



Yoga: Its developmental history & Practices

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Abstract :-

Yoga is essentially a spiritual discipline based on very subtle science which focuses on establishing harmony between mind and body. This is the art and science of healthy living. The word yoga is derived from the Sanskrit root yuj which means to join or to unite or to join. According to the texts related to yoga, by doing yoga, one's consciousness gets connected with the consciousness of the universe, which signifies perfect harmony between mind and body, human and nature. According to modern scientists, everything in the universe is just a manifestation of the same magnitude. One who realizes this oneness of existence is said to be situated in yoga and is called as a yogi. One who has attained the liberated state which is called Mukti, Nirvana or Moksha. Thus, the goal of yoga is self-realization, freedom from all kinds of sufferings leading to the state of moksha or the state of Kaivalya. Living with freedom in every sphere of life, health and harmony will be the main objectives of doing yoga. Yoga also refers to an internal science which includes various methods through which human beings can realize this unity and control their destiny. Since yoga is largely regarded as an immortal cultural result of the Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization, which has a history dating back to 2700 BCE, it has proved that it is both a material and spiritual upliftment of humanity. The basic human values that make this possible are the hallmarks of yoga practice.

Keywords :- Yoga, Developmental history, Practices.

1.1 Introduction:-

The tradition of yoga is very ancient and it originated thousands of years ago. It is believed that yoga is being practiced since the beginning of civilization. That is, yoga was born long before the birth of the oldest religions or beliefs. In Yoga Vidya, Shiva is considered "Adi Yogi" and "Adi Guru". After Lord Shankar, Yoga is believed to have started from the Vedic sages and sages. Later Krishna, Mahavira and Buddha expanded it in their own way. After this Patanjali gave it a systematic form. This form was later expanded by the Siddhapanth, Shaivpanth, Nathpanth, Vaishnava and Shakta panthis in their own way.

The earliest historical evidence related to yoga is the objects obtained from the Indus Valley Civilization whose physical postures and postures are direct evidence of the existence of yoga during that period. If we look at the history of yoga, then there is no evidence of its beginning or end, but the description of yoga is first found in the Vedas and Vedas are considered to be the oldest literature. Yoga was started in India, in today's time, attention is being paid to yoga in many states of India, in which the state of Uttarakhand is at the forefront, Rishikesh of Uttarakhand is also known as the city of Yoga.

1.2 Developmental history of Yoga Practices

Pre-Vedic period (before 3000 BC)

Until recently, Western scholars held that yoga originated around 500 BCE, when Buddhism emerged. But from the excavations done at Harappa and Mohenjodaro, it is known from the yoga postures that the practice of yoga was already 5000 years ago.

Vedic period (3000 BC to 500 BC)

In the Vedic period, yoga was practiced to develop concentration and to overcome worldly difficulties. There is a great difference between the yogasanas of ancient times and the present yogasanas. Yajna and yoga were of great importance during this period. In the Brahmacharya Ashram, along with the education of the Vedas, the education of weapons and yoga was also given.

Yasmadrate na sidhyati yajno vipachitschan. S Dhinaam Yogaminvati ‘ (Riksamhita, Mandala – 1, Sukta – 18, Mantra – 7) That is, without yoga, no yajna can be accomplished even by a scholar. That is, the same God should be oriented towards our samadhi, by his mercy we may benefit from samadhi, wisdom, fame and Ritambhara wisdom, but the same God should come towards us with siddhis like Anima etc.

Preclassical period (500 BC to 200 BC)

There is a lot of discussion about yoga in the Upanishads, Mahabharata and Bhagavad Gita. The Bhagavad Gita mentions Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga and Raja Yoga. Lord Krishna himself describes Karmayoga, Bhaktiyoga and Jnanayoga while telling the importance of yoga to Arjuna in the Geetopadesh. In the first verse of the fourth chapter of the Gita, Krishna tells Arjuna

Im vivasvate yogam proktavanhamvyam. Vivasvanmanve prah manurikshavakave □bravit 4.1 That is, O Arjuna, I told this imperishable yoga to Surya, Surya to his son Vaivasvata Manu and Manu to his son King Ikshvaku.

