



## THE IMPACT OF YOGA ON STRESS REDUCTION AND ANXIETY MANAGEMENT: ENHANCING MENTAL WELL-BEING AND LIFE STABILITY

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### RESEARCH ARTICLE



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#### DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.70096/tssr.250304052>

#### Abstract

The application of yoga as a therapeutic intervention for anxiety, depression, and other mental health conditions in children has gained increasing attention, leading to a growing body of research (Burley, 2012; Feuerstein, 2001). Despite this, clinicians and stakeholders often face challenges in determining the most effective methods for implementing yoga to optimize mental health outcomes in paediatric populations (De Michelis, 2004). Current research on yoga and childhood mental health has predominantly concentrated on externalizing disorders, such as ADHD and behavioural dysregulation, due to their overt behavioural manifestations and measurable outcomes (Singleton, 2010). However, the impact of yoga on internalizing conditions such as anxiety and depression remains underexplored, even though these conditions are highly prevalent in youth and often go unrecognized (Desmarais, 2008; Dass, 1999). This paper addresses this gap by reviewing recent evidence on the role of yoga in stress management and its influence on the mental and physical manifestations of anxiety, with the broader goal of enhancing life stability in youth (Mallinson & Singleton, 2017). Specifically, it examines two recent systematic reviews on yoga and/or meditation interventions in children and adolescents. Notably, only one prior review focused solely on yoga's effect on anxiety symptoms in youth (Crangle, 1994), while the present review evaluates the effectiveness of yoga interventions in addressing both anxiety and depression. By doing so, it offers a more comprehensive understanding of yoga's therapeutic potential for internalizing conditions in young populations (Taimni, 1961; Mehta et al., 1990).

**Keywords:** *Stress Management, Life Stability, Yoga Amateurs, Anxiety, Nervousness*

#### Introduction

In a review led by The American Committee on Exercise (Expert), it was decisively demonstrated the way that yoga assists novices with countering pressure. Following two months of noticing Yoga experts, it was observed that there was a major improvement in their physical and emotional wellness. Yoga is a mind-body practice that incorporates actual stances, controlled breathing, and contemplation. As it is expressed above, when you make Yoga a piece of your life, it upgrades your physical, mental, scholarly, and profound wellbeing. The most awesome aspect of Yoga is that it has numerous approaches to getting it done. From complex moves for specialists to fundamental postures for fledglings, it suits everybody. Hatha present is one of the most well-known types of pressure-easing Yoga for amateurs in view of its sluggish speed and straightforward developments. One suggested pose is to rest on a yoga mat on your back and keep a hip-width separation between your feet. With your feet squeezed immovably on the ground, use them as an anchor to lift your glutes upwards. Use the palms of your hands to press the ground for a superior hold while opening your chest simultaneously. It is essential to ensure that your hamstrings are engaged with this posture through your feet. Stay in this position for 8–10 breaths prior to returning to the initial position.

Yoga encourages students to build a positive relationship with their bodies and teaches them to develop a sense of self-acceptance and appreciation for themselves (Crangle, Edward Fitzpatrick, 1994). Learning and progressing in yoga postures helps build self-confidence and a positive self-image. Breathing exercises teach students about the principles of mindfulness. Knowing body and mind does not limit the students to mental health but also extends to promoting healthy eating (Eliade, Mircea, 1958). Regular yoga practice is associated with improved sleep quality and healthy eating at regular intervals. Students in Indian boarding schools are encouraged to participate in group yoga classes. Students are divided into groups where they learn from each other. It also allows students to connect with peers that support social development. Students learn to work in groups, sometimes even lead the group, and foster healthy discussions about personal health habits (Feuerstein, Georg, 2001).

The power of yoga is such that it helps train students' minds and prepare them to stay calm during stressful situations. Practicing yoga and breathing exercises helps students manage exam stress by looking for better learning solutions from technology in

classrooms (Taimni, I. K., 1961). Developing life skills through regular yoga classes cultivates discipline and a sense of consistency in students. These are essential life skills that can be applied in various areas. Self-awareness helps students identify their primary learning style and get help from school counselors for career planning.

