



Development of Yoga: Changing Perspective from Ancient to Modern Age

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Abstract : Yoga is a gift from ancient Indian saints and sages to the world. Yoga evolved as a transcendental stage of spirituality that was practiced under Guru-Shisya Parampara with the goal of spiritual evolution of the soul as well as physical and mental harmony. However, over time, it appears that yoga's perspective is shifting from its traditional purposes to the demands of modern society. Apart from this, the method of yoga is taught and learned is changing from an ancient to a modern approach. Human beings are striving for endurance and survival in the present age of competition and people are subjected to increasing physical and psychological stress and strains. They have no control over them but can figure out how to deal with them, and Yoga is an excellent medicine for this because it lowers the risk of a variety of medical and psychological illnesses. Although the real purpose of yoga is spiritual evolution, practitioners in modern and affluent society it is to adapt it to their culture and requirements, limiting its application to physical and mental fitness. The present study is an attempt to review the ancient science of Yoga from its beginnings (Pre-Patanjali Period) to the twenty-first century (Post-Patanjali Period) in order to comprehend the sequential progress and changing perspectives of yoga in India and around the world.

Index Terms - Yoga, Changing Perspective, Spirituality, Meditation.

INTRODUCTION

Yoga is an ancient science and philosophy that has garnered worldwide prominence in recent years. As a spiritual disciple, the science of yoga focuses on achieving self-realization by developing harmony between the body and mind. However, in recent past decades, the traditional style of yoga has evolved and been adopted in a variety of ways by people. It is regarded as an antidote to stress, depression, and anxiety by people living in modern, urban, and industrial societies (Singleton, 2010). It has now evolved into a way of life for rich modern culture, corporate new agers, Senior citizens, beauty, and corporate culture. In Western societies, around 14.9 million Americans and half a million Britons are thought to engage in some version of this activity (Newcombe, 2005; Hoyez, 2007). For most of them, however, yoga is defined as the group practice of various yoga postures and breathing exercises (*Pranayam*) under the guidance of a yoga instructor. This yoga training is now widely available, from yoga centers to shopping malls where yoga entrepreneurs brand their own styles of practice. They have opened franchises, created logos, packaged their practice regimens under Sanskrit names, and promoted a lifestyle that incorporates yoga, physical fitness, and healing spas. Besides, yoga has also become a part of the academic topic of study in a number of educational institutions. It shows that the most sacred Hindu philosophy has spread beyond its home of India, where it has been a part of man's actions aimed at greater spiritual achievements for hundreds of years throughout the entire world and is practiced by people of all religious faiths (Phillips, 2009). The greatest cultural and philosophical traditions of India have soared in popularity around the world, morphing into a global cultural phenomenon. The Eastern practice has now made its way into the socio-cultural Western environment, including the commercial world, hospitals, corporations, and a number of academic institutions (Bloom, 2006).

Furthermore, the twenty-first century might be considered the beginning of yoga as a multibillion-dollar industry, with firms patenting postures, sequences, and styles (Singleton, 2010). Many American and European yoga practitioners, in fact, spend a significant percentage of their income on yoga classes, products, and retreats (Yogitha and Ebnezar, 2014). However, the majority of them are still unaware of the yogic philosophic foundation and its real essence. When we look at the history and origin of yoga, we can see that there is a gap between the ancient, "classical yoga tradition and yoga as we know it now in the modern age and practices around the world (Singleton, 2010). Yoga as a primarily spiritual practice, with a physical component, quickly came to be adopted by modern health clubs and fitness fanatics as an exercise technique that sells it as a way to decrease stress, control weight, enhance immunity and make the physical body disease-free. Despite the fact that spiritual Yoga has undergone numerous cultural changes as well as distractions along its thousands-year trek to the present age, its originality is still maintained by spiritual seekers, philosophers, and monks (Singleton, 2010). In order to understand the modification of yoga and the disconnection between then and now, this present study has attempted to delineate the historical background and its changing

perspective from the ancient to the modern period. The study is based on secondary data, and the information gathered has been divided into three historical periods: ancient, medieval, and modern.

