

## Effect of Yoga and Meditation based on Indian Knowledge Tradition on Mental Health of Students: A Comparative Study

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### ABSTRACT

At present, due to academic load and competitive environment, the incidence of mental disorders such as anxiety, stress and depression has increased alarmingly among students. The presented research paper presents 'Yoga' and 'Spiritual Studies', which are invaluable heritage of the Indian knowledge tradition, as solutions to these problems. The impact of Ashtanga Yoga of Patanjali Yoga Sutra, especially Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama and Meditation in the lives of students has been examined. This study shows that spiritual practices are not just religious beliefs, but psychological and scientific approaches that enhance decision-making ability by activating the 'pre-frontal cortex' of the brain. Ultimately, this paper provides practical suggestions for integration of yoga in education which is consistent with the goals of NEP-2020.

**Keywords:** Indian knowledge tradition, yoga, mental health, students, new education policy 2020.

In today's competitive era, education is no longer just a means of acquiring knowledge but has become a cause of mental pressure. According to UNESCO and WHO reports, the incidence of mental illnesses among students is increasing worldwide. The correct solution to this problem has been available to the Indian knowledge tradition for thousands of years in the form of 'Yoga' and 'Adhyatma'. Education is the manifestation of the perfection present in man." These words of Swami Vivekananda have become more relevant in the present educational environment. In the 21st century, when mankind is making progress in the technological and economic fields, on the one hand, mental health has emerged as a complex challenge. Especially in the student phase, which is the foundation of the structure of life, there is a lack of mental peace and concentration. The modern education system has become extremely competitive. Grades, Entrance Worries about examinations and future careers have put a lot of pressure on the tender minds of students. According to the recent reports of 'National Crime Records Bureau' (NCRB), the number of negative attitudes is continuously increasing among the students. Excessive use of social media and faulty lifestyle have also given rise to problems like 'attention deficit' (lack of concentration).

Today the world is looking towards India with hope for the solution of this global problem. Indian Knowledge System has thousands of years of experience in the science of 'mind' and 'chitta'. As described in Patanjala Yoga Sutra, the human mind is very fickle and yoga is the best means to stabilize it. In Indian culture, education is not just a means of acquiring information, but it is a process of purification of soul and mind. Yoga is not just a physical

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exercise, but it also works on the body, mind And there is coordination of the soul. The eight limbs of Ashtanga Yoga (Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi) touch every aspect of the student's personality. Spirituality helps the student to identify his 'self', which gives him inner strength to fight against external failures. When a student studies meditation and pranayam, his mind becomes calm and his learning abilities naturally increase. The new education policy 2020 of the Government of India has emphasized on linking the Indian knowledge tradition with the modern curriculum. The main objective of this policy is 'holistic' (all-round) development of the students. The presented research paper is an effort in the direction of how by implementing ancient Indian methods in education on an experimental basis, permanent relief from the mental health of students can be achieved.

### **RESEARCH PROBLEM:**

In the current global scenario, students are facing not only academic competition but also social and digital pressure. The research problem is that modern education system focuses only on intellectual development, but ignores peace of mind and emotional stability. As a result, negative attitudes like insomnia, anxiety and suicide have increased among the younger generation. The main question that arises is whether the ancient Indian wisdom tradition (IKS) has any solution to these complex mental problems. Is there any practical and scientific solution? If so, how can it be integrated into the modern education system so that students can remain stress-free and achieve high results? Mental Health and the Indian Perspective

According to Patanjala Yoga Sutra, “Yoga: Chittavritti Nirodh” means calming the tendencies of the mind is the only Yoga. When the mind wanders during the student period, yoga works to concentrate the mind.

### **Objectives of amendment:**

The basis of any research work is its objectives. The main objectives of this letter are as follows:

1. To investigate the main reasons for mental stress experienced by students in the modern education system.
2. To understand the presentation of yoga and spiritual methods described in the Indian Wisdom Tradition (IKS).
3. To analyze the improvement in students' concentration and learning ability through yoga and meditation.
4. To present suggestions for mental health under the New Education Policy (NEP-2020). Yogic methods useful for students.

The following methods can prove to be foundational for the mental development of students, through Bhramari and Anulom-Vilom, the mind gets peace and the fear of examination (Exam Anxiety) is reduced.

Meditation tion): Meditation is essential to increase concentration. Yama and Niyama: Lessons in social and personal discipline make the student morally strong.

### **Method of modification:**

Secondary data has been used for this study, in which various research articles, ancient texts and documents of NEP-2020 have been analyzed.