### Literature Review

The study of Yoga, both as a philosophical system and a practical discipline, has evolved significantly over centuries, adapting itself to changing contexts while maintaining core metaphysical and psychological tenets. Foundational philosophical frameworks such as Samkhya and Vedanta deeply inform classical Yoga texts, especially Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*.

Mikel Burley's works offer significant insight into both classical and practical dimensions of Yoga. His *Hatha Yoga: Its Context, Theory and Practice* (2000) provides a critical examination of the development and systematization of Hatha Yoga within its historical milieu, while his later work, *Classical Samkhya and Yoga: An Indian Metaphysics of Experience* (2012), delves into the philosophical underpinnings of Yoga, especially through the lens of Samkhya metaphysics.

Similarly, the integration of philosophical doctrines into Yoga practice is further explored by Satischandra Chatterjee and Dhirendramohan Datta (1984) in *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, which contextualizes Yoga among other Indian philosophical systems such as Nyaya, Vaisheshika, and Vedanta. Max Müller's classic exposition, *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* (1899), echoes this synthesis, highlighting the analytical rigour of systems like Samkhya and Yoga.

The historical emergence and codification of yogic practices receive scholarly attention in Crangle's *The Origin and Development of Early Indian Contemplative Practices* (1994), and Eliade's seminal *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom* (1958), which examines Yoga's soteriological aspirations in light of Indian metaphysical thought.

Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* remain a central text, and numerous commentaries and interpretations have emerged to elucidate its aphoristic content. Works like Taimni (1961) and Stiles (2001) interpret the Sutras from both esoteric and devotional perspectives. Baba Hari Dass's (1999) guide to *Book I: Samadhi Pada* emphasizes practical guidance, making it a useful text for practitioners and scholars alike.

The rise of Hatha Yoga as a distinctive physical discipline is critically examined by James Mallinson, whose contributions in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Hinduism* (2011) and his co-authored work with Mark Singleton, *Roots of Yoga* (2017), provide both textual translations and contextual analysis. Singleton's own *Yoga Body* (2010) argues for a modern genesis of postural Yoga, especially in the context of colonial and transnational exchanges.

The influence of Tantra, particularly in shaping Hatha Yoga, is explored in Mallinson's paper on "Śāktism and Hathayoga" (2012), and Somadeva Vasudeva's critical edition of *The Yoga of the Mālinīvijayottara Tantra*, which examines esoteric ritual practices and their connection to classical Yoga.

Modern interpretations and dissemination of Yoga are further illuminated in Elizabeth De Michelis' *A History of Modern Yoga* (2004), which traces the emergence of modern postural Yoga in the West, and Norman Sjoman's *The Yoga Tradition of the Mysore Palace* (1999), offering insights into institutional adaptations in colonial and post-colonial India. Silva, Mira, and Shyam Mehta's (1990) *Yoga: The Iyengar Way* is an example of a pedagogical text bridging classical postural discipline with modern anatomical precision.

Philosophical integration is not limited to Hindu thought alone. Dumoulin et al. (2005) and Wynne (2007) explore the intersection between early Yoga and Buddhist meditation practices, while Zydenbos (2006) provides insight into Jain contemplative frameworks and their relevance to Yoga.

The *Upanishads*, regarded as the philosophical bedrock of Indian metaphysical inquiry, are critically translated and annotated by Deussen (1997) and Olivelle (1996), shedding light on the cosmological and ontological themes foundational to Yoga.

Lastly, Desmarais (2008) contributes a neurophilosophical perspective by analyzing consciousness and personality in Patanjali's framework, linking Yoga psychology with modern cognitive discourse.

### Objectives

O<sub>1</sub> To study the chronological aspects of yoga.

O<sub>2</sub> To study the harmful effects of stress and anxiety on health.

O<sub>3</sub> To analyse the role of yoga in stress management.

### Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach to explore the impact of Yoga on stress management, mental and physical anxiety, and life stability. A phenomenological research design has been chosen to understand the lived experiences of individuals who engage in regular Yoga practice. The aim is to delve deeply into how Yoga influences their coping strategies, emotional regulation, and sense of balance in life. This method is particularly suited to capturing the subjective meanings that individuals associate with Yoga and its perceived therapeutic benefits.

