Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Yoga is one of the most important heritages of India. The term ‘YOGA’ is derived from Sanskrit word YUJ. The most acceptable meaning is “YUJ SAMADHU” which means integration that is to put things in their proper order and prospective. Yoga is a traditional and cultural science of India. Ayurveda includes yoga as a part of an ideal lifestyle and maintenance of health (swastha vritta). Hatha yoga, ashtang yoga, bhakti yoga, mantra yoga, dnyan yoga, karma yoga, raj yoga appear like different types of yoga due to their different methods and techniques but the main objective of all of them is liberation, salivation or to attain Samadhi, the highest state of chitta (consciousness) by controlling its vrittis (tendencies, desires) arising in it, out of attachment with materialistic world, so as to merge into the divine principle (absolute consciousness). Yoga is an experiential science.

Yoga goes a step further and aims at harmonizing the physical, mental and spiritual aspects of personality, with a view to attaining the highest level of consciousness. Yoga discipline thus embraces the whole of operational existence of human beings, from the level of gross body to level of pure consciousness. This all embracing new awareness leads to correct understanding of one’s own nature, which is step towards gaining a total control over activities in all spheres and all the levels of one’s existence.

On a more practical level, yoga is a means of balancing and harmonizing the body, mind and emotions. This is done through the practice of asana,

pranayama, mudra, bandha, shatkarma and meditation, and must be achieved before union can take place with the higher reality\(^2\).

It is appreciated that yoga consider the human being as the whole body, mind and spirit together and not in separate components. Such an approach and philosophy is strongly anti-stress; disintegration of this personality leads to stress. The aim of man’s life is to get rid of the worries, anxieties and suffering of the world and to achieve peace.

In this modern world our environment is fighting for survival and we humans suffer from more and more physical and psychological stress, we cannot always control them but can learn how to face them and to this end Yoga is as good an invention it has ever been. The aim of yoga is attainment of physical, mental and spiritual health. The main credit of systematizing yoga goes to Patanjai who wrote the” yoga sutra” two thousand years ago. He has recommended 8 stages of yoga discipline, yama (social code), niyama (personal code), asana (posture), pranayama (control of prana), pratyahara (sensewithdrawal),Dharana (concentration), Dhyana (meditation) and Samadhi (superconsciousness)\(^3\).

Yoga is the science of right living and, as such, is intended to be incorporated in daily life. It works on all aspects of the person: the physical, vital, mental, emotional, psychic and spiritual. The science of yoga begins to work on the outermost aspect of the personality, the physical body, which for most people is a practical and familiar starting point. When imbalance is experienced at this level, the organs, muscles and nerves no longer function in harmony; rather they act in opposition to each other. For instance, the endocrine system might become irregular and the efficiency of the nervous system decrease to such an extent that a disease will manifest. Yoga aims at bringing the different bodily


functions into perfect coordination so that they work for the good of the whole body.

The term fitness and physical fitness are often used interchangeably. Thought both terms involve quality of life, they do not mean that same think. Fitness includes emotional, mental, spiritual, social fitness and as well as physical fitness. Currently a popular term for fitness is wellness⁴.

Yoga has been practiced for over thousands of years. In the past, humans discovered for the first time how they were living and wrote their story with alphabet. Essential knowledge is transferred from one generation to another generation in the form of fairy tales. With this method, knowledge grows and becomes culture. Surely, yoga has been presented since the past in this way. Yoga is a safe and soft exercise which can reduce the pressure in daily situations. Yoga is then considered an entertainment for the modern citizen. Though yoga practice is very popular; there are still mysteries for most people. Yoga is neither a religion nor an abnormal strange movement of your body. Yoga practice focuses on simplicity and softness which is good to your mind and body. Yoga empowers everybody who practices it because it can reduce the effects from stress. Besides, yoga helps create the balance of positive and negative powers. Yoga, therefore, can reduce and cure illness. Blood flows in every part of your body. There will be no stress and fatigue. As a result, a good body movement can be achieved. Joints can function well. There will be attention to work and understanding of what is to be done, what is being done and what has been done. Calmness increases where as pain from menstruation decreases. So, yoga in worldwide popular, especially at the present time when everybody recognizes the importance of good health and good mind.

Physical fitness defines as the capacity of an individual to do work effectively with joy and pleasure. After the work is over, he still has sufficient capacity to do more work without exertion. Moreover, his recovery is faster and quicker. Basically there are four components comes under general physical fitness. Muscular strength defines as the ability of a muscle or muscle group to exert maximum force\(^5\).

