

## A STUDY ON ATTITUDE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS AND TEACHERS TOWARDS INCLUSION OF YOGA AS A COMPULSORY SCHOOL SUBJECT

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### Abstract

*Today, stress is considered to be a major hindrance to the academic performance of school students. Due to the increase in academic competition, the incidents of anxiety and depression have also increased. To combat stress and anxiety among students and provide them quality education, many steps are being taken at the school level. Yoga education is one such means through which the physical and mental wellbeing of students can be well taken care of. Efforts need to be made to include yoga as an integral part of the school education system. The purpose of this study is to determine the attitude of secondary school students and teachers towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject. Sample of the study includes 180 students and 60 teachers of different schools of Patna affiliated to BSEB, CBSE, and ICSE boards. The findings of the study reveal that the students, as well as teachers, have a **positive** attitude towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory subject. Also, there is a difference in the attitude of students and teachers of different school boards towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory subject. The study also brings into light the reasons for the positive attitude towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject.*

**Key Words:** Attitude, Secondary school, Yoga.

### Introduction

Today, the present educational system has become quite complex where the students are most of the time surrounded by stress and anxiety. Stress is a major hindrance to the academic performance of students. Due to the increase in academic competition, the incidents of stress and depression have also increased. To combat stress and anxiety among students and provide them quality education, many steps are being taken at the school level. Yoga education is one such means through which the physical and mental wellbeing of students can be well taken care of.

The Sanskrit noun 'yoga' is derived from the root 'yuj' which means "to attach, join, harness, yoke". Yoga is an amalgamation of physical, mental, and spiritual practices which originated in ancient India. Amongst the six orthodox schools of the Hindu philosophical tradition, it is one of the important schools. The term 'yoga' in the western world often denotes a modern form of Hatha yoga, yoga as an exercise, consisting largely of the postures called 'asanas'. Yoga is not an ancient myth but

the most valued inheritance of the present. It is an indispensable need of today and the culture of tomorrow. The training of yoga would give the proper direction for the betterment of exam achievements and peace of mind (Sarkar,2017). It paves way for a disciplinary lifestyle among the students. Yoga helps children to recover their self-esteem and confidence, improve concentration and reduce stress and anxiety. Yoga acts as a potential tool for children to deal with stress and regulate themselves (Hagen &Nayar, 2014). Yoga and meditation help students to be more self-aware (Monshat,2013). Yoga produces positive and demonstrable stress reduction effects on the brain and immune function (Parmar, 2015). Yoga appears to be an effective modality for helping children cope with stress and anxiety (Nanthakumar, 2018). The whole purpose of yoga is to be unto oneself to bring integrity in you and to make you whole (Shankar,2014). It promotes active pedagogy that will focus on the development of life skills. According to UNICEF, "Life Skills" are defined as psychological abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. They are loosely grouped into three broad categories of skills: cognitive skills for analyzing and using information, personal skills for developing personal agency and managing oneself, and interpersonal skills for communicating and interacting effectively with others. The development of these life skills will help students find new ways of thinking and problem-solving. Yoga, thus, helps in the development and enhancement of these life skills. The five essential life skills that can be trained with the help of yoga are focus, self-control, patience, mental flexibility, and stress management.

Yoga education is gaining popularity across the globe and many western countries have included it as a part of their educational system. Presently in the Indian education system, yoga is a part of Health and Physical Education. National Curriculum framework2005, proposed that yoga should be introduced from the primary level onwards in informal ways, but the formal introduction of yogic exercises should begin from class VI onwards. Health Education, Physical Education, and Yoga must be suitably integrated into the elementary and secondary pre-service teacher education courses also. The draft of National Educational Policy 2019 was submitted to the Human Resource Development Minister in May this year in which it was suggested that there will be no hard separation of learning areas in terms of curricular, co-curricular, or extra-curricular activities and all subjects, including arts, sports, yoga, community service, etc., will be curricular. Also, it stated that physical education, mind and body wellness, and sports should be included in the curriculum right from the foundation stage, and students at all levels of school would be provided opportunities to participate in physical activity and exercise, including sports, games, yoga, etc. Yoga should be made part of the school curriculum (Siva Prasanna Kumar, 2019).

Thus, realizing the importance and benefits of yoga for school children, the present work was undertaken.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the attitude of secondary school students towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject.
2. To find out the attitude of secondary school teachers towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject.
3. To find out the difference in the attitude of secondary school students of BSEB, CBSE, and ICSE boards towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject.
4. To find out the difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers of BSEB, CBSE, and ICSE boards towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject.

- To outline the reasons for the attitude towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject.

## Research Method

**Design of the Study:** Simple descriptive survey method was employed to study the attitude of secondary school students and teachers towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject.