ANCIENT YOGA

The origin of yoga is a matter of debate. Except for the fact that yoga originated in ancient India (Flood, 1996) and was initially practiced by Hindus, there is no consensus on its timing (Burley, 2000). It is also said that Yoga was first started by Lord Shiva (Sankaracharya, 1960). The Vedas provide the foundation of yoga. However, some historical discoveries such as archaeological findings of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa evidence yoga's existence prior to Vedic times. The people of the pre-historic ages worshipped a male deity who may be regarded as a prototype of Siva, according to historical evidence (Chandra, 2007). According to this textual evidence, the origin of the word 'Yoga' was first used in a Rig Vedic hymn. (युञ्जते मन उत युञ्जते धियो विप्रा विप्रस्य बृहतो विपश्चितः), a dawn devotion to the rising Sun-God Kon as 'Yuj,' which has been translated as 'yoke' or 'yogically govern' (Aurobindo, 1916; Mike, 2000). The Sanskrit term 'yuj,' which means 'union,' is a cognate of the English word 'yoke,' which refers to a bullock or war chariot that yokes itself, the team of horses, and the chariot itself with its many straps and harnesses (Flood, 1996). It represents how the illuminated link their minds and thoughts to the illuminating godhead, to the vast, to the luminous in consciousness, to the all-knowing one. As a result, yoga, as a whole, aims to bring the limited self and divine or ultimate being closer together (Alter, 2004). On this basis, yoga is described as any of a variety of Indian spiritual emancipation or self-transcendence ways that result in a transmutation of consciousness and release from egoist identification or worldly life (Whicher, 1998). The Vedas do not directly explain yoga, the word 'dhira' is referenced which is a Sanskrit word for self-realization. The Vedas describe a variety of sitting positions and meditation techniques aimed at achieving *Moksha* or liberation/emancipation (Dasgupta, 1975; Werner, 1977). It was also closely connected with the ritual lives of people at that time. As a result, yoga was regarded as a means of connecting with the invisible world or supreme reality and it revolved around a sacrifice – self-sacrifice. And the master of Vedic yoga was known as a 'seer' (Dasgupta, 1975).

The word 'yoga' was later found in Upanishad during the pre-classical period. This was the time when the Upanishads described Vedic yoga techniques along with three subjects – Truth (*Brahman*), the transcendental Self (Atman), and the connection between the two (Dasgupta, 1975). The first Hindu Upanishad, *Brihadaranyaka* Upanishad mentions *Pranayama* (consciously regulating breath) (Flood, 1996; Olivelle, 1998; Elide, 2009) and *Pratyahara* (Concentrating all of one's senses on Self) (Eliade, 2009). The aim of these yogic practices was to reach the world of Brahman (Truth). Another later first millennium BCE text, the *Shvetashvatara* Upanishad, describes a procedure in which the body is held upright, the breath is controlled, and the mind is meditatively focused, preferably inside a cave or a place that is simple, plain, quiet, or gently flowing water, with no noises or harsh winds (Singleton, 2010). Later, the word 'Yoga', was coined with a reference to its practices appearing in *Katha Upanishad*, a 3rd century BCE (Phillips, 2009). *Adhyatmayoga* or Yoga of Self-absorption, is the doctrine espoused in this book, defined yoga as the constant control of the senses, which leads to a sublime state when combined with the cessation of mental activity. As a result, yoga was regarded as a method of interiorization for achieving *Samadhi* (Muller, 1962; Flood, 1996).

