

## Awareness and Understanding of Yoga and its Effect on Upper Primary School Students

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### Abstract

Health is a precious gift bestowed upon the mankind. To nurture and maintain good health is the responsibility of human being. As we know “health is wealth”, and to maintain and enrich our health, we need to do both physical and psychological exercise daily. The present study was conducted on the students of upper primary school of Delhi to know the level of awareness and understanding and various implication of yoga in their lives. The data was collected from a upper primary school situated in South-Delhi. Primary school with sample consists of 83 students, 46 female and 37 male. The data was collected through closed end questionnaire. The content of the questionnaire was validated through expert consensus. The awareness and understanding of class 7<sup>th</sup> students are better among upper primary level students. Physical readiness towards yoga of class 6<sup>th</sup> students is greater among upper primary level students as they rarely feel pain or dizziness after attending yoga. Psychologically, Class 6<sup>th</sup> students get maximum benefits among upper primary level students as they enjoy and feel energetic after attending yoga class. The understanding and awareness of both boys and girls of upper primary level is almost equal. At upper primary level physical readiness of both girls and boys are almost equal towards yoga. Both girls and boys of upper primary level equally enjoy and feel energetic after attending yoga class.

**KEYWORDS :** Yoga, Upper Primary School, Health, Physical and Psychological Exercise, Physical readiness, Awareness and Understanding.

### INTRODUCTION

Today we live in the information and technology age where most of our daily needs or activities are mechanised. For example, if we want to purchase any stuff, it will be available to our door step through online shopping. In the past, atleast these types of activities like shopping etc. are performed by almost every individual, irrespective of person perform daily exercise or not. Infact, today's general fear of every individual is of lifestyle diseases like hypertension, depression, stress, anxiety, diabetes, cholesterol related heart diseases, etc. Life style disease is an umbrella term which involves both physiological and psychological problems of human beings.

There are many forms of physical and mental exercises available to the people like walking, cycling, swimming, skipping rope, rowing, hiking, playing different types of games, for example, badminton, cricket, etc. However, yoga is the most comprehensive form of physical and mental exercise. The basis of Yoga is a search for happiness. However, we search happiness in the objects of senses. The happiness is right within us. Despite our own true nature which is blissful, people usually become far too distracted with their own mind, body and material object. Yoga seeks to provide people to cast off this ignorance and become aware of their divine self.

Yoga way of life is characterised by peace and tranquillity, harmony and health, love and happiness, precision and efficiency.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) on the eve of “International Yoga Day” observed on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2015 has launched textual material on yogic activities for students of Upper Primary and Secondary stages. This textual material is meant for the students of upper primary stage (classes 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>). It includes various yogic activities to be performed by students of this stage. These activities are an integral part of the syllabi of Health and physical Education brought out by NCERT.

### OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- (i) To know the basic awareness and understanding of yoga among sixth to eight class students.
- (ii) To know the physical and psychological conditions of learner after attending yoga class.

### DESIGN AND PLAN OF THE STUDY

The present study was exploratory in nature and was conducted on the upper primary school students in single phase through questionnaire using survey method.

### UNIVERSE OF THE STUDY

The universe of the study is upper primary level school students

### UNIT OF ANALYSIS

Unit of analysis in this study is upper primary level students of a School, situated in South-East Delhi. The age of the respondents varied from 11 to 14 years. There are 83 learners out of which 46 are girls and 37 are boys.

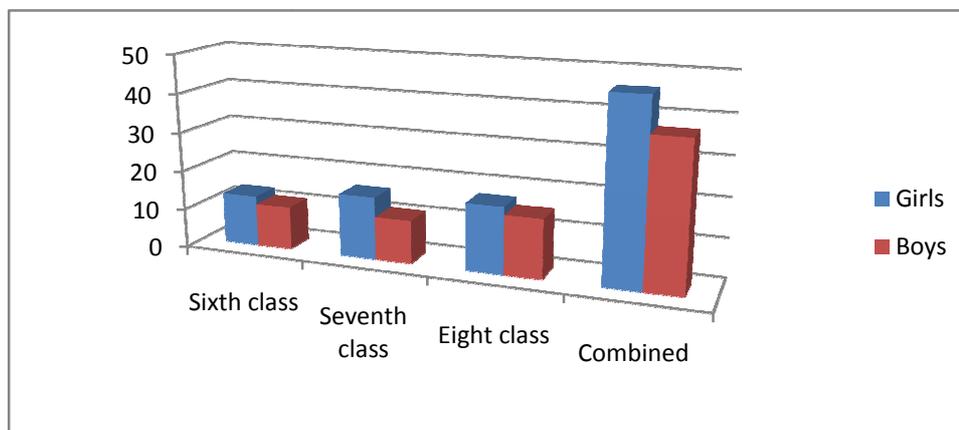
### SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

The sample for the study has been collected from the School, situated in South-Delhi. 24 students from class 6<sup>th</sup>, comprising 13 females and 11 males. A total of 27 students from class 7<sup>th</sup> having 16 female 11 male. 32 students have been chosen from class 8<sup>th</sup> consisting of 17 female and 15 male. A total of 83 students from upper primary level having 46 female and 37 male considered for the purpose of the study. The respective strength of each class is determined by the number of students present at the time of data collection. The details of sample composition is given in Table 1 and visual representation of sample composition is also given in Figure 1.

