

How Does Alternative Treatment Through Traditional Malay Exercise Good for General Health?

Bagaimana Rawatan Alternatif Senaman Tradisional Melayu Baik untuk Kesihatan Am?

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Abstract: Malaysia's multiracial society has its cultural heritage of exercising for the health of its practitioners. In Chinese culture, for example, there is Tai Chi, while in Indian culture, Yoga is practiced for general health. Furthermore, in Malay culture, exercise has always been associated with the martial arts called 'Silat Melayu' with one of them being Senaman Tua Melayu (ST), which is developed from Silat Melayu Keris Lok 9. The Ministry of Health Malaysia has recognized traditional medicine as an alternative treatment. Senaman Tua Melayu (ST) belongs to this category. Unfortunately, there are no scientific studies to prove the effectiveness of ST for its users. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effectiveness of ST from the users' perspective upon completing 16 sessions of ST training. The quantitative approach, i.e. questionnaire instrument, is used to carry out this study. It also used the qualitative method, where interviews with all participants were conducted for data triangulation. The results show that ST is significantly effective in improving participants' general health and musculoskeletal systems. Findings also showed that participants are strongly interested in continuing the practice of ST to improve their general health. It is hoped that this research may spread the good effects of doing routine physical activity. Further research can be done to explore the benefits of ST in a specific disease apart from general health.

Keywords: *Senaman Tua Melayu* (ST), general health, musculoskeletal system, exercise, alternative treatment;

Abstrak: Masyarakat Malaysia yang berbilang kaum mempunyai warisan budaya bersenam yang tersendiri untuk kesihatan pengamalannya. Dalam budaya Cina misalnya, terdapat Tai Chi, manakala dalam budaya India pula Yogadialankan secara umum untuk kesihatan. Dalam budaya Melayu, senaman lazimnya dikaitkan dengan seni mempertahankan diri yang dipanggil 'Silat Melayu', salah satunya ialah Senaman Tua Melayu (ST) yang telah dikembangkan daripada Silat Melayu Keris Lok 9. Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia mengiktiraf perubatan tradisional sebagai rawatan alternatif. Senaman Tua Melayu (ST) tergolong dalam kategori ini. Walau bagaimanapun, belum ada kajian saintifik yang membuktikan keberkesanan ST kepada pengamalannya. Oleh itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis keberkesanan ST dari perspektif pengamal atau peserta setelah mereka menamatkan latihan ST sebanyak 16 sesi. Pendekatan kuantitatif iaitu instrumen soal selidik digunakan dalam kajian ini. Dalam masa yang sama,

kaedah kualitatif turut digunakan dengan menjalankan temu bual terhadap semua peserta untuk tujuan triangulasi data. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa ST amat berkesan dalam meningkatkan kesihatan am dan sistem muskuloskeletal peserta. Dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa peserta amat berminat untuk meneruskan amalan ST bagi meningkatkan kesihatan mereka. Kajian ini diharapkan dapat memberi manfaat atau kesan baik melakukan aktiviti bersenam sebagai rutin harian. Kajian selanjut boleh dilakukan untuk meneroka manfaat ST dalam menyembuhkan penyakit tertentu selain daripada kesihatan am.

Kata kunci: Senaman Tua Melayu (ST), kesihatan umum, sistem muskuloskeletal, senaman, perubatan alternatif;

Introduction

Studies on the effectiveness of complementary and alternative treatments for various diseases have begun to gain place and recognition in modern medicine. For example, a report by Kanodia et al. (2010) found that treatment through yoga, tai chi and qi gong provided relief to patients. Similarly, a study conducted by Fahey (2018) and Saper et al. (2017) concluded that non-pharmacological treatment is significant against the treatment of chronic diseases.

In the context of the Malay world, there are also activities in the form of exercises adopted for the purpose of improving health and rehabilitation, similar to tai chi and yoga. Among these exercises are the *Pencak Silat* and *Senaman Tua Melayu (ST)*. *ST* which is now beginning to gain a place among the community, is also believed to be effective in the rehabilitation process of various diseases. *ST* was introduced by its founder, Azlan Ghanie, around the 1980s. *ST* was developed by Azlan Ghanie as part of the Silat Keris Lok 9 school. However, this exercise is taught to the public separately from Silat Keris Lok 9, as a fitness and health practice.

