

Mindfulness in Human Development 2018-2019

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Research Question

How does Yoga for Youth (Y4Y), an after-school Kundalini yoga program, affect at-risk middle school students' self-reported emotional regulation, depression, anxiety, and stress levels?

Introduction

Over the last five years, yoga and mindfulness programs have started to become a part of educational settings. Research suggests that providing yoga and mindfulness practices to students may help them develop self-regulation strategies, mind-body awareness, and physical fitness, which may then foster additional positive student outcomes, including improved classroom behavior, mental state, health, and academic performance.

Data & Methods



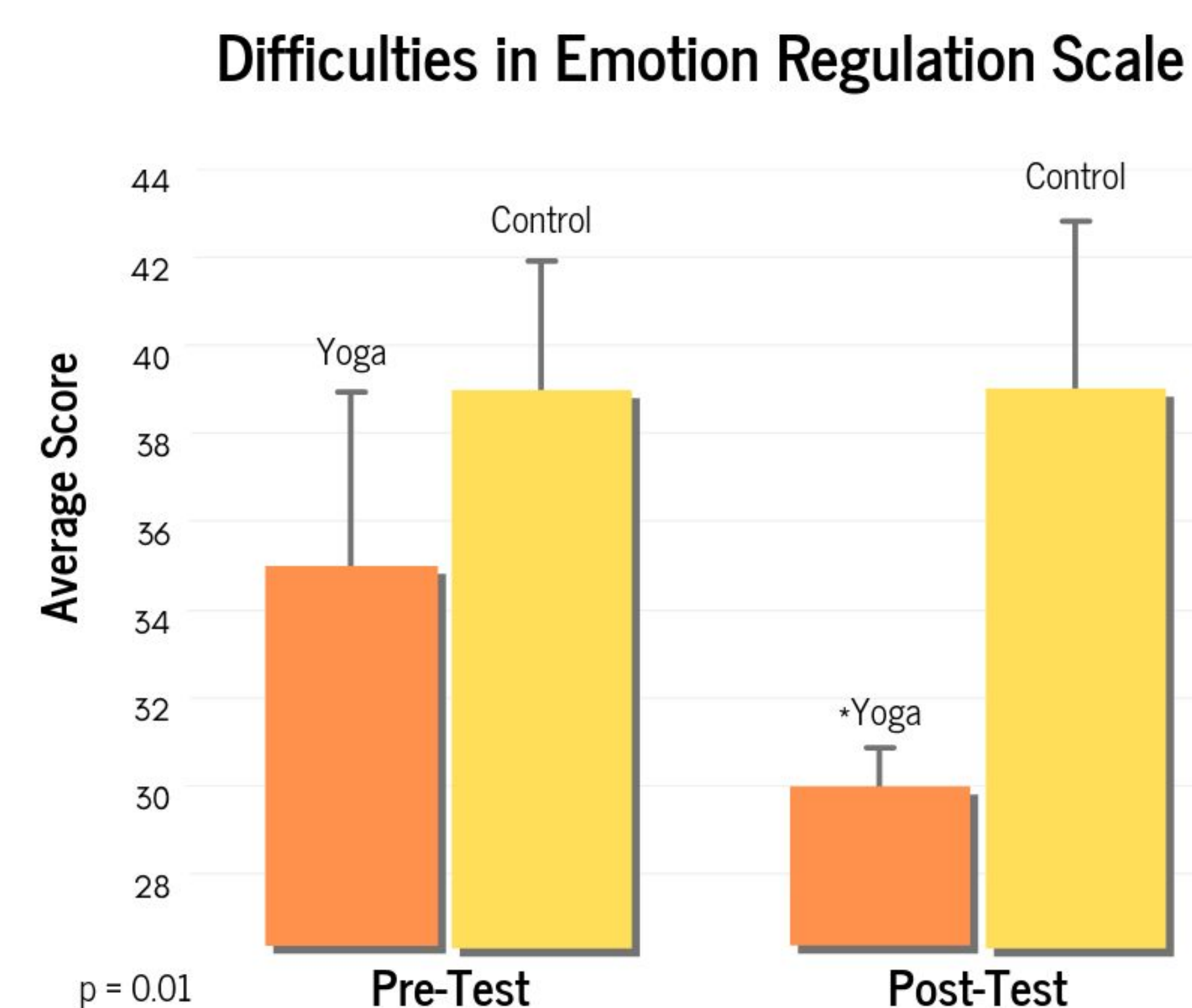
Intervention Group
52 Middle School Students

Control Group
66 Middle School Students

- Students were primarily labeled at-risk.
- The program consisted of two 40 minute classes per week over a six-week period.
- Students took pre and post-tests of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale, Mindful Attention Awareness Scale, and Depression Anxiety Stress Scale.

Results

- Students who participated in the yoga program reported a significant increase in the ability to regulate their emotions.
- Yoga students showed an increase in engaging in goal directed behavior.



- Through focus group sessions, students told researchers that they felt more academically motivated and focused after participating in the yoga study.

"I feel like I have a clearer head after it. I think being able to sit in silence is a really good skill to have, especially like today with everything going on... And I feel like that always helps me with my moods... it's serene."

Conclusions & Next Steps

The after-school based Kundalini yoga program improved emotion dysregulation in at-risk adolescents. The intervention also decreased students' anxiety, depression, and stress levels. Next year, our team will be assessing the data from our follow-up 2017-2018 study.

Future research should study how local contexts and the complexity of school environments can affect specific interventions. By considering these factors, we can tailor school-based yoga programs to the school contexts.

Embodied Learning Summit

This year's *Embodied Learning Summit* - a day-long community event - focused on "Yoga in the Era of #MeToo" to understand how yoga and mindfulness practices can be used to address struggles related to sexual violence.



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