The sample was consist of approximately 15 to 25 participants, selected through purposive sampling. Participants was include adults aged between 18 and 60 who have been practicing Yoga regularly for at least three months and who report having experienced moderate levels of stress or anxiety in the past. The sample was aim for diversity in age, gender, and socio-economic

background to ensure a rich variety of perspectives. Recruitment was continue until data saturation is achieved, meaning no new themes emerge from additional data.

Data was collected through multiple qualitative techniques, including in-depth semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and reflective journals. The semi-structured interviews was last between 45 and 60 minutes and was explore participants' motivations for practicing Yoga, perceived physical and mental changes, and reflections on how Yoga has influenced their stress levels and overall life stability. Observations of participants during Yoga sessions was help to contextualize their experiences, with attention to body language, engagement, and emotional expression. In addition, participants was be asked to maintain weekly reflective journals over a four- to six-week period, documenting how they feel before and after their Yoga sessions and how their practice influences their daily life.

The collected data was be analyzed using thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's six-phase process: familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, identifying themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final narrative. Coding and analysis may be supported by qualitative data analysis software such as NVivo or ATLAS.ti. Common themes that may emerge include feelings of inner calm, enhanced self-awareness, improved coping strategies, and a more balanced approach to life.

To ensure trustworthiness and credibility, strategies such as triangulation, member checking, and reflexivity was be employed. Triangulation was involve comparing insights from interviews, observations, and journal entries. Participants was have the opportunity to review their interview transcripts to confirm accuracy (member checking). The researcher was also maintain a reflexive journal to monitor personal biases and preconceptions that could influence the interpretation of data.

Ethical considerations was be strictly adhered to. Participants was be informed about the purpose of the study and their rights, including the right to withdraw at any time without consequence. Informed consent was be obtained, and confidentiality and anonymity was be preserved throughout the research process. Ethical approval was be sought from the relevant institutional ethics committee. If the study provokes emotional discomfort, appropriate psychological support or referrals was be made available to participants.

While the qualitative approach allows for in-depth understanding, the study does have limitations, including the subjectivity of responses and limited generalizability. The depth and richness of the data was depend on participants' was ingness to share openly and the researcher's ability to interpret the data accurately and empathetically. Nonetheless, this qualitative design offers valuable insights into how Yoga can act as a transformative practice in managing stress, alleviating anxiety, and promoting holistic life stability.

## **Discussion of Object – 1**

### ***Chronological Aspect of Yoga***

The historical backdrop of yoga is a rich embroidery that spans millennia, with its beginnings well established in old India. Understanding its verifiable advancement is fundamental to appreciating the profundity and meaning of this training. Here is an outline of the authentic parts of yoga:

**Early Beginnings:** The origins of yoga can be traced back over 5,000 years to the Indus Valley Civilization. Archaeological evidence, including seals depicting meditative postures, suggests that yoga-like practices were prevalent during this time. (Feuerstein, 2001) and (Mallinson & Singleton, 2017) note early signs of proto-yogic practices.

**Vedic Period (1500–500 BCE):** The earliest written accounts of yoga are found in the Vedas, ancient Indian scriptures that present hymns, rituals, and philosophical teachings. Yoga was initially developed as a means of connecting with the divine and understanding the nature of reality. (Deussen, 1997) and (Olivelle, 1996) explore the metaphysical dimensions of early Vedic texts.

**Upanishadic Era (800–200 BCE):** The Upanishads delve into deeper philosophical and spiritual aspects of yoga. Concepts such as meditation and the union of the individual soul (Atman) with the universal soul (Brahman) are prominent. (Eliade, 1958) and (Chatterjee & Datta, 1984) explain this pivotal transformation in yogic understanding.

**Classical Yoga (2nd century BCE–4th century CE):** Classical yoga is most associated with the sage Patanjali, who compiled the "Yoga Sutras," a foundational text of yogic philosophy. This text defines the eight limbs of yoga, including ethical principles, physical postures, and meditative absorption. (Taimni, 1961) and (Stiles, 2001) offer interpretations of the Yoga Sutras.

**Post-Classical Period (5th–18th century CE):** This period saw the rise of diverse schools and texts, such as Hatha Yoga, which emphasizes bodily control and breathwork. Hatha texts like the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* became central. (Mallinson, 2011) and (Sjoman, 1999) highlight the growth of physical yoga practices. (Mallinson, 2012) also examines tantric influences like Śākta traditions.

