CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY

This chapter presents summary of the research work entitled, “Effect of Yoga Therapy and Play Activities on Learned Helplessness and Academic Performance among the Learning Disabled.”

According to Hammill et. al. (1981), “Learning disability is a generic term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities. Those disorders are intrinsic to the individual and presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction. Even though a learning disability may occur concomitantly with other handicapping conditions (e.g. Sensory impairment, mental retardation, social and emotional disturbance) or environmental influences (e.g. cultural differences insufficient/inappropriate instruction, psychogenic factors) it is not the direct result of those conditions or influences.”

Learned helplessness is irrational, neurotic, panic stricken behaviour, a wild over-reaction to a tiny uncontrollable risk. It is a severe problem and needs to be fixed. The causes are by now parents and or teachers respond to children’s failures and successes. If humans feel as though they cannot control their environment, this lack of control will impair learning in certain situations. The effects of learned helplessness are a lack of self-confidence, poor problem solving, wandering attention and feeling hopeless. This might set children behind in academic subjects and damper social skills.

Yoga therapy is instruction in yogic practices and teachings to prevent, reduce or alleviate structural, physiological, emotional and spiritual pain, suffering or limitations. Usually this is taught one-on-one for the specific conditions and purpose of individuals by specially trained yoga teachers or therapists.

In modern times, the value of yoga is being increasingly recognized for general and its preventive and curative effects. The function of yoga asanas helps to relax body and mind together. Yoga is the scientific process of establishing harmony among body,
mind and soul. Yogic practices can play a vital role in directing the mind towards creativity & constructive goals. The aim of practising yoga is to control the mind, i.e. the ability to marshal our thoughts to direct them at will. Yoga enhances our work efficiently as a result of soundness of our health. If we are sincerely anxious to attain what is attainable in this life, we should start the practice of yoga sooner than late. By regular practice of yoga, many problems of learning disabled children can be solved, their learned helplessness can be reduced and academic performance can be increased. They can do better in their studies.

Academic performance means the achievements of a scholar in the field of study or research. Performance is synonymous of accomplishment or proficiency. There is acknowledgement of a scholar's attainments in a specific field. Performance also denotes the range and depth that a scholar attains in a designated area of learning. In short, performance and achievement are co-extensive synonyms. Academic Performance is naturally a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon. In our culture, students’ performance is the most anxious concern of the parents and the teachers. Performance measures the scholar’s level of skill or range. It denotes the performance in a designated area of learning.

Play is amusing interaction with people, animals or toys often in the context of learning or recreation. Some play has clearly defined goals and is called a game, some play has no such goal and is unrestrained. Play is the work of children. It consists of those activities performed for self-amusement that have behavioral, social, and psycho-motor rewards. It is child-directed and the play is an important part of the childhood development. Through play, children learn about shapes, colors, cause and effect, and themselves. Besides cognitive thinking, play helps the child learn social and psycho-motor skills. It is a way of communicating joy, fear, sorrow and anxiety.

Play is vital to every child's social, emotional, cognitive, physical, creative and language development. It helps make learning concrete for all children and young people including those for whom verbal communication may be difficult.

Mental play is exploring and discovering. Words, numbers, touching, tasting, and seeing are part of mental play. Children use their minds to remember what cards have been played and plan how to win a card game. A baby learns that someone picks up
what the baby drops from the high chair. It becomes a "game." Children count and read. They start collections; butterflies, stamps, insects, and coins and learn to classify them. It is fun to find a new thing to add to a collection. Children tell jokes and riddles about flowers on a nature walk, and learn colors from balloons.

7.1 Rationale of the Study

Well planned yoga therapy and physical & mental play activities can make children aware of their potentials as individuals are able to improve their learned helplessness and academic performance. (Ayres, 1980) suggests that motion allows an active involvement of the individual with visual experience as opposed to a passive sharing only as occurs during many activities e.g. looking at a picture. Movement, especially, self-directed movement like no other aspect of the curriculum can make children aware of themselves as individuals able to perform facts of speed and skill, to master their own bodies, conquer space and joyfully interact with each other. Movement education can thus improve a child's self-concept. Body awareness leads to body control, which requires concentration and self-monitoring and body control leads to greater self-mastery. (Frostig and Maslow, 1973). Motor proficiency encompasses the development of the abilities that are essential to movement and the subsequent acquisition of motor skills. Movement skills that come easily to the non-disabled may have to be carefully taught to those with a disabling condition. Evans (1977) states: "As a result of skill acquisition and efficiency of movement, it is quite possible that self-control, perseverance, courage and decision making will be enhanced." (P. 3). Visual perception, as well as oculomotor co-ordination are required for motor-skill performance.

