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Sports and Physical Education Benefits of Yoga

Abstract— The purpose of this article is to discuss the role of some yoga elements in physical education and sports. Yoga is a philosophical system from India that emphasizes the importance of developing healthy behaviours and thoughts through the body. Sanskrit calls its physical postures asana. They are the ones that got the most attention out of all the techniques. The scope of Physical Education includes sports and gymnastics. During a time when competitions were sacred and respect was essential between competitors, people used to say that winning was not everything; it was competing nobly that was important. There are many interpretations of Physical Education in modern society. Those who promote "education of the body" argue that one should educate the body to achieve certain abilities and skills, as is done in sports, for example. Those who champion "Education to the body" say one should work out only to appear better. The primary reason for joining gyms is to lose weight, especially before summer. The term Physical Education originally implied that exercise was a form of education through the body. Through the work with the body, we foster autonomy and ethical

relationships between humans and the environment. It includes sports and gymnastics under the heading of Physical Education. People used to say that winning itself was not important, but competing nobly at a time when competition places were sacred and respect between competitors was paramount. A key component of Yoga and Physical Education has always been to develop attitudes and abilities that contribute to mental and physical well-being. In today's world, both subjects can be considered complementary. The East focused more on relaxation and concentration to achieve the same goals as the West, which focused on aerobic conditioning and sports training.

Keywords: Yoga, Exercise, Physical Education, Practices, Health and Well-being.

INTRODUCTION

Yoga, derived from the Sanskrit word 'Yuj' is an ancient Indian practice that encompasses physical, mental, and spiritual disciplines. It is a holistic approach to health and well-being, aiming to harmonize the body, mind, and soul. The word 'Yoga' holds deep significance in Indian culture. It refers to the union of the individual self with the universal consciousness. It is believed that through the practice of Yoga, one can achieve a state of profound inner peace, self-realization, and liberation. In its essence, Yoga is a system of

techniques and practices that promote physical strength, flexibility, and balance. It includes various postures, known as asanas, which help improve posture, enhance body awareness, and increase overall vitality. These asanas are often combined with controlled breathing exercises, or pranayama, which help calm the mind, reduce stress, and improve respiratory function. Yoga also encompasses mindfulness and meditation practices. Through meditation, one cultivates a deep sense of awareness, focus, and concentration. This leads to mental clarity, emotional stability, and a greater sense of self-awareness. The practice of mindfulness, on the other hand, involves being fully present in the moment and observing one's thoughts, feelings, and sensations without judgment. Beyond the physical and mental aspects, Yoga has a spiritual dimension. It is deeply rooted in Indian philosophy and draws inspiration from various spiritual traditions. The ultimate goal of Yoga is to attain a state of self-realization or enlightenment, where one transcends the limitations of the ego and experiences a sense of unity with all beings and the universe. Yoga is not just a physical exercise or a set of techniques; it is a way of life. It encourages individuals to live in harmony with themselves, others, and the natural world. It promotes values such as compassion, kindness, and non-violence. Through regular practice, one can cultivate a deep sense of inner peace,

balance, and well-being¹.

BENEFITS OF YOGA & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Yoga is often perceived as a system of physical education with a spiritual aspect. However, this understanding is actually the opposite of the truth. Yoga is primarily a spiritual system that incorporates a physical component. While the practice of asanas, or yoga postures, is a well-known aspect of yoga, it is just a small part of the comprehensive system of Physical Culture & Education known as Hatha Yoga. Hatha Yoga, which originated in ancient India, encompasses a wide range of practices beyond asanas. It includes pranayama (breathing exercises), mudras (hand gestures), bandhas (energy locks), and meditation techniques, among others. These practices are designed to harmonize the body, mind, and spirit, leading to a state of balance and well-being. The physical aspect of yoga, including asanas, is meant to prepare the body for spiritual pursuits. By cultivating strength, flexibility, and balance, practitioners create a stable foundation for deeper spiritual exploration. The practice of asanas not only helps to improve physical health but also calms the mind, enhances concentration, and facilitates the awakening of dormant energy within the body. However, it is essential to recognize that yoga is not solely focused on physical fitness. Its ultimate goal is to facilitate self-realization and connect

individuals with their higher selves or divine consciousness. Through regular practice, individuals can develop a deeper understanding of themselves, their place in the world, and their connection to something greater.