यदा पञ्चावतिष्ठन्ते ज्ञानानि मनसा सह । बुद्धिश्च न विचेष्टते तमाहुः परमां गतिम् ॥ १० ॥
तां योगमिति मन्यन्ते स्थिरामिन्द्रियधारणाम् । अप्रमत्तस्तदा भवति योगो हि प्रभवाप्ययौ ॥ ११ ॥

— *Katha Upanishad*, 2.6.10-11

(Yoga is the stillness of the senses, the concentration of the mind, It is not thoughtless heedless sluggishness, Yoga is creation and dissolution).

In addition to Upanishada such as *Yoga Vasistha*, written in the first and second millennia CE, discusses Yoga ways to achieve Self –realization (White, 2011). The ancient fundamental *Sutras* of Hindu Philosophy such as the *Vaisheshika Sutra*, composed sometime between the 6th & 2nd century BCE, describe yoga as a state where the consciousness exists exclusively in the soul (Matilal, 1986), not in the senses. This withdrawal of the senses (*pratyahara*) leads the individual to a state of even-mindedness where there is an absence of *dukkha* (suffering) and *sukha* (happiness) and the soul moves the state of spiritual liberation. Similarly, the *Brahma Sutra* – the basic scripture of Hinduism, emphasizes that yoga is a means to gaining "subtlety of body" and other qualities (Phillips, 2009). The *Nyaya Sutras* – the *Nyaya School's* fundamental work is a discussion of yogic ethics, meditation, and *Samadhi*.

Following the Upanishads, two famous Epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* also provide guidance on the intricacies of Yoga practice. *Bhagwat Geeta*, states that Yoga is the control of the whirls of the mind. As a result, a Yogi is a devotee who has conquered his mind, body, and senses and acquires perfect serenity, and recognizes his own self as the Supreme Self. It describes three paths of yoga – Action (*Karma Yoga*), Devotion (*Bhakti Yoga*), and Wisdom (*Jnana Yoga*) – (Sharma, 2000; Debroy, 2005; Strauss, 2005). The aim of yoga, according to *Bhagwat Geeta* is to unite the individual atman with the Divine.

Since the third-century BCE (200 BCE-500 BCE), textual references to yoga have become more widespread in Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist literature. In the Mauryan and the Gupta eras different philosophical schools of Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism were taking form and a coherent philosophical system of yoga began to emerge (Dasgupta, 1975). Yoga is referred to in Jainism, as *Samadhi* and *Dhyana* in many ancient Jain Scriptures. For Jains, yoga is the central practice of spirituality with the goal of discovering oneself and bringing the soul to perfect liberation. Yoga is the movement of the mind and body towards the soul, according to Jainism. The great teacher *Rishabhadev*, who was the exponent of the tradition of Jainism, also emphasized efforts dedicated to the liberation of the spirit. It was the time when Yoga found its way into Buddhism too; Lord Buddha was the first Buddhist to study Yoga. The teaching of Buddhism which arose in India is similar to that of yoga: striving toward *nirvana* and renouncing worldly pleasure for the sake of ultimate reality. Indeed, there was some kind of meeting between yoga and early Buddhism, and one of the Buddhist schools is actually known as *Yogachara*. Indian Buddhism flourished throughout Asia, and some Yoga concepts made their way to Tibet, Mongolia, China, and finally Japan. Buddhist scriptures lay stress on meditation and

physical postures. For getting the steadiness of mind, the body should become steady at first, and for true practice of yoga, Buddha described the concept of *Ashtamarga* or Eightfold path of yoga (*Samyag-drastic, Samyag-Sankalpa, Samyag- Karmanta, Samyag-Ajiva, Samyag-Vyayama, Samyag-Smrti, and Samyag-Samadhi*) which can be well considered as of the origins of *Yoga sadhana*. Buddhists believe that meditation is an important aspect of the journey to enlightenment and Nirvana. People who were followers of Buddha covered a variety of meditation techniques that aimed at improving awareness, focus, calmness, and insight.