With the help of Yoga therapy and Play activities, the learning disabled can perform their work skillfully and speedily. They become active and develop better self-concept and self-esteem. Their social and behavioral problems decrease, attention span increases, their performance in difficult subject areas improves, their thinking and reasoning powers develop, their reading and writing problems get ameliorated and interpersonal skills develop. Yoga therapy and Physical play activities will help the child to achieve a developmental task rather than academic task. If different skills are developed and various non-academic problems of learning disabled are reduced by
yoga therapy and play activities, their academic performance is bound to improve significantly in different disciplines of learning. Needless to say that it will positively help the learning disabled to negotiate a better deal with their learned helplessness. Mental play activities can improve the cognitive skills of learning disabled via fun. Hence, their academic performance should improve.

The present study assumes significance in light of above arguments. An investigation into whether yoga therapy and play activities (both physical & mental) reduce learned helplessness and enhance academic performance among the learning disabled is proposed.

Not many studies could be traced on learned helplessness and academic performance among the learning disabled while scanning literature more so in Indian context. Thus, the study of the present problem assumes importance.

The present study will certainly be a valuable contribution in practice of yoga therapy for acquiring sound mental health and reduced learned helplessness. Education planners would find a useful study for planning yoga activities in the schools and colleges. Heads of educational institutions and voluntary agencies would also find this study useful for formulating yoga activities in their respective institutions.

7.2 Statement of the problem

The problem is stated as under:

“Effect of Yoga Therapy and Play Activities on Learned Helplessness and Academic Performance among the Learning Disabled.”

7.3 Objectives of the study

- To examine the incidence of children with learning disability in the sample.
- To examine the effect of yoga therapy on learned helplessness among children with learning disability.
- To examine the effect of yoga therapy on academic performance among children with learning disability.
- To examine the effect of physical play activities on learned helplessness among children with learning disability.
To examine the effect of physical play activities on academic performance among children with learning disability.

To examine the effect of mental play activities on learned helplessness among children with learning disability.

To examine the effect of mental play activities on academic performance among children with learning disability.

To compare the three experimental groups on the variable of learned helplessness.

To compare the three experimental groups on the variable of academic performance.

7.4 Hypotheses

- Yoga therapy has significant effect on learned helplessness in children with learning disability.
- Yoga therapy has significant effect on academic performance in children with learning disability.
- Physical play activities have significant effect on learned helplessness in children with learning disability.
- Physical play activities have significant effect on academic performance in children with learning disability.
- Mental play activities have significant effect on learned helplessness in children with learning disability.
- Mental play activities have significant effect on academic performance in children with learning disability.
- The three treatments will not differ significantly among themselves on learned helplessness.
- The three treatments will not differ significantly among themselves on academic performance.
7.5 Delimitations of the study

Due to the elaborate identification procedure, sample size was limited to 45 students only, the study was limited to geographical area of Ferozepur district only and the study was limited to 3rd, 4th and 5th classes only.

7.6 Design

The present study is experimental in nature. A pretest-post test experimental design has been used in the study. The effect of three remedial treatments on academic performance and learned helplessness has been studied. These treatments are: Physical Play Activities, Mental Play Activities and Yoga Therapy.

Accordingly, there were three experimental groups, Physical Play Group, Mental Play Group and Yoga Therapy Group, each having 15 children in it. The dependent variables in this study are academic performance and learned helplessness and independent variable is remedial measures. All the three groups served as comparison groups for each other. As the number of subjects available was small, researcher could not afford a control group. All the groups had boys and girls mixed in them. A pre-test was administered before the onset of experiment and post-test at the end of intervention period.

7.7 Sample

The total sample of the study comprised of 45 learning disabled children-selected from regular school going children of 3rd, 4th & 5th classes having average or above average intelligence manifesting traits of learning disabled children and low academic performance and having learned helplessness traits. In this study the initial samples drawn was four hundred and sixty four. These children belonged to three schools of Ferozepur City. Out of these, 45 children were identified as learning disabled. These identified children were randomly allocated to three experimental treatments
7.7.1 Criteria for sample selection

The study required a sample of learning disabled children. These children were having low academic performance and manifested learned helplessness. The following criteria were used for the identification of sample from regular schools.

- Performance in language and Mathematics below a level of Mean -1S.D.
- Above average intelligence
- A discrepancy in language and Mathematics performance of one Z or more
- Discrepancy of more than 15 points on Verbal Quotient and Performance Quotient in Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC)
- No visual and / or hearing impairment

7.7.2 Procedure of sample selection

The sample was selected using the following procedure:

Marks of Language & Mathematics of 464 children of 3rd, 4th and 5th classes from three schools of Ferozepur city were noted. Children performing below Mean -1S.D. in Language and Mathematics were selected.

