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## Parental perceptions of yoga benefits on the social-emotional development of individuals with disabilities: A survey study

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Although there is a progressive trend toward the use of yoga as a mind-body complementary and alternative medicine intervention, there isn't sufficient research on the benefits of yoga for individuals with disabilities. This study evaluated the parental perceptions of yoga benefits in enhancing the social-emotional development of their children with disabilities. Eighteen (18) parents of individuals with disabilities participated in the online and paper survey. The survey instrument included six demographic questions and 18 close-ended Likert-scale questions. The survey was designed to collect data on the perceptions of parents about yoga benefits for their child with regards to three major components of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL): Self-regulation skills, social skills and behavior and decision-making skills. A quantitative analysis of data was utilized with the Qualtrics survey software. Descriptive statistics (i.e., percentage scores) were utilized to analyze response scores of the 18 participants. The results indicated that almost 80% of participants agreed that yoga was helpful in enhancing their child's ability to focus, stay calm, regulate their emotions and be aware of their surroundings. Almost 50% of participants disagreed that yoga had no influence on their child's ability to communicate and understand the emotions of others. Over half i.e. 63% of participants agreed that after practicing yoga, their child was more organized, flexible to changes and had improved ability to follow directions and resolve conflicts. These data suggest that yoga may be effective in enhancing the social, emotional and physical well-being of individuals with disabilities.

### Biography

Sonal Sharma has completed her BE in Mechanical Engineering from India. She has served as a Naval Architect Officer in the Indian Navy for 2.5 years. After moving to the USA, she earned an MA in Special Education with Early Childhood Education Specialist Credential from San Jose State University, California. She has worked in the field of special education for over 5 years, serving individuals with autism, intellectual disability and orthopedic impairments. She is currently working as an Early Childhood Specialist in the Bay Area, California.

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