**Table:1 Sample Composition**

Row Labels	Female		Male		Total Count of Gender	Total Percentage
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage		
6 <sup>th</sup>	13	28.26%	11	29.73%	24	28.92%
7 <sup>th</sup>	16	34.78%	11	29.73%	27	32.53%
8 <sup>th</sup>	17	36.96%	15	40.54%	32	38.55%

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
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**Figure 1: Sample Composition**

### **TOOLS USED FOR THE STUDY**

A closed-ended questionnaire was constructed for data collection after due consultation of experts because no standard questionnaire was available.

### **PROCEDURE OF DATA GATHERING**

The questionnaire for the study consisting of 20 closed end questions, constructed through proper interaction with the supervisor and the yoga expert at the Jamia Middle School situated in South- East Delhi. The first twelve questions of the questionnaire tries to assess the basic awareness and understanding of yoga as well as theoretical background of students regarding yoga. Remaining eight questions targeted at knowing the physical, psychological as well as health related aspects of the subjects.

The distribution of questionnaire is done by the researcher through personal interaction with each class considered for the study, briefing them about the purpose and need of the study as well as their crucial role in the study. The questionnaire is then distributed to each students of respective class present at that time, and their responses collected at the end of the session.

### **DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

- (A) There is only one school having yoga teacher in and around Jamia Nagar and therefore a relatively small sample is considered for the present study.

### **THE MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

#### **(1) THE BASIC THEORETICAL UNDERSTANDING AND AWARENESS OF YOGA**

- **Class**

The study data showed that 7<sup>th</sup> class students have better awareness and understanding of yoga than 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> class students. The position of class 8<sup>th</sup> is lowest on this front.

On combining all the three standards, the students achieved/scored almost 50 percent which is quite a good outcome, considering yoga a new concept for school education in India and lack of infrastructure.

- **Gender**

**(A) Girl**

The data showed that the class 7<sup>th</sup> girls have better awareness and understanding than class 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. The level of awareness and understanding of yoga of class 6<sup>th</sup> girls are lowest. On combining all the three classes, the performance of girls are 48.55 percent which is almost equal to the overall performance. This signifies that girls are in good position with respect of awareness and understanding of yoga.

**(A) Boys**

The data showed that the 6<sup>th</sup> class boys have better awareness and understanding than class 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. The level of awareness and understanding of yoga of class 8<sup>th</sup> boys are lowest. On combining the performance of all three classes, boys scored 51.45 percent which is more than overall performance and also the performance of girls as a whole. This signifies boys are better on awareness and understanding front with respect to girls. The cause for the lower performance of girls on awareness and understanding of yoga may be various for example

- Lack of interest
- Hidden curriculum i.e. girls do not required physical exercise because they are weak as compared to male counterpart and they should only play indoor game like ludo etc.
- There may be preconception in the school environment that yoga is for boys.
- There may be the fear that yoga may cause rupture of hymen, which is believed as a symbol of virginity and for this parents prohibit girls in participating in yoga class.

Nevertheless, the performance by both girls and boys are good on awareness and understanding front. However, participation of students in yoga classes should be encouraged by school management. This can be accomplished by organizing special programmes at schools on yoga on different occasions like Yoga Day, Mothers Day or Children's Day etc.

**(2) PHYSICAL CONDITIONS AFTER ATTENDING YOGA CLASS**

- **Class**

The study showed that 68.75 percent students from class 6<sup>th</sup>, 66.66 percent from class 7<sup>th</sup> and 51.56 percent students do not feel pain or dizziness after attending yoga classes. For class 8<sup>th</sup>, the percentage is lowest. When we combine "occasional" component the result comes out 81.25 percent for class 6<sup>th</sup>, 87.04 percent for class 7<sup>th</sup> and 84.37 percent for class 8<sup>th</sup> which is second highest in percentage term. In the above analysis, the occasional feeling of pain and dizziness is playing significant role in assessing physical condition of students after attending yoga class. When researcher combines all the three standard of upper primary level, the result comes out 61.44 percent i.e. 61.44 percent students do not feel any kind of ailment related to pain or

dizziness and if he includes “occasional” component, the percentage outcome is almost 90. Here also “occasional” component of the response is significant and this signifies that students as a whole occasionally feel body pain or dizziness.

