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Analysing the role of yoga practices for shaping health and fitness in the contemporary world: A systematic review

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Abstract

It has been suggested that yoga can lead to enhanced productivity and increased quality of life. Keeping in view, the aim of this study is to investigate the systematic review analysis in consonance to health and fitness benefits of yoga in contemporary world. Keeping in view, in the selected review analysis the researcher found that Yoga is explored in a physiological context as an exercise form and the potential of yoga as a continued source of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) in Western culture is broadly discussed. Yoga is more than just exercise. It can be viewed as a reliable and safe form of complementary and alternative medicine in entire world. Yoga has promising potential for healing with documentation to support its ability to ameliorate maladies across the medical spectrum in contemporary world. The evidence explored in this research study clearly suggests the inherent link that exists among one's body, mind, and spirit.

Keywords: yoga practices, health, fitness

Introduction

Yoga is the only science which takes care of the all-round development of three essential elements- body, mind and soul together. Yogic Practice is a holistic science which includes the culture of the body, the mind as well as the spirit. Yoga, not only improves physical and mental health and intellectual ability, but also improves character and behaviour of men by nipping in the bud the devil in them with the help of Yama-Niyama. This provides a strong moral foundation to men's life on which they build their physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual super-structure and prove themselves to be a man or a woman in the real sense of the term. Yoga is a philosophy which first developed in India, in which physical exercises and meditation are believed to help people to become calmer and united in spirit with God. Yoga is a type of exercise in which you move your body into various positions in order to become more fit or flexible, to improve your breathing and to relax your mind. Concept of Yoga The word 'Yoga' is not unfamiliar to us. We have some ideas about it, though the ideas may be wrong or right. At one time, yoga was confined to very few dedicated people, initiated to that order by their Gurus, most of whom were ascetics and hermits. The general belief, even among the educated people, was that yoga was meant only for those people who had left their worldly life and started living in hermitage, and not for the householders. But, after it has been popularised among the masses by yogis like Swami Ramdev, Shri Ravi Shankar and others, through mass-media, particularly through television and mass-yoga-camps, it is now widely practised by the common people, irrespective of gender, religion, caste, birth, age and profession, in order to gain relief from ailments and to lead a healthy, happy and prosperous life. Yoga imparts a certain quality to life. Yoga for example, tells us how to think, behave and grow to our fullest maturity. It provides us with procedures that consistently help us in every area of our life. Yoga can thus be defined as an ancient system of self-development that expedites man's natural process of evolution. This applies to all departments of one's life, with a special reference to the evolution of consciousness. The earliest reference to yoga techniques can be found in the Shruti Literature-the latest period of which would be around 1500 B.C. The middle period Upanishad, like Maitri A.D, contain numerous references to the ideology and technology of Yoga.

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Problem in hand: The statement of the research problem is reported as under:

“Analysing the role of yoga practices for shaping health and fitness in the contemporary world-A Systematic Review”

Objectives of the study: The purpose of the study is as under:

- To explore the role of Yoga practices for shaping Health and Fitness in the contemporary world.

Methodology: The presents study was carried with the help of descriptive research method. The researcher examined the secondary data for generalising the results of the study. Accordingly the parameters are reported as under:

Rationale of the study: This needs to be paired with other activities that will overcome their internal barriers, that can make them mindful of the internal shifts happening in their bodies and brain, that can make them conscious of their own stresses, and this can allow them the capacity to concentrate on the subject matter they are learning. It was delineated that higher intensity and integrative yoga practices coincide with greater health benefits (Cramer H, Quinker D, Schumann D, Wardle J, Dobos G, *et al.* (2019) ^[6]. Others seek the benefits of yoga on a deeper level, desiring personal wellness and the yogic virtues of self-acceptance, mindfulness and non-competitive spirit [Lee M, Huntoon EA, Sinaki M (2019) ^[24] Still others use yoga as a route which allows them to prevent, reduce, or control diseases and their associated risk factors (Wang, C. C., Li K, Choudhury A, Gaylord S (2019) ^[29] For those combating chronic illness or rehabilitating an injury, yoga can be seen as an alternative outlet for therapy and healing, as discussed below. However, the most common reason for taking part in a personal yoga practice is to more effectively manage stress (Cramer H, Ward L, Steel A, Lauche R, Dobos G, Zhang Y: 2016) ^[7]. Yoga practice has also led to pain relief and increased range of motion for individuals with musculoskeletal disorders including osteoarthritis, carpal tunnel syndrome, multiple sclerosis, and chronic back pain (Patwardhan AR, Lloyd LW (2017) ^[26]. In addition, yoga may hold an important role in improving cardiopulmonary measures including lung function, exercise capacity, and resting heart rate. Yoga practitioners have displayed a reversal of the negative effects of stress and reduced risk factors for cardiovascular disease and hypertension. Yoga practice has helped individuals maintain and enjoy healthier body weights, lipid levels, and blood pressures. Further, yoga has been shown to reduce the symptoms of obstructive airway diseases by significantly improving oxygen delivery (Cramer H, Anheyer D, Saha FJ, Dobos G: 2018) ^[4]. For certain ailments, yoga has been recognized as an equally effective method of treatment for disease as that of traditional medicine. This evidence of healing, however, is of a holistic platform, one which nurtures the body, mind, and soul to influence three primary realms of wellbeing-physical, emotional and spiritual. Although not a customary method of treatment, yoga is a trendy physical practice that has yielded attainable health benefits to those of both sound and compromised immunities (Campo M, Shiyko MP, Kean, MB, Roberts L, Pappas, E. 2018) ^[3]. Ross A, Touchton Leonard K, Kang L, Wallen G (2016) ^[27] examined yoga’s influence on personal affect and found that, after one week of yoga practice, study participants experienced a 47% decrease in overall negative affect and 13% increase in overall positive affect. The most pronounced emotional

