

FROM ANCIENT TO MODERN: ROLE OF YOGA AND MEDITATION IN VIKSIT BHARAT

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Abstract:

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) is a treasure trove of wisdom passed down through generations. It covers subjects like spirituality, science, and ethics, influencing modern India and inspiring great thinkers. Ancient institutions like Nalanda and Taxila spread knowledge worldwide. The Vedas and Upanishads offer guidance on life, nature, and spirituality. IKS teaches us to live in harmony with nature, promoting sustainability and kindness. Its ideas, like Dharma and Ahimsa, are relevant today, offering wisdom for a balanced life. By embracing IKS, we can foster personal growth, social harmony, and environmental awareness. Its timeless principles can guide us towards a more meaningful and sustainable future, benefiting individuals and society as a whole world. This ancient wisdom is a valuable resource for building a better world. Yoga promotes holistic development, uniting body, mind, and spirit. It enhances physical health, mental clarity, and emotional stability, fostering social responsibility and spiritual awareness. Regular practice reduces stress, anxiety, and depression, promoting overall well-being.

Keywords: Indian Knowledge system, Meditation, Yoga, holistic Development, self realization, Cultural Heritage, Viksit Bharat.

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Introduction:

When we talk about a person's growth, we should not look at just one part of life. True growth means holistic development. This means taking care of our body, mind, emotions, how we behave with others, and our inner spiritual health. In today's world, life is very fast and full of stress. People face health problems, mental pressure, and lack of peace. Because of this, holistic development is more important than ever before. India has a treasure of old wisdom called the Indian Knowledge System (IKS). This knowledge has been passed from one generation another through families, festivals, and ancient books like the Vedas and Upanishads. It teaches us how to live a good and balanced life.

Yoga is a very important part of IKS. The word "Yoga" derives from Sanskrit and means "to join". It teaches us to connect our body, mind, and spirit. Many people think yoga is only about body postures, but it is much more than that. It is a complete way of life.

Objectives of the study:

- 1) To examine yoga's impact on physical, mental, and emotional, Health.
- 2) To investigate yoga's influence on social responsibility and spiritual awareness
- 3) To Encourage Sustainable Living.

Research methodology:

This study is based on secondary sources, using information from books.

History of Yoga:

Yoga has a rich history in Indian cultural heritage, spanning thousands of years.

- **Pre-Vedic and Vedic Period (before 1500 BCE – 500 BCE):** Yoga's earliest traces are found in Indus Valley Civilization seals, showing figures in meditative postures. The Vedas, especially the Rigveda, mention yoga as a means of inner discipline, focusing on sacrifice, rituals, and meditation.
- **Upanishadic Period (800 BCE – 200 BCE):** The Upanishads introduced self-realization through inner contemplation, breath control (pranayama), and sensory withdrawal (pratyahara). Concepts like Atman (soul) and Brahman (universal consciousness) laid yoga's spiritual foundation.
- **Epic Period (500 BCE – 200 CE):** The Bhagavad Gita describes three primary yoga paths: Karma Yoga (action), Bhakti Yoga (devotion), and Jnana Yoga (knowledge).
- **Classical Period (200 BCE – 500 CE):** Patanjali's Yoga Sutras systematized yoga into Ashtanga Yoga (Eight Limbs), emphasizing physical postures, breath control, and meditation.

Two foundational texts shaped yoga's understanding:

- **Bhagavad Gita:** Emphasizes yoga as a way of life, integrating action, devotion, and knowledge.
- **Patanjali's Yoga Sutras:** Systematizes yoga into a structured discipline, focusing on mental discipline and inner purification.

Role of yoga in our daily life:

a) Aachar (Good Habits) – Doing regular exercise, yoga postures, and breathing practices to keep the body strong and healthy.

b) Vichar (Good Thoughts) – Keeping the mind clean and positive by following good values like honesty and kindness.

c) Aahar (Good Food) – Eating fresh, simple, and healthy food made with love.

d) Vihar (Good Recreation) – Taking rest, staying calm, and doing activities that make the mind peaceful.

Along with yoga, meditation and mindfulness help us to stay calm and focused. They reduce stress, fear, and sadness. They improve our memory, concentration, and make us emotionally strong.

Yoga's Roots & Patanjali's 8 Steps in Easy Language:

Yoga is over 5,000 years old, It's ideas are found in ancient books like the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, and Patanjali's Yoga Sutra.

Patanjali's 8 Steps (Ashtanga Yoga) –

How to reach the peace.... **For holistic Development...**

Yoga integrated Daily Life:

Pie Chart: Equal Parts of a Complete Life



Many Indians start their day with yoga, including asanas, pranayama, and meditation, to boost physical and mental well-being. Spiritual practices like chanting mantras and Surya Namaskar are also common.

Rituals and Religion: Yoga is part of temple traditions, pujas, and rituals like fasting and purification. Practices like sankalpa (setting intentions) and body postures in worship mirror yogic disciplines.

Festivals: Yoga is celebrated during International Day of Yoga (June 21), Makar Sankranti (with Surya Namaskar), Navratri (with fasting and meditation), and Maha shivaratri (with deep meditation).

