



YOGA THERAPY AND REHABILITATION OF THE CONVICTED: A STUDY

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1. Introduction

The criminal justice system has come to understand more and more in recent years how critical rehabilitation is to lowering recidivism rates and promoting the reintegration of prisoners into society. Conventional punishment measures have frequently failed to address the intricate underlying causes of criminal conduct. Because of this, alternative approaches like yoga therapy have drawn notice for their potential to support inmates' overall rehabilitation and personal development.

Yoga is an age-old Indian discipline that has become very popular all over the world due to its many physical, mental, and spiritual advantages. Yoga is more than just a physical practice; it is a holistic philosophy that aims to balance the mind, body, and spirit. Yoga offers a holistic approach to improving total well-being through the integration of physical postures asanas, breath control pranayama, meditation, and ethical concepts.

Yoga therapy offers a promising path for recovery in the context of correctional facilities, where individuals frequently struggle with trauma, addiction, mental health concerns, and social alienation. Through the treatment of the underlying reasons of criminal conduct, yoga can help incarcerated people overcome cycles of violence and substance abuse by promoting self-awareness, emotional regulation, and stress management skills.

Although there is increasing interest in the therapeutic uses of yoga in correctional settings, there is still a dearth of scientific study on the subject. By investigating the effects of yoga therapy on the rehabilitation of condemned individuals, this study aims to add to the body of knowledge already in existence. This research attempts to clarify the possible advantages of incorporating yoga into rehabilitation programs for jailed populations by an extensive assessment of pertinent literature and an empirical inquiry.

Through an examination of the connections between yoga, criminal justice, and rehabilitation, this research aims to provide light on novel strategies for meeting the multifaceted needs of offenders. In the end, it is envisaged that the research's conclusions would influence criminal justice system policy and practice, opening the door for more considerate and successful rehabilitation strategies.

2. Literature Review

Research indicates that there may be multifaceted and multidomain characteristics that can be used to identify individual-specific rehabilitation trajectories throughout time as well as significantly predict the pro-cognitive effects of cognitive rehabilitation.

It is feasible to treat cognitive impairment in schizophrenia with a personalized rehabilitation approach if method- and patient-specific outcome predictions are taken into consideration **A Rampino, 2021.**

Results indicate that while there are some notable differences across exercise kinds, the impact of different exercise types employed in CLBP on pain and impairment varies. Numerous of the included systematic reviews had significant risk of bias and were based on randomized controlled trials of low to moderate quality. The contradictory findings cast doubt on the outcomes, resulting in very low to intermediate quality evidence supporting our findings. To reduce resource waste, future systematic reviews should be of a better calibre **WJA Grooten, 2022.**

As an adjuvant in the therapy of SMI, yoga and mindfulness therapies both seem beneficial. Research has demonstrated improvements in schizophrenia patients' psychopathology, anxiety, cognition, and functioning. In a similar vein, both methods have proven to be useful adjuvants for MDD. But larger, more well planned studies might be required, especially for BD **B Bharadwaj, 2019.**

If exercise training and psychological support are part of respiratory rehabilitation, then functional exercise capacity and HRQL are likely to improve. To clarify the types and intensities of exercise, the impact of respiratory muscle training, and patient education, more study is needed **Y Lacasse, 1997.**

Research findings showed that practicing yoga lowered anxiety. However, more research is required to improve the capacity to generalize and apply yoga to reduce anxiety because of the large range of study populations, restrictions in some study designs, and different outcome measures **LL Weaver, 2015.**

3. Benefits and Outcomes

Here are some benefits and outcomes are stated below:

1. **Better Mental Health:** Those who are incarcerated may experience better mental health outcomes as a result of participating in yoga therapy programs. Yoga assists people in reducing their symptoms of anxiety, sadness, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) by teaching mindfulness and relaxation techniques. Participants may have improved emotional well-being and less psychological suffering by developing a sense of inner calm and resilience.



2. **Tension Reduction:** By encouraging practitioners to concentrate on the present moment and develop an inner calm, yoga practice helps people relax and reduce tension. Yoga is a useful coping strategy for prisoners who are dealing with the difficulties of isolation and

unpredictability in their lives. It helps them to reduce tension and anxiety. Participants may have lower levels of cortisol and other stress hormones by learning to control their physiological reactions to stress, which could improve their general health and well-being.