Yoga, an ancient practice originating from India, has gained worldwide recognition for its numerous health benefits. In recent years, the role of yoga in education has garnered significant attention. Education systems vary across the globe, encompassing diverse philosophies and approaches. Whether it is traditional classroom education, home schooling, or alternative educational models, the integration of yoga practices can offer immense benefits to students. Yoga's holistic nature aligns perfectly with the goal of providing comprehensive education that nurtures both the mind and body.

Children today face an array of stressors, both inside and outside the classroom. The demanding academic curriculum, peer pressure, social expectations, and extracurricular commitments can create overwhelming stress for students. Consequently, this stress can negatively impact their mental and physical well-being, hindering their overall development. In addition to stress, children encounter various difficulties, problems, conflicts, and distractions that can impede their learning process. These issues can range from learning disabilities and behavioural challenges to conflicts with peers or

academic pressures. Furthermore, the proliferation of digital devices and social media can act as major distractions for students, affecting their focus and concentration. Another critical aspect to consider is the dissipation of children's energy. The traditional classroom setting may not always provide sufficient outlets for students to release their pent-up energy. As a result, restless and agitated behaviour can manifest, hindering their ability to engage actively in the learning process. Integrating yoga into education can address these multifaceted challenges faced by children. Yoga practices, including asanas (poses), pranayama (breathing exercises), and meditation, can help students achieve a state of balance and inner calm. By incorporating yoga in schools, educators can provide students with valuable tools to manage stress, enhance focus, improve self-discipline, and boost overall well-being².

BENEFITS OF YOGA IN EDUCATION

- Stress Reduction: Yoga provides students with techniques to manage stress effectively, promoting mental well-being and resilience.
- Enhanced Focus and Concentration: Regular practice of yoga cultivates the ability to concentrate, improving students' attention span and academic performance.
- Emotional Regulation: Yoga helps children develop emotional intelligence by fostering self-awareness and

encouraging them to express and manage their emotions in a healthy manner.

➤Physical Fitness: Yoga asanas contribute to physical fitness and flexibility, promoting a healthy lifestyle among students.

➤Self-Discipline: Practicing yoga instils self-discipline and self-control, which are essential life skills for personal and academic success.

BRAIN HEMISPHERE ADJUSTMENT

Scientists believe that the human brain has two hemispheres, the right and the left. There are different functions performed by these two hemispheres. Logical, linear, and intellectual functions are performed by the left hemisphere. Artistic, creative, and intuitive abilities are associated with the right hemisphere. Considering these facts, the education system does not allow the child to develop the right and left hemispheres of the brain to their full potential. Traditionally, education has been based on books. It involves reading, memorizing, sitting for an exam, and receiving a grade. There is only one outcome: success or failure. In addition to reading, memorizing, taking an exam, and receiving a grade, you must also prepare to take a test. There are linear, logical systems of thought used to teach subjects such as mathematics, history, geography, physics, chemistry, and medicine, whether they are taught at an advanced level or in secondary schools.

There is only one side of the brain stimulated in this procedure - the linear, logical side. Children are taught the arts to balance out the other aspects. In addition to practicing music, painting, and performing plays, we encourage them to be creative. Using their creativity is something we encourage them to do. It turns out, however, that the linear and logical lobes of the brain are more dominant than the creative and artistic lobes.

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO MENTAL DEVELOPMENT

In addition, we should keep in mind that the brain is only the medium through which our minds are educated. Manas, buddhi, chitta, and ahamkara are the four faculties of the mind, according to yoga terminology. This word means to think, to rationalize. The word Buddha means intellect. The chitta is where we store impressions. Ego is what Ahamkara is about. There's only one part of the mind we feed in modern education - buddhi. Manas is the faculty to know what's right and wrong; we're not talking about that. This is not chitta, where memories and experiences store impressions of knowledge. Ahamkara, the ego, isn't in play either. Instead, we're stuffing Buddha with information without strengthening the other parts of our brain. In other words, despite all our education, we can't use it creatively and constructively. If we have to decide what to do, even with all our understanding of

right and wrong, we get confused. In the meantime, we ignore childhood psychological samskaras and psychological natures most of the time as teachers and parents³. An Urdu couplet says, "Let me tell you what I've accomplished in my lifetime." I've studied, I've gone to college, I've served, I've got my pension, and I died after I got my pension. So that's life." But is that all there is to life? That's not true. Everyone should give their kids the opportunity to recognize themselves, use their potential, grow and discover themselves, without parents imposing their own ideologies. It's not just education that's the problem. Parental problems are also a problem⁴. There isn't any education for parents. The best degree you can get might not be enough to make you educated. There's no such thing as an education degree. The only thing you get is a certificate that lets you lead a life with some self-esteem, if any. You can't get recognition or satisfaction with a degree. Degrees don't mean you're educated. The only way to give children a proper education is to let them use both their intuitive abilities and their intellectual abilities. You have to give them the opportunity to overcome their fears and inhibitions, to get over the psychological pressures they face without imposing your own rules. Our first week in San Francisco, SALT looked like this. Students from elementary school, high school, and college were interviewed. There were psychological blocks to learning, remembering and

memorizing in each of them. The nature of children is different from that of adults. A desk with a book isn't necessary for children to study, but adults do⁵.

