



Importance of Ashtanga-Yoga in Education

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Abstract:

Yoga is one of the most ancient schools of thought system, which is produced and practiced for ages. The purpose of yoga is “Yoga Chitta vritti nirodha” it means cessation of mental modification.

In the process of education, the first step is to determine the aim of education. The aim of education is connected with aim of life and the aim of life is a good life which is considered a valuable life. Yoga has a very clear idea of the goal and its purpose. It has a systematic process to achieve the aim. Ashtanga-Yoga offers new learning possibilities not only to every age group of students but also to every individual. In the Ashtanga-yoga system of education from the early stage, Yama and niyama will start nurturing the character of the student, Asana and Pranayama will make the body physically strong with that student were enough capable of handling the physical strain.

Concentration and mediation (Dhyana) will help the student to focus on the target and achieve it without much difficulty because mental modification gets stopped.

Keywords: *Ashtanga-Yoga, Yoga, Education system, meditation, Yama and niyamas*

1. Introduction

Yoga is one of the most ancient schools of thought system, which is produced and practiced for ages. The purpose of yoga is “Yoga Chittavritti nirodha” it means cessation of mental modification.

In today’s world, human beings is going through a crisis. Everyone is behind the western world’s scientific and technological advancement and their way of life which seems to be fast and more effective. In today’s world moral values had been stepped aside which is the backbone of human civilization.

2. Aims of Education

Some definitions of education which help us to get the understand-

Rigveda- “Education has been understood as something which makes a man self-reliant and selfless”

Upanishad- “Education has been understood as something that their end product is salvation”

Shankaracharya- “Education is the realization of self”

Yoga- “cessation of mental modification is real education”

In the process of education, the first step is to determine the aim of education. The aim of education is connected with aim of life and the aim of life is a good life which is considered a valuable life.

Ancient India focused on both forms of life philosophy (theoretical and practical aspect), right way of leading a good life i.e. Purusartha
Dharma-Right action
Artha- material wealth
Kama- pleasure-intrinsic value
Moksha- salvation-Spiritual value

In the current system aim of life is only material wealth and it is leading us to a very dangerous stage, where behaviors towards self and others are destructive.

3. Astanga-Yoga Method

Yoga has a very clear idea of the goal and its purpose. It has a systematic process to achieve the aim. According to Samkhya-Yoga philosophy, everything preexists in its cause. It means that we have the capacity in ourselves that needs to be manifested. To manifest our potential which we already have in ourselves Ashtanga-yoga is the procedure or method to bring it out. Yoga emphasizes on Ashtanga-yoga which means eight limbs, for the holistic development and self-realization of students. Ashtanga-Yoga is a structured system in which the first emphasis was given to physical health because the mind requires a healthy body to harness its potential. Ashtanga-Yoga helps students to manifest their potential and let the ego disappear and senses in control.

Eight limbs are as follows-

- Yama (Abstinences)
- Niyama (behaviors)
- Asana (posture)
- Pranayama (breathing technique)
- Pratyahara (abstraction)
- Dharana (concentration)
- Dhyana (meditation)
- Samadhi (Fusion of mind and body)

Yama's (Abstinences) and Niyama's (observances) are the support pillars for the students, where they can learn and understand the ethical code of conduct of life, which help the student to become an awakened person.

Yama has five pillars 1- Ahimsa (non-violence) 2-Satya (truthfulness) 3- Asteya (non-stealing)4-Aparigraha (non-possessiveness) 5- Brahmacharya (celibacy).

Ahimsa (Non-violence) is starting fundamental, when a student wishfully chose non-violence from his mind and also from his action it leads to harmony in his thoughts and action.

The next one is Satya (Truthfulness) which means a total commitment to truth in the intention, words, and action and practicing for the realization of the higher truth.

Asteya (Non-Stealing) students need to prepare themselves for the abandonment of all intention to steal, what does not belong to them and cultivate this feeling of progress.

Aparigraha (non-possession) means one should not have more than is required. It is very important for students because when more than the requirements are there, one becomes lazy and will not be able to do the needful activity effectively.

The last part of Yama is Brahmacharya (celibacy) which means one has to be in self-control for securing harmony in the impulses. By practicing these, students can stable their hormonal disturbance and will be able to achieve their goals without any diversion.