3. **Improved Self-Awareness and Self-Regulation:** Participants in yoga therapy develop stronger self-awareness and self-regulation abilities, which improves their understanding and control over their thoughts, feelings, and actions. People can develop more self-control and learn to examine their inner feelings without passing judgment by engaging in mindfulness exercises and breathwork. Through the acquisition of these vital life skills, individuals may find themselves in a better position to make wise decisions and stay out of trouble in the future.
4. **Health Benefits for the Body:** Yoga treatment provides several health benefits for prisoners' bodies in addition to its mental and emotional advantages. Regular yoga asana practice can enhance general physical fitness and lower the chance of injury by promoting flexibility, strength, and balance. Yoga has also been demonstrated to enhance cardiovascular health and reduce chronic pain, both of which improve participants' overall health results.
5. **Positive Behavioral Changes:** Taking part in yoga therapy programs has been linked to inmates exhibiting more positive behaviors. Yoga helps people develop pro-social attitudes and behaviors by encouraging self-control, self-discipline, and self-respect. People may have better relationships with themselves and others by practicing empathy, compassion, and non-violence (ahimsa), which will lessen hostility and conflict in correctional facilities.
6. **Enhanced Resilience and Coping Skills:** Yoga therapy helps prisoners develop their resilience and coping mechanisms, which helps them deal with life's obstacles more skillfully. Through practicing being grounded and in the moment when faced with challenges, participants increase their ability to overcome failures and keep going after their objectives. People who practice yoga develop resilience and inner strength, which gives them the ability to overcome challenges and bring about positive change in their life.



7. **Reintegration into Society:** Probably most significantly, yoga therapy programs can help formerly jailed people successfully reintegrate back into society. Through addressing the root causes of criminal conduct and encouraging personal development and transformation, yoga gives participants the skills they need to lead successful and meaningful lives after their release. By developing good coping mechanisms, self-regulation, and self-awareness, people can become more equipped to face the obstacles of reintegration and make valuable contributions to their communities.
8. **Decreased Recidivism Rates:** Yoga therapy's capacity to lower recidivism rates is one of its most important effects when applied in correctional settings. Yoga therapy can assist in breaking the cycle of jail and reoffending by addressing the underlying causes of criminal conduct and giving them the tools they need to make wise decisions in life. Studies indicate that involvement in yoga programs while incarcerated is linked to decreased recidivism rates,

underscoring the long-term influence of these interventions on lowering criminal activity in the future.

9. **Empowerment and Personal Growth:** Yoga therapy gives prisoners the confidence to take charge of their life and follow their own paths toward development and transformation. Yoga helps practitioners recognize their innate worth and capacity for transformation, which increases their sense of agency and self-efficacy. Setting and completing goals on the mat helps people develop a positive self-image and increase their self-confidence, which paves the way for long-lasting personal change.
10. **Cultivation of Mindfulness and Gratitude:** Yoga therapy promotes inmates' development of these virtues, which deepens their understanding of life and all of its benefits. Participants gain more resilience and contentment—even in difficult situations—by learning to appreciate the present and nurture an attitude of appreciation. People who engage in activities like guided meditation and gratitude journaling develop a more optimistic view on life, which improves their general well-being and sense of fulfillment.
11. **Community Building and Peer Support:** Yoga therapy programs offer a welcoming setting where people can meet people who have like aims and experiences. Participants' emotions of alienation and loneliness are lessened as a result of developing a sense of camaraderie and belonging through group practice sessions and shared observations. Yoga programs promote social ties and improve general well-being by establishing a supportive network of people dedicated to personal development and positive transformation through peer support and mutual encouragement.
12. **Promotion of Pro-Social Values:** In order to create a more tranquil and harmonious society, yoga therapy encourages the development of pro-social values including empathy, compassion, and non-violence. Ahimsa (non-violence) and satya (truthfulness), two concepts that yoga emphasizes, are meant to inspire people to treat others and themselves with kindness and respect. Participants get a stronger sense of social responsibility and help to create a more compassionate and just world by practicing ethical ideals both on and off the mat.

In conclusion, yoga therapy provides a plethora of advantages and results for those who are incarcerated, from better mental and physical health to lower recidivism rates and better reintegration into society. Yoga therapy has the power to completely change criminal justice system rehabilitation procedures and develop a more humane and efficient strategy for dealing with crime and incarceration by attending to the multifaceted needs of offenders and encouraging personal development and transformation.

