

Long-term Behavior Change Through Yoga and Meditation Among Secondary School Children: Review of Buddhism

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ABSTRACT

To examine the effectiveness of Buddhist ideology in promoting long-term behavioural changes in school children through yoga and meditation. This study utilized the scientific review process as a Meta synthesis to determine the effectiveness of Buddhism Ideology in facilitating long-term learning behaviour changes through yoga and meditation among school-level children in Nepal, framed within a pragmatic research philosophy. Extensive archival analysis followed by a thorough review would be the strategies employed during the scientific review. Based on the nature of data availability, both qualitative and quantitative research approaches would prove effective. The review was systematically executed through the gathering of research articles alongside reports and data. Bhagavadgita, known as Yoga Sastra, is a seminal text on Yoga. Yoga has been a fundamental element of human efforts directed towards achieving higher spiritual achievements. The importance of meditation practice for students is emphasized, and it also recommends teaching all students meditation and yoga to improve academic performance. Programs centered around yoga for middle school students showed benefits in mental health, executive functioning, and physical, social, and academic aspects for learners. It is a method and asset that can be incorporated into the daily lives of students to improve academic performance and lower stress levels.

Keywords: behaviour, changes, meditation, helath, students, school, youga

Introduction

Patel Nimisha (2019) summarized yoga can be traced back to the R̥gveda itself, the oldest Hindu text which speaks about yoking our mind and insight to the Light of Truth or Reality. Great teachers of early Yoga include the names of many famous Vedic sages like Vāsiṣṭha, Yajñavalkya, and Jaigīśavya. The greatest of the Yogis is always said to be Yogeśvara Kṛṣṇa himself, the propounder of Bhagavadgita which is called as Yoga Śāstra an

authoritative work on Yoga. Lord Śiva is also the greatest of the Yogis or Ādinātha. Yoga has been part of man's activities directed towards higher spiritual achievements.

According to Bhuyan and Vineeta (2022) yoga and meditation have a great significance to make all round development relating to body, mind and spirit harmoniously and thereby to promote human values in adolescent. The result of the present study shows that the regular practice of

Yoga and Meditation improves the adjustment level of Secondary School Students. This result is same as the earlier study where made a study where 3 months of Yoga intervention was provided to the group and significant differences were found in self-adjustment score in boys and girls.

According to [Verma and Misra \(2022\)](#) yoga and meditation have been playing vital roles in our holistic wellbeing and attaining our spiritual goals since ancient time. During second wave of Covid-19 and lock-down its importance became more significant and visible around the globe. Many patients have easily recovered with the help of their boosted immunity by doing yoga and meditation (like breathing exercise, Bhramari Pranayama and meditation etc.) and could keep themselves stress-free. During and post pandemic maintaining mental health is a great challenge. It is very difficult to be relaxed, peaceful and healthy due to increased level of anxiety, stress and depression as a consequence of loss of health, lives, jobs, migration, inaccessibility to health education and other basic facilities, changes in life styles and so on. Yoga can help us to stay calm, manage our health and anxiety without any extra intervention if understood well and made a part of our daily routine.

According to US Army stress is the way human beings react both physically and mentally to changes, events, and situations in their lives. People experience stress in different ways and for different reasons. The reaction is based on your perception of an event or situation. If you view a situation negatively, you will likely feel distressed—overwhelmed, oppressed, or out of control. Distress is the more familiar form of stress. The other form, eustress, results from a “positive” view of an event or situation, which is why it is also called “good stress”. Stress can have consequences far beyond temporary feelings of pressure. While you can’t avoid stress, you can learn to manage it and develop skills to cope with the events or situations you find stressful. By learning to cope with stress, and by recognizing the symptoms of depression and the warning signs of suicide, you’ll

be better prepared to help not only yourself, but also friends, fellow students, and the Soldiers you will someday lead.

According to [Eswari \(2018\)](#) the impact of meditation within a semester has marked its practice as much more important, continuing the learned practise will give consistency on academic performance. Our result conveys the importance of meditation practise among students and also recommends teaching meditation and yoga to all students to maximize academic performance. Practising meditation also reduces stress among students so it helps the student to regulate them towards their goal. Further research on this concept with larger samples will help us to generalize the meditation practise to all. Applicability of this meditation practice in various segments will also unveil many beneficial things. Herewith it is concluded that apart from culture and religious difference the goodness of any practise will remain same with all of us.