**Population of the Study:** The secondary school students studying in VIII-X standard and teachers of BSEB, CBSE, and ICSE schools of Patna.

**Sample of the Study:** 180 students and 60 teachers of Secondary level of BSEB, CBSE, and ICSE schools of Patna constituted the sample of the study.

**Sample Selection:** Incidental (accidental) sampling technique was adopted to select a representative sample from the above-mentioned population.

**Sample Size:** 180 students and 60 teachers of the six different secondary schools of Patna were taken as the sample of the study. The students were of standard VIII, IX, and X.

### Break-up of the sample:

S. No.	Name of the Schools	Boards	Sample Size (Students)			Sample Size (Teachers)
			VI	VII	VIII	
1.	School 1	BSEB	10	10	10	10
2.	School 2	BSEB	10	10	10	10
3.	School 3	CBSE	10	10	10	10
4.	School 4	CBSE	10	10	10	10
5.	School 5	ICSE	10	10	10	10
6.	School 6	ICSE	10	10	10	10
	<b>Total</b>		60	60	60	60

**Tools for Data Collection:** For the collection of relevant data, two questionnaires were constructed and standardized by the researchers and the supervisor.

The first questionnaire was administered upon the students. It consisted of two parts, viz., 'Section-A' for extracting personal information about the students and teachers included in the sample, and 'Section-B' which was an attitude scale for determining their attitude towards inclusion of yoga as a

compulsory school subject. 'Section-C' consisted of an open-ended question where the respondents were free to express themselves.

The questionnaire consisted of 17 items, of which the first 6 items constituted Section-A, the next 10 items formed the attitude scale of Section-B, and the Section-C constituted of 1 item which was an open-ended question.

**Reliability:** Reliability of the questionnaires was found by the split-half method. The reliability coefficients of the two half tests were found to be 0.48 and 0.46 respectively and the reliability coefficients of the whole tests were found to be 0.63 and 0.68 using the Spearman-Brown Prophecy formula. The reliability coefficients of 0.63 and 0.68 were significant at 0.01 levels which show that the reliability of the questionnaires was high and the tools were sufficiently reliable.

**Validity:** The content validity of the tests was established by the constructors with the help of various experts' opinions and suggestions. The items were thoroughly evaluated and criticized by the experts.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

**Analysis related to the first objective:** To find out the attitude of the secondary school students towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject.

Table: Attitude of the secondary school students towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject

<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Positive	74%
Neutral	3%
Negative	23%

The above table shows that 74% of students have a positive attitude towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject. However, 3% of students are uncertain about yoga being included as a compulsory school subject and 23% of students possess a negative attitude.

Thus, nearly two-thirds of the students have a positive attitude towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject. But nearly one-fourth of the students do not have a positive attitude toward the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject.

**Analysis related to the second objective:** To find out the attitude of the secondary school teachers towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject.

Table: Attitude of the secondary school teachers towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory subject

<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Positive	65 %
Neutral	15 %
Negative	20 %

The above table shows that 15% of secondary school teachers have a neutral attitude and 20% of teachers have a negative attitude towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject. 65% is of secondary school teachers have a positive attitude about including yoga as a compulsory subject in the secondary school curriculum.

Thus, the majority of the teachers have a positive attitude towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject. But the attitude of more than one-third of teachers is either negative or neutral.

**Analysis related to the third objective:** To find out the difference in attitude of secondary school students of BSEB, CBSE, and ICSE boards towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject.

Table: Attitude of Secondary school students of BSEB, CBSE, and ICSE boards towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject

<b>Board</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Negative</b>
BSEB	55 %	18%	27 %
CBSE	68%	13%	19 %
ICSE	57 %	12%	31 %

The above table shows that 55% of students of BSEB, 68% of CBSE, and 57% of ICSE boards have a positive attitude towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject. 18 % students of BSEB board 13% students of CBSE board and 12% of ICSE board have a neutral attitude towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject. 27% students of BSEB board, 19% students of CBSE board, and 31% students of ICSE board have a negative attitude towards inclusion of Yoga as a compulsory school subject. Thus, the majority of students of all three boards have a positive attitude

towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject. As compared to the students of BSEB and ICSE boards, the highest percentage of secondary school students having a positive attitude towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject is that of CBSE board whereas the highest percentage of secondary school students having a negative attitude towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject is that of ICSE board.

**Analysis related to the fourth objective:** To find out the difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers of BSEB, CBSE, and ICSE boards towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject.

