



YOGA DIMENSIONS IN MODERN EDUCATION

Dr. Shatrughan Singh* & Vandana Rathore**

Jagadguru Ramanandacharya Rajasthan Sanskrit University, Mandau,
Jaipur, Rajasthan

Cite This Article: Dr. Shatrughan Singh & Vandana Rathore, “Yoga Dimensions in Modern Education”, International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Modern Education, Volume 3, Issue 1, Page Number 539-543, 2017.

Copy Right: © IJMRME, R&D Modern Research Publication, 2017 (All Rights Reserved). This is an Open Access Article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Abstract:

Modern Education system is rooted in matter-based paradigm postulating that everything is nothing but matter. This upward-causation model has been the hallmark of scientific revolution. Modern education centred around bread-earning uses this scientific approach for the development of intellect and its practical applications to modern life. While sharpening of the intellect is most essential, over-sensitivity created often by this sharpening leads to big imbalances and its hazards as depression among the teenagers even. Hence, a holistic education system to meet these challenges is the need of the hour. While science also is progressing towards consciousness-based paradigm (downward causation) featured by consciousness as the original state and matter as the end product of condensed consciousness, education system also should incorporate this holistic base. Yoga as a science of holistic living brings out total personality development at physical, mental, emotional and intellectual levels with a spiritual basis. It can bring the necessary value system, character and nation-building dimensions. A summary of research of this four-fold personality development and four-fold development of consciousness - civic sense, service zeal, patriot awareness and spiritual urge have been presented. Based on these researches, integrated yoga modules for training of teachers have been developed and thousands of teachers have been trained throughout India who are introducing yoga in primary, higher secondary and higher school levels. Integrated yoga modules suited to higher education levels are also developed to make the students coming out of the education system to have not only bread-earning but also man-making, national-building, character building, value-based total education.

Modern Education:

The last four centuries in our Globe have brought about immense changes in our understanding of nature around us. Corresponding educational modifications have become mandatory in the society. The modern educational system has changed quite fast to keep up with this growth in understanding. Yet, a bigger change appears to be in the offing. In the encounter, man has moved from ignorance and superstitions to a place of rational thinking. The intellect is developed. The power of discrimination is harnessed. This move has brought great dividends in terms of solving (i) the basic needs of food, shelter and clothing and (ii) unravelling the secrets of the tremendous vast spectrum of the physical universe from the level of fundamental particles at the micro-level to the galaxies and Milky Way's at the macro-spectrum. Generalized laws like relativistic mechanics and quantum theory have replaced the classical mechanics. The present decade is showing signs of new breakthrough in physics, micro-biology, brain research and medical sciences on the one hand and economics, technology and social sciences on the other. Sensitivity and matter-based approach are good but hypersensitivity may be the result - Too much is too bad. Such imbalances then lead to new transformations. Problems become stepping stones to newer understanding. About four to five decades ago, under similar situations, the probability theory and quantum mechanics sprang up opening a new vista of knowledge. Soon, our world view will undergo a total transformation, said [1 to 4]* Professor Josephson, the Nobel Laureate of the University of Cambridge in his lecture 'Beyond Quantum Theory' in 1985. From the present matter-based world view, we may advance to a more fundamental world vision that consciousness, intellect, mind, life, etc., are primary and matter is secondary. That will be a total turning of the tables in science. And so will be our approach to education.

If micro-biologists have started adding life as a separate entity, brain researchers have recognized the inevitability of using consciousness as the innate core of all brain functioning – the medical world has recognized the limitations of the modern drug therapy mainly based on the matter-based world view in dealing with psychosomatic diseases and psychiatric problems. Just as petro-based technology is turning predominantly ecological, Non-pharmacological approach is getting increasingly recognized in the field of medicine. Economic models have started including health costs and expenditure on tension and stress hazards in making themselves more realistic; the classical objective, linear models in economic theories are replaced by non-linear, highly probabilistic and sophisticated models. Social philosophies have started reconsidering the value system (G.N.P.) on which they classified the nations. Economics as a total measure of social growth is being replaced by human well-being as the measure. All these mean a total transformation. Educationists too are dissatisfied with the pattern of education and are introducing rapid changes in the curriculum. Naturally, it appears, we are on the

verge of a transformation and at a turning point as rightly Professor Fritjof Capra in his book *Turning point envisaged*. In this transition towards a fundamental and profound change in our world view, Professor Josephson continued, "We find a direction, a new light in the Eastern wisdom the wisdom from the Vedas, Upanishads, and Shad Darshanas " Many other progressive scientists and thinkers have similar views and research is progressing all-over the globe. So, educationists are examining the concept of the education as propounded in the East.