- **Gender**  
(A) **Girls**

The data showed that 7<sup>th</sup> class girls feel less pain and dizziness as compared to 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> class. On addition of “occasional” component the response of 6<sup>th</sup> class is 76.8 percent, 7<sup>th</sup> class is 87.5 and 8<sup>th</sup> class is 73.5 percent and as a whole 79.34 percent. The response of class 7<sup>th</sup> is better which and is above normal, comes after combination of three classes.

- (B) **Boys**

The data showed that 6<sup>th</sup> class boys feel less pain and dizziness as compared to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> class. On combining “occasional” component, the response of 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> class comes out 86.27 percent, 86.3 percent and 93.3 percent respectively. The response of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> classes are almost same and the response of 8<sup>th</sup> class is highest in favour of “do not feel pain daily or occasionally”. The combine response of 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> class taking together, 62.16 percent do not feel pain or dizziness and when researcher includes “occasional” component, the response becomes almost 90 percent. It is important to mention here that when one perform physical exercise, he/she experience pain and also in very rare occasion, dizziness. Nevertheless, we can not ignore the probable cause for this problem. The cause of occasional feeling of pain or dizziness may be various, few of them as mentioned below could be the main reasons

- (a) No proper breakfast on that day when respective student feels body pain or dizziness.
- (b) No proper warm-up before doing different asanas.
- (c) Teaching of new asanas or postures on that day.
- (d) Duration of yoga class get prolonged on that day.
- (e) Heavy workout through yoga on that day.

Whatever be the reasons, the yoga expert or teacher should also teach do’s or don’t of different asanas and pranayamas in particular and in general he should taught what and when to eat, the danger of empty stomach and making fun of a particular body posture i.e. asanas, this may cause severe problems if not done as expected.

### (3) PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITIONS AFTER ATTENDING YOGA CLASS

- **Class**

The data showed that 93.75 percent students from class 6<sup>th</sup>, 88.88 percent students from class 7<sup>th</sup> and 56.25 percent students from class 8<sup>th</sup> enjoy yoga class and feel energetic after attending yoga class. For class 8<sup>th</sup>, the response is lowest in the above mentioned choice. If researcher combines the “occasional” component, the response comes out 95.83 percent, 92.58 percent, 64.05 percent respectively for class 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. The responses of class 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> is nearly same. However, class 8<sup>th</sup> students response is 64.05 percent which is very low as we compared from the overall response regarding this dimension. This is the cause of concern for the researcher to find the probable reasons and will be discussed after

complete analysis of this dimension. The combined response off the three classes is 77.71 percent, students who enjoyed and feel energetic after attending yoga class and if researcher include “occasional” component the outcome touched 82.52 percent which is satisfactorily good.

- **Gender**

- (A) **Girls**

The data showed that 6<sup>th</sup> class girls enjoyed and feel energetic after attending yoga class as compared to class 7<sup>th</sup> and class 8<sup>th</sup>. The position of class girls are not good as their response is bare 52.9 percent which is far below the normal between girls of different standard comes under upper primary level and the normal is 76.08 percent. The response is also has significant difference when we compared it with overall response of upper primary level students including both boys and girls. The combined response of all the three class is 76.08 percent and 79.34 percent when researcher includes the “occasional” component.

44.11 percent girls of class 8<sup>th</sup>, do not enjoy and feel energetic after attending yoga period. This is the point of concern and the probable cause will be discuss at the end of this dimension.

- (A) **Boys**

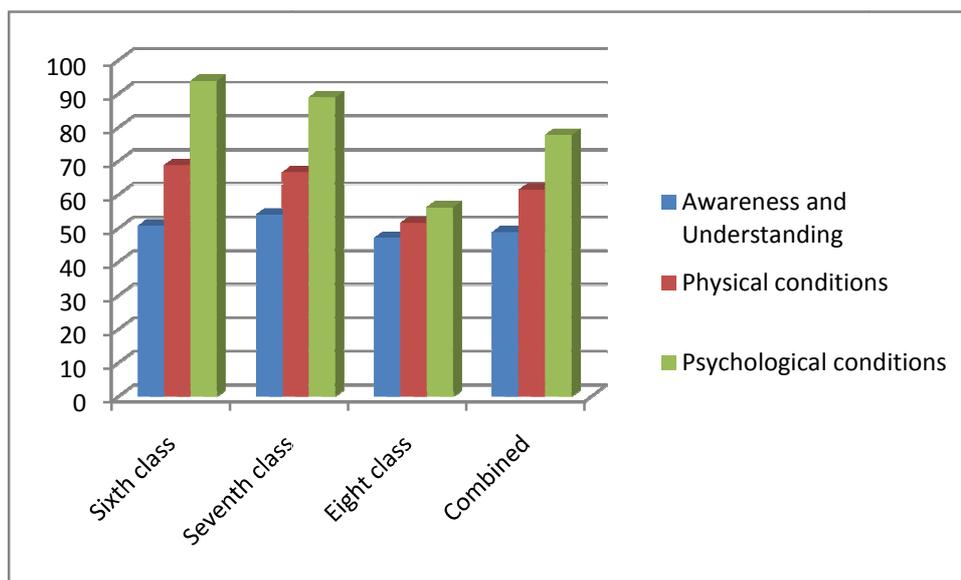
The data showed that class 6<sup>th</sup> and class 7<sup>th</sup>, almost equal on “enjoyment and energetic” component i.e. both class enjoy equally and feel energetic after attending yoga class as compared among upper primary level students. The position of class 8<sup>th</sup> is not so good. When researcher includes the “occasional” component, the percentage outcome of 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> are 95.4 percent, 95.4 percent and 73.3 percent respectively and the combined response of all the three class included together is 79.72 percent i.e. 79.72 percent boys enjoy and feel energetic after attending yoga class. When researcher includes occasional component, the response becomes 86.47 percent which is comparatively good.