The objective of this study is to observe the effects of *ST* on general and musculoskeletal health from the perspective of the participants. The study expects *ST* can help to improve the general and musculoskeletal health, while at the same time, participants could express intent to continue practicing *ST* in the future. This study is important in preserving Malay culture by adding *Senaman Tua Melayu* to the academic literature of alternative treatments within Malay culture. Other cultures have long promoted their complementary or alternative treatments, such as yoga and tai chi, with international recognition.

Literature Review

Before the introduction of a proper health system, common people of the past relied on traditional, alternative, and complementary medicine as a treatment to prevent, diagnose and cure their illness or disease. The knowledge, skill, and practice, based on the beliefs and experiences of their forefathers, depended on the natural resources and ancestral wisdom. Modern scholars, on the other hand, engaged in empirical and experimental activities to improve health and its treatments. Drugs, medicine, and the like are not new in human civilization, whether in the East or the West, as scholars of either previous or modern time, are very much concerned with the value of health.

With the advance of technology, to some people and cultures, traditional medicine is deemed a taboo. Traditional, alternative, and complementary medicine is highly underestimated; its significance is unrecognized while their effectiveness is considered uncertain when compared with mainstream health practices (Tabish, 2008). The integration of mainstream medicine and traditional, alternative as well as complementary medicine has been debated for years, the future of the latter seen in many countries (Mann, Gaylord & Norton, 2004). The passage of time has finally changed the global attitudes and views on traditional, alternative, and complementary medicine. A recent survey done among undergraduates of six universities in China, for example, shows that the majority are very optimistic towards the traditional, alternative, and complementary medicine (Xie et.al, 2020).

In Malaysia, empirical evidence has proven the efficacy of traditional, alternative, and complementary medicine (Salihah, Siti Aishah & Wan Norhayati, 2019). This is not unexpected as traditional medicine has survived for a very long time. This is in line with Kramlich (2014) who stated that “various forms of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) have

been reported for centuries. Use of CAM declined with the appearance of antibiotics in the early 1900s and then regained popularity in the 1970s.” CAM refers to complementary and alternative medicine which, as she maintained, has become the primary health practice of many developing countries. The trend is even more evident in countries where such medicine is the leading health practice.

Traditional medicine, the oldest approach of cultural healing systems, includes knowledge, skill and practices derived from the indigenous theories, beliefs and experiences of different cultures in order to either maintain health or to prevent, to diagnose and to treat an illness. Alternative medicine uses a non-mainstream approach compared to conventional medicine, whereas complementary medicine employs a non-mainstream approach in addition to conventional medicine (World Health Organization (WHO), 2019). The latter two approaches of medicine are categorized under the umbrella term of “complementary and alternative medicine” (Tabish, 2008). In some countries, both are used interchangeably with traditional medicine (WHO, 2019).

The release of the WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy (1999–2005) suggests that traditional, alternative and complementary medicine has been recognized worldwide in the healthcare industry. Its safety, quality, and effectiveness are observed regularly from all member countries including Malaysia. According to WHO (2019), Malaysia shows that traditional and complementary medicine (T&CM) receives a significant demand even though the country’s primary health care system is strongly conventional medicine. This is closely associated with the ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity of Malaysian society. Today, traditional Malay medicine, traditional Chinese Medicine, traditional Indian medicine, homeopathy, chiropractic, osteopathy and Islamic medical practices are recognized by the Institute of Public Health in Malaysia (WHO, 2019). Currently, patients with chronic disease such as arthritis, pneumonia, stroke, cancer etc. can obtain traditional and complementary treatment services from nine dedicated hospitals (Salihah, Siti Aishah and Wan Norhayati, 2019; Che Noriah et al., 2012).

As far as *Senaman Tua Melayu* is concerned, it falls under the fields of traditional Malay medicine and mind-body therapy. According to a study carried out by Salihah, Siti Aishah and Wan Norhayati (2019), Malays are the second highest users of traditional medicine to treat various illnesses such as cancer, stroke, and diabetes. They maintain that the most common of traditional medicines are massages, acupuncture and yoga as well as Ayurveda among the Malay, Chinese and Indian people

respectively. Yoga, for instance, can provide benefits to the physical, emotional and spiritual development of an individual. It can improve strength, blood circulation, spine and bone health, improve moods, reduce weight, anger, depression, fatigue and stress-causing symptoms, teach proper breathing, increase resilience, and so on (Singh, 2017; Middleton et al., 2015).

