ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Community Physiotherapy

KEY WORDS: Moon Salutation, Yoga, Womens Health, Mental Health, Chandra Namaskar

EXPLORING THE THERAPEUTIC POTENTIAL OF MOON SALUTATION: A NARRATIVE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Chandra Namaskar (Moon Salutation) is a reviving and calming yoga sequence which is not as well known as much attention as Surya Namaskar. The goal of this narrative review is to explore the positive effects of Moon Salutations on multiple aspects of health. Given the lack of existing research, this review was carried out to emphasize the therapeutic benefits of Moon Salutations and establish the groundwork for future studies and clinical use in wellness and rehabilitation settings. A comprehensive search of articles published between 2016 and 2025 was conducted using databases like Google Scholar, PubMed and Scopus, Six articles were chosen from a thorough search of 320 publications. The results indicate that while Moon Salutations significantly decrease anger and foster emotional stability in teenagers, it also improves flexibility and dynamic balance in young adults. The practice was linked to improvements in women's psychological well-being, hormonal balance, and sleep quality, especially in the premenopausal and postmenopausal phases. Additional advantages includes improved cognitive function, mind–body coordination and self-awareness. This review backs the use of moon salutations in holistic wellness programs meant to enhance both mental and physical health. However, the limited amount of data points to the need for more focused and targeted research.

INTRODUCTION

Yoga is a centuries-old discipline which is outlined to promote harmony and well-being in a person's physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects[1]. The Bihar School, a yoga school in India founded in the 1960s, first published the sequence in "Asana Mudra Pranayama Bandha" in 1969[2]. Moon Salutations has a physiological effect on our body's "Root chakra" (Mooladhar Chakra), which affects flexibility. It also has been shown that it reduces anxiety by activating the parasympathetic nervous system, or Ida naadi [3]. Chandra Namaskara is associated with the fourteen phases of the moon. The lunar energy flows within the ida nadi. It has calming, soothing, and creative qualities[4].

Chandra Namaskar is frequently performed in the evening or during the moon's waning phases, which is consistent with its symbolic meaning of spiritual reflection, emotional equilibrium, and feminine vitalityStretching and strengthening the thigh muscles, calves, pelvis, and ankles mostly the lower body are some of the physical benefits of this[5]. It promotes healthy blood circulation, maintains a well-regulated and healthy abdominal tract, activates spinal neurons, stretches the back and legs, treats sexually transmitted infections, and increases flexibility before to childbirth[6]. Moon Salutation might potentially be a viable alternative treatment for hormone imbalances and premenstrual symptoms[5]. In yoga, the impacts of related techniques like Chandra Bhedana (left nostril breathing) have further deepened our understanding of the lunar influence[7]. A pilot study conducted by Khatavkar M reported significant improvrmrnta in dynamic balance and hamstring flexibility among young adults after a four-week Moon Salutation intervention[2]. According to a few studies, Chandra Namaskar is a "soother" that can counteract the sympathetic nervous system hyperactivity that is frequently observed in contemporary lifestyles.

While Sun Salutation (Surya Namaskar) has been widely researched for its physiological and psychological benefits including enhanced cardiovascular fitness, increased flexibility, and reduced stress the Moon Salutation had been studies less comparatively. According to preliminary data, Moon Salutation may have particular advantages, particularly in promoting relaxation, controlling circadian cycles, reducing anxiety, and increasing parasympathetic activity. Nevertheless, there isn't a comprehensive analysis in the collected works of existing literature. There is a gap in the scientific research of its physiological mechanisms, pscyvhoemotional effects, and possible use in the rehabilitation settings. This narrative review aims to close this gap by gathering the information that is currently accessible about Moon Salutation's effects. Th The purpose of this work is to promote the evidence-based application of Moon Salutation in health promotion and to direct future research.

Methodology

The review attempts to give a thorough summary of the influence of moon-salutations, emphasizing how they affect different populations and aspects of health. An extensive search was done to find relevant articles published in peer-reviewed journals and scientific databases. The evaluation includes studies that report on the intervention either directly or in relation to related yogic practices like Surya Namaskar, with pertinent inferences drawn when applicable, due to the paucity of research expressly addressing Moon Salutations. Relevant articles from 2016 to 2025 were included in the narrative review. The search included terms related to yoga, moon salutations, Surya namaskar, and postmenopause, adolescents. The search strategy included the following terms: ('Yoga' OR 'Moon Salutation' OR 'Chandra Namaskar' OR 'Surya Namaskar') AND ('Postmenopause' OR 'Adolescents'). Key databases, such as PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar, were searched for relevant articles. From the included studies, appropriate data was taken out and examined.