Table: Attitude of the secondary school teachers of BSEB, CBSE and ICSE boards towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory subject

<b>Board</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Negative</b>
BSEB	55 %	20%	25%
CBSE	65 %	15%	20 %
ICSE	50 %	15 %	35 %

The above table shows that 55% of secondary school teachers of BSEB board, 65% secondary school teachers of CBSE board, and 50% secondary school teachers of ICSE board have a positive attitude towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject. 25% of secondary school teachers of BSEB board, 20% secondary school teachers of CBSE board, and 35% of ICSE board have a negative attitude towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject. 20% secondary school teachers of BSEB board, 15% secondary school teachers each of CBSE board and ICSE board are uncertain towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject. However, the highest level of uncertainty is among the teachers of the BSEB board as compared to the teachers of the CBSE and ICSE boards. The highest percentage of secondary school teachers having a positive attitude towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject is that of the CBSE board whereas the highest percentage of secondary school teachers having a negative attitude towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject is that of ICSE board. The graph clearly shows that the attitude of the teachers towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject is highly favourable in CBSE schools compared to BSEB and ICSE schools.

**Analysis related to the fifth objective:** To outline the reasons for the attitude towards inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject.

The following are the reasons for the positive attitude of students and teachers towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory subject that came to light:

- Due to the increasing course load and competition, students today are confronting with anxiety, depression, and restlessness. Yoga can provide them a much-needed break from their hectic lifestyle. It equips them with life skills that enable them to handle outer and inner chaos effectively.

- The present generation is most of the time suffering from posture-related problems as they work on laptops and mobiles for longer periods. Yoga can help teachers and students in learning the right postures.
- In the present scenario, when everything is available right with the click of a mouse, yoga can help children to gain control over their mind and improve their attention span and concentration to perform the task with creativity and success.
- The schools do not require investing a big amount of money in imparting yoga education to students. The schools can appoint a trained yoga instructor under whose guidance students can learn yoga effectively.
- Yoga education can lead to the holistic development of students. It not only helps in reducing stress and reforming behaviour in a positive direction but also promotes human values among students.
- Regular practice of yoga in schools will counter the ill effects of junk food on students and help them maintain the right weight suitable for their age.

### Educational Implications

- In this age of stress and strain, the practice of yoga, meditation, and other breathing techniques should be made an integral part of the school curriculum.
- It should ensure that students are given opportunities for the holistic development of their personalities. They should not be overloaded with academic work.
- The schools should appoint efficient and trained yoga instructors so that practical skills can be taught effectively by avoiding any kind of injury.
- Awareness campaigns can be organized in schools for disseminating the benefits of yoga for healthy living. Misconceptions regarding it, if any, should be removed. The schools should communicate this fact clearly that yoga is a universal activity and is not associated with any specific religion.
- Any cost involved in incorporating yoga as a compulsory practice should be borne by the school administration.

### Conclusion

The study aimed to find out the attitude of the secondary school students and teachers towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject. The main conclusions about the present study have been presented below:

- i. Based on the study, it is concluded that the attitude of secondary school students towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory subject is positive. Many students acknowledge the fact that yoga has manifold benefits. Sharma et. al (2017) reported that the practice of yoga should be encouraged to promote health and well-being. Yoga helps students to keep up with their regular academic tasks with little stress.
- ii. From the study, it is concluded that secondary school teachers have a positive attitude towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject. Teachers do agree that yoga has multiple benefits. Nanthakumar, C. (2018) stated that yoga appears to be an effective modality for helping children to cope with stress and anxiety. Siva Prasanna Kumar (2019) also stated that yoga should be made part of the school curriculum.
- iii. The study also leads to a conclusion that there is a difference in the attitude of secondary school students of BSEB, CBSE, and ICSE boards towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject. The reasons for this difference may be the variation in course structure, difficulty level, and differences in the range of subjects offered to them.



- iv. From the study, it can be concluded that there is a difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers of BSEB, CBSE, and ICSE boards towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject. The reasons for this difference may be the increased work pressure, variation in course structure, and differences in the range of subjects offered in each board.
- v. On the basis of the study, it is concluded that there are several reasons responsible for a positive attitude towards the inclusion of yoga as a compulsory school subject such as academic performance, a powerful means to de-stress, helping in overall development, developing confidence, self-control, improving concentration, health, etc. Thus, to make yoga a compulsory school subject, the stakeholders of the education system need to be vigilant enough right from policy formulation, designing a need-based course structure to its effective implementation at the school level.

## Limitations

1. Due to the paucity of time and resources, a sample of only 180 students and 60 teachers were taken which restricted the scope of valid generalization.
2. Another limitation was that participants of this study were only from Patna.
3. Since the attitude was measured based on fixed responses, the students and teachers might have given socially accepted responses instead of giving correct responses.
4. Some respondents put tick marks without reading the items carefully and some left some of the items unanswered which led to difficulty in accurate analysis of the data.
5. While responding some students consulted with each other in making their choices. So, the result might have got affected due to this.

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