In Yoga sutra (YS), The fundamental text of Patanjali, Yoga sutra defined yoga as a set of techniques and divides the practice of Yoga into eight stages, known as *Ashtanga yoga* (eight-fold path of yoga). These eight-fold paths are Yama, Niyama (social morality), *Asanas* (physical positions), *Pranayama* (breathing techniques), *Pratyahara* (removal of the external sensory input), *Dharana* (single-pointed focus), *Dhyana* (uninterrupted meditation) and *Samadhi* (finally perfect union with the absolute) (Strauss, 2005). Patanjali emphasizes in Yoga sutra that the highest sim of existence, i.e. union of self with supreme Consciousness can be attained via regular and earnest yoga practice. Yoga, according to Patanjali, is the cessation of all changes in consciousness. **योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः** (*yogascitta-vrtti-nirodhaḥ*) - *Yoga Sutras* 1.2 (Yoga is the inhibition (*nirodhaḥ*) of the modifications (*vrtti*) of the mind (*citta*) (Taimini, 1961).

The above information reveals that classical yoga is a collection of scientific procedures, aimed at reuniting the soul with the spirit (Dass, 1999). According to Ian Whicher (1998), yoga refers to a variety of “Indian paths of spiritual emancipation or self-transcendence that result in a transmutation of consciousness and freedom from constraints of egoic/self-identification or worldly life.”

MEDIEVAL PERIOD

Various new styles of yoga evolved during the medieval period (500 to 1500 AD). *Tantras* emerged as a yoga genre in India in the fifth century (Samuel, 2008; Shingo, 2009). ‘*Tantra*’ is a contentious term; although it can be considered as a school whose practices first emerged in Buddhist and Hindu literature in mostly complete form in the 10th century (Samuel, 2008). According to Gordon (1996), *Tantra* was a significant theoretical and practical innovation. On the theoretical level, the *Tantras* promote a new version of the pre-existing yoga soteriology based on medieval scriptures and commentarial traditions. The practitioner’s ultimate goal is no longer escape from suffering existence, but rather self-deification: one becomes the deity, raising one’s consciousness to the level of god-consciousness (Rastelli, 2009; White, 2011). In reality, in the *Tantras*, the term yoga has a wide range of meanings. It can simply mean ‘practice’ or ‘discipline’ in a broad sense, encompassing all of the tools available to achieve one’s objective itself, such as ‘conjunction’, ‘union’, or identification with divine consciousness (Vasudeva, 2004).

In addition, Tantra is typically connected with a sexual type of yoga by some Westerners today. According to Tantric beliefs, yogis had sexual encounters with low-caste women who they believed were yoginis or Tantric goddesses. Having sex with these yogis could help them reach a higher state of consciousness. Gurus that engage in such behavior in their yoga courses today aren’t exactly known for their moral or spiritual prowess (Samuel, 2008). Over the period of time, some ideas of the *Tantra* school influenced the Hindu, Bon, Buddhist, and Jain traditions. In medieval Buddhist and Hindu countries in East and Southeast Asia, elements of Tantric yoga rituals were adopted by and influenced state functions (White, 2009; Samuel, 2008). The Buddhist text Hevajra Tantra and Caryagiti describe the hierarchies of seven chakras aligned along the spinal column, — ranging from the *muladhara* (Coccyx center) at the level of the anus to the *Sahara* in the cranial vault (White, 2003). In this kind of yoga, the elements of *Tantra* were embraced in the form of ceremonial offerings, worship, and mantras in order to reach a higher state of awareness, similar to Patanjali’s yoga techniques.

