

Correlation between Yoga Techniques Practice, Value Orientations and Motivation

Bosiljka Janjušević*, Predrag Nikić
*International Society for Scientific Interdisciplinary Yoga Research
Belgrade, Serbia*

Abstract: *In this paper, we research correlation between yoga practice, value orientations and lifestyle preferences. We presumed that individuals who practice yoga techniques for a longer period of time are more open, democratically and humanistic oriented while competitive values and life style are less represented. Sample consisted of 111 respondents, among them there were 43 yoga instructors, 38 students of the International Yoga Academy and 30 yoga practitioners who are beginners in yoga, both sexes, 16 to 64 years of age. There were assessed value orientations by the instrument of Kuzmanović (1995) and Pantić (1981) and lifestyle preferences were assessed by Popadić (1990, 1995) instrument. Results of the research show that there are statistically significant correlations between yoga practice duration, value orientations and lifestyles. We noticed that yoga practitioners in Serbia are more opened and they more often choose humanistic lifestyle and at the same time, they show lower tendency toward competitiveness as the motivational factor.*

Key words: *yoga, value orientations, lifestyle, motivation, awareness*

Introduction

Values are both micro and macro concepts. On the micro level of the individual's behavior, values represent the source of motivation as internal standards that enable harmonization of the individual's needs and requests of the social life. Values enable person to estimate possibilities for action that are available to him/her. On the macro level of the cultural practice, values represent understanding that brings meaning, order and integration into the social life. Kluckhohn (1951) thought that, without system of values there is no personal safety nor stability of the social organization.

Values, also, influence institutional decision making because they give the meaning about what is right, good and desirable (Rokeach, Rokeach, 1989).

Values are also criteria that people use when they make choice and to justify their activities both when they estimate people (including themselves) and events (Schwartz, 1992; Rokeach, 1973; Williams, 1970). Yoga practitioners change their life philosophy by accepting new life values, they change their behaviour, attitudes, they tend to be humane and to achieve higher goals in their lives (Nikić, 2011).

Life style represents attitudes, values and perceptions of the world of an individual. Life style, therefore, represents the mean of the self creation and creation of the cultural symbols that have

* Corresponding author: bosiljka.janjusevic@gmail.com

the personal identity. Some aspects of the life style are not voluntary – social and technical systems in which individual is present can limit his/her choice of the life style that are available to him/her (*Spaargaren, VanVliert, 2000*).

Motivation is the element of personality that pushes individual to be active in order to realize the goal and the individual manages behavior that leads to the goal. It can be considered a driving force in the individual. It appeared that motivation has the roots in psychological, behavioral, cognitive and social context. It can have the roots in the basic impulse to maintain a good condition of the organism, to lower physical and psychological pain and to improve the pleasure (*Valerand, 1993*).

Yoga techniques practice (including physical postures - *asanas*, breathing exercises - *pranayama*, meditation and relaxation), significantly contributes to gaining the greater insight in their perception, reactions and behaviour in the life situations (*Janjušević, 2011*) and enables the choice of value orientations and life styles where there is recognized openness for other and for new options.

Subject and goals of the research

In this paper there was examined correlation between value orientations and life styles and the time period of the yoga techniques practice.

Goals of the research were aimed to identify whether there is correlation, and if it exists, to examine the level of correlation between the time period of the yoga techniques practice, value orientations and life styles and to examine polarity of the found correlations.

There was established the following hypothesis: in respondents who practice yoga for a longer period of time, openness and democratic orientations are more pronounced, as well as humanistic life style, and competitive orientation is less pronounced.

Method

This research has been done with the aim to discover the nature of the value orientations present in the yoga teachers, correlation between *time period of the yoga practice* with value orientations and life styles of the yoga practitioners, as well as explanation of these correlations between mentioned groups of phenomena.

The sample was made of 111 yoga practitioners from different parts of Serbia, different ages. Their average years of age were 42. among respondents, there were 30 yoga practitioners who attend yoga classes, 38 students of the International Yoga Academy in Belgrade and 43 certified yoga instructors (200 hours of training).

Correlation between certain psychological and socio-demographic characteristics and the time period of the yoga techniques practice has been asses with application of demographic questionnaire which consisted of 22 questions, instrument of *Popadić (1990, 1995)* which was used to assess life styles and instrument of *Kuzmanović (1995)* and *Pantić (1981)* which was used to examine value orientations of the respondents.

For the variable *yoga* there was used Spearman's correlation coefficient in the statistical analysis and Pearson's correlation coefficient for all other variables.

Results of the research

1. Time period of the yoga practice

Result shows that openness in yoga practitioners is in correlation with longer period of time of the yoga techniques practice ($r = 0,22^*$), while competitiveness as the motivational factor is in negative correlation with the *time period of the yoga practice* ($r = -0,26^{**}$). Correlation between the *time period of the yoga practice* and competitiveness appeared to be significant at the level 0,05.