Like yoga and Chinese traditional exercise i.e. tai chi, *Senaman Tua Melayu* has its own identity in implementing various exercise techniques involving physical exercise, postures, and movement and breathing control to improve one’s mental and physical health. The ST exercises focus on the basics of standing, sitting, lying down and moving parts of the body in a correct way to maintain health and treat illnesses (Azlan, 2007; Ros Aiza et al., 2021). In addition, the exercise techniques of *Senaman Tua Melayu*, like other Malay martial arts (*silat*) such as Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia (Abdul Hafiz et.al, 2019), also enables an individual to develop and maintain their spiritual well-being (Azlan, 2007; Ros Aiza et al., 2021).

With regards to physical health, Azlan (2007) maintains that sitting in front of the computer or while doing work for hours can lead to back pain. In the past, back pain was caused by the Malay practice of sitting cross-legged on the floor for too long in official events where it is deemed improper to lean against wall. Therefore, ST offers several techniques and exercises to treat back pain, either for lower back pain or upper back pain caused by sitting on a chair for too long, sitting cross-legged or other possible reasons. Instead, WHO’s (2019) concern is that such a practice, including any traditional medicine, can probably be done excessively while certain postures are unlikely to be suggested for various conditions. Due to this, WHO, as we have mentioned before, maintained that non-mainstream medicine should adhere to the safety, quality, and effectiveness of the user.

Apart from back pain, today’s lifestyle, and health problems, physically or mentally, can lead to fatigue, lethargy, and a weak constitution. Lifestyle factors could also contribute to back pain, including not exercising, stress (Amatriain-Fernández et al., 2020) and even excessive exercise. Therefore, individuals who suffer from weak bodies are advised to change their lifestyle, such as practicing moderate exercise, limiting extreme workout, drinking adequate amounts of water, ensuring enough sleep and avoiding things that cause stress.

In fact, Siti Zarinah (2019) suggests that an inactive lifestyle can cause knee pains due to being overweight and drastically doing exercise activities. Because of obesity, the knee has a higher risk of receiving more pressure and injuries in the knees or joints. Such injuries occur because

the activities are unsuitable with muscle strength, which is unable to support the joints. She further explains that exercise may not completely cure knee pains, but certain movements can reduce pain. In this respect, continuous physiotherapy and exercise treatments can strengthen and restore aching muscles and knee joints (The Longwood Seminars, 2014).

Another factor contributing to a weak body is lack of stretching, which is undoubtedly recommended for those who have been doing daily house chores and work routine. This is because these tasks can cause physical exhaustion, muscle tension and brain fatigue as well. Hence, stretching is one of the feasible ways to recharge someone's mind and body caused by physical and mental exhaustion (Sinar Harian, 2019). In ST, bodily movements are taught to users to improve physical and mental health. As far as mental health is concerned, the ST physical exercise can have good psychological consequences for the user (Azlan, 2007). This is in line with a contemporary study by Amatriain-Fernández et al. (2020) on the benefits of physical exercise during the current COVID-19 global pandemic.

According to Amatriain-Fernández et al. (2020), depression, stress, exhaustion, anxiety, frustration, and emotional exhaustion are among mental related disorder affecting the people under quarantine. Back in 2007, the WHO anticipated that depression will be the second leading cause of the burden of human disability in the world by 2020 (World Health Organization & United Nations Population Fund, 2007). In Malaysia, mental health is expected to be the second largest health problem after heart disease by 2020 while more people are likely to experience stress due to work overload and family problems (Wan Norliza, 2018; Thye, 2018).

Previous researchers, such as Amatriain-Fernández et al. (2020) maintain that physical exercise can produce positive impacts in the disorders while having beneficial effects on the common psychological problems. Prior, several studies were conducted on the guidelines and effects of exercise on the physical, emotional and mental health on a person's health beliefs, depression (Ng, Nazir and Nault, 2020; Siti Marziah et al., 2018), anxiety disorder (Sarris, et.al, 2012) and general wellbeing (Saltus, 2013; Edmunds, Biggs and Goldie, 2013; Hancock, 2012; Miner, 2003). Overall, both researchers and patients are confident that exercise can improve pain, physical and mental health, and general quality of life (Hurley et.al, 2018).