Tantra yoga practices gradually began to include *Asanas* and breathing exercises. Hatha yoga first appeared in In Buddhist scriptures about the 8th century and emerged from *Tantra*. It’s called ‘psychophysical yoga,’ and it is a combination of physical postures, breathing, and meditation that’s probably the most similar to what we think of as yoga today (Georg, 1996). Bhakti (Devotion) yoga began in South India in the sixth to ninth centuries as a spiritual path within Hinduism that centered on living through love and devotion to God. In the fifteenth century, Bengal and northern India accepted Bhakti yoga as a way to salvation (Flood, 1996; Madeleine, 1994). Bhakti is one of three paths to the highest spiritual attainments, according to the Bhagavad Gita, and it links an individual’s finite ‘Self’ with supreme consciousness (Fowler, 2012). There are two ways to realize the divine or Brahman’s essence in Bhakti yoga: *Saguna* (Imagine God with form, traits, and qualities) and *Nirguna* (imagine ultimate reality truth as formless) (Karen, 2014). The same Brahman is regarded as from two different perspectives in Geeta, one from *Saguna* (love) and the other from *Nirguna* (knowledge) (Fowler, 2012). Some medieval Hindu literature (Particularly devotional poems) written by Kabir, Nanak (Founder of Sikhism), Ravidas, Namdev, Vallabha Acharya (Hawley, 2015), Tulsidas (Kieckhefer and George (1990), Ramananda, Dadu Dayal (William, 1996) Eknath, Tukaram, Mirabai (Pandey, 1965) and Ramprasad Sen (Rachel, 2001), etc. emphasize that *Bhakti* yoga is the highest path of God-realization (Beck, 2011). From the 9th to 18th centuries, hatha yoga, the most popular form of yoga today, and its various variations flourished (Georg, 1996). The development of Hath Yoga was at its pinnacle in the 14th century; however, this form of yoga is different from the ancient concept of Raj yoga or Patanjali’s yoga techniques.

Hatha yoga combines posture and breathing techniques with components from Patanjali’s *Yoga Sutras* (Mike, 2000). Unlike Patanjali’s methodology, which focuses more on the mental aspect and the mind’s journey to greater spiritual achievement, Hatha yoga concentrates on physical purification through the practice of postures, Kriyas (internal cleansing methods) and Pranayama (breathing exercises (Mike, 2000). Hatha yoga is concerned with the ‘transmutation of the human body into a vessel’ better fitted for spiritual union with the Divine, according to the best known hatha yoga scriptures, the Shiva-Samhita (15th c. CE), Hathayogapradipika (15th – 16th c. CE), and Gheranda-Samhita (17th -18th c. CE) (Singleton, 2010). According to the hatha texts, the entire process, which consists of various body postures *pranayama*, and mudra, is aimed at the purifying and balancing of the

body's network of subtle energy channels (*nadis*) to achieve the ultimate result of *samadhi* (higher-level meditation), ultimately leading to *moksha* (liberation) which is different from the objective of practicing contemporary hatha yoga (ibid).

Since yoga is metaphysical science, it is stated that it cannot be explained or understood by intellectual faculties and can only be experienced as such. According to Joseph Alter (2004), the meaning of yoga can only be understood until "full insight is gained". But, comprehensible or not, yoga's elusiveness and ambiguity persist, resulting in numerous debates over its definition, classification, and understanding of the true purpose of practicing yoga, particularly in modern society.

MODERN YOGA

Yoga's modern period is considered from the late nineteenth century. In the late 19th century, during the colonial period, Kolkata emerged as India's most important intellectual hub. Many leaders of Indian reform and independence movements had come from this location. During this period of transition, the 1882 publication of Bankim Chandra Chatterji's powerful and controversial Bengali novel *Anandamath* played a vital role (Lipner, 2005). His writing drew parallels between the *Sannyasi* and *Fakir* Rebellion and the cause of Indian independence. Many reformers, mostly Bengali, ditched their Western garb in favor of Indian holy men's saffron robes. - Swami Vivekananda, the Indian founder of "modern yoga" (De Michelis, 2004) and Sri Aurobindo, who was not only imprisoned by the British for plotting a *sannyasi* revolt against them but also devoted the latter part of his life to yoga, founding his famous ashram in Pondicherry in 1926, were among them. At the same time, yoga caught the attention of Westerners, who were fascinated by Indian culture at the time. At the 1893 World Parliament of Religion in Chicago, Swami Vivekananda, a Hindu monk and follower of saint Ramakrishna brought the science of yoga to a Western audience and represented India's spiritual and cultural values. He classified yoga into four categories: Raja (moral, physical, and mental discipline), Bhakti (devotion), Jnana (knowledge), and Karma (selfless service). Raja yoga is the supreme contemplative path to self-realization, according to him, in which the individual self is realized as the Supreme Self, the absolute Brahman (Strauss, 2005). Following him, many great personalities such as Maharshi Ramana, Paramhansa Yogananda, Sw.

