

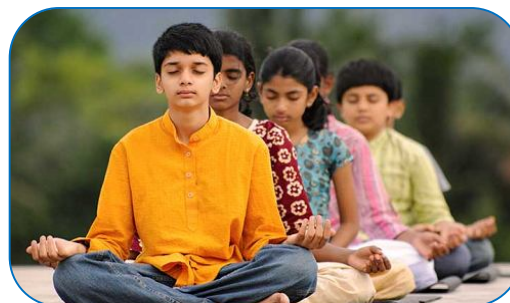


## SIGNIFICANCE OF YOGIC PRACTICES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

C. Buvaneswari<sup>1</sup> and Dr. R. Yasoda<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Part Time Scholar, Directorate of Distance Education, Dravidian University, Kuppam, Andhra Pradesh & BT Assistant, PUMS, Velan Nagar, Tirupattur Tk, Vellore District, Tamil Nadu.

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor & Head i/c, Department of Education, Dravidian University, Kuppam, Andhra Pradesh.



### ABSTRACT :

Yoga is a group of physical, mental, and spiritual practices or disciplines which originated in ancient India. Yoga is a mind-body practice that has many components such as physical postures and exercises to promote strength, breathing exercises to enhance respiratory function, relaxation to release tension and stress, and mind body awareness to improve attention and regulation skills. The bases of the yogic practice are proper exercise, diet, breathing, relaxation and meditation. When children practice yoga it increases their confidence, builds concentration and strengthens growing bodies. For children with behavioral issues, yoga can improve their impulses in a positive direction and provides them with an outlet as a way to manage their behaviour.

**KEYWORDS :** *Yogic Practice.*

### INTRODUCTION

Yoga is a group of physical, mental, and spiritual practices or disciplines which originated in ancient India. Yoga is a mind-body practice that has many components such as physical postures, exercises to promote strength, breathing exercises to enhance respiratory function, relaxation to release tension and stress, and mind body awareness to improve attention and regulation skills. A positive effect of yoga has been found on increasing focus, mental alertness, academic performance, and inner strength of the practitioners. The science of yoga is a powerful stream of knowledge, which enables the practitioners to achieve radiant physical health, serene mind, continues spiritual uplift, and creates the ability for harmonious social living. Yoga through its techniques of meditation, asanas, and pranayama yields a positive effect in the management of stress in adolescents.

### REVIEWS ON YOGIC PRACTICES

Some of the reviews on yogic practices are given below.

**Tiwari Anamika (2016)** concluded that emotional intelligence can be enhanced through regular yoga practices as well as it also promotes healthy life style habits. Their study results suggest following recommendations yoga training awareness workshops must be included in govt. and private firms training to motivate employees for regular yoga practice so that they can deal with workplace problems easily as well as enable them to develop healthy life style habits for healthy and happy life forever. The yoga practice awareness programmes must be conducted by govt. through social welfare scheme to make every person aware of the yoga practices to make a happy and healthy society where

everyone follows healthy lifestyle habits as well as capable to handle day to day stressful situation easily and contribute to make a healthy and developed nation.

**Lea Petersen (2014)** investigated the effects of participation in twice weekly yoga classes in 14 university students. Cohen's Perceived Stress Scale, a measure of the perceived uncontrollability of individuals' lives, was used to measure changes in reported perceived stress in the first, third and fifth weeks of yoga classes. 9 of the 14 students evaluated exhibited a decrease in perceived stress by the end of the summer session. On average, students perceived their stress to decrease by 1.8 points with a median decrease of 2 PSS points. Their research observed positive changes in perceived stress in university students participating in a five week yoga course.

**Shikha Banerjee (2014)** had done the study on sample of 40 student for two month. There were two groups (control group and experimental group) and 20 students were assigned to each group. The Pre and post scores on memory obtained for both the experimental and control groups were treated statistically to assess the effect of the practice .in the hypothesis it is considered that there is no significant difference in memory scores of students of experimental and control group at pre test and post test levels was rejected in favour of the finding that yogic practice helped in increasing of memory level from pre test to post test level among students of experimental group as compared to the control group .As the practice in school going students in yogic practice was provided for a period of 2 months that is Surya namaskar, Pranayam, Omkar jap and Yoga nidra, it helped in increasing memory level.