Several studies have found that *silat* influences bone health (Muhammad Amrun, Ooi & Chen 2018; Norsuriani & Ooi 2018), but to date, there is almost no data or studies on the effects of *silat* on general health. ST is believed to be effective in the rehabilitation process of

various diseases. However, it is quite difficult to find academic writings about it. Instead, it has been developed through non-academic writings, such as the magazines, coffee table books, and the websites. Therefore, the objective of this study is to observe the effects of ST on general health and musculoskeletal system from the perspective of the participants. The study expects ST can help to improve general health and musculoskeletal system, while participants could express intent to continue practicing ST in the future.

Methods

This study used a set of questionnaires to measure the effectiveness of ST on the general health of staff and students of Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) who had undergone ST training sessions. The inclusion criteria where subjects must be over the age of 18 and overweight or obese according to the Asia-Pacific classification for obesity in the Asian population. Subjects also have no previous medical diagnosis as well as exercise fewer than once a week. All subjects gave written consent after being provided with information and fully understood the research procedure before it was conducted. 22 participants were selected as an active group. They were assigned to undergo 24 sessions of ST training: 16 sessions with trainers and 8 self-training sessions. The report is based on the responses of participants to the post-training sessions' questionnaire. A sample size of 22 people for this active group was calculated based on findings from previous studies on ST (Razali, Norazhan & Nagoor Meera, 2014).

Furthermore, this study used a semi-structured interview to obtain data or more information on the benefits of ST to its users. The interviews intend to explore in-depth their experiences on how ST benefited and enhanced their general health. It is also intending to unpack the significant impacts of ST on those who practice it. The study uses the interview, as it is an effective instrument to gain a richer understanding of a new phenomenon (Maxwell, 2005; Sekaran, 2007). All 22 participants of the active group, i.e. 7 males and 15 females, have been involved in the interview session.

The research instrument was a self-constructed questionnaire based on Alyson Ross, *et. al* (2013) questionnaire on yoga practice, and the Theory of Planned Behavior questionnaire in a physical activity developed by Sonia Tirado González, *et.al* (2014). In order to test the instrument, a reliability test is conducted to ensure its internal consistency. The questionnaire comprises three sections: demographics, perception of benefit of ST on general health, and intention to practice ST. Each response score ranges from 0 to 5, from strongly agree to

strongly disagree. Overall, the questionnaire consists of 31 items.

This study employed the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 21 for data analysis. The study analyzes the socio-demographic data descriptively and presents it as frequencies and percentages. The test of normality was run to check the data distribution of the variables. The perception about ST and health, and intention to practice ST items were presented descriptively in the form of mean and standard deviation. Furthermore, the differences and correlation between the variables were presented using a non-parametric test like the Mann-Whitney U test and the Spearman Rank Correlation, as the number of samples is below one hundred. The interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis, in which researchers closely identified common themes, analyzed, and interpreted the meaning and responses of the interviewees.

Results

Socio-demographic characteristics

There are 22 respondents whose age ranged from 20 to 49 years. 68.2% were above 40 years old. Seven (31.8%) were male respondents, and 15 (68.2%) were female. 77.3% of respondents do not have past medical histories, and 19 of them (86.4%) did not smoke. Further details of the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographics

Item	Detail	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	7	31.8
	Female	15	68.2
Age	20-29	3	13.6
	30-39	4	18.2
	40-49	15	68.2
Past Medical History	Allergic Rhinitis	1	4.5
	Eczema	1	4.5
	Fibromyalge	1	4.5
	Kneepain bilateral	1	4.5
	Pyrexia of Unknown Origin (PUO)	1	4.5
	NIL	17	77.3
Smoking Status	Yes	3	13.6
	No	19	86.4

Reliability of the Instrument

The internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha) for the three constructs was calculated at 0.654 for expectation on ST, 0.923 for perception on the benefit of ST on general health, and 0.888 for intention to practice

ST. All items emerged as high between 0.654 - 0.923 (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011) as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Reliability of the Instrument

Constructs	No. of Items	No. of Respondents	Cronbach's alpha
Expectation on ST	5	22	.654
Perception benefit of ST on general health	17	22	.923
Intention to practice ST	4	22	.888

Descriptive Statistics

The Expectation on Senaman Tua Melayu

Table 3. The Expectation on Senaman Tua Melayu

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
ST can improve my health.	4.5000	.59761
ST can improve my breathing after practicing.	4.5909	.59033
ST can remove wind from the muscle after practicing.	4.4545	.73855
ST can reduce my back pain.	4.5000	.59761
ST can strengthen my body muscles.	4.3182	.56790

The mean scores of all five items in the construct are considered high ranging from mean = 4.3182 to 4.5909. Among all the items, 'ST can improve my breathing after practicing' has the highest mean (4.5909), and 'ST can strengthen my body muscles' (4.3182) has the lowest mean. Based on the mean score of each item, our sample could be considered as possessing a high expectation and knowledge of the benefits of practicing ST on their general health.