According [Swami Vivekananda \(2016\)](#) “Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work or worship or psychic control or philosophy by one or more or all of these and before. This is the whole of religion”

In fact, yoga is not a religion; it is a way of living whose aim is a healthy mind in a healthy body”. A piece of yoga practice every day will definitely make student community gain more physical strength and get rid of all physical difficulties and diseases. With this mental strength, student community can come out and fight against all discrepancies with increasing self-confidence. They will thus become more powerful than ever before. Yoga can empower in the following four ways like Physical Health Empowerment, Emotional Empowerment, Mental Health Empowerment and Spiritual Empowerment. All these can be attained through yoga practices that include Yogasana, Pranayama and Meditation. These simple but powerfully uplifting intervention programmes can instill self confidence in students,

renewing their sense of joy, spirit of integration and communal kinship to (Vivekananda, 2016).

According to Bhuyan and Vineeta (2022) summarised the result of the present study shows that the regular practice of Yoga and Meditation improves the adjustment level of Secondary School Students. This result is same as the earlier study where made a study where 3 months of Yoga intervention was provided to the group and significant differences were found in self-adjustment score in boys and girls. The yoga should be integrated in the present system of education to increase the adjustment level of students because if students have proper adjustment level then they can easily survive in any situation.

According to Alicia, Cooper Stappa and Ashley Berry, Lambertb (2020) with rising pressure and an increase in expected academic performance in schools across the United States, students are experiencing higher levels of stress than ever before. To address this issue, the present study examined the impact of mindfulness-based yoga interventions on fifth-grade students' perceived anxiety and stress levels through a mixed methods research approach.

Caldarella and Moya (2022) summarised middle school is a time of adjustments in youth: physical, intellectual, and social changes often result in stress. Middle school students are vulnerable to academic, behavioural, and mental health problems. Yoga is an Indian discipline practiced for health and relaxation. School-based yoga programs are becoming increasingly common given their potential benefits for students. Study results suggested that middle school-based yoga interventions showed mental health, executive functioning, and physical, social, and academic benefits for students. Yoga also showed benefits for middle school students who were stressed, anxious, or depressed, and those at risk. We provide considerations for those contemplating the implementation of yoga in middle schools.

According to Dai et al. (2023) the advantages of yoga that emerged were improved physical performance, reduced perceived stress, acceptance

of oneself, better well-being, and improved coping. The identified disadvantages were time commitment, lack of motivation, and other competing interests. Learning through small steps, modifications, and identifying multiple sources of confidence helped build behavioural confidence. Practicing at home or at a yoga studio was a common theme for support in the physical environment. Directing negative emotions into purposes was helpful in maintaining the yoga practice.

According to Panday (2023) the results of the current research also indicate that yoga has an impact on mental health and well-being. We all know the importance of yoga in today's world. The results of the current research also indicate that yoga has an impact on mental health and well-being. The comparison of pre-yoga results and post-yoga results makes it clear that there is a significant difference in the results of both. We can say that the effect of yoga activity is on mental health and well-being in males and females.

According to Ghara (2020) human concentration and attention largely depends on the physical health and activation of the brain and it also help us to fell positive thinking, imagination, effort, creative activity, interest to study etc. Yoga is a type of exercise that helps to maintain proper movement and communication of various parts of the body. We find the reality of nature in the body through our breathing. Practicing yoga every day awakens the nerves and produces energy hormones. As a result, our negative attitude and depression are removed and a positive outlook on life is created. Yoga practice improve our brain function and higher level of concentration which can influence the academic performance of students and also helps to reduce symptoms like shortness of breath, gastrologic problems, aggressiveness, irritation mood, laziness etc.

According to Mallick (2024) the present system of education has mostly failed to achieve the objective of all round development of the learners. So, Yoga Education plays a crucial role

for bringing all round development of students by focusing upon its different areas the individual and social, cognitive and emotional, psychomotor and behavioral and moral and spiritual in all philosophical and religious system of India the teacher has given the toughest place because he gives his discipline towards the ultimate goal but in the yoga system without the teacher nothing can be obtained by the student, hence the place of teacher is inevitable. So as a student or teacher we should realize the concept of systematic procedure of yoga.