**Khalsa Sat Bir S. et al. (2011)** demonstrated that inclusion of a semester-long regular yoga intervention is feasible in a high school setting within the school curriculum. Out of 136 potential participants in the study, only five declined to participate for religious reasons, whereas most all other non-participants dropouts were due to schedule/class elective changes. Among students randomly assigned to the yoga intervention, attendance was high and similar to the school's typical physical education class attendance levels. This attendance and the generally positive qualitative feedback suggest that the yoga was perceived as an acceptable practice by both parents and students.

**Berlin Sarah (2008)** The Effect of Yoga in the Classroom" Phd. thesis University of California, San Diego Education Studies July 18, 2008. Evaluated the effects of doing yoga in a regular education seventh grade classroom, during normal instruction hours, on stress levels and academic achievement. This month long study consisted of a total of two weeks of yoga instruction, due to block scheduling, and data collection. The three methods of data acquisition were pre and post student stress tests, student yoga surveys, and student assessments. The results indicate that yoga in the classroom was a positive addition to the classroom schedule. Students showed a decrease in stress levels, performed better on reading comprehension tests and quick writes, and perceived a benefit to doing yoga.

## PRINCIPLES OF YOGA

The bases of the yogic practice or five basic principles are listed below.

1. **Proper Exercise:** Body is the physical manifestation of a being; it is the shell that expresses and represents one's self. One's spiritual health begins with physical health, which is physical achieved through proper exercise. The yogic practice has beneficial effects to every part of the body - muscles, joints, ligaments, blood circulation, digestion, etc.
2. **Diet:** A proper diet should accompany the yogic practice to maintain a healthy physical body. In order to detox one's body, yoga recommends a vegetarian diet. Digesting meat requires more energy than a vegetarian diet; this energy is needed for rejuvenating the body through meditation and mental clarity.
3. **Breathing:** Most of the people become shallow chest breathers by the age of 8, which doesn't utilize the full capacity of the lungs. Yoga emphasizes attention to breath, and taking long, deep inhalations that begin in the lower abdomen and fill up the entire chest cavity. This increases lung capacity and oxygen flow throughout the body, which clears and cleanses the mind.
4. **Relaxation:** One achieves inner peace and spiritual cleansing through proper relaxation. Relaxation begins in the physical body, manifested through losing all tension within the muscles. This then extends to the mind, and positively affects one's actions throughout the day.

5. **Meditation:** The final but most important aspect of the yoga philosophy is positive thinking and meditation. It is part of the yoga belief that everything in the physical body is controlled through the mind. The meditation allows one a way to ease the constant chatter of the mind, and instead control it, and channel it to positive thinking and spiritual health.

### FEATURES OF YOGA

Some of the features of yoga are as follows:

- **A Universal practical discipline:** Yoga is a psychological, physiological and spiritual discipline that has been an integral part of our Indian culture for centuries. Yoga is a complete science of life that originated about thousands of years ago in India and still been practiced in India for centuries.
- **Process:** The process that maintains not only the health but also generate a sense of happiness and fulfillment. It also encourages personal growth and development. Yoga brings the mind and body into a mutual state of well being, balance, ease and vibrant alertness.
- **Positive approach to health:** The health of the human being is influenced by various factors. Yoga is one of the system that includes all these factors. These factors are regular exercises in the form of physical postures, proper breathing, sufficient rest and relaxation, meditation, positive thinking and balanced diet. Thus Yoga is an important, natural, preventive measure to ensure good health.
- **Self therapy:** It is a self therapy in the sense that one can perform this discipline on his own. Yoga involves different breathing techniques and postures which are known as Asanas or postures. Postures, Proper Breathing, Relaxation and meditation are important parts of Yoga.

### RELEVANCE OF YOGA FOR CHILDREN

The self-confidence is an essential life skill for children to develop, and parents can be a main source of this. A low self image can lead to many emotional issues in adulthood, including depression and anxiety. This can be avoided with the guidance of some very caring role models, and the positive interactions that these relationships impose.

There are numerous benefits to enrolling your child into a yoga class for kids, and even more specifically a hatha yoga class. The hatha yoga specializes in four areas which are breathing, relaxation, meditation, and posture. Yoga seems to contradict the nature of a child, but when performed in a group atmosphere and seen as a beneficial life tool, children excel in yoga. There is no competition in yoga, so children are not competing with one another which can also subconsciously harm the ego.

The early childhood years are exciting and transformative. It is inspiring and magical to observe children as they are immersed in learning and development. These years, however, are also often challenging and confusing. Children require a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment to meet the developmental tasks of this time period and to grow into subsequent phases of life well prepared. The social-emotional learning, trusting relationships, and adequate amounts of physical activity and exploration are critical for young children.