INCORPORATING YOGA INTO THE CLASSROOM

There needs to be a change in the educational system for children. In addition to it, certain practices must be employed in order to remove psychological blocks, to make them aware of the psychological changes that occur in their body and brain, in order to be able to focus on the theme of the subject matter they are studying. This can help them become aware of their own distractions and help them focus on the subject matter at hand⁶. Having said that, what did we do? RYE (Research on Yoga in Education) has conducted studies with children in Europe on how to implement very simple yoga practices in the classroom environment. Two asanas and one pranayama are practiced during RYE classes. The child should practice two asanas and one pranayama sixteen times every day at the beginning and at the end of each class if you have six or eight classes during the day. There is a psychologist in European schools who monitors a child's performance, behaviour, and aptitude, and who also tries to create a support group for the child at home. The yoga practiced in the classroom was observed to improve children's responses, creativity, receptivity, memory, willpower, and

behaviour. In comparison to their counterparts in other classes, who were not practicing yoga and who were more destructive, restless, and violent and distracted, the children practicing yoga were more relaxed, focused, one-pointed, and tranquil than their counterparts in other classes⁷.

RYE was an inspiration for Americans, but we incorporated extra things in addition to yoga. In order to ensure that children are not continually psychologically pressured to study, we have incorporated soft background music into the classroom. By having music around, we are subconsciously distracted and subconsciously relaxed. The classical music of Bach was chosen as the subject of our experiment. Pranayama was taught to the students by the teachers. A large grandfather clock was used to help the students breathe in and out in unison. Every time the pendulum swung to one side, everyone was directed to breathe in, and every time it swung to the opposite side, everyone was directed to breathe out. Within a few moments, the breathing pattern was synchronized with the swing of the pendulum, resulting in a regular pattern of breathing. During the exhalation period, the teachers provided instructions and became silent during the inhalation period. There may be a question in your mind about how this relates to education. Nevertheless, it is very relevant and important, since psychologists have observed that when we breathe in, our minds are filled with

psychological, emotional, and rational blocks. There is a withdrawal of energy from the body, brain, and mind. Breathing out leads to relaxation of the body, the nervous system, the mind, and the brain. The brain is more likely to retain information if it is provided during a relaxed state of physical system⁸.

ESTABLISHING RAPPORT AND AWARENESS

In addition, this contributes to bringing awareness into the conversation. My school visits often reveal teachers who aren't aware of the subject they are teaching the students. In the class, there is no awareness of what is happening during the training. Notes are taken mechanically by students, regardless of whether they understand the subject matter. The teachers are not concerned about that. It is also known to the students that the teacher isn't concerned, so why bother? Consequently, student-teacher relationships are lacking. Having that gap can greatly contribute to the development of the student's personality, which is lacking.

Incorporating some methods of concentration, however, will lead to the development of rapport and awareness. During yoga classes, students are not only taught physical practices and breathing techniques. A teacher should be able to distinguish between speaking and listening. Silence can also serve as a medium of instruction because it enables you to assimilate what you just heard.

Speaking is the primary medium of instruction, but silence is just as important. Make sure you speak more than you speak. Children should have three Minute breaks after every ten minutes or one Minute breaks after every five minutes. Ask everyone to be silent and become silent yourself. Play a game of observing your breath in the silence with the children. As they count their breath backward from fifteen to one, ask them to stop. A single breath and one count are taken during inhalation and exhalation. One minute is equal to fifteen breaths. You can then start giving instructions again. The importance of this point cannot be overstated. There must be a balance between speech and silence. Passive visualization must be combined with alertness and dynamic instructions. At the same time as instructing, stimulating their intellect, you must give them the opportunity to passively visualize what they have just heard. Every student should be able to come to you and say, 'Look, I am having a hard time with my studies, what can I do?' and feel like they are a friend rather than a teacher. The story of Mulla Nasruddin, the Sufi saint, is well known. An earthen pot was lying near a well when he was trying to fill it with water one day. However, there was a crack in the earthen pot. He would pour everything into it and it would leak through the crack. In response to the people's sneers, he replied, 'You must be crazy. Isn't this vessel cracked, and all the

water is dripping out?’ He replied, ‘I don’t care. I’m only interested in filling the vessel.’ The same things are repeated by teachers every day. The purpose of our work is to provide information to children. The retention of the information is not important to us. How did things turn out? By the time you wake up in the morning, you’ve forgotten everything you studied the night before⁹.