Education and Institutions:

Yoga is taught in schools to promote concentration, discipline, and health. Government programs, like the **Ministry of AYUSH**, promote yoga in healthcare and public wellness.

why yoga is very useful in schools and colleges,

- As mentioned in the National Education Policy 2020. But yoga is not only for personal health. It also helps society. Yoga teaches us Seva, which means selfless service to others. It teaches Ahimsa, which means not hurting any living being.
- The idea of “**Vasudeva Kutumbakam**” tells us that the whole world is one family. These values build love, respect, and unity among students. They also teach us to protect nature and live a simple, sustainable life.
- **To make a Sustainable Viksit Bharat** – a developed, strong, and caring India – we must first heal our people. Healthy, peaceful, and responsible citizens can build a healthy nation.
- By using yoga, meditation, and mindfulness in our education, daily routine, and lifestyle, we can create a better future for everyone.
- Yoga in Schools – Helps Students Grow Smarter & Happier
- Adding yoga to school routines can boost kids’ overall growth.
- Improves Focus & Memory: Yoga helps students concentrate better in class.
- Reduces Stress & Anxiety: Breathing exercises calm nerves and improve behaviour.
- Better Attendance: Students who practice yoga tend to miss fewer school days.
- Builds Social Skills: Yoga encourages teamwork, empathy, and kindness.
- "Yoga in Schools" Programs: In the U.S. and India, schools report better student behaviour and attention.
- India’s NEP 2020 Policy: Suggests yoga and mindfulness in curriculum for student well-being.

Yoga covers 3 key areas of learning:

- Body (Physical Postures): Builds strength and coordination.
 - Mind (Focus & Calm): Improves concentration and reduces stress.
 - Emotions (Kindness & Empathy): Teaches students to be aware and caring.
 - In short: Yoga is a simple, effective tool to help students thrive academically, physically, and emotionally
- In short, healing the nation starts with healing ourselves. The ancient wisdom of IKS can show the path to a modern, developed, and sustainable India.

Benefits :

- Yoga promotes cultural diplomacy, health, and wellness worldwide.
- Reduce anxiety and enhance relaxation.
- Improving sleeping quality.
- Improve concentration.

Yoga's Journey: From Ancient Roots to Modern Wellness:

Yoga transformed from a spiritual path in India to a global wellness trend.

Key moments: **Swami Vivekananda (1893):** Introduced yoga's meditative side to the West, focusing on self-realization.

Tirumalai Krishnamacharya (20th century): Pioneered physical yoga, emphasizing postures (asanas) and breathwork.

The Shift: Yoga moved from spiritual liberation (moksha) to fitness and stress relief.

Asanas, once a prep for meditation, became the main focus.

Consequence: Spiritual roots often took a backseat to physical benefits.

Yoga as Therapy: Modern science backs yoga for treating depression, anxiety, pain, and chronic diseases. WHO and health bodies endorse yoga for mental and physical health.

Challenge: Focusing on body + mind without losing yoga's holistic core.

Yoga in Healthcare:

Backed by Science Hospitals and research centre now use yoga to treat diseases because studies show it works:
Mental Health: Depression, anxiety, PTSD.

Physical Health: Heart issues, diabetes, chronic pain, sleep problems.

Addiction Recovery: Yoga Nidra and breathing exercises (pranayama) help.

It's Credible: WHO and Indian government endorse yoga for health.

Top institutions like Harvard and Cleveland Clinic research yoga's benefits.

The Catch: Breaking yoga into parts (e.g., postures for back pain) helps, but risks losing its holistic essence. Teachers need proper training to avoid risks.

Key Point: Yoga bridges ancient wisdom and modern medicine, but keeping its core principles (like ethics and liberation) is crucial for true benefits.

Educational Implication:

1. Holistic Development of Students

Practices like Yoga, Meditation, and Mindfulness help in overall growth—physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual—not just academic learning.

2. Better Focus and Concentration

Regular meditation and breathing exercises improve attention span, memory, and classroom engagement.

3. Emotional Balance and Stress Reduction

Students learn to manage anxiety, anger, and pressure through mindfulness, leading to a calm and positive mindset.

4. Value-Based Education

Yoga philosophy (like Yama & Niyama) teaches values such as honesty, discipline, kindness, and self-control.

5. Improved Physical Health

Asanas and pranayama promote fitness, flexibility, and immunity, reducing health issues among students. We can keep students away from drugs through yoga, and meditation.

6. Positive Classroom Environment

Mindfulness practices create a peaceful, respectful, and cooperative classroom atmosphere.

7. Development of Self-Awareness

Students become more aware of their thoughts, emotions, and actions, helping in better decision-making.

8. Inclusive and Experiential Learning

IKS-based practices are activity-based, making learning more engaging and suitable for all types of learners.

9. Teacher Well-being

Teachers practicing yoga and mindfulness experience less stress and become more patient and effective.

10. Sustainable and Balanced Lifestyle

Students learn habits that support long-term well-being and a balanced life, aligning with sustainability goals

Conclusion:

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) provides timeless wisdom that is highly relevant in today's modern world. Practices like yoga, meditation, and mindfulness support holistic development by improving physical health, mental clarity, emotional balance, and spiritual awareness. They also promote important values such as peace, compassion, and social responsibility.

In a world facing stress, environmental challenges, and social imbalance, IKS offers simple and effective solutions for a balanced life. By integrating these practices into education, daily routines, and lifestyle, individuals can achieve inner harmony and contribute to society.

Therefore, adopting the principles of IKS is not only beneficial for personal growth but also essential for building a sustainable, peaceful, and developed nation—Viksit Bharat. In simple terms, the path to a better future begins with the holistic development of every individual.

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