The next limb (Anga) is Niyama (behaviors) it also includes five parts.

- 1-Souch (cleanliness): means maintaining the holistic purity of the body, mind, and speech. Students have to maintain the purity of the body and mind, it is also considered essential for health, happiness and general well-being.
- 2-Santosh (contentment): means contentment, acceptance of one's circumstance and also of others. when one understands and accepts the reality of the situation then it helps the students to think and act according to the situation and need of time. The student will take a stable decision for life, which is one of the essential aspects of true education.
- 3- Tapas (discipline): means self-discipline and perseverance, students have to follow it to understand the true reality of self and the world.
- 4-Swadhyaya (self-analysis): one of the fundamental requirements for students is to think and analyze, whatever they have learned. It can be done through various techniques. By reading the required text, understanding the concept, and observing their thoughts, by doing all this, students can able to understand their position and attain the required knowledge for holistic development.
- 5-Ishwar-pranidhana (surrendering to a higher power): basically, surrendering to the teacher or parents or higher authority is considered Ishwar. Sometimes students have to surrender to parents or teachers for their own betterment because some time students do not have the required experience to deal with certain situations, where they need support. It can also be understood as love toward the universe or nature.

The next two limbs are Asana (posture) and Pranayama (breathing technique), both the limbs are to make the body enough competent to face any kind of physical challenges.

The fifth limb is Pratyahara (abstraction), this is to control sense organs according to our needs, not students should not act according to the wish of the sense. when we can control our body according to the choice we make, in this position we can make our senses invert the people do not attract with desires and their actions have steadiness and it prepares students for the next steps.

When we can go invert and started focusing on our goal without any distraction is known as Dharana (concentration), which is the six limbs of Ashtanga yoga. The Other two are also used in a spiritual sense but are also very important to students. By doing concentration students can achieve a state of meditation which is essential for achieving higher results in any activity. Students need to concentrate and meditate regularly to get set goals.

A student's mind can be controlled and trained through meditation, concentration, and continuous practice of ethical purity. For any kind of success in any kind of work, one of the important sources of power is Dhyana (meditation).

Dhyana essentially means dispassion for other things. Mediation is the focus area of Yoga through this, the mental power and self-confidence of our students will increase. When Dhyana reaches its final stage, it led to Samadhi (Fusion of mind and body).

Education is not only just accumulating the bookish knowledge to satisfy our ego, but it needs to make your character, improve the capacity of thinking, your intellect will be sharpened, as a result, one can stand on one's own feet.

4. Field of study

Ashtanga- Yoga meticulously includes all those studies, which is required for the all-round development of the body, mind, and soul of the students. Ashtanga- Yoga can be considered under the broad heads of physical, mental, cultural, aesthetics, classics, language, religion, spirituality, medicine, and science and technology.

Yoga is an essential part of our culture and way of life. In today's world, now the need arises that one should get holistic development and Ashtanga-Yoga has the potential to give holistic development to our students this approach must be used in schools.

Ashtanga-Yoga is the best approach for India for a balance Nation. We have to combine the dynamics and scientific attitude of the Western countries with the spirituality of our country. Through all this, we can make our people well organized, happier, and grounded.

5. Conclusion

Yoga (Ashtanga-Yoga) is the practical school of thought as Samkhya gives theoretical basic. It will help the education system to give the student a constructive, practical, and comprehensive character. If Ashtanga-yoga philosophy is used in education to its fullest, will lead to the holistic development of a student.

Ashtanga-Yoga offers new learning possibilities not only to every age group of students but also to every individual. Traditional yoga was used only in sports and fitness and now can be used in other aspects too.

When a student becomes conscious of the reality of self, the sense of self-confidence and dignity rises in the student, this is the real purpose of education and it is possible through the Ashtanga-Yoga system of education. We can harmonies the traditional values of India with the new development in science and technology.

In the Ashtanga-yoga system of education from the early stage, Yama and niyama will start nurturing the character of the student, Asana and Pranayama will make the body physically strong with that student were enough capable of handling the physical strain.

Concentration and mediation (Dhyana) will help the student to focus on the target and achieve it without much difficulty because mental modification gets stopped.

Through the Ashtanga-yoga system of education, we can build a strong nation that will lead the world towards peace, harmony, and stability.

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