BENEFIT FOR SPORTS

Sports play a vital role in our lives, offering numerous benefits for individuals of all ages. Engaging in sports not only promotes physical fitness but also contributes to mental well-being and social development. One of the primary benefits of sports is improved physical health. Regular physical activity, such as playing sports, helps to strengthen muscles, increase flexibility, and enhance cardiovascular endurance. This can lead to a reduced risk of developing chronic diseases like obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. Moreover, engaging in sports promotes weight management and helps individuals maintain a healthy body mass index (BMI)¹⁰. In addition to physical health, sports also have a positive impact on mental well-being. Participating in sports has been shown to reduce symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression. Physical activity prompts the release of endorphins, which are natural mood enhancers, leading to a sense of happiness and overall mental relaxation. Furthermore, sports provide an outlet for

individuals to release pent-up emotions and frustrations, promoting emotional stability and mental resilience¹¹. Sports also foster social development and teamwork skills. Whether it’s playing team sports like soccer or basketball or participating in individual sports like tennis or swimming, sports require individuals to work together towards a common goal. This cultivates important skills such as communication, cooperation, and leadership. Moreover, participating in sports provides opportunities for individuals to build friendships, establish social support networks, and develop a sense of camaraderie¹². Engaging in sports can also have a positive impact on academic performance. Research has shown that regular physical activity improves cognitive function, memory, and attention span. Students who participate in sports often demonstrate higher levels of academic achievement and have better time management skills. Additionally, sports teach individuals the importance of discipline, perseverance, and goal setting, which can be applied to academic pursuits as well. Lastly, sports contribute to the overall quality of life. Beyond the physical and mental benefits, participating in sports provides individuals with a sense of purpose, fulfillment, and personal accomplishment. Whether it’s hitting a personal best, winning a competition, or simply enjoying the thrill of the game, sports help individuals develop self-confidence

and a positive self-image¹³.

PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF YOGA

Yoga is a holistic practice that originated in ancient India. It is not only a form of exercise but also a way to achieve balance and harmony within the body and mind. The physical effects of yoga are numerous and can have a profound impact on one's overall well-being. One of the primary physical benefits of yoga is increased flexibility. Through a series of stretching and bending poses, yoga helps to improve the range of motion in joints and muscles. This can lead to improved posture, reduced muscle tension, and decreased risk of injury¹⁴. Yoga also strengthens the muscles of the body. Many yoga poses require holding the body in challenging positions, which builds strength and endurance. Additionally, certain poses target specific muscle groups, such as the core, arms, and legs, leading to increased muscle tone and definition¹⁵. Practicing yoga regularly can also improve cardiovascular health. Flowing sequences, such as Sun Salutations, increase heart rate and improve blood circulation. This can help to lower blood pressure, reduce the risk of heart disease, and improve overall cardiovascular fitness. Another physical effect of yoga is improved balance and coordination. Many yoga poses require concentration and focus to maintain stability. Regular practice can enhance proprioception, which is the body's awareness of its position in space. This

can translate into better balance and coordination in everyday activities¹⁶. Yoga is also known to have a positive impact on the respiratory system. Through deep breathing techniques, known as pranayama, yoga helps to increase lung capacity and improve respiratory function. This can enhance oxygenation of the blood, improve energy levels, and promote a sense of calm and relaxation¹⁷. In addition to these physical effects, yoga can also have a profound impact on mental and emotional well-being. The mind-body connection fostered through yoga practice can help to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression. Regular yoga practice has been shown to promote relaxation, improve sleep quality, and enhance overall mental clarity and focus.

CONCLUSION

Yoga offers students a wide range of learning opportunities, making it a valuable addition to any educational program. As a modification to traditional physical education, yoga in sports can be as important in a sports man's life as other think it can help him in different ways and different levels. Yoga can help sportspeople improve their concentration and mind control, which can enhance their performance. Physical activity can help children and adults build a strong foundation for life by enabling them to experience success. Yoga education challenges, however, require curriculum specialists, teachers, trainers, and students to be aware of and analyze

seriously in classrooms and in real life.

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