Sivananda, Sw. Kuvalayananda and Ramana Maharshi who played an important role in the spread of yoga in the modern world, stated that yoga is for Self-Enquiry (Singleton, 2010). Paramhansa Yogananda, the founder of the Self-Realization Fellowship in Los Angeles and author of the perennial best-selling 1946 book *Autobiography of a Yogi*, is renowned as the "Father of Yoga in the West" for his significant contribution to the dissemination of ancient yoga in the modern world. Another yogi, Yogendra Mastamani, arrived in the United States in 1919 and spent nearly thirty years teaching Hatha yoga to Americans. The establishment of Kaivalyadhama by Sw. Kuvalayananda (master of the scientific study of Yoga) has also made a significant contribution to the propagation of yoga among householders (Singleton, 2010). Sw. Shivananda, a well-known yoga master who worked as a doctor in Malaysia wrote more than 200 books on yoga and philosophy. He has made a significant impact on society through his effort and contribution to the field of modern yoga. He focuses on the modern scientific and medical benefits of yoga practice along with the ultimate goal of finding the truth (Alter, 2004).

Till the 1930s and 1940 hatha Yoga did not become a commonplace workout in the United States, but it peaked in the 1960s, when Hindu spirituality became more popular among young Americans. Hariharananda (the founder of the Kapila Matha) and Krishnamacharya (the guru of the three hatha yoga) were primarily responsible for popularising postural yoga throughout the world in the late 20th century. Krishnamacharya promoted the importance of Viniyoga Hatha Yoga, and later, in the beginning of the 1950s, his brother-in-law, B.K.S. Iyengar continued the tradition (Dasgupta, 1975; Dass, 1999). K. Pattabhi Jois, and T.K.V. Desikachar, his other two prominent followers, would offer their own modifications to his techniques, defining the postural yoga that swept Europe, the United States, and much of the rest of the world. The direct and indirect disciplines of these three pioneers make up the current frontline of yoga teachers. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi introduced Transcendental Meditation to the West in the mid-1960s. Srila Prabhupada arrived in the United States in 1965 to form the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKON) and spread a movement based on Bhakti Yoga (ibid). Though the Eastern practice of yoga has expanded around the world as a result of the teachings of great people, there are numerous variations and hence distinct viewpoints that may be seen in the discipline of yoga, especially in the current day. For example, in Western culture, yoga is synonymous with the practice of asanas (postures) and asana-centric yoga sessions are widely available in practically every Western metropolis, with the awareness that yoga promotes physical fitness, flexibility and (Singleton, 2010).

Although yoga benefits us in many ways, such as improving physical fitness, mental tranquility, and a sense of instant well-being (Anita, 2014), therapeutic intervention techniques limit the true essence of yoga ((spiritual evolution of the soul), as described by Indian ancient sages (Lewis, 2008; Molever, 2013). Traditional yoga, also known as meditative yoga, combines mental and physical activities with the ultimate goal of attaining supreme consciousness (De Michelis, 2005; Nagendra, 2006). Yoga is a spiritual practice, as the concept of unity between the body, mind, and spirit is adopted by those in search of a pleasant experience (Turner and Turner, 2010). Yoga is deeply rooted in spirituality in ancient Indian philosophy, stressing components such as self-discipline (*niyama*), detachments from the senses (*pratyahara*), and meditation (*dhyana*), and modern yoga is largely limited to the practice of asana (Turner and Turner, 2010). However, there is limited evidence suggesting that *asana* was ever a core component of any type of traditional, Indian yoga practice. Bodily asanas, which were once used by sages to maintain physical harmony, are today mostly shaped by a drive for bodybuilding. In the early twentieth century, the demand for bodybuilding also feuded with women's gymnastics movements in the United States and Europe (Singleton, 2010).