4. Challenges and Considerations

Programs that use yoga therapy have shown promise in helping jailed people recover holistically and rehabilitate. Nonetheless, there are issues and obstacles associated with implementing such programs in correctional settings. In order to maximize the efficacy and durability of yoga therapy programs, we will review some of the major issues and concerns that come up when introducing them into correctional facilities. We will also go over ways for dealing with these issues.

1. **Access and Equity:** It is quite difficult to provide all prisoners with equal access to yoga treatment programs in the context of prison environments. Some prisoners' participation in these activities may be hampered by a lack of resources, congested facilities, and logistical issues. Furthermore, differences in access depending on racial, gender, or socioeconomic background as well as the degree of institutional support could make already-existing imbalances in the criminal justice system worse. Correctional administrators and program facilitators need to prioritize inclusion in order to expand access to yoga therapy programs for all jailed individuals, regardless of their circumstances or history. This will help solve the difficulties at hand. This could entail arranging for participants to receive transportation help, holding numerous sessions at various times and locations within the building, and utilizing community partnerships to augment current resources.



2. **Staff Training and Support:** Making sure that correctional staff members have the necessary training and assistance to facilitate yoga therapy programs is another important factor to take into account when putting these programs into place. Although many employees might be aware of the potential advantages of yoga for rehabilitation, it's possible that they lack the knowledge and experience needed to carry out these programs successfully. To ensure the quality and efficacy of yoga therapy interventions within correctional facilities, it might be helpful to solve this difficulty by offering staff members full training and continuous support. Training curricula must to include issues like conflict resolution, cultural sensitivity, and trauma-informed care in order to give staff members the abilities and information necessary to assist clients in their recovery.
3. **Safety and Security Concerns:** Yoga therapy programs are difficult to establish in correctional environments because of safety and security issues. To protect everyone's safety, instructors and participants must follow tight rules and regulations. Furthermore, the trusting and unwinding environment required for a successful yoga session may be impacted by the presence of security measures like metal scanners and surveillance cameras. The therapeutic objectives of yoga therapy must be balanced with the requirement for security and safety, which calls for careful thought and cooperation between program facilitators and correctional officials. In-depth risk assessments, open lines of communication between staff and participants, and specialist training for yoga instructors on navigating security procedures within correctional facilities are some strategies for resolving safety and security concerns.



4. **Resistance and Stigma:** Getting acceptance and support for yoga programs in correctional facilities may be difficult due to resistance and stigma around yoga and alternative types of therapy. Some stakeholders may have misconceptions or unfavorable opinions about yoga, believing it to be incompatible with conventional rehabilitation techniques or religious beliefs. These stakeholders include administrators, correctional staff, and even the incarcerated inmates themselves. Dispelling these myths and raising knowledge of the scientifically proven advantages of yoga therapy is crucial to breaking through resistance and creating an accepting environment in correctional settings. Workshops, talks, and informational materials are

examples of education and outreach initiatives that can help debunk myths and misconceptions about yoga and foster support for its inclusion in rehabilitation programs.

5. **Trauma-Informed Approach:** Numerous people serving prison sentences have had trauma, such as physical and sexual abuse, as well as difficulty in their early years, which may hinder their participation in yoga treatment programs. Establishing a supportive atmosphere that promotes healing and rehabilitation requires implementing a trauma-informed approach that places a high priority on safety, empowerment, and choice. In order to support healing and resilience, yoga instructors and facilitators need to be aware of each participant's individual needs and experiences. They should adjust their teaching style accordingly and offer trauma-informed care. This could entail teaching trauma-sensitive yoga techniques, providing tailored accommodations and support, and giving participants access to resources for more trauma-informed therapies.
6. **Integration with Existing Programs:** There are organizational and logistical difficulties when integrating yoga therapy programs with the current rehabilitation initiatives and services offered by correctional facilities. Smooth integration of yoga therapy into complete treatment plans requires cooperation and coordination between several departments and stakeholders, such as mental health specialists, drug abuse counselors, and healthcare providers. The impact of yoga therapy programs can be maximized and participant continuity of treatment can be ensured by establishing clear communication channels and protocols for referral and collaboration. Furthermore, integrating yoga therapy into current treatment plans and schedules might support an interdisciplinary and holistic approach to rehabilitation in correctional settings.
7. **Sustainability and Long-Term Impact:** Sustaining the viability and enduring influence of yoga therapy initiatives within correctional environments necessitates continuous dedication and financial support from all relevant parties. Over time, programmatic initiatives must be sustained through securing money, fostering institutional support, and proving quantifiable results. Furthermore, assessing the long-term effects of yoga therapy on mental health outcomes, recidivism rates, and general well-being is essential for shaping future criminal justice system policy and practice. The effectiveness of yoga therapy programs can be evaluated, along with areas for improvement, through longitudinal research and program evaluations. This process ultimately aids in the creation of evidence-based practices and policies in the field of penal rehabilitation.