Perception on Benefit of ST towards General Health

Table 4. Perception on Benefit of ST towards General Health

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
My breathing is clearer after practicing ST.	4.4545	.73855
My body feels refreshed after practicing ST.	4.5909	.50324
My muscles get stronger after practicing ST.	4.1818	.66450
My knees get stronger after practicing ST.	4.3182	.56790
My body becomes more stable after practicing ST.	4.4545	.50965
My tummy is flat after practicing ST.	3.7727	.81251

My body feels reenergized after practicing ST.	4.5909	.50324
I feel more energetic after practicing ST.	4.4091	.50324
My emotions are more cheerful after practicing ST.	4.5000	.51177
My feel more enthusiastic after practicing ST.	4.5909	.50324
My body aches decrease after practicing ST.	4.5000	.51177
I sleep better after practicing ST.	4.4091	.50324
I feel healthier after practicing ST.	4.5000	.51177
My diet is better after practicing ST.	3.9091	.86790
ST helps me to maintain my weight.	4.0909	.81118
My relationship with other people improves after practicing ST.	4.2273	.81251
I feel more vibrant after practicing ST.	4.5455	.59580

The mean scores of all 17 items in the construct are considered high ranging from mean = 3.7727 to 4.5909. Three items emerged with the highest mean (4.5909) among all the items. They are ‘My body feels refreshed after practicing ST,’ ‘My body feels reenergized after practicing ST,’ and ‘My feel more enthusiastic after practicing ST’. While ‘My tummy is flat after practicing ST’ (3.7727) has the lowest mean. Based on the mean score of each item, our sample could be considered as having an incredibly positive perception and belief that ST enhances their general health.

Intention to Practice ST

Table 5. Intention to Practice ST

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have thought about exercising ST at least five times a week (each session 30 minutes, 5 sessions equal to 150 minutes)	4.2727	.70250
I will try to practice ST at least five times in a week (each session 30 minutes, 5 sessions equal to 150 minutes (about 2 and a half hours)	4.0455	.72225
I will make an effort to practice ST at least five times a week (each session 30 minutes, 5 sessions equal to 150 minutes (about 2 and a half hours)	4.3182	.56790
I will attempt to practice ST at least five times in a week (each session 30 minutes, 5 sessions equal to 150 minutes (about 2 and a half hours)	4.0455	.89853

The mean scores of all four items in the construct are considered high ranging from mean = 4.0455 to 4.3182. Among all the items, ‘I will make an afford to practice ST at least five times in a week’ has the highest

mean (4.2727). While two items have the lowest mean (4.0455) which are ‘I will try to practice ST at least five times in a week’ and ‘I will attempt to practice ST at least five times in a week’. Based on the mean score of each item, our sample could be considered as possessing a high behavioral intention to continue practicing ST.

Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis was tested using Spearman's rho correlation test, the results of which are presented in Table 6. Based on the results, the correlation coefficient between Expectation on ST and Perception on the benefit of ST is significant, and at +.793, is the strongest. The correlation between the Perception of the benefit of ST and Intention to practice ST is also significant and positive but moderate (+.477). The correlation between Expectations on ST and Intention to practice ST is not significant (+.315).

Table 6. Correlation between Expectation on ST, Perception on the benefit of ST, and Intention to practice ST

		Mean_Expectatio n on ST	Mean_Perceptio n on the benefit of ST	Mean_Intentio n to practice S T
Mean_Expectatio n on ST	Spearman's rho	1.000	.793**	.315
	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.153
	N	22	22	22
Mean_Perceptio n on benefit of ST	Spearman's rho	.793**	1.000	.477*
	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	0.25
	N	22	22	22
Mean_Intentio n to practice ST	Spearman's rho	.315	.477*	1.000
	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.153	0.25	.
	N	22	22	22

Discussion

The focus group involved in the 8-weeks-exercise plan consists of 22 respondents from different health backgrounds. Each of them was interviewed to share their thoughts and feelings on the impacts of ST on their general health. The impacts are categorized according to the wellbeing theme as follows:

General wellbeing

With ST, the general health of users shows improvement. The body and muscles change to be fitter and stronger. The special techniques taught in ST help the body to stimulate physical body relief, body freshness, and enthusiasm while straightening body posture. Body aches, particularly caused by aging, disappeared. For those with bloated stomach issues, the discomfort lessens.

