

Association of Muslim prayers and physical fitness among general population-A systematic Review

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Objective: To observe the association of Muslim prayer and physical fitness.

Methodology: For this article, the data were searched from Google scholar, PubMed, Pedro and Cochrane library using the keywords and reviewed using the systematic approach. A systematic review was conducted. Several positive effects are gained from Prayer. It impacts both physical health and mental health. During offering prayers, there is the movement of the whole body. It also interlinks with spiritual well-being. So, Prayer is also called physical fitness. It reduces the mental strains. It makes the relation between God and Muslims. It is very beneficial for physical health. This study only includes the articles related cross-sectional research and systematic reviews.

Results: We selected the 10 studies without biasness and unpaid, 7 out of 10 had association between Prayer and physical fitness. There were beneficial outcomes which are suitable for health. Prayer is also helpful for disabled and geriatric patients, indirectly maintaining physical fitness.

Conclusion: Prayer is very beneficial for health. It maintains the physical fitness level. It gives body shape. It reduces the level of obesity. During praying, the muscles of the body contract and relax at specific positions which increases the blood flow, which helps in removing wastes. Though, it gives more positive results that are very useful for a person's health.

Keywords: Praying, physical health, physical fitness, exercise, physical activity.

INTRODUCTION

Physical fitness is very beneficial for humans. It is a blessing from God. It encompasses the physical and spiritual well-being of a person. It prevents the risk of occurring disease. Fitness is a condition of mental, social and physical goods. It improves the immune system, prevents respiratory diseases, induces gratification, optimism, cheerfulness, decreases anxiety and depression.¹ Exercise is well-defined as planned, organized, ordered and repetitive, maintaining the physical well-being. There is an inverse relationship between less activity level and health-related pathologies such as cardiopulmonary ailment, osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, and memory impairments.² Prayer is an Arabian word that means offering prayers. It gives a calming effect. It is essential and is the second pillar of Islamic belief. Worshippers usually wear loose clothes during prayers. Women wear proper dressing and cover the head with hijab, performed within the peaceful atmosphere to focus and pay attention in the Prayer. *Salat* is a physical and spiritual act involving total obedience and submission to Allah (God). The act of prayers is obligatory for all Muslims.³ In the whole world, Muslim Worshippers offer prayers 5 times a day in a specific manner. The Holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said, "Pray as you have seen me praying, and when it is the time for the Prayer, one of you should

pronounce the Adhan, and the oldest of you should lead the Prayer.

The performance of prostration is an essential element of Prayer. It is performed when the person's head touches the floor or prayer rug. At that posture, the blood rushes, which helps in removing wastes.⁵ Imam Ali in *Nahj al-Balagha* considers health one of the greatest gifts to humans. There is a close relationship between people's religious orientation and beliefs about physical fitness, health, and their behaviors to stay healthy.⁶

Workout plans for old aged people can reduce the risk of several diseases.⁷ It is suitable for physical health and nourishes the body.⁸ It leads to physical and mental health.⁹ It results in a positive effect on mental well-being, which provides prayers frequently.¹⁰ Every position of Prayer is similar to yoga attitudes.¹¹ Prostrating prevents ischemia and heart failure.¹² Physical exercises, including exercise, reduce the level of stress among younger and older.¹³ Spiritual views can impact dietary and health maintenance studied by the king in 1994, Levin in 1988, and Koenig in 2012.¹⁴ Muslim Prayer was accomplished of creating a high level of quietness among worshippers.¹⁵

METHODOLOGY

This review was done at the University of Lahore and

was completed within four months, from August to November. All the literature from 1999 to 2018 was searched with specific vital words physical fitness, prayer, physical activity, health, association, exercise, general population with the use of Boolean operators “OR” and “AND” database search included Google Scholar, PubMed, HEC digital library and Cochrane library.

Table 1: Studies analyzed.

1	Prayers	70,930	3
2	Prayers AND physical fitness	205	7
	Total		10

A systematic review of the electronic database (PubMed, Google scholar AND COCHRANE) was conducted using a relevant database search engine. Keywords were physical fitness, physical activity, health, and postures during prayers. Paid, only abstracts,

irrelevant, unclear studies, interventional studies and studies with copyright or permission issues were excluded. Only observational cross-sectional studies, which included the association of Prayer and physical fitness, available in full length text and published in English, were included in the study.

Ten of our studies produced results with non-response biases which directly meant that there would be an increased risk in our systematic review's power of detecting association between prayers and physical activity among the general population. Furthermore, we did not include paid articles, which may increase the risk of inefficient results (Table 1).

Statistical Analysis: Data were organized and entered on SPSS version 21.

