



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE OF NURSING STUDENTS TOWARDS YOGA AND OTHER COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES

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#### ABSTRACT

The main concept of the complementary and alternative therapy refers to therapies used together with conventional medicine as well as therapies used in place of conventional medicine. In the modern era the word holism is more often coined with the nursing practice. There has been a substantial increase in the use of yoga and other complementary and alternative medicine even among the modern health care professionals everywhere in the world. The main aim of the study was to identify the knowledge and attitude of nursing students towards yoga and other complementary and alternative therapies. The data were collected from 300 undergraduate nursing students by using NSAS-Y (Nursing Students Attitude Scale-CAT) and a knowledge questionnaire. Results show that majority of the nursing students having adequate knowledge and a positive attitude towards the yoga and other complementary and alternative therapies. The study concluded that there should be a provision for remodeling in the traditional nursing educational system to integrate the yoga and other complementary and alternative therapies in the nursing curriculum in order to improving the knowledge and attitude of the young buds in nursing as well as faculty.

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## INTRODUCTION

In modern years, complementary and alternative therapy has developed as a well-accepted health care treatment system all over the world. The major view of the complementary and alternative therapy refers to therapies used together with conventional medicine as well as therapies used in place of conventional medicine. There has been a substantial increase in the use of complementary and alternative medicine even among the modern health care professionals everywhere in the world. These therapies are divided into the following categories; mind-body therapies, alternative medical systems, biological-based therapies, manipulative and body-based systems, and energy therapies. These inclinations may be a sign of craving for adopting a holistic health concept among the practitioners in modern medicine as well as among the public. Public interest and the support by the health care professionals designated that the holistic approaches can no longer be discharged by conventional health care practices and this will

provide more time, personal attention, comfort, reassurance, and a sense of completeness and healing for individuals seeking medical care. As far as nursing is concerned complementary and alternative therapies include intervention which may harmonize the care usually offered the by nurses and which may comprise therapeutic touch, relaxation, meditation, aromatherapy, reflexology and yoga. Yoga is a set of physical, mental, and spiritual practices which initiated in ancient India. Yoga became the part of Indian traditions and the kinds of literature show that there is a broad variety of yoga, practices among the different ethnic and religious groups. Among the most renowned types are Hatha yoga and Raja yoga. The physical and mental health benefits of practicing yoga are well-documented. A Study concluded that after finishing an 8 weeks of yoga session, participants declared that they had extensively higher levels of self-image and less amount emotional problems (Gina K. Alexander, 2015).according to the report from the Mayo clinic shows that yoga may reduce stress level, blood pressure etc.. , and makes a perfectly healthy individual. Yoga is more than just an exercise. Its advantages can be apprehended from within the body and from without the body.

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An unswerving yoga practice can encompass a positive impact on body chemistry, disease prevention, or alleviation, and emotional health. In the modern era the word holism is more often coined with the nursing practice. This demonstrates that the ingenuousness of nursing profession to accept the good practices from the allied profession and in order to make a multidisciplinary approaches in prevention, treatment and rehabilitation phase. Holistic practice draws on nursing knowledge, intuitions and expertise that help the nurses to become the effective partners in the client care. Practicing of holistic health demands an in-depth knowledge base about the concepts of modern nursing practice as well as major complementary and alternative therapies. Yoga was accepted as a major form of complementary and alternative therapy, It symbolizes our harmony of body and mind, thought and action, self-control and performance, synchronization between man and the nature and a holistic approach to health and well-being of the human beings. Today yoga has to turn out to be a well-liked form of exercises contributing to the health and fitness. However previously yoga was considered as a complete lifestyle. In the present scenario yoga become one of the major areas of concern of holistic nursing and various statutory bodies nursing like American nurses association recognized yoga as a part of the nursing practice. In nursing curricula the statutory bodies included complementary and alternative therapy as one of the major area of concern. Yoga and other therapies became an integral part of the holistic care, so the nursing leaders should take initiatives in order to prepare the student nurses to practice these therapies in order deliver a holistic pattern of care. For implementing this concept effectively among the nursing students we need to identify the attitude of nursing students towards the yoga and complementary therapy practices and this helps to redefine the curriculum. The present study examines the attitude of nursing students towards yoga and other complementary and alternative therapies.

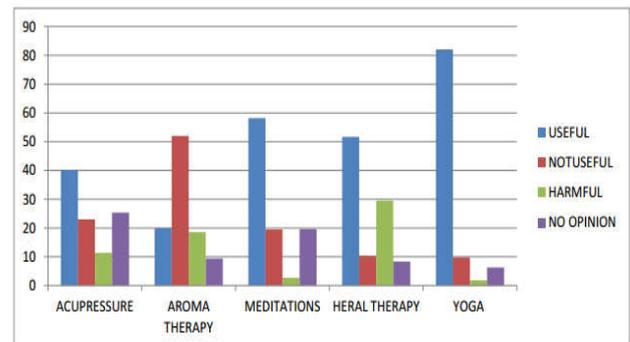
## MATERIALS AND METHODES

A descriptive survey was conducted at various nursing institutes in, Kerala during the academic year 2015–2016. The participants of the study were the undergraduate students who were studying in various nursing colleges in Kerala, India. 300 students were selected from the various nursing colleges at Kerala using a stratified random sampling. After getting the administrative, ethical sanctions and informed consent, the data were collected using NSAS-CAT (Nursing Students Attitude Scale-CAT) and a knowledge questionnaire. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

## RESULTS

The sample consisted of 300 nursing students. Mean ages of the samples were 20.76 (range 17–21 years). Of the respondents, 68.9% were girls. There were 50 (16.6%) first-, 62 (20.7%) second-, 88 (29.3%) third-, 100 (33.3%) fourth- year students. Nursing students were generally more positive attitude about yoga and other complementary and alternative therapies (51.2%) and 55.7% of students having adequate knowledge regarding yoga and other alternative and complementary therapies. Approximately 48.8% of nursing students agreed with the statement that yoga and associated therapies having placebo effects.

Similarly, 46.2% of nursing students agreed with the statement that yoga and other therapies, which have not been scientifically tested, should be discouraged.



**Figure 1. Opinion of nursing students regarding the clinical usefulness of selected complementary and alternative therapies.**

More than half of the students' (64.2%) agreed that the yoga arouses innate natural power in human beings and 56.3% supported that the yoga and complementary therapies should be included in the nursing curriculum. The major source of students' knowledge regarding the yoga and complementary therapies is internet, social media and the newspapers.

## DISCUSSION

The present study examined the knowledge and attitudes of nursing students regarding yoga and other complementary and alternative therapies. The findings of the study sink with the results of the study conducted by Yasemin Yildirim et al (2009), shows that the nursing students of Turkey having more knowledge and attitude regarding complementary and alternative medicine than the medical students. Majority of the study respondents agreed that yoga and other therapies should be included in the nursing curriculum; it supports the results of the study conducted by Cathryn Booth-Laforce, et al (2010). A study conducted by Adrian Furnham (2003) first year medical students having less knowledge than the remaining higher class students, it substantiates the findings of the present study.

## Conclusion

The present study reveals that nursing students have more positive attitudes and knowledge towards yoga and other alternative and complementary therapies. The study findings hoist some vital implications for the future nursing and healthcare. We recommended that to make out optimal changes in the traditional nursing education system in order to integrate yoga and other complementary and alternative therapies in the nursing curriculum for improving the knowledge and attitude of the young buds in nursing as well as faculty training programs should be initiated for enhancing the public health standards.

**Conflict of Interest:** NIL

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