Yoga in Education:

Education is not mere acquisition of knowledge but is a process to manifest the perfection already in man. It should help a growing child to blossom into a fine flower. For this blossoming of the child to a man, we need man-making education. [5] For making such Men emphasis on all-round personality development and social consciousness should be laid. Then, it is not enough if our students improve their IQ levels and gather more and more information in schools and colleges but the system of education should give them an opportunity to develop their physical, mental, intellectual, emotional with a spiritual basis (the four-fold personality development) for the build of a harmonious personality; the syllabus should be so formulated that the civic sense, patriotism, service zeal and spiritual urge (the four-fold consciousness) will emerge in our students. It is towards this goal of man-making and nation-building that we should orient our education. If this basic direction is set in our education system the present decadence of our society will vanish in future and our Bharat will regain her past glory. Yoga, the ancient science of India, is a conscious process for gaining mastery over the mind and personality development and thereby develops the normal human beings to reach heights of greatness. Newton-Descartes' mechanistic world-view and the classical deterministic approach featured by objective experimental methodology have kept us going over the last three to four centuries. The religious superstitions, blind beliefs, dogmas, rituals, customs, manners and habits have been replaced by rational thinking with a lifestyle-based on comfort. The era of science and technology has been the result. Education is also tailored to this era and is today, predominantly science-oriented and technology-based.

This conscious process of gaining mastery helps us to manifest the innate potentialities dormant in all of us and blossom into Men with the fivefold personality development mentioned above. Yoga harmonises our growth and through balance helps in total development. Such growth brings the divine qualities like love, affection, sacrifice, service etc., which are at the base of the four-fold consciousness. In this sense, yoga is a science of holistic living and is synonymous with basic or real education. Hence, yoga is being introduced in the educational system. Yoga has also become the fashion of the day. Millions all over the world have taken to yoga practices. Gradually the understanding of yoga is getting deepened. Yoga as a science of holistic living featured by peace and poise, health and happiness, energy conservation and efficiency is being recognized by larger and larger sections of the society rather than as a process of physical or breathing acrobatics if not, as a rope trick! Yoga with its usefulness to the modern man to relieve his stresses and tensions, to the patients in prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and promotion of positive health, to the professionals in increasing their skills and improve the quality of life, etc., is attracting people from all sections of the society. Further, its sound basis in Upanishads offers a fundamental understanding to the human misery in general and hence a direction towards greater and greater bliss. Based on this wisdom, holistic value system is offered by yoga; this if used in our education system right from beginning, we can build an ideal society. We will then head from the era of science and technology to an age of Yoga science.

For these reasons, Yoga in Education is becoming mandatory. Systematic introduction of Yoga Techniques, the right way, can certainly go a long way in reconstructing the lost value system in our country which has been the prime cause for our decadence. This needs systematic development of techniques, their scientific assessments to establish their usefulness to students at different levels which also help in improving the right techniques and by eliminating the wrong ones. Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana (VYASA) has involved itself over the last 3 decades in this process of man-making and nation-building education. VYASA has developed Yoga courses towards such a goal and the Yoga Research done over thirty years has established their efficacy.

(a) Personality Development at the Physical Level: Does the growth of physical personality imply a bulky body weighing 100 kgs? An ideal body has the following features:

A proportionate body with all the muscles relaxed in normal state. It is soft like a flower, flexible to the core. Instantaneously, it can acquire a diamond's hardness. All the organs and systems in the organs and systems in the body with least abnormalities is the first feature of a good personality at the physical level. The chronic and acute ailments are, thus absent in such a body. It is here that the therapeutic application of yoga is cutting grounds. The second aspect of personality development at the physical level is to make the body work more efficiently by using the energies in the most controlled fashion. At resting periods, the metabolic rate should be very low. [5, 6] During normal activities, just the necessary amount of energy is to be used by the body. At critical times, under conditions of high demand the functions of the organs so nicely co-ordinate that the necessary energy gets evoked and flows profusely into those regions which need more energy. The body gets all the necessary strength to deal with the situation. This 'stamina' of the harnessing to work in such co-ordination,

can be effectively accomplished by yogic practices. It is in this area of application of YOGA that specialists in physical culture, wrestlers, sportsmen and dancers are keenly interested and are putting yoga to utmost use.