During this period, yoga had become a lifestyle rather than a practice related to breathing and posture. There is sufficient evidence for this in the Upanishads. Its symptoms are mentioned in the Kathopanishad. During the period of Jain and Buddhist awakening and upliftment, emphasis was placed on the parts of Yama and Niyama. The practice of Yama and Niyama i.e. non-violence, truth, celibacy, asteya, aparigraha, defecation, contentment, austerity and self-study remained more. Even yoga was not given a systematic form. 563 to 200 BC There was a practice of three parts of yoga – penance, self-study and God Pranidhana. This is called ‘Kriya Yoga’.

The famous dialogue, “Yoga Yajnavalkya”, which is described in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, mentions several breathing exercises, postures for cleansing the body and meditation between Yajnavalkya and Gargi. The Chhandogya Upanishad by Gargi also talks about yogasanas. Has been talked about.

Classical period (200 BC to 500 AD)

Yoga came to the fore in a clear and holistic form during this period. Patanjali described yoga science scattered in the Vedas in 200 BC. Presented in its entirety for the first time. He compiled 195 sutras of abstract yoga (see Yoga Sutras). The Yoga of Patanjali Sutras is Raja Yoga. It has eight parts: Yama (social conduct), Niyama (personal conduct), Asana (physical posture), Pranayama (breath regulation), Pratyahara (return of the senses), Dharana (concentration), Dhyana (meditation) and Samadhi. Although physical postures and breathing have also been given place in Patanjali Yoga, more importance has been given to meditation and samadhi. There is no name of any Asana or Pranayama in the Yoga Sutras Many texts related to yoga were composed during this period, in which Patanjali’s Yogasutra, Yogayagyavalkya, Yogacharabhoomishastra, and Visuddhimagga are prominent.

Middle Ages (500 AD to 1500 AD)

During this period, the followers of Patanjali Yoga gave a new approach or new twist to yoga by giving more and more importance to asanas, cleansing of body and mind, doing Kriyas and Pranayama. This form of yoga is called hatha yoga. Small systems of yoga started in this era.

Modern period

Swami Vivekananda introduced yoga to the whole world by mentioning yoga in his historic speech at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago. Many yogis such as Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, Paramahansa Yogananda, Ramana Maharishi influenced the Western world and gradually yoga was accepted worldwide as a secular, process-based religious doctrine.

In recent times, the decency of three disciples of T. Krishnamacharya, BKS Iyengar, Pattabhi Jois and T.V. has popularized yoga globally.

On 11 December 2014, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed to celebrate 21 June as International Yoga Day in the United Nations General Assembly, which was accepted by 175 out of 193 countries without any voting. Recognizing the importance of yoga, the UN recognized that ‘Yoga is a holistic approach towards human health and well-being’.

Contrast between Ancient and Modern Yoga

In ancient times, man understood the true essence of Yoga. The purpose of Yoga was to connect oneself with the world around them. It focused on breathing and freeing of the body, spirit and mind. Our ancestors understood the importance of mental hygiene and concluded that regular practice of Yoga will cleanse the body and soul of unnecessary pollutants.

However, in current times, the spoken benefits of Yoga are limited to fitness, flexibility and ridding oneself of physical disabilities. The true spirit of Yoga that lay in the hygiene of mind and soul, lies forgotten in the graves of our predecessors. With the incessant popularity of only Asanas, the people of the world seem to have left behind the eight limbs of Yoga – only one of which is Asanas. Yoga, in today’s time, is associated only with physical fitness and flexibility due to the increasing popularity of Asana Yoga.