During the ancient Indian Civilization, it also maintains, contrary to Singleton's argument, that people in Western civilization have the potential to practice yoga with the primary goal of achieving Samadhi. In the mid-80s, they developed a fresh 'brand' of yoga called *Jivamukti* Yoga in New York City which seeks to unify the spiritual, psychological, and physical components of traditional yoga for Western practitioners (Gannon and Life, 2013). Similarly, Moliver et al. (2013) claim that yoga is not

performed for the purpose of healing specific illnesses in many parts of Western society, but rather to uplift spiritual and physical well-being.

This argument demonstrates that in today's modern and affluent society, yoga is ascribed to the fact that both spirituality and physical fitness may be interpreted and defined in a variety of ways, and whoever wants whatever style of yoga depends on the notion (Bray, 1999). This concept of fitness, health, and wellness as comparative social constructs says that yoga should be placed within a cultural and social context that allows practitioners to define what yoga means in their lives and what motivates them to practice (Lewis, 2008).

Apart from spiritual progress, it is commonly recognized that practicing yoga has a number of other advantages that are beneficial to one's overall health. As a result, today's yoga practitioners interpret the meaning of yoga in a variety of ways and each from their own unique perspective. Some people attend yoga courses to strengthen their muscles or to maintain their bodies and minds healthy and stress-free, while others practice yoga with the hopes of progressing more quickly toward enlightenment (Lewis, 2008). This emphasizes how flexible individual yoga experiences are, and how they differ from person to person depending on their goals.

A state of physical, mental, and social well-being, rather than the absence of disease or disability, is defined as "sound health (WHO, 1964). As a result, yoga's contribution to giving this integrated overall benefit to those who practice yoga in their daily lives is enormous. Its regular practice improves mental clarity and coolness, increases bodily awareness, reduces tension, soothes pain and depression, and improves focus (Verma, 2015).

According to the preceding discussion, yoga promotes physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being. Most people, on the other hand, focus solely on the physical, mental, and social benefits connected with modern life. The current state of affairs is extremely chaotic and stressful. Individuals must constantly struggle for their existence in this age of competition, hard work, and stress. People have to go through a lot to cope with the fast-changing world, and many of them are under a lot of physical and psychological stress as a result. Yoga is one of the best medicines for maintaining physical fitness and mental tranquility in this regard.

As a result, during the last few decades, the classic version, or Eastern movement of yoga, has become increasingly popular around the world, but in many forms (Hoyez, 2007; Newcomb, 2005). Yoga has gained worldwide appeal and is currently being given in various societies according to the culture and needs of individuals. Modern yoga and fitness facilities, shopping malls, hospitals, schools, resorts, and commercial institutions have adopted the ancient method of practicing yoga (Bloom, 2003). Furthermore, the arrival of yoga as a commercialized multimillion-dollar industry was realized at the end of the twentieth century, with firms patenting poses, sequences, and styles. Yoga postures and the physical fitness achieved through practice are used to promote a variety of products, ranging from yogurt to cell phones (Singleton, 2010). According to recent data, yoga practitioners in the United States spend up to 5.7 billion dollars each year on classes, goods, and retreats (Yogitha and Ebnezar, 2014). As a result, it is clear that modern methods of yoga dissemination have shifted from the Eastern practice of yoga into a legitimate socio-cultural modern setting.