Muscular endurance is the ability of a muscle or muscle group to resist fatigue and to make repeated contraction against a defined submaximal resistance\(^6\). Cardio-respiratory fitness is ability of the circulatory and respiratory systems to adjust to vigorous exercise and recover from the effect of such exercise\(^7\). Flexibility is the ability to move the body joints through a maximum range of motion without under strain\(^8\).

There are number of studies have been conducted on yogic practices and found positive effect on physical and physiological parameters of an individual. A study was conducted on the effects of hatha yoga training on the health-related physical fitness. Result of the study reported that practice of hatha yoga for eight weeks has a significant improvement on the health related physical fitness except cardiovascular endurance\(^9\).

The best way for a woman to maintain her health and figure is exercising. Exercising improves the circulation of oxygen throughout the body by building additional blood vessels to the areas that are stressed and by removing excess waste from the body. When muscles are worked out, they store higher levels of energy in the form of glycogen. Exercising increases muscle size, the lungs’ ability to function, and promotes a healthy heart. It is important to include

\(^{5}\text{Ibid.}\)  
\(^{6}\text{Ibid.}\)  
\(^{7}\text{Ibid.}\)  
\(^{8}\text{Ibid.}\)  
exercise in our daily practices. There are many simple ways to add exercise to your day. Instead of driving somewhere, take a walk. Bicycling is another fun way to exercise. Studies show that by adding bike riding to your daily routine you can limit your chances of having a heart attack. This is because the blood circulation to the muscles will increase. Walking is the simplest form of exercise. Walking gets the heart pumping and circulates blood and oxygen throughout the body. It can even burn calories, fat and cholesterol if you walk at a brisk enough pace. Walking is a form of aerobic exercise. Skipping is a fun way to exercise the entire body. This easy form of exercise builds your lungs, legs and even wrists. Skipping can tone your body, improve circulation, calm stress, and improve your hand and foot coordination. You can also skip while you are jumping rope. Jumping rope is equivalent to running or swimming. Now here is an interesting exercise that you never thought of as exercising; breathing. Deep breathing techniques will increase your body’s oxygen flow. Practice deep breathing for ten minutes during the day. It will help wake you up in the morning and relieve stress during the day.10

From the physical body, yoga moves on to the mental and emotional levels. Many people suffer from phobias and neuroses as a result of the stresses and interactions of everyday living. Yoga cannot provide a cure for life, but it does present a proven method for coping with it. Through the practices of yoga, awareness develops of the interrelation between the emotional, mental and physical levels, and how a disturbance in any one of these affects the others. Gradually, this awareness leads to an understanding of the more subtle areas of existence11.

Studies have shown that yoga practice can lead to significant improvements in muscular strength, muscular endurance, body composition, respiratory fitness parameters, balance, agility and flexibility. There are many more physical and physiological parameters are significantly improved due to regular yogic practices.

There are numbers of ways through which an individual make them fit or more specific physically fit like weight training, running with moderate intensity, jogging, swimming, yogis practices and many more ways.

Now a day yoga or yogic lifestyle worldwide accepted as a one of the best mean for fitness. The graph of yogic practices is raise rapidly around the globe. Yoga is a lifestyle. It is beyond any religion, cast and country. Yogic practices are for whole humanity. There are number of study which concludes that yogic practice give number of benefits at all levels like physical, physiological and spiritual.

All Yogic practices are divided in three categories on the basis of their nature of movements, static yogic practices (Asana, Dharana, Dhyana, and many more which are static in nature), dynamic yogic practices (yogic vinyasa) and combination of both static and dynamic practices (Suryanamaskar with slow pace and yogic vinyasa practice with slow rhythm and hold in final pose of asanas). Combination yogic practices always give best result because it is involved of both anaerobic and aerobic metabolism of the body.

Today every individual fails to take care of herself while managing work and home together. With endless work deadlines and family responsibilities we

often fail to look after our own health. It has been medically proved that women have more health risks than men. In order to fight these changes one should follow a rich diet. All of the doctors and fitness expert suggest for diets rich in proteins and low with fats and carbohydrates. One should take enough amounts of minerals and vitamins in daily diets for high immunity. With carelessness health problems can grow further and causes various health problems. A good exercise regime is also very important. You can do some basic exercise at home. If you like to walk follow some morning or evening walks. One can also do aerobics and yoga for fitness. Eat fruits and vegetables as they provide all kind of nutrients. Drink at least 8 to 10 glasses of water in a day it helps for good metabolism. Eat fiber rich food for healthy digestive system. A healthy body results in a great physical as well as mental performance. We often fail to understand that a healthy body can only look after perfectly and maintain good health of family. With so many changes throughout the life we need some extra care routine to follow for good health.16

Today students sit in overcrowded classrooms, cramped and bent over their books, their mined tired from too much intellectual activity. Real education is not just for the fulfillment of external, social and economic commitments, it is also for the inner understanding and the growth of the all round personality at physical, mental and spiritual17.