Breathing

ST teaches how to breathe in and out in the correct way. The right inhaling and exhaling techniques also give a user the advantage to find out how to flatten the tummy. Furthermore, the user is equipped with the skill of taking breath properly in dealing with stress and problems at work and in life.

Upper back pain

The upper back part includes in and under the shoulder. A consistent practice of ST may gradually reduce and lighten the pain. This contributes to a more relaxed feeling. It is believed that such pain affects most of those who sit and spend a lot of time working in front of the computer. Movements of the ST such as “The Malay Hand” (Tangan Melayu) and “Dragon’s Tail Curl” (Gulung Ekor Naga) help a lot to either reduce or eliminate the pain. This finding was in line with the results of Saper (2017), who stressed that when upper back and shoulders are rounded forward, shoulder blades start to pull away from each other. This over-stretches the muscles that support the shoulder blades. Over time, this causes muscle fatigue and strain in the mid back. Therefore, one needs to open his chest and the fronts of his shoulders, activate the muscles that support his shoulder blades and increase mobility in the thoracic spine.

Lower back pain

The tricks and treats of low back pain and waist pain can be learned from several ST techniques. ST may help to eliminate the ache of low back pain. A consistent practice of ST works for lower back pain including waist pain while strengthening the hips. The pain could be caused by breastfeeding and sitting too long in front of a laptop.

Knee pain

ST movements and techniques may greatly improve knee pain due to being overweight. For the non-

overweight user, knee pain especially when climbing the stairs or work on certain activities can be reduced or fully recovered by doing regular ST workouts.

Heel pain

Heel pain is a common foot problem among men and women. Among the causes of heel pain are obesity, ill-fitting shoes, abnormal walking style, and injuries. Pain can generally affect the side of, under, or behind the heel. Constant practice of several ST techniques and “Sole 9” (*Tapak 9*) has a positive effect on heel pain. Indeed, this finding was also confirmed in the study of Amatriain-Fernández et al. (2020), who showed that postures that stretch and strengthen the legs and feet can help reduce and even relieve plantar fasciitis which is caused when someone overuse or put too much stress on his feet.

Anxiety and Stress

ST is essentially like self-care spa therapy, but it requires a different way of massage. The pre-and post-testing Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS) was used to investigate the effectiveness of ST on the respondents in terms of anxiety and stress. It shows that the scales greatly declined through the post-test.

It could be discerned from here that general wellbeing is the most effective proof of ST among the respondents. The impacts of ST can also be seen from the progress of breathing condition, followed by back pain, and then knee pain. Anxiety and stress are the least. These evidences significantly show that doing ST repetitively within a week is advantageous to everyone. Several ST techniques are no different from the common movements that we do in our life. However, these techniques or movements are not labeled ST.

Conclusion

The results of this study show that ST is a practical and beneficial exercise, regardless of age, gender and health status. The participants’ perception and belief on the benefit of ST in enhancing their general health are incredibly positive. Most of them agree that ST made them feel fresh, reenergized, and more enthusiastic. When we go deeper through the interview data, we noticed that the experiences of those who undergo the training are highly significant. We identified the impact of ST is highly significant in six areas such as breathing, upper back pain, lower back pain, knee pain, heel pain, and anxiety and stress. It is also worth mentioning that one participant who has been suffering from fibromyalgia admits that ST significantly lessens her muscles pain and improves her sleeping problem. While for another

participant who takes painkillers almost every week due to gout and arthritis, with ST, he has reduced his painkiller intake. ST's breathing technique and its stretching movement have relieved the stress in his joints. Generally, we conclude that ST can enhance general health. We are not generalizing this thought to all people who practice ST. But it is worth mentioning that the benefit of ST towards general health is remarkable. Further studies are required to understand and delve in-depth into how every single technique of ST has effects on other health issues.

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