According to [Singh et al. \(2022\)](#) meditation as an alternative mind-body therapy. It is a popular intervention to improve mental and physical health. People have been meditating for thousands of years, often as part of a spiritual practice. But in more recent years, meditation has become a popular way to help people manage their stress and improve their overall well-being- and a wealth of research shows it's effective. Effects of meditation on human physiology (physical health) such as heart beat, blood pressure, metabolism, cortical activity, skin resistance are discussed. Impact of meditation on human mental health such as relaxation, systematic desensitization, release of repressed memory, perception, memory, stress, depression, anxiety, sleep disturbance, un-stressing and so on are also discussed.

According to [Beohar \(2022\)](#), summarized meditation is a key practice which has become an essential factor. It can produce structural changes in your brain like enhancing attention, perception, and focus. Person who practices Sahaja yoga meditation can not only experience relief from stress and anxiety but also from all physical ailments. In the student's phase, unnecessary stress, emotional setbacks, tension, anxiety can be easily handled by Sahaja yoga meditation. The students were told to practice meditation on daily basis and record their results. 80% results were showing improvement in daily routine, reduction in physical ailments, reduction in stress, improvement in thought process and sound sleep,

are to name the few. Indeed, meditation can make life better ([Beohar, 2022](#)).

According to [Naragatti et al. \(2023\)](#) Vadiraja H.S., S. Anburani this review highlights the good impacts of yoga on physical health, mental well-being, and cognitive capacities by reviewing a wide range of research findings. According to the findings, adding yoga into educational settings can improve concentration, reduce stress, raise self-awareness, and improve overall academic achievement. Furthermore, this abstract explores the various processes through which yoga promotes good outcomes, such as increased mindfulness, improved emotional regulation, and improved physical health.

According to [Krishnakumar et al. \(2015\)](#) the neural pathways and circuits can in fact change with learning and with mental exercises, and meditation may be a harmless way to encourage the growth of new neurons (neurogenesis) along with the formation of new connections between existing neurons (synaptogenesis). By tying together the neurobiological effects of neurotransmitters, brain waves, mental exercise and the empirical evidence from the psychological experiments, it is evident that meditation is an effective treatment for anxiety, and it does not suffer from any side effects. It may also function as a preventive medicine; therefore, it is highly recommended to everyone and not limited to patients suffering from disease.

[Kirti Saxena et al \(2020\)](#) summarised, school is an ideal place to teach the practice of yoga. It is a skill and tool that can be incorporated into the daily routine of students to improve academic performance and mitigate stress. A Hatha yoga practice in a school setting with positive outcomes for the students, particularly in improving inattention and hyperactivity.

Research Objectives

To examine the effectiveness of Buddhist ideology in promoting long-term behavioural changes in school children through yoga and meditation.

Methodology

This study utilized the scientific review process as a Meta synthesis to determine the effectiveness of Buddhism Ideology in facilitating long-term learning behavior changes through yoga and meditation among school-level children in Nepal, framed within a pragmatic research philosophy. The researcher aims to propose a practical solution for the present time via systematic literature. Therefore, this study may be classified as pragmatic, philosophy-driven research. The researcher predominantly employs deductive logical reasoning throughout the review; nevertheless, the researcher's observational experiences are structured as inductive logical reasoning during inference, specifically confined to adductive logic to ensure the objective's completeness. Extensive archival analysis followed by a thorough review would be the strategies employed during the scientific review. Based on the nature of data availability, both qualitative and quantitative research approaches would prove effective. The review was systematically executed through the gathering of research articles alongside reports and data.

Results and Discussion

Bhagavadgita, referred to as Yoga Sastra, is an authoritative text on Yoga. Lord Śiva is recognized as the supreme among the Yogis or Adinatha. Yoga has been an integral part of human endeavours aimed at attaining greater spiritual accomplishments.

Yoga and meditation hold significant importance in facilitating comprehensive development concerning the body, mind, and spirit in a harmonious manner, thereby fostering human values in adolescents. The consistent practice of Yoga and Meditation enhances the adjustment abilities of Secondary School Students.

Many patients have successfully recuperated with the assistance of their enhanced immunity by practicing yoga and meditation (such as breathing exercises, Bhramari Pranayama, and meditation, etc.) and were able to remain stress-free.

Throughout and after the pandemic, sustaining mental health presents a significant challenge.

The influence of meditation over a semester has highlighted its significance, maintaining the acquired practice will ensure consistency in academic achievements. The significance of meditation practice for students is underscored, and it also suggests instructing meditation and yoga to every student to enhance academic success.