Marks of 464 children in English and Maths over 3 tests, exams and/or in term tests, were collected from three schools of Ferozepur city. These students were from 3rd and 4th and 5th classes. Mean and S.D. of 3rd, 4th and 5th classes in English and Maths were found out separately of three schools. After that, Mean-1S.D was calculated for each school & each class in the subject of English and Maths. Children falling below Mean-I.S.D were retained in each subject, class and school. 148 children were retained here. Further, children who had difference in English and Maths performance of the order of one Z or more, were retained .These children were 51 in number. They were subjected to Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children Malin (1991), for assessing intelligence and for identifying the learning disability using the criterion of discrepancy in verbal and non-verbal areas. After applying this scale on these children, 45 children were selected for intervention on the basis of these criteria:

a) average or above average intelligence.
b) discrepancy of more than 10 points in verbal and performance sections of intelligence scale.
c) difference of more than 40% in performance in any two areas of WISC whether verbal or non-verbal, pointing towards discrepancy.

These 45 children formed sample & were classified for intervention in three groups namely - physical play group, mental play group and yoga therapy group each having 15 children in it. Treatments were randomly allotted to groups.

7.8 Tools and Techniques

A scale of learned helplessness was developed by researcher.

For intelligence & discrepancy - Wechsler Intelligence scale for children was used.

For academic performance - scores of children on 3 sets of evaluations.

Observation – To ratify behaviours of children with learning disability.

7.9 Procedure of data collection

The present study was conducted in three phases: pre-test, intervention and post-test.

7.9.1 Pre-test stage

Performance in academics and performance on learned helplessness scale served as pre-test. Pre-test was used for the purpose of assessing the baseline behaviour of these children.

7.9.2 Intervention

Intervention comprised of 30 sessions was given to all the three groups. It was started in the mid of January and continued for a month i.e. 30 sessions to all the three groups. Each child in a group was subjected to a session of 35-40 minutes for treatment daily. Before starting intervention, the researcher explained the purpose of carrying on these activities, the benefits they will gain from yoga therapy and play activities.

These three groups were given treatment of different types. One group was given physical play activities, second group was of mental play activities & third group was treated as yoga therapy group. These techniques were used to improve academic performance and reduce learned helplessness among learning disabled children.
techniques were started from mid of January continued till end of February approximately excluding holidays. Yoga therapy included forward bending poses, backward bending poses, balancing poses and different types of asanas. Physical play included object balance, throwing and hitting, one leg hopping, skipping, jumping activities and race. Mental play included making different words from a big word, anagrams, jumbled words and making words from boxes.

7.9.3 Post Test

Learned helplessness scale was applied at the end of intervention after the gap of 2-3 days. Academic performance of learning disabled children in March (Annual) examination was also collected from schools to serve as post test. The post tests were conducted for the purpose of observing the improvement in academic performance by intervention and also to examine whether learned helplessness reduced by intervention among these 45 children.

7.10 Statistical techniques

Various descriptive and inferential statistical techniques along with graphic representation were applied to understand nature of data & test research hypotheses.

For the development of the scale. Product Moment Correlation was found for a) checking the reliability of the scale via split half & test retest methods b) concurrent validity.

To describe data, parametric statistics like mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis were calculated.

Levene’s test and Box’s test of equality of variance were used for homogeneity of variances to justify use of parametric techniques.

To know whether groups are equal before treatment, a one way ANOVA on pre test scores was used.

To assess the relative contribution of variables, a 3x2 ANOVA having groups and trials as variables with repeated measures on trials was utilized.

Significance of difference between two means were found by t-tests.
7.11 Findings of the study

Following are findings of the study:

- Incidence of children with learning disability was found to be 9.69%.
- A significant difference was found in the pre test and post test mean scores on learned helplessness and academic performance for the three treatment strategies i.e. yoga therapy, physical play and mental play.
- Comparison of the three treatments, on the learned helplessness scale and academic performance show that yoga therapy, physical play and mental play did not differ significantly among themselves.
- Yoga therapy had significant positive effect on learned helplessness of children with learning disability.
- Yoga therapy had significant positive effect on academic performance of children with learning disability.
- Physical play had significant positive effect on learned helplessness of children with learning disability.
- Physical play had significant positive effect on academic performance of children with learning disability.
- Mental play had significant positive effect on learned helplessness of children with learning disability.
- Mental play had significant positive effect on academic performance of children with learning disability.
- Treatment of mental play did not differ from that of yoga therapy in effect on learned helplessness.
- Treatment of mental play did not differ from that of yoga therapy in effect on academic performance.
- Treatment of mental play did not differ from that of physical play treatment in effect on learned helplessness.
- Treatment of mental play did not differ from that of physical play treatment in effect on academic performance.
- Treatment of physical play did not differ from that of yoga therapy in effect on learned helplessness.
- Treatment of physical play did not differ from that of yoga therapy in effect on academic performance.