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**“ASSOCIATION OF YOGA AND PHYSICAL  
EDUCATION FOR FITNESS AND HEALTH OF  
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# Association of Yoga and Physical Education for Fitness and Health of Children

Amit Kumar

Research Scholar, Sai Nath University, Ranchi, Jharkhand

**Abstract – Younger students can burn off some of their energy, increasing their ability to settle in and focus on their academic work. In adolescents, regular physical activity not only helps to maintain a healthy body weight, but has also been shown to lower levels of anxiety and depression.**

**Keywords: Physical Education, Yoga, Children, Fitness**

## INTRODUCTION

Yoga and physical education contribute to not merely the physical development of the child but have a positive impact on psychosocial and mental development as well. Playing group games have a positive impact on individual self-esteem, promotes better interaction among children, imparts values of co-operation, sharing and to deal with both victory and defeat.

Both yoga and physical education have not been given the due importance in the school curriculum and neither has their contribution to the health and overall development of the child been adequately acknowledged. The constraints faced by yoga and physical education are related to a number of factors that affect the quality of school education in general and health and physical education in particular. These constraints include lack of appropriate school environment in terms of physical infrastructure, furniture, lighting, ventilation, water supply etc.; lack of budgetary support; lack of transport services; lack of adequately trained teachers and institutions for their training; lack of proper documentation and systematic evaluation of the area and lack of coordination between the education and health departments.

The observations made by this committee largely will hold true even today but what we do not have is adequate research in this area, which we feel is indicative of the importance it receives in the policy and research circles. In the following section we present the findings of a few studies on the status and transaction of the curriculum in this subject. A survey of 44 middle schools in Delhi on the status of school health programme showed that health education in schools does not get sufficient time or attention and

most teachers are not equipped to deal with this subject.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Similarly yoga practice contributes to the overall development of the child and various studies have shown that it contributes to flexibility and muscular fitness and also corrects postural defects among school children (Gharote, Ganguly & Moorthy, 1976). In addition it plays an important role in improving cardio-vascular efficiency and helps to control and reduce excessive body fat while contributing to the overall physical and health related fitness (Ganguly, S.K., 1989; S.K., Bera, T. K. and Gharote, M.L 2003; Mishra, Tripathi & Bera, 2003). Apart from contributing to physical fitness, yoga also contributes to improving learning, memory and dealing with stress and anxieties in children (Kulkarni: 1997).

## YOGA AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION FOR FITNESS:

A study of awareness among teachers of primary and secondary levels in Anna District of Tamilnadu showed a very low level of awareness regarding health promotion measures and was unable to carry out these measures systematically. There was lower awareness among male teachers and those in rural as compared to urban areas (Dhanasekeran: 1990).

An evaluation of the school health programme in relation to teacher's knowledge showed that elementary school teachers have misconceptions about health and health education. According to the study, the teachers possessed inadequate knowledge regarding the subject of health education. Though the health authorities were being involved in the school health programme there was little co-ordination between the education, health and social welfare

departments. Health education and management of school health programme were not included in the pre-service or in-service education of teachers and hence the lack of integration of this subject areas with others (Potdar, R.S: 1989) Although the number of studies concerned with yoga and physical education are very few, the available studies throw some light on the status of this area.

As far as physical education is concerned the available studies show that this area does not get the importance that it should and this gets translated into a negative attitude on the part of the teachers and head masters of schools. An evaluation of the physical education curriculum at the lower primary stage in Mysore district showed that eighty percent of headmasters, sixty percent of general teachers and 90 percent of physical education teachers had a positive attitude towards physical education. A significant percentage of general teachers had a negative attitude towards physical education. As far as the curriculum and syllabus is concerned, the aims and objectives of this area was not clearly stated and the existing syllabus for this area did not contain minimum levels of learning and the activities prescribed under yogic exercises were found to be inappropriate. The infrastructure for physical education was found appropriate but fifty percent of the lower primary schools of Mysore city did not have physical education teachers.

The secondary status given to physical education is corroborated by a study on attitude of secondary school students towards physical education. This study showed that in government and private schools; across rural and urban areas and across gender there was a positive attitude towards physical education. This study also showed that students in government schools had better attitude towards physical education as compared to the private schools. Students in urban areas had a better attitude to physical education than those in rural areas. The study observed gender difference in the attitude towards physical education with boys having a more positive attitude than girls the experience of introducing yoga in school curriculum has been quite a mixed experience. There is a tendency for yoga to be reduced to mere physical exercise that defeats the very essence of this practice.

## CONCLUSION:

At present there is a shortage of trained yoga teachers that is related to the non-availability of adequate number of institutions that have the capacity and expertise for this purpose. If yoga is to be effectively integrated then the government would need to overcome the shortage of yoga teachers beginning with the senior secondary level and then consider classes from sixth to tenth. In the interim period teachers who are trained in physical education are also getting some training in yoga education.

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