RESULTS

We used Pedro scale for quality assessment of studies (Table 2). The following characteristics were collected; the name of the first author, year of publication, sample size, country of study and gender (Table 3).

Table 2: Pedro scale of quality assessment for included articles.

	Simao 2016	Salami Yuksek	Reza	Doufesh	Nazish	Andrade	Ijaz	Dilek	Hassan	Maltby
1	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
2	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
3	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
4	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
5	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
6	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N
7	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
8	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
9	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
10	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
11	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
12	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Total score	10	10	7	9	6	9	10	7	10	10
% Yes	80%	80%	60%	70%	50%	70%	80%	60%	80%	80
Average Pedro Score										8

Table 3: Results of included articles.

Author	Sample Size	Year	Gender	Duration	Country	Pedro Scale
Simao	92	2016	Females	6 months	Cima	10
Salami Yuksek	849	2017	Males	10 months	Turkey	10
Reza	Not defined	2002	General population	1 year	Iran	7
Doufesh	9	2012	Males and females	5 months	Malaysia	9
Nazish	30	2018	Males and females	4 months	India	6
Andrade	219	2009	Females	4 months	India	9
Ijaz	174	2017	Males and females	2 months	Pakistan	10
DILEK	Supposed	2016	Males and females	3 months	Turkey	7
Hassan	176	2015	Males and females	1 year	Malaysia	10
Maltby	474	1999	Males and females	7 months	America	10

Table 4: Association between prayers and physical fitness.

Author/Year	Outcome	Study Design	Findings
Simao 2016	Health change	RCT	Positive outcomes have been identified regarding spirituality in health
Salami Yuksek 2017	Who offer prayers are more physically fit than the sedentary group	Cross-sectional study	Difference between the prayer group and sedentary group
Doufesh 2012	Higher alpha wave activity during performing Prayer	Cross-sectional study	The proposition of relaxation offered by performing Muslim Prayer
Reza 2002	Physical fitness among disabled geriatric patients	Cross-sectional study	Effect of performing prayers is beneficial for health
Nazish 2018	Prayer is considered a new form of physical activity and beneficial for health	Narrative Review	Relationship of Muslim Prayer with physical activity
Andrade 2009	No effect on the outcome	RCT	Relation between Prayer and healing
Ijaz 2017	Better mental and physical health	Cross-sectional study	Offering Prayer with mindfulness
Dilek 2016	Physical fitness and postural maintenance	Review study	Prayer and yoga benefits
Hassan 2015	Physical and spiritual well-being	Cross-sectional study	Relationship between religious behavior and health
Maltby	Frequency of Prayer lower depression, anxiety and greater self-esteem.	Cross-sectional study	Relationship between religion variables

We identified the clinical factors associated with physical fitness such as age, gender, depression, anxiety, handicapped, nutrition, physical inactivity, fatigue and lifestyle modifications mentioned in different studies and discussed, compared them with previous studies. Association between prayers and physical fitness as reported by various studies is summarized in Table 4.

DISCUSSION

Various studies showed that only fair daily living activities performed regularly give physical fitness-related advantages considered by Roaf in 2014. The posture of yoga and Prayer resemble and provide similar benefits to physical fitness. The dissimilarity is that Prayer is offered for God's love while yoga is performed for self-awareness.

There are some compulsions for Prayer like direction to Kabaah; cleanliness, and dressing, whereas yoga has not that obligations.¹¹ Religion is isolated to "Islamic faith" and "religious act." Outcomes display that Islamic belief impacts religion, lifespan maintenance, and protective activities. Physical fitness is powerfully correlated with daily activities: religion influences healthy nourishment, societal associations, and preventive actions.

The elementary principle of faith is known as "Belief" in the Islamic religion. Prayer should be offered at regular intervals. There is the physical activity of the body during offering Prayer. When Prayer is offered regularly deliver luxury, desire, contemplation, calmness, peace and conservation of belief and improve mystical well-being.

Prayer can also maintain lifestyle modifications. It can make a social relationship between Muslims during offering Prayer in the mosque.¹⁴ The individuals repeatedly kept their eyes open during round 2 and round 3. It results that offering Prayer with eye-opening is beneficial that the eyes were held focused on the center on the prayer mat which higher the emission of alpha waves results in calming effect studied by Oishi in 2007.¹⁵ A meta-analysis is recommended to know the significance of results statistically.

CONCLUSION

During Prayer, there is stretching of muscles and helps to maintain muscle tone. It decreases the risk of osteoarthritis and other comorbidities, keeps the body flexible, and prevents spasms and stiffness. During Prayer, the muscles are exercised. The blood supply increases, which help in removing waste products improves your mental activity.

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