26.6 percent of class 8<sup>th</sup> boys do not enjoy and nor do feel energetic after attending yoga class is a cause of concern. When researcher analyses, he finds that 44.11 percent girls of class 8<sup>th</sup> and 26.6 percent boys of class 8<sup>th</sup> do not enjoy and nor do they feel energetic after attending yoga class. There may be various reasons for this disinterest, some of the most probable reasons are mentioned below.

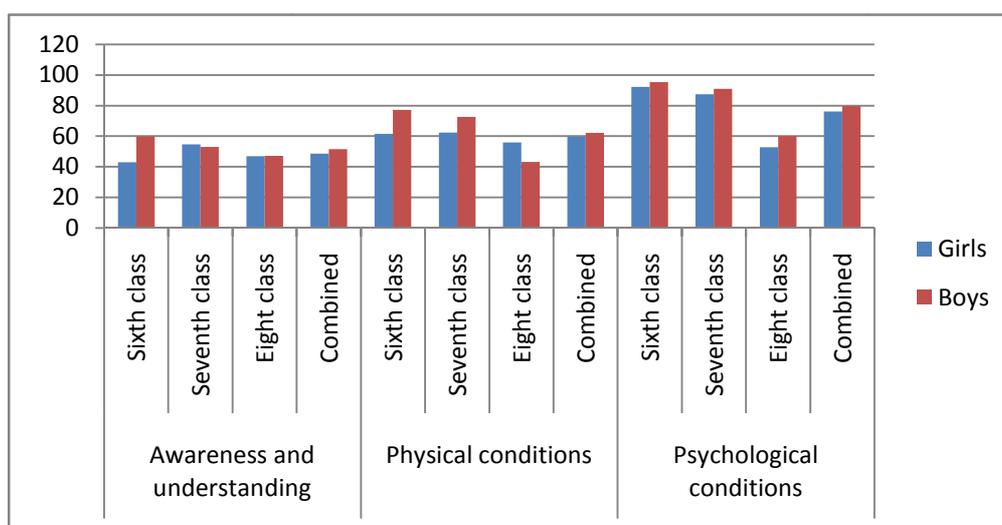
- They may like to play games like football etc., instead of yoga class in yoga period.
- They may be more oriented towards software based games or indoor game.
- There may be the effect of hidden curriculum is greater as compare to previous classes.
- The timing of yoga period may not be favourable to the students.
- Prohibition from parents especially to girls.

Whatever be the reasons of abhorrence or disinterest, one should not forget the health benefits of yoga. To resolve the above situation, the school management should properly counsel each and every students of class 8<sup>th</sup> regarding the benefit of health and how one can materialise his/her potential with the support of good health. In other words, the overall academic performance can be improved by the introduction of yoga as compulsory activity in the school curriculum.

The details of findings are represented graphically in Figure 2 and 3.



**Figure 2: Class wise representation of findings of Upper Primary School students on different parameters.**



**Figure 3: Gender wise representation of findings of Upper Primary School students on different parameter.**

### CONCLUSION

Yoga is a comprehensive exercise for all age group. June 21 has been declared as “International Yoga Day” and the best part is that yoga is now included as a subject for National Eligibility Test by University Grant Commission. Through these endeavour yoga will come into the mainstream of higher studies and both quality and quantity of research on yoga also increase. The endeavour is to promote yoga and it to become indispensable part of everyone’s life and this has to be start from grass-root level i.e. from school level. To some extent the researcher has tried to become the part of this endeavour. The students of upper primary school have sufficient awareness

and understanding of Yoga and they also like to practice it in school. They feel energetic and enjoy study after attending yoga class. The present research suggests that both girls and boys are almost equal in strength and reject the basis of gender discrimination in our schools. The research shows that both girls and boys are equally strong, be it on physical or psychological.

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