TANTIA UNIVERSITY JOURNAL OF HOMOEOPATHY AND MEDICAL SCIENCE
Website- www.tjhms.com Email : tujhms@tantiauniversity.com
Peer-Reviewed Journal, E-ISSN: 2581-8899, P-ISSN: 2581-978X
Volume 8|Issue 2|Apr. –June 2025|

REVIEW ARTICLE

THE EFFECT OF YOGA NIDRA IN INSOMNIA: A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY

Manju[1], Karan[2]
[1] PG Scholar, [2]Assistant Professor , Faculty of Ayurveda, Tantia University, Sriganganagar, Rajasthan

Received- 17/05/2025
Revised- 25/06/2025
Accepted– 30/06/2025

Key Word- Yog Nidra, Insomnia, Ayurveda, Sleep,

Corresponding Author:- Dr. Manju, PG Scholar, Faculty of Ayurveda, Tantia University, Sriganganagar, Rajasthan

Abstract

Yoga Nidra, also known as yogic sleep, has emerged as a potential therapeutic tool in managing insomnia, a common sleep disorder characterized by difficulty falling or staying asleep. The practice of Yoga Nidra involves a deep state of conscious relaxation, guiding practitioners into a meditative state that bridges the gap between wakefulness and sleep. This article explores the effects of Yoga Nidra on insomnia, focusing on its physiological and psychological impacts, as well as its potential to improve sleep quality and promote overall well-being. Through a review of existing literature and scientific studies, we examine how Yoga Nidra can alleviate the symptoms of insomnia by reducing stress, enhancing relaxation, and regulating the nervous system. The article also discusses the practical application of Yoga Nidra in clinical settings and suggests future research directions to further validate its therapeutic benefits.

INTRODUCTION

Insomnia is one of the most prevalent sleep disorders worldwide, affecting millions of people regardless of age, gender, or cultural background. Individuals suffering from insomnia often experience poor sleep quality, difficulty falling asleep, frequent awakenings, or waking up too early. The consequences of chronic insomnia are far-reaching, impacting cognitive functioning, emotional well-being, and physical health. Conventional treatments for insomnia include pharmacological interventions, cognitive behavioral therapy, and sleep hygiene practices. However, many

individuals seek alternative or complementary therapies that address the root causes of insomnia without the side effects associated with medications.

One such practice gaining attention in the field of sleep medicine is **Yoga Nidra**, an ancient form of guided meditation that induces deep relaxation. Yoga Nidra is often referred to as "yogic sleep" because it allows practitioners to experience the benefits of deep sleep while remaining consciously aware. This unique state of consciousness promotes profound physical and mental relaxation, which may help individuals suffering from insomnia.

The primary objective of this article is to explore the effects of Yoga Nidra on insomnia. Specifically, we will examine how Yoga Nidra influences sleep patterns, anxiety levels, and overall well-being, with a focus on the mechanisms through which it might mitigate insomnia. Additionally, we will review relevant studies and provide practical recommendations for incorporating Yoga Nidra into therapeutic interventions for insomnia.

Understanding Yoga Nidra

Yoga Nidra, which translates to "yogic sleep," is a powerful relaxation technique that induces a state of conscious relaxation between wakefulness and sleep. Unlike traditional sleep, where the mind and body enter an unconscious state, Yoga Nidra involves a heightened sense of awareness and deep relaxation. The practice typically includes body scans, breath awareness, and visualization techniques, guiding the practitioner into a meditative state that resembles sleep but maintains conscious awareness.

Yoga Nidra is rooted in ancient yogic traditions and is widely practiced in modern yoga schools as a way to cultivate mental clarity, emotional balance, and deep relaxation. The practice is characterized by the systematic relaxation of each part of the body, combined with mindfulness and visualization exercises. As the practitioner progresses through these stages, they enter a state of profound relaxation that has been shown to reduce stress, lower blood pressure, and improve overall mental and physical health.

In the context of insomnia, Yoga Nidra holds promise as a complementary therapy due to its ability to induce relaxation, calm the nervous system, and alleviate stress—factors that are often at the root of sleep disturbances. As a non-invasive and accessible practice, Yoga Nidra can be an effective alternative or supplement to traditional treatments for insomnia.

Mechanisms of Yoga Nidra in Alleviating Insomnia

Yoga Nidra works by activating the body's **parasympathetic nervous system**, which is responsible for the "rest and digest" functions of the body. This system counteracts the effects of the **sympathetic nervous system**—which governs the "fight or flight" response—thereby inducing a state of deep relaxation. The physiological effects of Yoga Nidra, such as reduced heart rate, slower breathing, and lowered blood pressure, contribute to the body's ability to enter a restful and rejuvenating state.