1.3 Concept of Yoga

Yoga is a spiritual process that involves bringing together (yoga) body, mind and spirit. The word ‘yoga’ and its process and concept are related to the meditation process in Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. The word yoga has spread from India to Buddhism as well as to China, Japan, Tibet, Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka, and is now familiar to people throughout the civilized world. For the first time since the accomplishment, on 11 December 2014, the United Nations General Assembly has recognized 21 June every year as World Yoga Day.

1.4 Types of Yoga

Modern yoga has evolved with a focus on exercise, strength, flexibility and breathing. It helps in enhancing physical and mental wellness. There are many styles of yoga, and no style is more authentic or superior than the other. The different types and styles of yoga include the following:

- Ashtanga Yoga
- Bikram yoga
- Power Yoga
- Hatha yoga
- Sivananda
- Iyengar Yoga
- Jivamukti Yoga

- Kundalini Yoga
- Kundalini Yoga
- Prenatal yoga
- Appropriation
- Relaxing yoga
- Credihealth

Ashtanga Yoga: This form of yoga uses the ancient teachings of yoga. However, it became most popular during the 1970s. Ashtanga yoga is primarily a combination of six postures that combine the process of rapid breathing.

Bikram Yoga: Bikram yoga is also known as or by the name of "hot" yoga. This type of yoga is mainly performed in an artificially heated room with a temperature of about 105 degrees and 40 percent humidity. It consists of a total of 26 poses and a sequence of two breathing exercises.

Hatha Yoga: This is a general term for any type of yoga that teaches physical postures. "Hatha yoga" classes usually serve as a gentle introduction to basic yoga postures.

Iyengar Yoga: In this form of yoga, correct alignment of all the poses is done using various props like blanket, pillow, chair and round long pillow etc.

Jivamukti Yoga: Jivamukti means "liberation while alive." This type emerged in 1984 and included spiritual teachings and practices. This type of yoga focuses on increasing the speed between poses rather than focusing on the poses themselves.

This type of focus is called Vinyasa. Each class has a topic, which is explored through yoga scriptures, chanting, meditation, asanas, pranayama and music. Jivamukti yoga can be physically intense.

Kripalu Yoga: This type teaches the practitioner to know, accept, and learn from one's own body. Kripalu's student learns to practice his level by looking inward. Classes usually begin with breathing exercises and gentle stretches, followed by a series of individual poses and final relaxation.

Kundalini Yoga: Kundalini means "to be coiled like a snake." Kundalini yoga is a system of meditation that aims to release the energy buried in the mind.

A class usually begins with chanting and ends with singing. In between, it adapts asanas, pranayama and meditation to produce a specific result.

Power Yoga: In the late 1980s, practitioners developed this active and athletic type of yoga based on the traditional Ashtanga system.

Sivananda: This is a system based on the five-point philosophy. This philosophy states that proper breathing, relaxation, diet, exercise and positive thinking work together to create a healthy yogic lifestyle. Usually it uses the same 12 basic asanas, booked by Surya Namaskar and Savannah asanas.

Appropriation: Appropriation can adapt to any person, regardless of physical ability. Appropriation teachers require intensive training and are experts in anatomy and yoga therapy.

Yin: This is a calming and meditative yoga practice, also known as Taoist yoga. Yin yoga allows the release of tension in major joints, including:

- **Ankle**
- **Knee**
- **Hips**
- **Full back**
- **Neck**
- **Shoulders**

Prenatal or prenatal yoga: This yoga is performed prenatal and yoga uses postures that practitioners have designed for people who are pregnant. It can help women get back to their old shape after pregnancy as well as support a health-care pregnancy.

Relax Yoga: This is a relaxing form of yoga. A person can take this yoga class in four or five simple poses. It does not require any extra effort to hold a pose, just you can do relaxing postures with the help of some props like blankets, round pillows.