differences noted were a 55% decrease in irritability and a 28% increase in feelings of contentment. The seemingly inherent ability of yoga to balance the autonomic nervous system leads to positive emotional shifts for individuals, thus enhancing quality of life. Yoga’s function in the alleviation of stress can resultantly ameliorate various factors for chronic disease. Because high blood pressure, high glucose, high cholesterol, and obesity pose the greatest risks for chronic conditions ways of preventing, limiting, or treating these health issues is paramount. Yoga, when used as an integrative health tool, can simultaneously impact all four interrelated factors (Jemni, M., Sands, W. A., Friemel, F., Stone, M. H., & Cooke, C. B. 2006) ^[19]. Thirty-two experimental, quasi-experimental, or observational articles using both diseased and healthy populations were reviewed by Yang the results from Yang’s 2007 study indicated that yoga has the ability to positively impact primary risk factors (high blood pressure, high glucose, high cholesterol, and obesity) for chronic disease, thereby improving one’s personal health and longevity. Further, yoga has a direct relationship to weight loss. Yoga practiced at regular intervals allowed participants of one study reviewed by (Jemni, M., Sands, W. A., Friemel, F., Stone, M. H., & Cooke, C. B. 2006) ^[19] to attain a normal body weight within the first year of intervention. Yang indicated that yoga contributes to a significant decrease in levels of blood glucose, with the earliest results shown after 40 days of practice. Additionally, in patients with hypertension, cardiovascular disease and diabetes, yoga helped lower blood pressure levels during the third week of trials. Within the fourth week of yogic exercise, Yang (2007) ^[30] further noted measurable decreases in cholesterol with improvements in deterioration. Yogis and yoginis can enjoy the health benefits of yoga early on in their adoption process. This is opposed to the delayed satisfaction oftentimes experienced when engaging in traditional exercise programs. Research investigating the effects of yoga on health outcomes has rapidly grown over the past decade. For some conditions, such as chronic low back pain, multiple randomised controlled trials have been conducted and systematic reviews have concluded that yoga is an effective treatment (Yang’s 2007) ^[30]. For many other conditions, preliminary results suggest that yoga practice leads to symptom reduction, increased function (physical, cognitive, mental), and improved quality of life. These results are documented in more than 200 reviews of yoga for improving health outcomes among people with major health conditions including cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome, diabetes, breast cancer, multiple sclerosis, depression and anxiety and asthma. Yoga is increasingly being considered to be a viable, integrative treatment option within inpatient, outpatient and community settings for health and wellness. Modern postural yoga has become a practice that millions of people participate in each year, with classes meeting the current definition of exercise. However, it remains unclear whether the scientific community considers postural yoga to be a form of physical activity and would include it as a recommended form of exercise to improve health-related outcomes. Apart from the above reported research studies, the role of yoga has been highlighted in multiple studies like; “Thoker, A. A. (2016), Wood C. Mood. (1993), Hoff, J., Helgerud, J., & Wisloeff, U. (1999) ^[13], Halin, R., Germain, P., Buttelli, O., & Kapitaniak, B. (2002) ^[11], Kaj, M., Németh, J., Tékus, E., & Wilhelm, M. (2013), Violan, M. A., Small, E. W., Zetariuk, M. N., & Micheli, L. J. (1997) and Werner, P. H., Williams, L. H., & Hall, T. J. (2012)”. These researchers

found that yoga practices hold immense value in physical fitness and health.

Conclusion

Yoga offers new learning possibilities to a wider group of students than traditional sports or fitness curriculum, making it a valuable addition to any educational program. Yoga can play a key role in cultivating mind control and concentration which helps a sportsperson to perform at their game. It offers children and adults an opportunity to experience success in physical activity, which can help build a foundation of strong of life. Apart from this, it was observed that Yoga's function in the alleviation of stress can resultantly ameliorate various factors for chronic disease. Because high blood pressure, high glucose, high cholesterol, and obesity pose the greatest risks for chronic conditions ways of preventing, limiting, or treating these health issues is paramount. Apart from the above reported research studies it was found that yoga hold immense value in shaping the physical and psychological profile of an individual.

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