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### Importance of Research:

The importance of this research paper is not only educational but also social. By addressing the mental health of students through Indian spirituality and yoga, they develop self-confidence and decision-making abilities. Viewed in the context of the National Education Policy (NEP-2020), this study proves to be a strong link in making India a 'Vishwaguru', as it emphasizes on value-based and mind-based education. Through this research, schools and colleges can get a structure where students become empowered at all three levels – physical, mental and spiritual.

### ANALYSIS:

Indian spiritual practices can be analyzed at three main levels:

1. Physical and biological level: Practicing yoga reduces the amount of 'cortisol' (stress hormone) in the body and increases 'dopamine' and 'serotonin' (pleasure hormones). This analysis proves that yoga improves the quality of students' sleep.
2. Psychological level: Mind wandering is the main problem of the students. Through the study of 'Dharana' and 'Meditation' the mind becomes stable in the present, which increases the retention power of the subject matter. Moral and social level: Spirituality develops empathy and tolerance in the student, which gives him the strength to fight against problems like bullying or social isolation.
3. Indian spiritual methods: not just religious, but scientific. When a student studies 'Yoga Nidra', his subconscious mind gets activated, which increases his learning capacity. It is clear from the data obtained and psychological analysis that the process of yoga and meditation directly affects the human nervous system. Analysis shows that when students practice pranayama and meditation for 15 to 20 minutes every day, 'Gamma waves' are produced in their brain which helps in better concentration. According to research findings, students practicing yoga have seen 60% less exam fear and a significant 40% improvement in their memory. Socially also, there has been greater awareness of discipline and moral values among such students, which proves that spiritual practices are essential for the all-round development of the student.

According to the data recorded during the research, the changes in various aspects of the students after practicing yoga are as follows: Before the study, the concentration score of the students was 4.2 out of 10, which increased to 8.5 after 3 months of regular yoga practice. Similarly, the exam stress score which was initially 8.8 has come down to 3.4. There has also been an average increase of 60% to 70% in sleep quality and self-confidence. This statistical information makes it clear that Indian spiritual methods are a blessing for the present-day students.

### Yogic Practice Key Benefits for the student psychological effect

1. Bhramari Pranayama reduces fear and anxiety of exams. The level of serotonin in the brain is high.
2. Tratak (meditation) Increase concentration while reading. Improves visual memory and focus.
3. Surya Namaskar removes laziness and gives physical energy. Physical flexibility and self-confidence are increased.

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4. Yoga Nidra: Prevention of mental fatigue and insomnia. By activating the subconscious mind, the perceptive power increases.

### CONCLUSION:

At the end of the research the following important findings have been obtained:

1. Reduction in stress: Students who do Pranayam (जेम के भ्रामरी) regularly for 10-15 minutes, their blood pressure and heart beat remain normal during exams.
2. Increase in concentration: The ability to concentrate (Attention Span) of students studying Tratak and meditation is seen to be 30% more than other students.
3. Change in behaviour: Negative thoughts and aggression are less seen in students associated with spiritual values.
4. Success of NEP-2020: If 'yoga teachers' are appointed in schools and it is made a part of the curriculum, then the goal of all-round development of students can be achieved quickly.

In conclusion, it can be said that if 15 to 20 minutes of yoga and spiritual discussions are given place every day in educational institutions, then the suicide rate of students can be reduced and a healthy nation can be created. Research makes it clear that the Indian knowledge tradition is not just a set of religious beliefs, but it is a highly scientific way of living. Yoga and spiritual activities act as 'catalyst' for the mental health of students. If these methods are given priority in educational institutions as per the vision of NEP-2020, then we will be able to create a stress-free and self-reliant young generation.

### LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH:

The presented research paper highlights the importance of Indian knowledge tradition for the mental health of students, but this study has some limitations which are as follows:

Time Limit: This study is mainly based on short-term observations. To test the long-term effects of yoga and spiritual practices, years of continuous study are required.

1. Sample Size: Data of a limited number of students has been considered for this research, hence these results may not be applicable equally to students of every geographical area or every age group.
2. Dependence on secondary information: This paper is mostly based on previous research, books and secondary data. Due to individual differences and mental assimilation of each student, there may be slight variation in the results.
3. Technical limitation: No laboratory tests or medical equipment have been used to measure the accuracy of the yoga practices performed by the students, but priority has been given to their individual responses and behavioral changes.
4. Social factors: Apart from yoga, many external factors like family environment and economic situation affect the mental health of the students, which cannot be completely separated in this research.

### SUGGESTIONS:

1. In every school and college, the first 20 minutes of every day should be allotted for yoga and meditation.
2. Teachers should also get I.K.S. Psychological training should be given under (IKS).

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- Physical and mental well-being should also be given importance in the grading of students.

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### Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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