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The Role of Yoga Practice in Health Protection: A Philosophical and Psychological Perspective

Santimoy Ghosh¹
Dr. Rukmani²

Abstract:

Since the beginning of civilization, the importance of yoga has been immense. Even today, yoga remains a major tool for human well-being. Research has shown that yoga was significant in ancient civilizations. However, very few studies have explored the importance of yoga in addressing modern physical ailments brought about by technological advancements. Hence, the aim of this research is to investigate the role of yoga in health protection. Yoga not only offers spiritual liberation but also plays a crucial role in physical healing. Through the review of research, we will try to understand the extent to which yoga practice benefits various human diseases in medical science. Additionally, the paper attempts to highlight the benefits of specific yoga practices and how they help individuals. Overall, the research also presents the dietary impact of different practices in relation to various diseases.

Keywords: Spirituality, Yoga Therapy, Quantum Exercise, Self-Control, Technology Science.

Introduction:

From the ancient civilization of India, yoga practice continues to shine as a living testimony. As the history of cultural evolution has progressed, the influence of yoga has increased. Moreover, various Indian scriptures such as the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Gita, and Upanishads emphasize the importance of yoga. Naturally, the term 'yoga' has a broad meaning. Here, it does not merely refer to the union between two people. 'Yoga' means 'union of the self with the inner soul.' Again, the union of the individual soul with the supreme soul is also called 'yoga.' The true realization of inner power is the goal of yoga. Maharishi Patanjali in the Yoga Darshan defines yoga as "Chitta Vritti Nirodh," which means the cessation of mental fluctuations through yoga practice. But the question arises: is yoga only for self-realization? Does it serve other purposes? If so, what are those objectives?

In modern times, science is a blessing — that's undeniable. But behind this blessing lies a reduction in physical labor, which is a critical issue today. With the help of technology, humans can now explore space and travel from one place to another with ease and speed. Technology has placed the world within our hands. However, this happiness brings concerns: the reduction of physical labor has led to new diseases, pandemics, pollution, and destruction. Technology, unknowingly, is leading humanity and society toward self-destruction.

Research shows that the reduction in physical labor has resulted in loneliness, isolation, conflict, physical incapacity, and increasing illness. In response, yoga practice is being consciously promoted as a solution. We aim to explore how yoga impacts health protection. Even medical science now acknowledges the benefits of yoga. Some scientists have shown that yoga promotes the growth of new neurons in the brain, though few have examined how yoga affects the brain. "Daily yoga practice helps reduce stress on the brain"¹ (Bhanu, 2015). Studies show the extent to which people



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¹ Ph.D. Research Scholar of Philosophy, Singhania University.

² Assistant Professor of Psychology, Singhania University.

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rely on yoga to shield themselves from negative influences. “Considering the multiple psycho-physical benefits of yoga meditation, in the 69th General Assembly of the United Nations in 2014, it was unanimously decided by 175 countries to observe June 21 as ‘International Yoga Day’². This proves the importance of yoga in today’s world. The research reviews how yoga affects health protection and how it contributes to maintaining good health.

Significance of the Research:

Yoga helps us in spiritual realization; hence, its importance is immense. The objective of the current research is to explore how physical and mental efficiency is decreasing due to technological advances and how yoga may play a role in preserving health. Various studies have shown that yoga practice can prevent physical disabilities and reduce mental impairment.

Objective of the Research:

To review scientific literature on the impact of yoga practice and its effect on physical and mental development in health protection.

Research Method:

This qualitative research is based on collected data, experiences, and insights. For literature review, Google Scholar, Google Advanced Search, various websites, and books were carefully explored.

Discussion and Analysis:

Yoga can be described as ‘spiritual science’ — a science that explores the connection between the self and the soul. It is a branch of Indian philosophy. Given this, if we focus on a specific aspect, we will see that yoga has gained new popularity and acceptance for promoting mental peace and physical well-being. Whatever aspect of yoga we investigate, we ultimately return to Rishi Patanjali’s Ashtanga Yoga, which includes eight steps: Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi. Among these, ‘Asana’ refers to ‘Yoga Asanas,’ which are categorized into meditation postures and health postures. Meditation postures are used for spiritual growth, while health postures are used for physical fitness and improvement. Though meditation is presented as a separate step in Ashtanga Yoga, the current research gives maximum importance to health postures due to the decline in daily physical labor caused by technological advancement. This decline has led to both mental and physical harm. Therefore, yoga is essential in addressing stress and various health issues. Yoga plays an indispensable role in healing diseases, improving memory, and contributing to medicine. Previous studies have shown that yoga promotes physical, mental, and spiritual development. “The healing effects of yoga have made yoga practice common in households worldwide. Diseases cured by practicing yoga asanas and pranayama include bronchitis, asthma, gout, colds, indigestion, diabetes, and back pain.”³ Yoga enhances not only physical health but also memory and concentration. Regular yoga practice ensures mental peace. It improves concentration and enhances self-control. In terms of health protection, quantum exercise has recently gained attention as it does not require a trainer and can be practiced independently. It does not damage the body and does not require special diet. Therefore, quantum exercise has made a significant contribution to healing.

Rules of Quantum Exercise:

1. Keep breathing normal during quantum exercise.
2. Practice 10 to 12 postures daily.
3. Exercise in an open space with good air and light.
4. Exercise 3 to 4 hours after a full meal.
5. Use a carpet or blanket for practice.



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6. Can be done at any time.
7. Consult a doctor in case of physical complications.

Diet for General and Quantum Exercise:

Yoga practitioners must follow specific rules. “Recent scientific research shows that instead of daily strict food control, eating normally one day and fasting the next day can be more effective. This is because ‘intermittent fasting’ increases protein production in the body, prevents brain cell damage, and stimulates nerve cell growth, reducing the risk of age-related brain diseases like stroke, Alzheimer’s, Huntington’s, or Parkinson’s. It also improves glucose metabolism and heart health. Fasting has shown better results than exercise in reducing heartbeat and blood pressure. Temporary energy deficiency during fasting encourages brain cells to produce protein, which enhances the body’s ability to handle stress. Insulin spreads throughout the body in a balanced way.”⁴

Other dietary rules include:

1. Maintain a fixed meal schedule.
2. Chew food thoroughly for better digestion.
3. Regular intake of sea fish is recommended.
4. Regular intake of vegetables and fruits.
5. Avoid excessive spices.
6. Fast once or twice a week.
7. Avoid junk food and intoxicants.

Benefits of General and Quantum Yoga Practice:

1. Spiritual growth and mind control.
2. Control over emotions like anger, fear, jealousy, sadness, and happiness.
3. Improved memory and attention.
4. Reduces fatigue and depression.
5. Helps relieve arthritis, digestive issues, obesity, and diabetes.
6. Alleviates gynecological disorders.
7. Helps treat diabetes, heart disease, hernia.
8. Reduces TB and asthma.
9. Controls asthma, colds, and bronchitis.

Yoga Therapy for Disease Cure:

Due to various life challenges, people suffer from different diseases. Yoga therapy is essential in addressing these. Medical science increasingly acknowledges its significance. Studies show that complex diseases can be treated through yoga therapy without medication. Many physical conditions are cured at home through yoga therapy.



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Types of yoga therapy include:

1. Asanas for Physical disease prevention and cure:

Siddhasana, Shirshasana, Bhujangasana, Matsyasana, Supta Vajrasana for TB and respiratory diseases.

Yogamudra, Shalabhasana, Dhanurasana for digestive and rheumatic issues.

Halasana, Chakrasana, Vajrasana for diabetes.

Sarvangasana for heart disease and gynecological problems.

2. Pranayama for Nervous system issues:

Anulom-Vilom balances body and mind.

Kapalbhati aids in weight loss and digestion.

Nadi Shuddhi maintains nervous system balance.

3. Meditation for Mental disorders:

Yoga Nidra helps with sleep and mental peace.

Mantra meditation improves concentration.

Comparative Results:

Studies show that people who practice yoga have fewer physical issues than others. Those with chronic ailments experience significant improvement through regular yoga. Both general and quantum exercises are meaningful in addressing physical and mental problems. Regular yoga improves physical and mental capacity. This research highlights yoga's special role in healing various diseases and maintaining well-being.

Conclusion:

This research confirms yoga's essential role in health protection. Though technology has made life easier, it has brought physical and mental health challenges. Yoga practice can alleviate some of these. It is not only for spiritual liberation but also physical healing. Many diseases have been mitigated through regular yoga. It provides peace to the mind and body. Hence, yoga practice has a profound impact on social life.

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