### BENEFITS OF YOGA FOR CHILDREN

When children practice yoga it increases their confidence, builds concentration and strengthens growing bodies. For children with behavioral issues, yoga can improve their impulses in a positive direction and provides them with an outlet as a way to manage their behaviour.

#### Physical Benefits of Yoga

Some of the physical benefits of yoga are listed below.

- Helps develop the right balance of muscle tone and strength throughout the body to support the joints.
- It helps to maintain flexibility and mobility in all joints and muscles and improves balance, alignment and coordination with practice of postures.

- It helps balance energy levels and calms the nervous system with twists that stimulate the spinal cord and regular practice of relaxation
- Keeps the heart and respiratory system fit and strong, encouraging better circulation by getting the heart pumping and using more of the space in the lungs with deeper breathing.
- Improves the digestive system with yoga asanas that get things moving in the gut and by stimulating the parasympathetic nervous system during relaxation, triggering important acids in the stomach to be released for breaking down food.

### Social, Emotional and Cognitive Benefits

The major Social, Emotional and Cognitive Benefits are listed below.

- Increases attention span and improves concentration
- More oxygen circulates round the body and brain during yoga practice and breathing exercises, so improving memory retention and learning ability.
- Children get better at dealing with anxiety and stress because they learn to incorporate relaxation and breathing techniques into daily life.
- Improves relationships and social awareness through group and partner work.

### DEFINITIONS OF YOGA PRACTICES

Some of the definitions of yoga practices are given below.

According to **Ramdev, S. (2009)** yoga is a life philosophy, yoga is self discipline, yoga is a life system. It is a greatest science of attaining self-treatment and self- realization. It is complete health building solution of body and mind.

In the words of **Balakrishna (2007)** yoga is a holistic and scientific process to transform body, mind and life. It is the path to gain eternal wisdom, ultimate truth and to unite the inner soul with the supreme soul through self-realization. It is an experience of complete silence and calm based on self-realization. It is devotion that transcends desire and a state of nothingness attained by self-realization. It is understanding of truth of life and rationality.

According to **Shastri, Suvrat Muni (1998)** yoga is a supreme learning (lore) and it stands next to none. The sadhaka (practitioner) can swim across the ocean of the worlds by yoga. The soul gets purified by yoga like gold which gets purified by fire.

According to **Gupta, M.G. (1999)** yoga is a mother of restraining the natural turbulence and turmoil of thoughts and restlessness and capriciousness of the physical organs.

### REFERENCES

1. Berlin Sarah (2008). The Effect of Yoga in the Classroom. Ph.D. Thesis University of California, San Diego Education Studies.
2. Khalsa Sat Bir S. et al. (2011). Evaluation of the Mental Health Benefits of Yoga in a Secondary School: A Preliminary Randomized Controlled Trial. Journal of Behavioral Health Services & Research, DOI 10.1007/s11414-011-9249-8. 80-90.
3. Lea Petersen (2014). Ph.D. Thesis, University of Pittsburgh.
4. Ranjna Devi & Mudit Rathore. (2018). Effect of yoga practices on educational achievement: A short summary of reviews. International Journal of Yogic, Human Movement and Sports Sciences, 3(2), 369-373.
5. Shikha Banerjee. (2014). Effect of Yoga on the Memory of Middle School Level Students, IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME) e-ISSN: 2320-7388,p-ISSN: 2320-737X, Vol. 4, Issue 1, Ver. IV, 49-52.
6. Sunitha, Putta. (2014). Integration of Yoga in School Curriculum. Ph.D. Thesis, Osmania University, Hyderabad.

7. Tiwari Ram Kalap. (2015). Benefits of Yoga Practices on High school student's memory and concentration in relation to Examination stress. International Journal of Yoga and Allied Sciences, 4(2), 77-81.
8. Tummers, N. (2005). Yoga for your students, 19(2), 35-7.
9. White L.(2009) Yoga for children. Pediatric Nursing, 35(5), 277-95.
10. <https://aussiechildcarenetwork.com.au/articles/teaching-children/benefits-of-yoga-for-children>
11. <https://www.anamayaresort.com/5-basic-principles-of-yoga/>
12. <http://www.indovacations.net/english/Yogafeature.htm>
13. <https://www.bkmedicalwing.org/salient-features-of-yoga/>
14. Yoga.Wikipedia:the free encyclopedia.
15. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>