The terms modernization and westernization are synonymous in developing countries like India (Srinivas, 1963). Although modernization entails a fundamental, deep-seated, and widespread shift in attitudes, the development of rational positivist mentality, and the application of new knowledge to ways of life, in the Indian context, this is directly linked to the acceptance of the Western way of life (Srinivas, 1963). In the case of yoga, it has been discovered that the eastern expression of Eastern or traditional practice appears to focus predominantly on the physical forms of the practice. Singleton (2010) supports this viewpoint, claiming that yoga is synonymous with the practice of asana (posture) in Western Society and that asana-centered yoga sessions are freely available in practically every city in the West as well as in a number of other nations, including India. Yoga appears to be performed as part of a physical fitness regime in the majority of British contexts, with the knowledge that asana promotes flexibility and strength.

Yoga has grown in popularity around the world in the twenty-first century. The number of practitioners in the United States increased from 4 million in 2001 to 20 million in 2011 (Anita, 2014). Since then, numerous scientific investigations have discovered that yoga has a slew of health benefits: high blood pressure, depression, chronic pain, and anxiety are all reduced by it. It also boosts heart health, muscle strength, and circulation. Yoga is now considered as another exercise class to attend at the gym, something fitness and, for some function as a therapy in the modern world of the twenty-first century. However, knowing something about yoga's deep spiritual roots – something that has survived thousands of years – will help to get something more from it.

CONCLUSION

To summarize, yoga has grown in popularity around the world and has become a global phenomenon after a long journey from ancient times to the twenty-first century. Yoga is clearly a blessing for today's modern man because of its multi-dimensional approach and scope in physical, psychological, social, and spiritual benefits. Despite modern practitioners and yoga researcher attempts to show East against West, spiritual versus physical dichotomies, the yoga tradition is inextricably a product of cultural fusion. The study reveals that yoga has evolved over time, taking on different shapes and views depending on the culture and needs of the society. The evolution of yoga practice along with its multi-dimensional approach and dissemination pattern indicates its shifting from spiritual-centric to needs-based. Although modern yoga centers and schools have attempted to counteract this cultural infusion by emphasizing faithfulness and textual tradition, it appears that the impacts of modernity and globalization make it difficult to persist in its originality and inviolability. Despite practitioners' attempts to retain and protect its fidelity, it continued to be molded by economic and social influences. In 2001, the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) was established in India 2001 as a means of preventing foreign entrepreneurs from adopting and patenting Indian traditions as their own intellectual properties.

Following the issuance of a US patent to Indian-American yoga celebrity Bikram Chaudhury in 2004 for a sequence of twenty-six *asanas*, the TKDL has shifted its attention to yoga to protect a wide variety of its theories and real-world practices.

Furthermore, it re-creates itself to satisfy the needs of different times and civilizations because of its multi-dimensional approach. Without a doubt, today's techno-globalized lifestyle is complex and fraught with stress, anxiety, and sadness. People in modern society are chasing what their lives require in order to survive. Individual's lifestyles, including their daily routines, food habits, and thinking patterns are changing, resulting in a variety of medical and psychological disorders. As a result, yoga is helpful in managing health issues that arise as a result of modern life. Although Yoga is comprehensive in nature providing physical, psychological, social, and spiritual advantages, most people in modern society are only concerned with the physical, mental, and social aspects. However, Shapiro (1992) addresses that while people in modern culture are often away from the real purpose of yoga, their intents can evolve along a continuum from self-regulation, to self-exploration, and finally to self-liberation.

Self-regulation is related to one's control over cognitive processes (for example stress management), self-exploration describes one's investigation and knowledge of the Self, and self-liberation to attaining a transcendental state in which one is free of the sensation of being a separate self. The notion is that as practitioners' practice becomes more regular and ingrained in their lives, they will shift their focus from stress management to a spiritual quest for enlightenment. Even while the old form of yoga has evolved into various current forms and practitioners adopt yoga practices in various ways depending on their culture and circumstances, it will always aid human beings in their spiritual evolution which is the ultimate goal.

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