Table 1. Correlation between variable *time period of the yoga practice*, value orientation and life style

Correlated variables	Pearson's correlation coefficient
Openness	0,22*
Democratic orientation	0,23*
Competitiveness	-0,26**

* correlation significant at the level 0,05 ** correlation significant at the level 0,01

On the variable *time period of the yoga instructor work*, there was confirmed lower expression of competitiveness ($r = -0,24^*$). In this group of respondents – yoga practitioners, correlation between yoga techniques practice, that is, *time period of the yoga instructor work* and competitiveness as the factor of motivation is lower and it is significant at the level 0,01.

Табела 2. Корелација између варијабле *дужина јога инструкторског стажа*, вредносне оријентације и животног стила.

Correlated variables	Pearson's correlation coefficient
Competitiveness	-0,24*
Religiosity	-0,29**
Religious style	-0,23*
Sentimental style	-0,23*

* correlation significant at the level 0,05 ** correlation significant at the level 0,01

On the variable *yoga practice* there is significant correlation between humanistic life style ($r = 0,30^{**}$) and openness ($r = 0,25^{**}$) with yoga techniques practice. In the group that practices yoga recreationally at the yoga classes, there was no significant correlation between yoga practice and competitiveness.

Table 3. Correlation between variables *yoga practice*, value orientations and motivation.

Correlated variables	Spearman's correlation coefficient
Хуманистички стил	0,30**
Религиозност	-0,19*
Отвореност	0,25**
Верски стил	-0,35**

* correlation significant at the level 0,05 ** correlation significant at the level 0,01

Discussion

Goal of the research was examination of the correlation between time period of the yoga practice, value orientation and motivation. We presumed that openness, democratic and humanistic style are more pronounced in persons who practice yoga techniques and that they are less prone to the competitiveness as motivational factor. There were assessed three groups of the yoga practitioners, long time yoga teachers, students of the International Yoga Academy and yoga practitioners who practice yoga in their yoga classes.

Previous researches show that there is significant positive correlation between yoga practice and openness ($r = 0,25^{**}$), as well as between yoga practice and humanistic life style ($r = 0,30^{**}$) (Nikić, Janjušević, 2011). In 2011, there was also identified significant negative correlation between yoga techniques practice and religiosity ($r = -0,19^*$) in the yoga practitioners in Serbia, and level of the negative correlation grows with the time period of yoga practice – in yoga teacher, correlation between time period of the yoga teacher work and religiosity is $r = -0,29^*$.

Results confirm hypothesis, i.e. there is a correlation between the *time period of yoga practice*, value orientations and motivation. Longer time period of yoga practice shows lower feeling of competitiveness as factor of motivation, and higher openness, democratic orientation and human approach in the life situations and communication with the surrounding. There is also significant negative correlation between yoga practice and competitiveness on the variable *time period of the yoga instructor work*. In the group of respondents who practice yoga as recreation at the instructors' yoga classes (variable *yoga practice*) there was no significant correlation between yoga practice and competitiveness. Given the correlations that have been proven in the previous variables, time period of the yoga practice and time period of yoga instructor work, it can be concluded that there appears reduction in competitiveness as the motivation factor by the longer time period of yoga practice and wider range of applied yoga techniques.

Research shows that the most prevalent value orientations are openness and democracy in yoga instructors (Nikić, Janjušević, 2011). Besides them, humanistic style also singled out in yoga practitioners, and respondents give the least importance to competitiveness as a value system. Values have a central place in the structure of personality and they represent belief that a specific mode of behavior or living is socially or personally more desirable compared to some others (Rokeach, 1973).

In yoga instructors and yoga practitioners, awareness about body, emotions and the ability to concentrate and direct the attention allow a greater degree of sympathy with the other party and the other members of the organization, therefore they feel possibility to give to the other the climate that they wish and expect for themselves. Therefore, openness and democratic life style appears in yoga practitioners, because these characteristics include behavior that they wish and expect for themselves, as well. In both yoga instructors and practitioners, competitiveness as the factor of motivation is in negative correlation with yoga practice. In yoga practitioner, self-motivation is pronounced. Yoga practitioners don't find encouragement for achievement their results in competing with others but in finding deeper meaning of their existence, i.e. reaching their personal inner heights.

By understanding the meaning, he/she develops internal motivation. After longer time period of the yoga practice there appear negative correlation between yoga practice and competitiveness as the factor of motivation.

Conclusion

Results of the research confirmed that yoga practice, including physical postures, techniques of breathing, concentration, meditation and relaxation, are connected with humanistic life style and higher level of openness and democratic orientation of the practitioners. Yoga practice is in negative correlation with orientation towards competitiveness as an important element of motivation. Results indicate the need for further researches of the yoga practice effects. In the following researches it is needed to separate yoga instructors according to the time period of the yoga practice.

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