Sound mind lives in a sound body. As we know that the children are the bank of energy and they know as a synonym of motion (active). It is much heard to teach them yoga or more specific yogic asana, those are static in nature.

Today yogic practices have common popular throughout the world Yogic practices are believed to have tremendous psychological and therapeutic values.

Yoga has the surest remedies for man’s psychological as well as physical ailments.

Concentration refers to the intensity in which a player focuses their attention in terms of a width (broad-narrow) and depth (internal- external). Concentration is a term used in everyday language. In post-event interviews with high-profile athletes, a failure to concentrate is a commonly cited explanation for poor performance. Not surprisingly therefore, concentration is a concept the layperson feels that they understand immediately. However, improving concentration skills is not simply a case of trying harder to concentrate. It is a case of knowing what to concentrate on and focusing attention on these factors. Concentration is defined as ‘the process by which all thoughts and senses are focused totally upon a selected object or activity to the exclusion of everything else. It is worth emphasizing here that concentration is a process that changes over time and that maintaining the intensity and focus of concentration requires effort. Recognizing this factor is important because it means that concentration can vary in both intensity and focus. We can be focusing on the key parts of performance at one moment, but be distracted the next. Racket sport requires high-level concentration. Concentration or selective attention is also involved in racket sports because it is psychological factor such as fatigue, state of situation, balance and functioning of the central nervous system which is important at time of playing the shots in different sports (Routledge and Paul Kegan, 2004)\(^\text{18}\).

Yogic training programme helps in decreasing stress, anxiety and it improves concentration and memory. Yogic practices are believed to have tremendous psychological and therapeutic values.

It has been found that now-a-days college students are going through academic stress, examination anxiety lack of concentration and memory. It is the need of the hour to find a suitable method of physical activity that will be safe, effective, appropriate and enjoyable for the students. The research scholar attempted to build a comprehensive yoga training program to improve status of student’s body as well as mind and spirit. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of comprehensive yoga training program on academic stress, examination anxiety, concentration and memory of college students.

**Objectives of the Study**

Following were the objectives of the study

- To find out the effect of comprehensive yoga training program on academic stress.
- To find out the effect of comprehensive yoga training program on examination anxiety.
- To compare the effect of comprehensive yoga training program on concentration.
- To compare the effect of comprehensive yoga training program on memory.

**Delimitations**

- The study was confined to male college students from Dayanand Vedic Degree College, Orai.
- This study was delimited to subject’s chronological age between 18 to 25 years.
- The study was further delimited only to 60 male students.
Only participants, who attended the yoga session for all 5 days were selected as the subjects.

- The follow up period was limited to 12 weeks.
- This study was delimited to following selected variables.

I. Academic Stress
II. Examination Anxiety
III. Concentration
IV. Memory

Limitation

Certain factors like eating habits, lifestyles, routine work, diet etc. Which might have affected the results of this investigation and are not considered in the study.

Hypotheses

From the scholar’s own understanding of the problem and as gleaned through the literature it was hypothesized that

- There will be significant effect of effect of comprehensive yoga training program on academic stress.
- There will be significant effect of comprehensive yoga training program on examination anxiety.
- There will be significant effect of comprehensive yoga training program on concentration.
- There will be significant effect of comprehensive yoga training program on memory.
DEFINITION AND EXPLANATION OF THE TERMS

Anxiety

It is the state of emotional and physical disturbance induced in a personal by real or imaginary threat. A state of apprehension and fear resulting from the anticipation of a threatening event of situation. Anxiety is a psychological and physiological state characterized by cognitive, somatic, emotional and behavioural components. These components combine to create an unpleasant feeling that is typically associated with uneasiness, fear or worry.

Concentration

The act of focusing of attention upon a task or problem or upon certain elements of an experience” (Good. Dictionary of Education, 1945)

Memory

It may be defined as the ability to recall to consciousness previously registered experiences and information’s.

Stress
Stress is the body’s reaction to a change that requires a physical, mental or emotional adjustment or response. Stress can come from any situation or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry, nervous or even anxious.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

- The study may be helpful to improve the Physical and Physiological status of individual.
- The result of study may highlight that if yoga training is effective for the selected variables.
- This study may provide knowledge about how to design comprehensive training program for yoga.
- Comprehensive yoga training should be part of an effective fitness programme for better fitness.
- The finding of the study will add new knowledge in the field of yoga and physical education.