they did a very large scale study where they collected data nearly 13,000 attorneys in the United States, and found very high rates of anxiety, depression and alcohol dependency; they concluded that this long term stress within the legal profession contributes to maladaptive coping mechanisms. Wallace (2005) mentioned that the high workloads, competitive and aggressive working environment and tight schedule in the legal profession are all the factors; lead to psychological distress and burnout. Same as, Organ et al., (2016), stated about newly entered in legal profession, they found that younger attorneys and attorneys employed by private law firms were the most stressed, and therefore there is a call to proactively provide interventions. Mind-body interventions have been suggested as possible solutions to this problem.

Sharma et al., (2018), found that yoga program for eight week showed a significant reduction in cortisol levels in working professionals also have seen the elevation in mood states; these results are dependable with Brown and Gerbarg's (2005) neurophysiologic model of how yogic breathing activates the vagus nerve and thereby produces parasympathetic dominance and reduces stress response.

Telles et al., (2010), conducted a randomized controlled trial with health care providers and they found that yoga practice and breathing exercise significantly reduced perceived stress level and fatigue, while improving awareness and overall well-being. Chandwani et al., (2014), showed that mindfulness practice along with breathing exercises improves resilience power and reduction in burnout symptoms in high-stress occupations.

Studies have also shown how yoga may affect the brain and body when it comes to stress, both physically and mentally. A study by Sengupta (2012), which reviewed the many ways that yoga works at a physiological level, demonstrated that yoga has been able to reduce HPA-axis activity, sympathetic overactivity, and improve mental stability. A similar study, conducted by Granath et al. (2006), also discovered that while yoga was as effective as CBT in reducing stress caused by work, yoga added some additional benefits including increased flexibility and better energy levels.

Lastly, a study by Sharma and Haider (2020) revealed that practicing pranayama significantly reduced anxiety and improved emotional regulation among professionals who were experiencing chronic stress. This could be beneficial for lawyers working under stressful and adverse conditions.

Overall, this research demonstrates a strong correlation that shows that using yogic techniques, specifically breathing meditation, can assist in reducing stress linked with careers with high demand, and promote greater emotional resilience and general well-being in professionals like lawyers.

## Objectives

To evaluate the efficacy of a one-month structured yoga program on perceived stress level of practicing lawyers.

## Research Methodology

This experimental study was conducted on 75 aged 25–65 practicing at District Court, Jhajjar. Participants voluntarily enrolled in a one-month structured yoga training program after giving informed

consent. The program included daily 1-hour sessions of yoga incorporating asanas, pranayama, and guided relaxation.

Participants completed the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-14) before and after the intervention. The PSS consists of 14 questions, 7 neutrally worded (higher scores indicate more stress) and 7 positively worded (higher scores indicate less stress, reverse-scored). Pre- and post-intervention data were analyzed using paired t-tests, and statistical significance was set at  $p < 0.05$ .

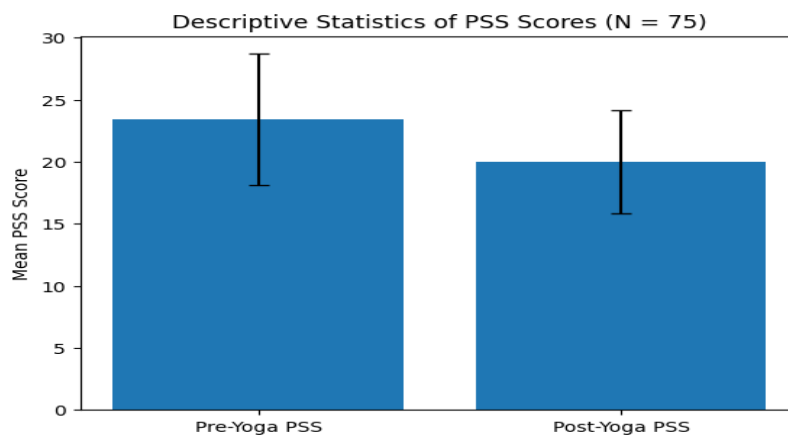
## Results and Discussion

The study aimed to evaluate the effect of a structured one-month yoga program on stress levels among practicing lawyers. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) scores before and after the yoga intervention. The mean pre-intervention PSS score was 15.50 (SD = 2.10), which decreased to 11.52 (SD = 1.95) post-intervention, suggesting a marked reduction in stress levels.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of PSS Scores (N = 75)**