In summary, there are a variety of special difficulties and factors to take into account when introducing yoga therapy programs in correctional settings, from issues of equity and access to safety and security. Stakeholders may overcome obstacles and develop more inclusive, efficient, and compassionate methods to rehabilitation within the criminal justice system by proactively addressing these issues and working together. Using trauma-informed treatment, staff development, program integration, and strategic planning, yoga therapy has the power to completely change rehabilitation procedures and encourage the healing and transformation of those who are jailed. Equity, safety, and sustainability should be given first priority so that we can use yoga's healing properties to promote good transformation and the wellbeing of inmates everywhere.

Conclusion

The implementation of yoga treatment programs in correctional settings is a complex undertaking that necessitates meticulous evaluation of multiple aspects to guarantee their efficacy and durability. In this conversation, we've looked at the main issues and concerns surrounding the implementation of yoga therapy programs in prisons, along with solutions to these problems so that the programs can have the greatest possible positive effects on the holistic healing and rehabilitation of prisoners. Making sure that all prisoners have equal access to yoga treatment programs is one of the biggest implementation issues. The participation in these programs may be hampered by a lack of funding, practical difficulties, and differences in access depending on variables including gender, color, and

socioeconomic level. At order to overcome this obstacle, administrators and program facilitators. At correctional facilities need to place a high value on inclusivity and think of creative ways to increase the number of people who can participate in yoga therapy programs, regardless of their circumstances or background.

Making sure that correctional staff members have the necessary training and assistance to lead yoga therapy programs is another important factor to take into account. Ensuring that staff receive thorough training and continuous support can assist guarantee the caliber and efficacy of yoga therapy interventions in correctional facilities. Implementing yoga treatment programs is also significantly hampered by worries about security and safety. The therapeutic objectives of yoga therapy must be balanced with the requirement for security and safety, which calls for careful thought and cooperation between program facilitators and correctional officials.

Acquiring acceptance and support for yoga programs within correctional facilities may also be difficult due to resistance and stigma surrounding yoga and alternative types of rehabilitation. Dispelling these myths and raising knowledge of the scientifically proven advantages of yoga therapy is crucial to breaking through resistance and creating an accepting environment in correctional settings. In addition, a lot of people who are behind bars have gone through trauma, which could affect their capacity to participate in yoga treatment programs. Creating a supportive atmosphere that promotes healing and recovery requires adopting a trauma-informed strategy.

There are organizational and logistical difficulties when integrating yoga therapy programs with the current rehabilitation initiatives and services offered by correctional facilities. The smooth integration of yoga therapy into comprehensive treatment regimens requires collaboration and coordination between several departments and stakeholders. Additionally, continuous dedication and investment from stakeholders at all levels are necessary to preserve the sustainability and long-term effects of yoga therapy programs.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, there is no denying the potential advantages of yoga therapy for those who are incarcerated. Studies have indicated that engaging in yoga programs while incarcerated is linked to favorable behavioral modifications, stress reduction, improved self-awareness, and mental health improvements. Additionally, yoga therapy has been connected to higher rates of reintegration into society and lower rates of recidivism. Yoga therapy has the ability to improve criminal justice system rehabilitation procedures by addressing the multifaceted needs of offenders and promoting personal development and transformation.

In conclusion, putting yoga therapy programs into practice in correctional settings necessitates a determined effort to get over a number of obstacles and concerns. A more inclusive, efficient, and compassionate approach to rehabilitation within the criminal justice system can be created by stakeholders working together to prioritize access and equity, staff training and support, safety and security, stigma reduction, trauma-informed care, program integration, and sustainability. We can use yoga to help inmates recover, transform, and make positive changes in their lives via thoughtful planning, teamwork, and continuous assessment. In the end, this will help to build a society that is more fair and compassionate.

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