CHAPTER 12

CONCLUSION AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This research set out to study the Patanjali Yoga Sutras, the ancient classical work on yoga practice and principle, in the light of evidence-based modern scientific interdisciplinary field of medical neuroscience.

The introduction provides an extensive overview and sets the groundwork for the research covering both the tradition of yoga and the tradition of science.

The literature review exhaustively reviews the evidence base for an undertaking of such a research study and the feasibility of the research including a detailed review of the evidence base of the research methodology adapted in the study.

The qualitative interpretative analytical method of hermeneutics was used as the method of interpretation of meaning of the sutras. Interpretation was done of the sutras as a lived experience by the researcher with a personal practice and incorporation of the principles of Ashtanga Yoga in his personal life and as also being a hereditary traditional practitioner of Vedic yoga way of life.

A small qualitative analysis of the interpreted text was done to show a coherence between ancient wisdom and modern science of the Yoga Sutras.

Finally a small quantitative clinical study using a mind-body medicine intervention called PRAYOGA with concepts derived from the Ashtanga yoga of Patanjali Yoga Sutras, developed by the researcher and used clinically, was reported, to demonstrate the clinical application of the Yoga Sutras and its effectiveness in chronic distress or suffering due to chronic pain conditions.

Future research could be directed to more researchers in the field of medicine and neuropsychology taking up qualitative research and hermeneutic research of Yoga Sutra and other works on yoga as an experiential research. This would provide impetus not only to qualitative research as a valid methodology of
research in medicine and social sciences but also give more credibility to ancient works in yoga.

Research on yoga at present seem to restrict to certain aspects of Ashtanga Yoga, especially, asana, pranayama and dhyana (meditation). It would be helpful for researchers to consider the Ashtanga Yoga in its entirety as a transformative practice and pursue research on their effects on wellbeing.

It would be helpful to conduct double-blind randomised controlled research studies on larger and representative samples in clinical populations in yoga research.

Studies involving following-up a cohort over time to look at the long term effects and benefits of yoga programs based on the Ashtanga Yoga of Patanjali would be useful to inform wider acceptance and application of yoga in clinical practice.

More research on yoga not only as a practice for overcoming personal suffering but as a movement towards promoting harmony in society and a bigger goal of bring about world peace can be a task for the future researchers and practitioners.