Yoga is not a faith; it is a lifestyle whose goal is "a healthy mind in a healthy body". Daily engagement in yoga practice will undoubtedly help the student community to develop increased physical strength and eliminate all physical challenges and ailments.

Middle school yoga programs demonstrated improvements in mental health, executive functioning, as well as physical, social, and academic advantages for students. Additionally, yoga proved beneficial for middle school students experiencing stress, anxiety, or depression, including those deemed at risk.

Yoga emerged and improved physical performance, reduced perceived stress, acceptance of oneself, better well-being, and improved coping. The comparison of pre-yoga results and post-yoga results makes it clear that there is a significant difference in the results of both. We can say that the effect of yoga activity is on mental health and well-being in males and females.

Engaging in yoga daily stimulates the nerves and generates energy hormones. Consequently, our negative mindset and feelings of depression are eliminated, fostering a positive perspective on life. Practicing yoga enhances our cognitive abilities and increases our concentration levels, which can impact students' academic success and also aids in alleviating issues such as shortness of breath, digestive problems, aggression, mood irritability, and lethargy.

Effects of meditation on human physiology (physical health) including heart rate, blood pressure, metabolic rate, cortical function, skin

resistance are examined. Influence of meditation on human mental health such as relaxation, systematic desensitization, recall of repressed memories, perception, memory, stress, depression, anxiety, sleep issues, de-stressing.

The ideology of Buddhism, particularly through the practices of yoga and meditation, has shown significant potential in fostering long-term behavior change among secondary education children in Nepal. Mishra and Aithal (2023 a & b) emphasize the role of ethical capital development through human resource practices, highlighting how Buddhist principles can cultivate moral integrity and emotional balance in young learners. The Eastern philosophical approach, as outlined by Mishra (2022), underscores experiential learning and self-discipline, which yoga and meditation effectively embody, promoting mindfulness and self-regulation. Empirical studies reveal that integrating Buddhist ethics, such as compassion and patience, within educational settings supports adolescents in managing stress and enhancing interpersonal relationships, essential for holistic development (Yadav et al., 2016). Furthermore, localized research from Madhesh Province illustrates how embedding traditional wisdom through meditation practices strengthens students' resilience and ethical awareness, contributing to community well-being (Mishra, 2023; Mishra 2024) The synergy of artificial and emotional intelligence with Buddhist mindfulness techniques also offers innovative pathways to nurture emotional intelligence and ethical behavior in youth (Mishra et al., 2025). Organizational support and teacher engagement are critical in implementing these approaches effectively in Nepalese secondary schools, ensuring sustained behavioral transformation (Tamang and Mishra 2022). Collectively, these insights affirm that Buddhist ideology, operationalized through yoga and meditation, provides a culturally relevant and effective framework for promoting enduring positive behavior change among Nepal's secondary education students as reflected in Tamang et al. (2024) also.

Conclusion

Bhagavadgita, referred to as Yoga Sastra, is an authoritative text on Yoga. Yoga has been an integral part of human endeavours aimed at attaining greater spiritual accomplishments.

Yoga and meditation hold substantial importance for achieving comprehensive development regarding the body, mind, and spirit in harmony, thus fostering human values during adolescence. Yoga and meditation have been essential components of our comprehensive wellness and reaching our spiritual objectives since ancient times.

The significance of meditation practice among students is highlighted, and it also suggests instructing all students in meditation and yoga to enhance academic achievement. Yoga contributes to achieving "a sound mind in a sound body." If practiced daily, yoga will certainly enable the student community to enhance their physical strength and eliminate all physical challenges and ailments.

The consistent engagement in Yoga and Meditation enhances the adaptability level of Secondary School Students.

Middle school-centered yoga programs demonstrated advantages in mental health, executive functioning, and physical, social, and academic areas for students. Analyzing the results from before and after the yoga sessions clearly indicates that there is a notable difference in the outcomes of each. Practicing yoga daily stimulates the nerves and generates energy hormones. Engaging in yoga enhances our cognitive abilities and increases concentration, positively impacting students' academic performance and alleviating symptoms such as shortness of breath, gastrointestinal issues, aggression, irritability, and lethargy.

School serves as an excellent environment for instructing the practice of yoga. It is a technique and resource that can be integrated into the everyday lives of students to enhance academic achievement and reduce stress.

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