Studies which fulfilled the following requirements were taken into consideration for inclusion:

- Emphasize the moon salutation.
- Assessed the impact of moonsalutations (or similar yoga therapies that included moon saluatations).
- Articles published in English language.
- Clinical trials and randomised controlled trials (RCTs), review articles.

Studies will be excluded if they do not meet the predefined criteria or are duplicate publications. The data extraction procedure was started after the quality assessment concluded. One independent reviewer systematically collected data from the selected articles. Data extraction included information on the study design, sample characteristics, intervention details, outcome measures, and

main findings related to the effect of moon salutation. The findings from individual studies were summarised qualitatively. Figure 1 is depecting the identification of the studies.

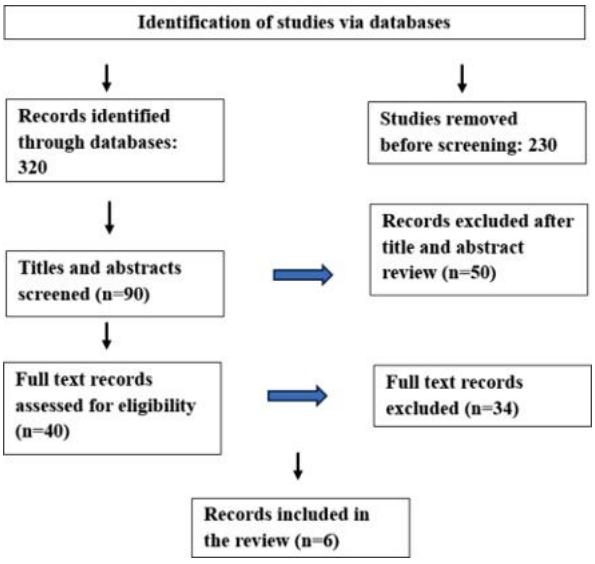


Figure 1:

RESULTS

The reviewed literature emphasizes the multitude of benefits of Chandra Namaskar, even though the majority of the research is still in its early stages and exploratory. A pilot study by Khatavkar M found that four weeks of practicing Chandra Namaskar led to significant improvements in both dynamic balance and flexibility in young adults[2]. According to two separate studies that involved adolescents, practicing Chandra Namaskara, either on its own or in conjunction with Om meditation, significantly reduced aggression and improved behaviour, highlighting its potential as a calming and restorative intervention[8]. Its calming and stress-reducing properties were also highlighted in descriptive studies, reinforcing its potential for emotional regulation. Moon Salutations may help alleviate premenstrual and perimenopausal symptoms, according to research on female populations[5]. Although the evidence remains limited, Chandra Namaskar have been consistently applied as a supportive practice for promoting women's hormone balance and psychological well being. Moon salutations' relaxing, parasympathetic effects have been indirectly supported by adjacent practices linked to the "Chandra" principle, such as unilateral left nostril breathing, which have been shown to enhance cognitive performance in yoga novices. Overall, the majority of studies were either descriptive reports or small-scale pilot studies, frequently mixing Moon Salutations with other yoga practices, even if the data continuously suggests good impacts on women's health, emotional regulation, physical fitness, and sleep quality. This variability makes it difficult to attribute the findings observed solely to Chandra Namaskar and highlights for well-designed studies to confirm these outcomes. Table 1 provides a summary of the main characteristics, factors, treatments, and findings of the included literature.