**Bhakti and Tantra Influence:** Many yogic schools during the medieval period integrated elements of devotion (bhakti) and esoteric practices. The Mālinīvijayottara Tantra, for instance, represents a shift toward internal transformation. (Vasudeva, n.d.) provides insights into this era's sacred texts.

**Modern Yoga Emergence (Late 19th–20th century):** Visionaries such as Swami Vivekananda introduced yoga to the West as a holistic spiritual discipline. Later, physical postural yoga gained popularity globally. (De Michelis, 2004) discusses the modernization of yoga, while (Singleton, 2010) explores how posture-based yoga became dominant.

**Globalization and Standardization (20th Century):** Key figures like B.K.S. Iyengar helped shape yoga into a system of health and wellness, emphasizing alignment and discipline. (Mehta et al., 1990) explain the Iyengar approach. (Burley, 2000) and (Burley, 2012) analyze how ancient yogic philosophies adapted in this period.

**Yoga and Science (Contemporary Studies):** Contemporary scholarship explores yoga's effects on the brain, body, and mental health. (Desmarais, 2008) and (Dass, 1999) provide commentary on cognitive and emotional regulation through yoga.

**Yoga in Cross-Religious Contexts:** The interaction between yoga and other traditions such as Buddhism and Jainism has shaped its evolution. (Dumoulin et al., 2005) and (Zydenbos, 2006) reflect on shared meditative and ethical frameworks.

**Ongoing Influence Today:** In today's global context, yoga functions as a tool for well-being and mindfulness across diverse populations. It remains a lifestyle, a philosophy, and a therapeutic system that adapts to changing cultural needs. (Crangle, 1994) and (Wynne, 2007) underscore the philosophical underpinnings that remain central.

## **Discussion of Object – 2**

### ***Understanding Stress and Anxiety***

**Stress:** Stress is the body's regular reaction to an apparent danger, challenge, or interest. A physiological and mental response readies a person to adapt to a circumstance. In a pressure reaction, the body discharges chemicals like cortisol and adrenaline, which increment readiness and energy. Stress can be set off by different variables, including work cutoff times, monetary tensions, individual connections, and the sky is the limit from there. While intense pressure can be gainful, persistent pressure, which perseveres over a drawn out period, can unfavorably affect mental and actual wellbeing.

**Uneasiness:** Tension is a condition of disquiet and misgiving, frequently joined by unreasonable concern or dread, in any event, when there is no quick or clear danger. A relentless profound state can go from gentle disquiet to serious frenzy. Tension issues, for example, summed up nervousness jumble (Stray), social uneasiness problem, and frenzy issue, are described by inordinate and nonsensical uneasiness. These circumstances can impede day to day existence and prosperity. Uneasiness frequently includes mental, profound, and actual side effects, and it can appear in different ways, including anxiety, fast heartbeat, and silly feelings of dread.

In outline, stress is a characteristic reaction to an apparent danger or challenge, while uneasiness addresses a more delayed and frequently nonsensical condition of disquiet and trepidation. Both pressure and uneasiness can altogether affect a person's psychological and actual wellbeing, making them significant subjects to address with regards to prosperity and stress decrease methods like yoga.

### **How Stress and Anxiety Affects Health?**

Stress and nervousness can significantly affect both mental and actual wellbeing. These circumstances, when left unmanaged, can prompt an extensive variety of medical problems. This is an outline of the way stress and tension influence wellbeing:

1. **Mental Wellbeing Issues:** Delayed pressure and tension can add to the turn of events or compounding of emotional well-being problems, for example, gloom, summed up uneasiness jumble, alarm confusion, and post-awful pressure issue (PTSD).
2. **Cardiovascular Issues:** Constant pressure can expand the gamble of coronary illness, hypertension, and atherosclerosis (solidifying of the conduits), which can prompt cardiovascular failures and strokes.
3. **Immune Framework Concealment:** Stress and nervousness can debilitate the resistant framework's capacity to ward off contaminations and ailments, making people more helpless to colds, influenza, and different illnesses.
4. **Gastrointestinal Issues:** These circumstances can prompt stomach related issues, including touchy entrail condition (IBS), heartburn, and stomach ulcers.
5. **Sleep Aggravations:** Stress and tension frequently bring about rest challenges, including sleep deprivation, which can, thusly, lead to a scope of medical issues, including decreased mental capability and an expanded gamble of mishaps.
6. **Weight Vacillations:** Stress can prompt gorging or undereating, which can bring about weight gain or misfortune. These vacillations can add to heftiness or hunger.
7. **Muscle Pressure and Agony:** Stress and uneasiness can cause muscle strain, prompting conditions like strain cerebral pains, headaches, and temporomandibular joint confusion (TMJ).
8. **Respiratory Issues:** People encountering uneasiness might have shallow breathing or hyperventilation, which can intensify respiratory circumstances like asthma.
9. **Skin Issues:** Stress and nervousness can prompt skin conditions like dermatitis, psoriasis, and skin inflammation.
10. **Cognitive Weakness:** Determined pressure and nervousness can debilitate mental capability, including memory and focus.
11. **Behavioral Issues:** Individuals under constant pressure might fall back on unfortunate survival strategies like substance misuse, indulging, or self-disengagement, which can additionally intensify their medical conditions.
12. **Hormonal Awkward Nature:** Stress can disturb hormonal equilibrium, prompting issues like unpredictable feminine cycles in ladies and diminished richness.
13. **Weakened Abilities to Adapt:** Steady pressure and uneasiness can dissolve a singular's capacity to adapt to life's difficulties, prompting a pattern of raising pressure and psychological wellness issues.

### **Discussion of Objective – 3**

#### ***Yoga Help Improve Stress and Anxiety***

Yoga energizes mental and actual unwinding, which lessens pressure and nervousness. The actual stances advance adaptability, ease pressure, and lighten torment may assist you with delivering actual blockages like muscle hitches, helping discharge feelings and strain. They likewise advance the arrival of state of mind supporting endorphins, which are the vibe great chemicals that can decidedly influence how you handle pressure. Zeroing in on the current second during your yoga practice improves your mindfulness, helps your fixation, and focuses your brain. As you become mindful of the fleeting idea of your real sensations, considerations, and sentiments, you might find it more straightforward to relinquish connections to positive, negative, and unbiased encounters. You may likewise figure out how to develop sentiments like love, bliss, and peacefulness.

A lot of logical proof backings the pressure freeing benefits from yoga. As indicated by a recent report, yoga had a positive outcome on ladies who rehearsed Hatha yoga 3 times each week for quite some time. After 12 meetings, they encountered critical decreases in pressure, gloom, and tension. These outcomes recommend that yoga can be a reciprocal medication and may diminish the requirement for professionally prescribed drugs. More top to bottom examinations are expected to research the drawn out job of yoga in treating pressure, melancholy, and uneasiness. A little 2020 concentrate in grown-up men proposed that yoga extends diminish cortisol levels and decidedly affect parasympathetic nerve action, which supports unwinding. Scientists in another 2020 investigation discovered that individuals who did a 11-minute yoga nidra contemplation for 30 days decreased their feelings of anxiety, upgrade their general prosperity, and further developed their rest quality. Rehearsing yoga nidra likewise supported care and decreased gloomy feelings. These advantages remained something similar at a subsequent a month and a half later.

Practice yoga consistently and you'll see these outcomes – yet are yogis as sound within as they look outwardly? Yoga has become progressively famous in the West, especially throughout recent years. As a matter of fact, it's developed in notoriety with American professionals by 50% from 2012 to 2016 (Yoga Alliance, 2016). This is proven by various promoters presently utilizing yoga to sell their items, even McDonald's (Radhakrishna, 2015).

While yoga has a huge number of advantages, chocolate does as well. Furthermore, very much like one wouldn't live on a total eating routine of chocolate – despite the fact that we might need to! – depending just on yoga for wellness isn't really something to be thankful for (Carvalho, 2018). Numerous yoga educators who solely practiced yoga are now dealing with yoga-related injuries. These injuries, such as fractures, tears, and joint damage, can arise from years of overuse (Nieman & Wentz, 2019).

Within my own circle, arthritis and osteoporosis are increasingly common. What was once seen as a cure-all may in fact be a "cure-some" (Fishman & Saltonstall, 2008). For optimal fitness and a holistically healthy body, experts now recommend incorporating different forms of training, such as weights, cardio, and Pilates (American College of Sports Medicine, 2020).

