

The effect of laughter yoga on happiness and self-esteem level in 5th grade students

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Statement of the Problem: As students transition from primary school to secondary school, their feelings about school also start to change. Secondary school requires higher academic effort compared to primary school, alongside a diversification in social relations. In this period of transitioning from childhood to adolescence, students express more negative feelings both about themselves and school. In addition, problems such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, autism, anxiety disorder, depression, substance abuse, suicidal thoughts can be seen in children during this period, which can all be considered as a risk factor jeopardizing the students' level of happiness and self-esteem. The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of laughter yoga on happiness and self-esteem level in 5th grade students.

Methodology: This research is an experimental study with pre-test posttest control group. The study population consisted of 5th grade students studying at a Secondary School in Turkey. Groups were randomly selected from among the existing 5th grade classes in the school for the intervention (31 students) and control (32 students) group. Two students from the intervention group could not attend the sessions because their parents did not allow them. School Children's Happiness Inventory (SCHH) and Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI) were employed to collect data. Laughter yoga sessions were applied to the intervention group twice a week for four week.

Findings: Of the students, 38 (62.3%) were male, 23 (37.7%) were female. For the SCHH scale, a significant increase was observed in the scores of the intervention group compared to the control group ($p < 0,05$). For the CSEI scale, there wasn't a significant decrease in the scores of the intervention group compared to the control group ($p > 0,05$) (Table 1).

Conclusion: In this study, it was determined that laughter yoga increases the happiness level of students, yet created no effect on self-esteem. It is recommended to organize laughter yoga activities in schools to increase the happiness levels of students.

Scales	Intervention Group (n=29) X̄±SD	Control Group (n=32) X̄±SD	Time P	Time*group
SCHH (pretest)	93.68±10.59	96.21±10.91		
SCHH (posttest)	104.24±11.46	97.96±10.69	0.000	0.003
CSEI (pretest)	16.00±4.03	16.43±4.50		
CSEI (posttest)	17.03±4.88	16.75±4.77	0.078	0.341

Table 1. Pretest-Posttest SCHH and CSEI Mean Scores of the Students

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Biography

Fatma Özlem Öztürk worked as a nurse in various clinics for about 10 years. She worked in neonatal intensive care, infectious diseases, gynecology-obstetrics operating room clinics. Then Dr. Öztürk served approximately three years in the Turkish Ministry of Health, Department of Tuberculosis. Dr. Öztürk's area of expertise is public health nursing, and she has been working as a lecturer at Ankara University since 2013.

İnci Açıkgöz works as a lecturer at Ankara University. Dr. Açıkgöz's area of expertise is statistics. Biostatistics and parameter estimation are among her area of interest. She courses biostatistics and research methods in Nursing Department. She has various scientific studies in subjects in the field of nursing.