(b) Personality Development at the Mental Level: The power of imagination - 'creativity and steadfastness or willpower are the two aspects of the mind which come under this head of personality development. It has been seen that yogic practices enhance the creative power of man. As such, many musicians, poets, film artists, engineers and technologists have been attracted to yoga. 'Will power' is an essential requirement for all persons to accomplish any work, however, insignificant or great the task be. Yoga by its systematic and conscious process of calming down the mind erases the weakness in the mind and builds 'willpower' into it. Into such a mind, each challenge arouses tremendous energy to combat the situation and bravery becomes a part of the personality. Steadfast to the core, such a person takes up with marvellous sobriety the challenges in life and converts them to opportunities for accomplishing his mission [7]

(c) Personality Development at the Intellectual Level: In the modern era of science, a sharp intellect and the faculty of reason plays a key role in the scheme of education. Rather than mechanical cramming of information, thinking and understanding are valued more in the learning process. The children are taught right from the primary level to think logically and scientifically. However, this enhanced power of the sharpened intellect associated with deep powerful concentration among the 'intellectual cream' of the society has also bound man to the whirlpool of the strong clutches of uncontrolled mind. Though torturous he cannot come out of it. The development of personality at the intellectual level should not only result in an intense sharpening of the intellect but also include mastery to come out of the enslaving power of the sharpened intellect. Swami Vivekananda rightly emphasizes, 'Concentration and Detachment' as the two vital parts of education. Not only should it be possible for one to dive deep into any subject on hand but also be able to come out of it any moment. It is again the specialty of YOGA that can bring about this comprehensive development of the intellect. Hence, YOGA is attracting the attention of many 'intellectual sufferers', bringing them into its fold. [8]

(d) Personality Development at the Emotional Level: Our emotions control our behaviour, especially at a crucial juncture. The challenges of the modern era pose a great threat to the emotional stability of man, probably stronger than ever before. Yet, the culturing of the development of our emotional faculties finds no place in the whole scheme of education. Man looks lost amidst the demands of modern life style and atrocities of life unable to overcome his emotional conflicts/ blocks and turmoil. The result is deep unrest, agony and psychiatric disorders, predominantly depression. Yoga trains us (i) to systematically sharpen and sanitize our emotions, and (ii) to consciously expand and diffuse the overtones of such sensitization. Thus, YOGA offers a fine tool for the development of the emotional personality of man. [9]

Spiritual Basis:

A man may have a very sturdy physique, amazing creative power, a powerful intellect and a highly sensitized emotional grasp, yet, may have no idea of spiritual progress. He may not possess even an inkling of the spiritual dimension. What then can be said to characterize the development of personality at the spiritual level? The Kathopanishat defines the same thus: Normally, all of us are so structured that we look mostly outside ourselves at the environment. The senses grasp the things around them – predominantly the objects of the world outside, solving the problems associated with them, unravelling the mysteries therein using such knowledge to make our life more comfortable and enjoyable; bringing up our children to perpetuate and sustain the society around us; striving to set patterns of behavior and etiquettes of transactions and so on. We are busy throughout. Not with standing this pattern of life, some glimpses into the depths of our inner dimension occasionally flash in all our lives. Very few catch these glimpses but some are awfully struck by the hitherto unknown dimensions hidden within. The search begins; the quest starts. That is the beginning of Spirituality in life. Yoga is not only a process for leading man towards this astounding hidden personality of man by bringing mastery over the body, mind, intellect and emotional faculties, but also a powerful tool to manifest those hidden potential powers in him.

As man progresses his zeal to perfect himself grows. In the process, he learns and understands the expressions of Nature around him. The great scientists and great seekers of reality do not hesitate to open themselves to unknown regions as well. There is an adventure in it for them. The new glimpses of the inner world draw them within. It is this openness, humbleness and humility among the highly developed researchers of the modern scientific era which is making them use yogic practices in their quest. They know no prejudices. Appreciation of such developments by their earlier seekers characterize them. Yoga is leading them to open up their spiritual dimensions. This process of education for the development of personality is a continuous function of one's growth level. The greater the development of personality, greater will be its educational implications and greater will be the unfoldment of perfection in him. This growth of the individual is coupled with the emergence of the four-fold consciousness enunciated earlier. Let us try to understand what we mean by them. [8]

Civic Sense:

Recognition of the importance of civil rules and regulations laid down by the state in tune with jurisprudence and a willful adherence to these codes of conduct, a sincere discharge of civic responsibilities as

an ardent citizen of the State are included under this head. It is to be made clear to the students that if we voluntarily accept and adhere to the rules, there is great joy, satisfaction and growth not only for ourselves but also for all in the society as a whole. Examples: Road traffic rules – avoiding to go round the circle; strikes and destruction of civic amenities. The state should enforce these rules strictly or else the ‘Tamas’ in man cannot be shattered. Such enforcements should be accepted by the citizens and we all should help in maintaining law and order in the society which is our primary responsibility. [10]

Patriotic Urge:

A deep feeling that I am an Indian and I should strive my best to foster the interest of the country form the basis of patriotism. This feeling for the country may be evoked in the students by making them aware of our grand culture which is the oldest, of the beautiful resources our Motherland has provided and the role India has to play in maintaining world peace by carrying the message of real human values. In teaching history, geography, science, etc., we should direct the attention of our students towards the great heritage of our land. Most of the nations which have achieved great success and growth, built up their country fast, have one common factor - patriotism. Almost every one of the citizen carry this mark of intense love for their country. That spirit of patriotism gets expressed even in trivial actions. They are prepared to sacrifice for the sake of the country. A visitor to Japan lost his wrist watch in a hotel. His complaint was taken quite seriously by the manager and the police were brought in for the search. The visitor was leaving the country and the watch could not be found. While boarding the plane, the visitor finds the Police Inspector apologizing for the unfortunate incident and requesting the visitor to accept one of the most expensive watches of Japan. After handing over the watch, he appealed, ‘I would appreciate if you can hold back this incident to yourself back home’.

Often, patriotism is considered disruptive, especially in an age of global communications seeking world harmony and peace. A right attitude to nationalism as part of Internationalism would ward off this narrowness and fanaticism. One belongs to his family as well as to the nation and to the world. There is no conflict about the same. The names of Scientists, Technologists, Historians, Musicians, etc., from their own country as done in Russia could be one of the means by which self-confidence and love for our elders could be infused. Studying the lives of great patriots is yet another powerful means. Such a spirit of patriotism can channelize the energies of the students in the right direction for national good. Such an atmosphere all-around can bring excellence in people. All over, the national freedom movement had spread like all consuming fire. People sacrificed everything at the altar of Mother Bharat. The spirit had a deep and widespread impact on the minds of all scientists, artists, etc. That invoked the dormant potentialities in most of the people. Best of talents emerged in this period only. Two Nobel prizes were awarded for outstanding research in Science and Literature. They were only symbols of the emergence of excellence. [10]

Service Zeal:

The students should be made to realize that there is greater joy in giving than in accumulating for them. For the ailing humanity all over the world with greed and speed, love is the need. Service is the penacea. The new value system with love and service as the fore-runners is the need of the hour. Let us foster this, right from childhood.

Spiritual Urge:

An intense quest to find the REALITY, the meaning and purpose of life, the connection between the world outside and inside, the secret of happiness and misery, form the basis of spiritual urge. By understanding and experiencing even the simple tenets of spirituality, an appreciation of the grand spiritual heritage can be developed. It is then that zeal to foster and propagate spiritual wisdom develops. As Swamiji says, ‘Service to Humanity is Service to Divinity’ is the message of spirituality most relevant to the modern era. It has to be inculcated in the students through various programs. VYASA, a spiritually oriented service mission has been running its education wing—based on the Holistic approach delineated above. Many primary and secondary schools in India have started using our syllabus which has been developed for all-round personality development and four-fold consciousness development of students. Large number of Yoga Teachers in both Govt. and private schools has been trained using this syllabus (totaling to about 40,000 during 1980 to 2010) by VYASA. [10]

Conclusions:

The review of the published research presented above can further be expanded to bring the effectiveness of integrated yoga modules at not only school levels but also in higher education levels, that can fill the vacuum in the present bread-earning education system by shifting from matter-based to consciousness-based paradigm.

References:

1. Capra, Fritjof. The Turning Point. Simon and Schuster, NY, 1982
2. I. Prigogine, The End of Certainty. The Free Press, NY, 1997, pp. 107-129.
3. T. Rothman, and G. Sudarshan, Doubt and Certainty. Perseus Books, Massachusetts, 1998, pp. 21-43.
4. A. Goswami, The Putnam Book of New York, 1993, Self Aware Universe.
5. R. Nagarathna and H.R. Nagendra, 1986. . . Yoga in Education. Swami Vivekananda Yoga Prakashana, Bangalore.

6. "Research contributions of VYASA, Vol. 1, Therapeutic Applications of Yoga compiled by Research team of VYASA. Swami Vivekananda Yoga Prakashana, Bangalore, 2001
7. Swami Vivekananda, Ràja-yoga. Advaita Ashram, Pithoragarh, 1995.
8. H.R. Nagendra, Yoga, its Basis and Applications. Swami Vivekananda Yoga Prakashan, Bangalore.
9. H.R. Nagendra, The Science of Emotion's Culture (Bhakti Yoga). Swami Vivekananda Yoga Prakashana, Bangalore, 2000.
10. H.R. Nagendra "The Secret of Action" Swami Vivekananda Yoga Prakashana, Bangalore, 2003.
11. R. Nagarathna and H.R. Nagendra, 1986. New Horizons in Modern Medicine. Swami Vivekananda Yoga Prakashana, Bangalore.
12. K. Wilber, The Spectrum of Consciousness. Shambhala, Vol. 1 Boston and London, 1999, pp. 82-116.