

Short Communication

## Self-Efficacy and Satisfaction with Life amongst Sudarshan Kriya Yoga (SKY) Practicing and Non - Practicing Early Adults

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Received: 31/05/2016

Revised: 18/06/2016

Accepted: 20/06/2016

### ABSTRACT

Meditation enhances the overall psychological well-being and health of an individual. Sudarshan Kriya Yoga is a form of meditation which works by altering the rhythm of breath in an individual. Several studies show that SKY improves self-perception and enhances one's confidence. The aim of this study was to examine and compare self-efficacy and satisfaction with life amongst Sudarshan Kriya Yoga practitioners and non-practitioners. The sample of the study consisted of 35 early adults (19 male and 16 female) with Mean age = 24.60 years and  $SD \pm 3.15$ . In order to achieve the purpose of the study Self-efficacy scale by Sud, Schwarzer, & Jerusalem (1998) <sup>[1]</sup> and Satisfaction with life scale by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin (1985) <sup>[2]</sup> were utilized. The data was analyzed using independent sample t test and Pearson correlation. The results indicated that the participants who practiced SKY regularly have higher self-efficacy in comparison to the non-practitioners. While in the case of scores on satisfaction with life, the SKY practitioners did not differ significantly from the non-practitioners. The correlation between the self-efficacy scores and life satisfaction was found to be significant. Thus we can say that SKY leads to higher self-efficacy. And that the individuals who regularly practice SKY are better able to acknowledge their own capabilities and use them more efficiently.

**Keywords:** Sudarshan Kriya Yoga, Self-efficacy, Life satisfaction.

### INTRODUCTION

Psychological wellbeing is now acquiring much importance and thus people have started resorting to a number of health-behaviour techniques to live a healthy and happy life. Yoga and meditation is one such purifying mechanism through which we try to unify the mind, body and soul (Arora, & Bhattacharjee, 2008). <sup>[3]</sup> It is an individual branch of knowledge whose ultimate aim is self-development and self-realization. Regular practice of these techniques promotes strength, resilience, flexibility and facilitates qualities like friendliness, compassion, and greater self-control (McCall, 2007). <sup>[4]</sup> Sustained practice and

commitment leads to changes in life perspective, and self-awareness (Desikachar, Bragdon, & Bossart, 2005, <sup>[5]</sup> Mehta, Mehta, & Mehta, 1995, <sup>[6]</sup> & Atkinson, & Permuth-Levine, 2009 <sup>[7]</sup>). The present article focusses on the Sudarshan Kriya Yoga and its effect on perceived self-efficacy and life satisfaction.

#### Sudarshan Kriya Yoga (SKY)

Breathing is the very first act which an individual does at the time of birth. Breath is regarded as an evidence of 'prana' and 'pranayam' means controlling and expanding the life force. In normal instances the breathing process often goes unnoticed. But when we encounter some emotionally

charged situations the breath patterns change drastically causing the change in the physiological arousal level. Thus breath can be regarded as a key to our emotions. Therefore we can speculate that breath plays a very crucial role and if we are able to adequately control and regulate it, we would be able to prevent mind and body from a number of ailments (Sovik, 2000 [8]). Sudarshan kriya yoga is one such technique which works by regulating the breath pattern. SKY program consists of four components. Three stage pranayama, bhastrika pranayama, chanting of 'Om' and then the Sudarshan kriya (cyclic breathing). The participants are instructed to keep their attention over their breath and the sensations in the body. The breath work is followed by meditation and rest.

#### **Self-efficacy and Satisfaction with Life:**

Self-efficacy is the extent or strength of a person's belief in one's own ability to complete tasks and reach goals. It affects every aspect of human endeavor like self-evaluation, goal appraisal, decision making, proper allocation of resources, etc. Higher self-efficacy is found to affect a person's decision regarding opting positive health behaviour patterns (Luszczynska, & Schwarzer, 2005 [9]). Self-efficacy is characteristically defined as a judgement in relation to one's ability to organize and execute a particular form of act (Bandura, 1989, [10] 1994 [11]).

Life satisfaction directs a person to rationally appraise his or her life and how s/he feels about where it is likely to be in near future. It is a measure of overall well-being and may be assessed in relation to mood, satisfaction with accomplished goals, self-concepts, and self-perceived ability to manage hassles of daily life. It is having a positive attitude of one's life as a whole rather being caught with the current feelings. Feelings and emotions are assumed as temporary and are considered temporary in nature (Bailey, Eng, Frisch, & Snyder, 2007 [12]).