1.5 Mudras of Yoga –

The different postures of yoga are as follows

1. Standing Yoga

- Konasana – First
- Konasana - Second
- Katichkrasana
- Hastapadasana
- Ardha Chakrasana
- Trikonasana
- Veerabhadrasana or Veerabhadrasana
- Vrikshasana
- Paschim Namaskarasana
- Paschim Namaskarasana
- Garudasana
- Utkatasana

2. Sitting Yoga

- Janu Shirsana
- Paschimottanasana
- Purvottanasana
- Baddhakonasana
- Padmasana
- Marjarisana
- A Pada Raja Kapotsana
- Infant seat
- Chowki chalnaasana
- Vajrasana
- Gomukhasana



3. Lying in Pet Yoga Pose

- Vasisthasana
- Adho Mukha Savasana
- Capricorn
- Dhanurasana
- Bhujangasana
- Salamba Bhujangasana
- Viparita Shalabhasana
- Shalabhasana
- Upward oral sex

4. Lying on Back Yoga

- Boating
- Bridge bandhasana
- Matsyasana
- Pawanmuktasana
- Sarvangsan
- Halasan
- Natarajasana
- Vishnuasana
- Cremation
- Sirsasana

1.6 Merits of Yoga –

Are you looking for reasons to do yoga? Here we have told about the many benefits of yoga like increasing your heart health and flexibility of your body with the help of yoga, which are as follows.

- Improves your flexibility Increases muscle strength
- Perfects your posture
- Prevents breakdown of cartilage and joints
- Protects your spine Strengthens your bone health
- Increases your blood flow
- Boosts your immunity
- Regulates heart rate
- Lowers your blood pressure
- Controls your adrenal glands
- Makes you happy
- Provides a healthy lifestyle
- Lowers blood sugar
- Helps you focus
- Relaxes your system
- Improves your balance
- Maintains your nervous system
- Relieves tension in your limb
- Helps you sleep deeply
- Prevents IBS and other digestive problems
- Gives you peace of mind Increases your self-esteem

- Takes away your pain
- Gives you inner strength

1.7 Demerits of Yoga

If you do yoga under the guidance of a well trained instructor then it is extremely safe and beneficial for you. But in some circumstances it can also be harmful for you. Some of the risks and disadvantages of yoga are as follows.

- If you get hurt due to yoga, it can become a hindrance in your continuous practice. But serious injury due to yoga is very rare.
- If you are pregnant or suffering from any medical problems such as high blood pressure, glaucoma or vitreous disease and sciatica etc., talk to your doctor before practicing yoga. In such a situation, there may be a need to change or avoid some yoga postures.
- If you have recently started learning yoga, then extreme positions and difficult techniques should be avoided, such as headstand, padmasana and forceful breathing.
- If you are doing yoga for a health problem, then take special care not to ignore the traditional medical care for that problem or replace yoga with that problem. Consult your doctor for pain or any other problem.

The practice of yoga helps to develop the body and mind, though it cannot be used as a substitute for any medicine. Learning and practicing yoga under the supervision of a trained yoga teacher is essential. In case of any medical condition, practice yoga only after consulting your doctor and your yoga teacher.

1.8 Conclusion and its Relevance in Present Era

The dawn of Covid-19 has made each of us sit back and think of life's true purpose. We have each pondered the true meaning behind it all and made a change in our lifestyles, consciously or not. There is no better way to incorporate this change than including Yoga in our schedule for a fixed time everyday.

Despite the numerous different customs and traditions in India, Yoga follows no religion or caste. It works solely on imbibing the values of compassion, patience and tolerance within oneself. Yoga not only helps clear the mind but also tones down the agitation and stress that comes with the fast-paced lives of this decade. It aims to achieve self-actualization and self-realization on an individual level.

Yoga has prospered in the eyes of the world. The teachings continue to be spread in the West and enlighten the lives of millions. 21st June has been declared as the International Yoga Day by the United Nations. This is a golden step towards spreading Yoga. This ancient discipline is rightfully given the recognition and importance it deserves, as it makes its way to enlighten billions with emotions like love, peace and universal integration.

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