Variable	Mean	SD	N
Pre-Yoga PSS	23.41	5.283	75
Post-Yoga PSS	20.01	4.157	75

**Figure: 1.**

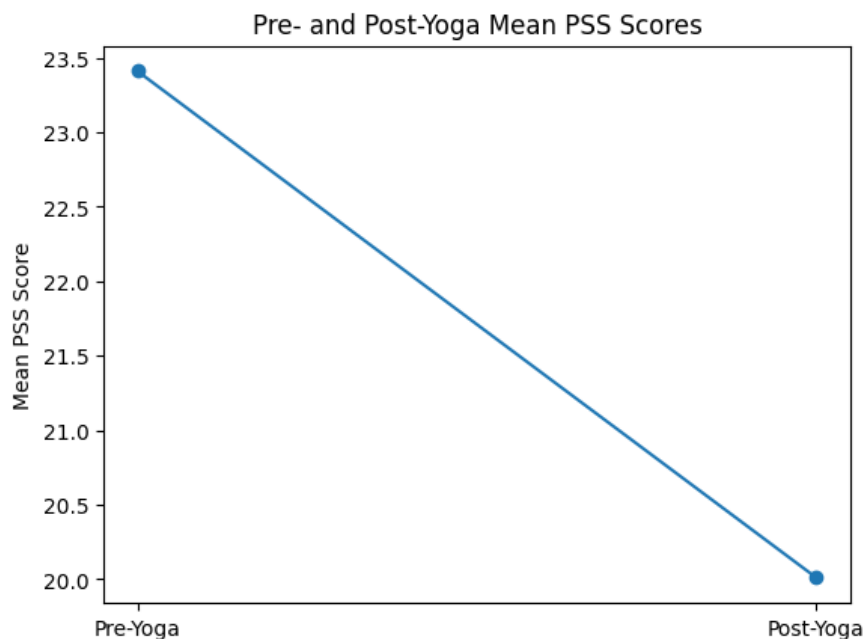


## Inferential Statistics

A paired sample t-test (Table 2) indicated a significant reduction in perceived stress following the yoga program ( $t(74) = 5.85$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ). The mean difference of 3.40 points reflects a substantial decrease in stress levels among participants.

**Table 2. Paired Sample t-test of Pre- and Post-Yoga PSS Scores**

Comparison	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value	Significance
Pre vs. Post (PSS)	3.40	5.85	<0.0001	Significant

**Figure 2.** Pre–Post Yoga Line Graph

The table no. 2 and figure no 2. showed the change in Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) scores of selected participants before and after yoga intervention. The mean PSS score prior to the yoga program was 23.41, indicating a relatively higher level of perceived stress among the participants. After the completion of the yoga intervention, the mean stress score was decreased by 20.01.

The downward line shown in above mentioned graph clearly indicates a reduction in perceived stress level after the practice of yogic techniques. This results demonstrates the positive impact of yoga practices on stress management, suggesting that regular practice of yoga helps to lowering psychological stress.

Thus, the results highlights the direction and magnitude of change in level of perceived stress, supporting the efficacy of yoga practices as a useful tool for reducing perceived stress among practicing lawyers.

## Discussion

The results of this study shows that perceived stress in practicing lawyers can be manage by one month yoga practice. The mean PSS score during the pre and post intervention was 23.41; and 20.01.

The data clearly showed reduction in the mean score of PSS through their participation in the intervention. The results of the present study support other previous studies that demonstrated that yoga helps to improves the ability of individuals to manage stress and improve psychological well-being. Asana, Pranayama and Meditation are the tools of yoga that affect the Autonomic Nervous System, assist in relaxation and enhance mindfulness. Each of these methods can be used personally or in groups to reduce the amount of stress experienced by attorneys. In view demanding nature of legal career, yoga may be considered as an affective, accessible and sustainable method for managing occupational stress.

## Conclusion

Thus the present study provides the strong evidence that structured yoga training program of one month significantly reduces perceived stress among lawyers. The marked reduction in PSS scores in post-intervention demonstrates yoga's potential as a non-pharmacological, cost-effective alternative

tool for mental health management in high-stress professions. Integrating yoga practice at workplace wellness initiatives could enhance performance, job satisfaction, and quality of life among legal professionals.

## Limitations

Although the findings are promising, but several limitations also exist in this study; like sample size was limited to 75 participants from a single court location, which may limit generalizability. Also this study did not include a control group, so other confounding variables influencing stress reduction cannot be ruled out. Future studies should involve larger, randomized samples across different regions and include physiological biomarkers for stress.

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