#### **Sudarshan Kriya Yoga and psychological wellbeing:**

The typical breathing pattern used in Sudarshan kriya helps harmonizing the physiological as well as the psychological homeostasis. SKY not only augments the state on mind but also has been reported to cure various mental inequities. It helps in the release of negative toxins by flushing them out with exhalation so that each cell feels revitalized and energized. Both clinical and research evidence demonstrate that it significantly alleviates stress, anxiety and depression (Bhatia, Kumar, Pandev, & Kochipilli, 2003 [13]). Bhatia et al. (2003), [13] reported that SKY was found successful with 70-80 per cent patients suffering from severe depression. SKY also has been postulated to facilitate regulation of emotion. Rather than allowing emotion to alter the breath (and cause physiological changes) SKY uses the breath to transform one's emotional state. Since the literature reports that regular practice of SKY results into uplifting of mental state it would be interesting to study its effect over the Perceived Self-efficacy and Life satisfaction. It was speculated that the participants who regularly practiced SKY would be significantly better in terms of satisfaction with life and perceived self-efficacy in comparison to those who never practiced the SKY.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Participants**

A total of 19 participants who regularly practiced SKY, at least since 100 days and 16 controls participated in the study. The Mean age was = 24.6 years and SD =  $\pm 3.15$ . All the participants gave their consent to participate in the study.

### **Tools**

The data of the study was collected by using General Self-Efficacy Scale & Life Satisfaction Scale.

**General Self-efficacy Scale (GSE):** The GSE is a 10-item scale designed to assess optimistic self-beliefs used to cope with arrange of demands in daily life. The scale was designed to assess self-efficacy, i.e., the belief that one's actions are accountable for

positive outcomes. The scaled score for each question ranges from 1 to 4. Higher scores indicate stronger belief in self-efficacy. This scale was originally developed by Jerusalem and Schwarzer in 1981 in Germany and has been translated into numerous languages. Cronbach alpha ranges from 0.75 to 0.94 across different language versions (Schwarzer & Jerusalem 1995, [14] Luszczynska, & Schwarzer, 2005 [9]).

**Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS):** SWLS developed by Diener, Emmons, Larson, and Griffin (1985) [2] does not assess contentment with particular life realms (e.g., health, achievement and finances), but it allows respondents to incorporate and evaluate these domains in an indirect way. It is a 5-item self-report measure of overall satisfaction with life. Questions are answered on a 7-point Likert Scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree,” and responses are summed to provide an overall score. The internal consistency of the SWLS was reported to be .87 and the test-retest correlation is .82 (Diener, 1984).

**Procedure**

The two assessment tools were administered to the participants in a group. Informed consent was obtained from them before administration of the scales. The participants were instructed to answer the items as honestly as possible and not to skip any items or leave any items blank. After finishing the assessment tools, they were thanked and debriefed about the objectives of the study.

**RESULTS**

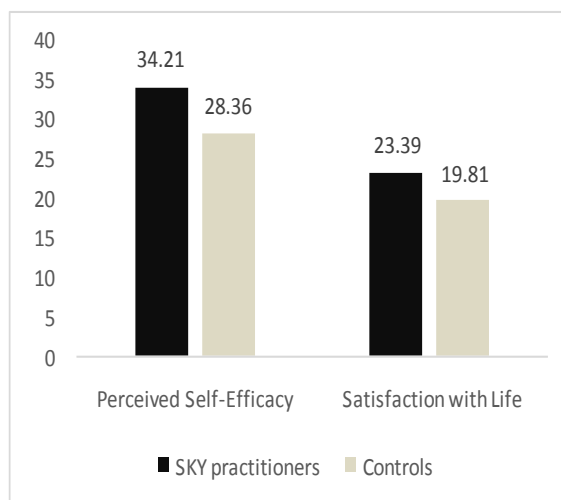
There were 19 SKY practitioners and 16 controls. An **independent-samples t-test** was run to determine if there were differences in perceived self-efficacy and life satisfaction amongst SKY practitioners and controls. Perceived self-efficacy was more in SKY practitioners (M =34.21, SD = ±3.29) than the controls (M = 28.38, SD = ±6.29), a statistically significant difference, M = 5.38, t(33) = 3.517. Life satisfaction

was more in SKY practitioners M =23.39, SD = ±7.072) than controls(M = 19.81, SD = ±6.90), but the difference was not found statistically significant, M = 3.58, t(33) = 0.141.

