Yoga is a concept that has been integral to the cultural consciousness and heritage of India. Yoga deals with the fundamental aspect of human nature which is suffering. Yoga approaches suffering as a potential for human growth in all spheres of physical, mental, social and spiritual being.

The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali is the classical work on yoga that deals with all dimensions of yoga and is there as a road map for progressively training the human consciousness for the highest level of growth towards self-transcendence.

The research set out with the following hypotheses:

1. It is hypothesised that in line with the philosophical tradition of India of using interpretation, commentary and exegesis of Sutras, it is possible to similarly employ the modern system of qualitative research and more specifically the method of hermeneutics to understand and interpret the Patanjali Yoga Sutras particularly in the context of suffering, using the relevant scientific knowledge and evidence-base of medical neuroscience.

2. It is hypothesised that by using the current knowledge and evidence-base of medical neuroscience, it is possible to gain a better understanding of the Patanjali Yoga Sutras for the benefit of incorporating it into health care that can potentially transform health care and also the individual and society. At the same time this exercise would also authenticate and validate Yoga as a science of healthcare in this modern era of Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM).

The hypotheses can be accepted on the following basis:
1. The study has demonstrated that hermeneutic interpretation of the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali using the concepts derived from medical neuroscience is possible particularly in the context of suffering as demonstrated and confirmed by thematic coding and qualitative analysis with the help of a qualitative data analysis software.

2. PRAYOGA a mind-body medicine program based on the ashtanga yoga of Patanjali Yoga Sutras developed by the researcher and used in clinical practice was studied with a brief quantitative clinical study in a patient population suffering from chronic distress due to chronic pain conditions. This showed a significant effect demonstrating the applicability and feasibility of practically adapting aspects the Patanjali Yoga Sutra in healthcare.

The present study has attempted to present the multidimensional aspect of the Patanjali Yoga Sutras through hermeneutic interpretation in the light of the body of current advances in medical neuroscience. Neuroscience is considered as the ultimate science of human studies. Advances in neuroscience is reaching new frontiers in our quest to understand ourselves better. The path of yoga is also a journey in the same direction. These are different paths leading us on to the same goal of getting closer to reality.

The Patanjali Yoga Sutras, even though a relatively concise work, is expansive and multidimensional in its scope. The following dimensions of the Patanjali Yoga Sutras are brought out through this work:

1. Yoga as health science

2. Yoga as neuropsychological science

3. Yoga as social science

4. Yoga as philosophy

5. Yoga as an art
6. Yoga as a spiritual tradition

7. Yoga as a cultural heritage

8. Yoga as a way of life

Yoga Sutras of Patanjali is a unique work which has the potential to transform individuals, society, the nation and the world. It deals with and appeals to the core or the heart of the human consciousness to bring out the best of human potential. This can be summarized in the following quote and applied to Patanjali Yoga Sutras as a means towards this end:

“Where there is righteousness in the heart, there is beauty in the character;
Where there is beauty in the character, there is harmony in the home;
When there is harmony in the home, there is order in the nation;
When there is order in the nation, there is peace in the world.”

An ancient proverb and favourite quote of
Late Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam,
Former President of India and World Renowned Space Scientist