

Effectiveness of Yoga Exercises to Improve Attention and Concentration of Athletes in Holy Angels Girls College, Kuliyaipitiya, Sri Lanka

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This study was conducted to explore the effect of yoga exercises to maintain attention and concentration of the school athletes during sports training. A sample of 60 athletes (netball/athletics/cricket) aged 13-15 years were selected using stratified random sampling and randomly assigned to control and treatment groups (n=30 per group). Participants of both the groups engaged in their respective sports training as usual. The treatment group underwent three yoga sessions per week for 03 months. All participants completed the Test of Attention and Concentration (TACL) before and after a training programme. TACL focuses on broad external attention (BET), broad internal attention (BIT), narrow effective focus (NAR), external overload attention (OET), internal overload attention (OIT), and errors of under-inclusion (RED). Paired t-test was used to compare between attention and concentration of athletes before and after training. According to results, pre- and post-test scores of the treatment group were significantly different ($P < 0.05$) with respect to OIT ($P = 0.000$), NAR ($P = 0.000$), BIT ($P = 0.008$) and RED ($P = 0.001$) whereas no differences existed between scores for BET and OET. In contrast, pre- and post-scores of all tested traits did not differ ($P > 0.05$) in control group. Thus, the proposed yoga session improved athletes' ability to concentrate on more than one task and effectively narrowed the attention/concentration focus, while reducing the difficulty of broadening attention focus and diminishing the tendency for internal overloading. In conclusion, the yoga training programme had a positive effect on concentration and attention of the sample.

Keywords: Concentration, Attention, Yoga