**Table 1: Depicting Mean, SD and t value for SKY practitioners with that of the controls on perceived self-efficacy and satisfaction with life**

	SKY practice	N	Mean	SD	t
Perceived Self-Efficacy	Yes	19	34.21	3.29	3.52**
	No	16	28.36	6.29	
Life Satisfaction	Yes	19	23.39	7.07	1.51
	No	16	19.81	6.90	

\*\*Significant at 0.01



**Graph: Depicting the mean differences between SKY practitioners and control on perceived self-efficacy and satisfaction with life.**

**Correlation between perceived self-efficacy and satisfaction with life:** A Pearson's product-moment correlation was run to assess the relationship between perceived self-efficacy and life satisfaction in SKY practitioners and non-practitioners (Mean age= 24.60 years, SD= ±3.15). Preliminary analyses showed the relationship to be linear with both variables normally distributed, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk test (p > .05), and there were no outliers. There was a moderate positive correlation between perceived self-efficacy and life satisfaction, r (33) = .473, p < .004.

**Table 2: Depicting correlation of Perceived Self-efficacy and satisfaction with life**

	Mean	SD	r
Perceived Self-efficacy	31.54	±5.65	.473**
Life satisfaction	21.75	±7.12	

\*\*Significant at 0.01

## DISCUSSION

The main objective of the study was to find whether the SKY practitioners differ significantly from the controls on the measures of perceived self-efficacy and satisfaction with life. It was found that those who practice Sudarshan kriya yoga regularly had better perceived self-efficacy in comparison to the controls. High self-efficacy is linked to positive well-being, regulation of stress, higher self-esteem, better physical condition, better adaptation to and recovery from diseases (Bandura, 1994 [11]). This finding goes in alignment with previous literature which speculates about the importance of SKY practice on the promotion of qualities like friendliness, compassion, and greater self-control (McCall, 2007 [4]). Several studies have also reported that sustained practice and commitment leads to changes in life perspective, and self-awareness (Desikachar, Bragdon, & Bossart, 2005, [5] Mehta, Mehta, & Mehta, 1995, [6] & Atkinson, & Permuth-Levine, 2009 [7]). Thus it is very essential that people inculcate meditation in their daily routines.

With reference to the satisfaction with life, we don't find statistically significant differences between the SKY practitioners and control group. But even then we can find the trend which indicates that those who practiced SKY regularly had higher satisfaction with life in comparison to the control. Further, there is need to explore the underlying factors involved in the determining the satisfaction with life in addition to meditation.

The correlation between Perceived self-efficacy and Satisfaction with life was found to be significant. Thus we can conclude that there is a positive relation between the two factors. And that self-belief and life satisfaction goes hand in hand.

**Implications and suggestions for future research:** The findings in this study are relevant and helpful to Researchers and psychologists in assisting and helping people in developing their sense of belief in oneself as well as in their ability to control

or alter life's circumstances or happenings by concentrating on what they "can accomplish" rather on what they "cannot accomplish", since this may sooner or later lead to a more tranquil or less tense academic and personal life. Adolescents are shelled with a barrage of challenges from the portrayal of different life roles like that of a student, leader, son, daughter, friend, etc., thus it is important to equip students with the basic life skills such as pursuing contentment and being confident or having faith in oneself in order for them not only to survive but even to flourish in their diverse life roles. Further research a work needs to be conducted in order to gain a vivid picture of the interplay and role of meditation in bringing psychological peace and physiological equanimity.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my gratitude to the Art of Living organization for permitting me to conduct this study and extending required assistance. My special thanks for Mr. Gaurav Singh Chauhan, full-time faculty of Art of Living, for his support and encouragement.

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How to cite this article: Mishra KA, Asthana HS. Self-efficacy and satisfaction with life amongst Sudarshan Kriya Yoga (SKY) practicing and non - practicing early adults. *Int J Health Sci Res*. 2016; 6(7):308-312.

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