Table 1: Characteristics of Key Studies on Moon Salutation

Author and Year	Population	Origin	Variables	Intervention	Conclusion
Khatavkar M, Panhale V. (2022)[2]	Young adults	India	Balance and flexibility	Chandra Namaskar	Chandra Namaskar improved balance and flexibility in young adults; this pilot study facilitates further research.
Khatavkar M (2022)[3]	Pregnant women	India	Maternal health and well-being, physical fitness,	Chandra Namaskar	It was discovered that Chandra Namaskar was a safe and helpful pregnancy practice that enhanced the general health of the mother.
Santhanam Kumar SS et al. (2020)[7]	Healthy adults	India	Cognitive function	Unilateral Left Nostril Breathing (Chandra Anga Pranayama)	Chandra Anga Pranayama enhanced cognitive function, indicating neurocognitive and relaxing properties.
Ummul Qura Ansari (2019)[5]	Pre-menopausal women	India	Pre-menopausal symptoms, physical and psychological health	Surya Namaskar and Chandra Namaskar	Yoga approaches have been demonstrated to be helpful to regulate pre-menopausal syndrome as a supportive and preventive strategy.
Tripathy M. (2018)[8]	Adolescents	India	Levels of Aggression	Chandra Namaskar	Regular practice of Chandra Namaskara reduced Regular Chandra Namaskar practice assisted adolescents become less aggressive.

DISCUSSION

Yoga is an age-old Indian practice and holistic discipline that combines breathing exercises, physical postures, and meditation techniques to help the body and mind work in harmony. Its ability to improve flexibility, balance, and quality of life has been universally acknowledged as a therapeutic benefit. For example, exercises like Surya Namaskara (Sun Salutation), which involve rhythmic, consecutive postures that use the entire body, have been shown to enhance flexibility, cardiovascular endurance, and mental wellbeing[9].

Similarly, Chandra Namaskar serves as the reflective and calming counterpart to Surya Namaskara. The word Chandra, signifies "moon," symbolizes tranquility, introspection, and cooling energy[10]. The concepts of Surya Namaskara are mirrored in Chandra Namaskara, which emphasizes relaxation and hormonal balance, just like the moon reflects the sun's light. It can be easily integrated into everyday activities, especially during times like premenopause and postmenopause when there is a greater physiological change.

Women's quality of life is impacted by hormonal changes during the premenopausal and postmenopausal phases, which are frequently accompanied by symptoms like mood swings, inconsistent sleep patterns, and musculoskeletal stiffness. In this regard, Ansari's report emphasized that using Chandra Namaskara, either on its own or in conjunction with Surya Namaskara, may function as a therapeutic and preventive approach for the treatment of premenopausal syndromes. Midlife women's health, functional ability, and psychological balance have all improved with structured yoga programs, highlighting the many advantages of yoga for this demographic[5]. Despite the stringent settings of the

COVID-19 program, Luo and Huang showed that a structured yoga intervention effectively improved balance and flexibility in female college students, showing the usefulness of yoga in maintaining physical function[11].

Retaining flexibility and postural balance is crucial for preserving independence and reducing the risk age-related functional deterioration. Prior research on conventional yoga techniques, such Hatha Yoga, has demonstrated that regular practice significantly increases dynamic balance and flexibility. To support this, Khatavkar M showed that young adults' dynamic balance and flexibility improved noticeably after a four-week Chandra Namaskara practice program. Maintaining good posture, balance, and flexibility is crucial for preserving independence and reducing the risk of age-related functional decline.

These results highlight how the Moon Salutation sequence induces physiological changes that are beneficial to musculoskeletal health despite being gentler and more meditative in nature[12]. Although its effects on bone mineral density are still unclear, evidence from a systematic review of randomized controlled trials suggests that yoga considerably improves balance in healthy persons, potentially lowering fall risk[13,14].

Overall, the current body of literature indicates that Chandra Namaskar may function as a accessible, low impact and effective intervention for enhancinf flexibility, balance, and supporting hormonal balance across various age groups. Mindful movement combined with the peaceful energy of the moon promotes emotional balance and physical conditioning, making it a useful component of holistic wellness practices.

CONCLUSION

The reviewed studies suggest that Moon Salutations have positive impact on physical fitness, hormonal health, emotional balance, sleep quality, and cognitive factors, all of which are integral for daily life. However, the majority of the data that is now available is preliminary and is derived from descriptive accounts, pilot studies, or small samples. Due to limitations such limited trial durations, combined therapies, and a lack of established methodologies, it is challenging to attribute results exclusively to Moon Salutations. Despite these drawbacks, the emerging evidence highlights the therapeutic potential of Moon Salutations as a holistic practice. Its incorporation into wellness and preventive health rehabilitation may benefit various populations, but further high-quality clinical trials are pivotal to establish standardized guidelines, exibit long-term effects, and broaden its applicability in clinical and community settings.

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