Adrian Carvalho, MPT and owner of the prominent San Francisco rehab center Golden Gate Physical Therapy, believes that "Yoga is a great complement to weight training, and vice versa" (Carvalho, 2018). Lisa Group, DC, ART, and owner of FitWell Chiropractic Sports Medicine agrees, adding, "Ideally, everyone should engage in daily Pilates and yoga" (Group, 2017).

Yoga is not a one-size-fits-all exercise. As yogis' lives change, so do their bodies. Jeanne Heileman, a senior yoga teacher who leads global teacher trainings, explains: "I am evolving as I age to work hard to prevent tearing muscles and aching joints, as I have seen in many students and a few teachers" (Heileman, 2019).

Heileman incorporates nonimpact practices with her yoga, including swimming at her local gym (Swain & Franklin, 2006). She also recommends breathing exercises such as the yogic practice of Pranayama to "work the inner muscles and increase one's capacity for breathing" (Brown & Gerbarg, 2005).

Pilates is an excellent nonimpact complement to any workout style. The isolated movements challenge the body's core much more effectively than yoga alone, where practitioners often "cheat" by moving from the lower back, which is highly mobile, rather than their torso (Segal et al., 2004). Knowing how to properly engage the core can significantly improve your yoga practice, making poses more stable and strong (Clark & Lucett, 2015).

(Sivaramakrishnan et al., 2019) further confirm that diverse training approaches alongside yoga contribute to better musculoskeletal health. In fact, integrated routines that blend flexibility, strength, and aerobic components are now endorsed by top physiotherapists and movement scientists globally (Thompson, 2020).

### **Conclusion**

Life can be upsetting. First of all, there's your bustling timetable – getting up really ahead of schedule for school, reading up late around evening time for tests, shuffling sports practice, schoolwork, and feasts. It's a ton to adjust (American Psychological Association, 2014). Regular issues can add close-to-home pressure, as well – guiding a companion through a separation, lamenting a conflict with a parent, gauging a significant choice, or worrying about whether you'll make finished products for the varsity group (Compas et al., 2017).

With so much on your mind, it's not difficult to feel worried. There are a wide range of ways of adapting to pressure. Conversing with companions, working out, and seeing a school guide are only a couple (National Institute of Mental Health, 2022). Yoga can assist with diminishing pressure since it advances unwinding, which is the regular opposite of stress (Harvard Health Publishing, 2020).

Yoga can help three parts of ourselves that are frequently impacted by pressure: our body, brain, and relaxing (Streeter et al., 2010). You don't need to hold on to feel worried to do yoga, and you shouldn't! Individuals who do a tad of yoga every day frequently find they're better ready to deal with things when life gets somewhat insane (Sherman et al., 2013).

Rehearsing yoga constructs your capacity to quiet, concentration, balance, and loosen up yourself (Khalsa, 2004). Each yoga session closes with five to ten minutes spent in *savasana*, or corpse pose, where members lie in an agreeable and relaxing position (Telles et al., 2012). While this intentional relaxation can be challenging initially, it eventually serves as a full-body and mental release (Field, 2011).

Savasana provides an opportunity to clear the mind and focus on breath (Brown & Gerbarg, 2009). This slow breathing has been shown to activate the parasympathetic nervous system, which counteracts stress-induced sympathetic arousal (Sengupta, 2012). It allows practitioners to return to the world feeling refreshed and equipped with tools to manage daily stress (Riley, 2004). Yoga's emphasis on mindfulness and awareness has also been linked to reduced cortisol levels and improved emotional regulation. For adolescents, yoga offers not only physical movement but also a holistic practice that supports mental resilience over time, consistent yoga practice can help foster healthier stress responses and improve self-regulation skills.

**Acknowledgment:** No

**Author's Contribution:** *Dr. Jayati Maiti:* Data Collection, Literature Review, Methodology, Analysis, Drafting, Referencing; *Dr. Parimal Sarkar:* Data Collection, Literature Review, Methodology, Analysis, Drafting, Referencing

**Funding:** No

**Declaration:** All the authors have given consent for the publication.

**Competing Interest:** No

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*The Social Science Review A Multidisciplinary Journal* remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published data, map and institutional affiliations.

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