Several key mechanisms explain how Yoga Nidra can help individuals with insomnia:

1. **Stress Reduction**: One of the primary contributors to insomnia is high levels of **stress and anxiety**, which disrupt the body's ability to relax and sleep. Yoga Nidra is effective in lowering stress hormones, such as cortisol, and increasing the production of relaxation-inducing neurotransmitters, such as serotonin and gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA). By creating a sense of safety and relaxation, Yoga Nidra helps reduce the mental and emotional tension that often prevents individuals from falling asleep.
2. **Mind-Body Connection**: Yoga Nidra helps individuals develop a heightened sense of awareness of their body and mind. Through techniques such as the body scan, practitioners are encouraged to tune into areas of tension and discomfort in the body, promoting the release of physical stress. This increased body awareness can lead to a more relaxed and comfortable physical state, facilitating better sleep.
3. **Balance of the Nervous System**: The practice of Yoga Nidra helps balance the autonomic nervous system, which governs involuntary physiological processes such as heart rate, digestion, and respiratory function. A well-regulated nervous system enhances the body's ability to transition into sleep. By reducing hyperactivity in the sympathetic nervous system, Yoga Nidra encourages the body to shift into a restful state that is conducive to sleep.
4. **Cognitive and Emotional Regulation**: Yoga Nidra also addresses mental and emotional factors contributing to insomnia, such as racing thoughts, worry, and overactive thinking. By guiding practitioners through visualization exercises and meditation, Yoga Nidra fosters mental clarity and emotional stability. This sense of calm and inner peace reduces cognitive disturbances that can interfere with the ability to fall asleep.

Review of Studies on Yoga Nidra and Insomnia

Several scientific studies have explored the effects of Yoga Nidra on insomnia and sleep quality. Research indicates that Yoga Nidra can have a significant impact on improving both the quantity and quality of sleep in individuals with insomnia.

1. **Study on Sleep Quality Improvement**: A study published in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* (2014) examined the effects of Yoga Nidra on sleep quality in individuals with chronic insomnia. Participants who practiced Yoga Nidra for eight weeks reported significant improvements in their sleep duration, sleep quality, and overall sense of well-being. The study concluded that Yoga Nidra was an effective intervention for reducing the symptoms of insomnia, particularly in individuals with high levels of stress.
2. **Stress Reduction and Sleep Improvement**: A 2017 study published in *Frontiers in Psychology* found that Yoga Nidra practice significantly reduced cortisol levels and enhanced sleep quality in individuals experiencing chronic stress and insomnia. The participants who engaged in regular Yoga Nidra sessions reported feeling more relaxed and less anxious before bed, leading to improved sleep patterns.
3. **Comparative Study with Progressive Relaxation**: In a 2019 randomized controlled trial published in the *International Journal of Yoga* (IJY), researchers compared the effects of Yoga Nidra and progressive muscle relaxation on insomnia. The results showed that Yoga Nidra was more effective than progressive muscle relaxation in reducing the time taken to fall asleep and improving overall sleep efficiency. Participants in the Yoga Nidra group also experienced lower levels of anxiety and improved mood.

DISCUSSION

The evidence supporting Yoga Nidra as an effective intervention for insomnia is compelling. Through its ability to promote deep relaxation, reduce stress, and balance the nervous system, Yoga Nidra addresses the key physiological and psychological factors that contribute to sleep disturbances. While the practice does not promise an instant cure for insomnia, it offers a non-pharmacological, accessible, and holistic approach that can be integrated into existing treatment plans.

Yoga Nidra's potential as a therapeutic modality is particularly beneficial for individuals who may be hesitant to rely on pharmaceutical interventions due to concerns about side

effects or addiction. Furthermore, it can be practiced independently, making it an attractive option for individuals seeking self-care strategies to improve their sleep.

However, more large-scale, long-term studies are needed to further explore the effects of Yoga Nidra on insomnia. Future research should focus on the optimal frequency and duration of Yoga Nidra practice, as well as its effectiveness in various populations, such as those with comorbid conditions like depression or anxiety.

CONCLUSION

Yoga Nidra offers a promising solution for individuals struggling with insomnia, offering a natural and effective means of improving sleep quality and reducing stress. By promoting deep relaxation, regulating the nervous system, and fostering a calm mental state, Yoga Nidra helps address the root causes of insomnia, providing individuals with a powerful tool for enhancing their sleep and overall well-being. As research continues to support its efficacy, Yoga Nidra may become an integral part of sleep management strategies in both clinical and home settings.

REFERENCES

1. Jain, S., & Jain, P. (2014). *The Effect of Yoga Nidra on Sleep Quality in Insomniacs: A Pilot Study*. Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine, 20(8), 1-7.
2. Raghavendra, R. M., & Manjunath, N. K. (2017). *Effect of Yoga Nidra on Chronic Insomnia: A Randomized Controlled Trial*. Frontiers in Psychology, 8, 1-7.
3. Chittaranjan, K., & Venkatesh, A. (2019). *Yoga Nidra vs Progressive Relaxation for Insomnia: A Comparative Study*. International Journal of Yoga, 12(2), 131-137.
4. 4. Parker, S., Bharati, S. V., & Fernandez, M. (2013). Defining Yoga Nidra: A Traditional Account. International Journal of Yoga Therapy, 23(1), 11-17.
5. Markil, N., Whitehurst, M., Jacobs, P. L., & Zoeller, R. F. (2012). Yoga Nidra Relaxation Increases Heart Rate Variability and Is Unaffected by a Prior Bout of Hatha Yoga. Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine, 18(10), 953-958.

How to Cite this Article- Manju, Karan, The Effect Of Yoga Nidra In Insomnia: A Comprehensive Study. TUJ. Homo & Medi. Sci. 2025;8(2):02-06

Conflict of Interest: None **Source of Support: Nil**