

Utility of Hathayoga and Rajyoga described in Yogatattvopnishad in modern life

Dr. Gayatri Gurvendra*; Dr. Amrit lal Gurvendra*

* Assistant Professor in Dept. of Yogic Science & Human Consciousness, Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya, Gayatrikunj, Shantikunj, Haridwar 249411.

* HOD & Associate Professor in Dept. of CAM, Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya, Gayatrikunj, Shantikunj, Haridwar 249411.

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Abstract:

The aim of the present investigation is to study the “Utility of Hathayoga and Rajyoga described in Yogatattvopnishad in modern life.” The Author of Yogatattvopnishad has mentioned important Yama, Moderate Diet (Mitahara), Niyama, Non-Violence (Ahimsa), mentions four asanas (Siddhasana, Padmasana, Bhadrasana, Simhasana), Pranayama (effect of pranayama on the Brain, Cardiovascular System, Respiratory System). Practice of pratyahara, accentuates mastery over sensory perceptions and chitta’s reaction to them, Dharana (meditative focusing) and ekagrata (focusing without meditation). As the term ‘meditation’ is so broad, and its therapeutic uses encompass many conditions including pain, mental health and somatic conditions, research on such diverse modalities and outcomes has been conducted in a systematic scientific manner.

Key words: Hathayoga, Rajayoga, Yogatattvopnishad, Modern Life.

Utility of Upanishads in Modern Life

Numerous studies have been undertaken to examine the significance of ancient books, such as the Upanishads, within contemporary society. The research was carried out within the context of a critical examination of European philosophy and the contemporary crisis of worldview. It involved an exploration of ancient Indian philosophy, specifically focusing on Puranic writings such as the Katha Upanishad, Garuda Purana, Srimad-Bhagavatam, Bhagavad Gita, Vairagya-Shatakam, and Briharadaranyaka Upanishadi. The study employed a heuristic synthesis and a comparative approach to

investigate the Eastern and Western approaches, ultimately leading to theoretical generalisations (Anikeeva, 2020).

Given the emergence of a novel philosophical paradigm, it becomes imperative to incorporate the comprehensive range of worldviews found inside the vast repository of global philosophical thinking. Consequently, the ancient Vedic spiritual wisdom assumes significance in terms of its potential use within this hallowed body of knowledge. The writers highlight a clear connection between the state of crisis in the contemporary worldview and the understanding of both one's own life and mortality.

The field of thanatology, which explores the concepts of death and life,

enables individuals to get an understanding of their own existence and the inevitability of mortality. The primary concept emphasised by the writers pertains to the significance of developing a proper worldview from an early stage in life. They argue that Vedic knowledge plays a crucial role in fostering the conscious selection of one's existence. According to the study conducted by Zholomanova et al. (2021),

In the current era of technological advancements and digitalization, the field of Management Education focuses primarily on enhancing students' skills and techno-economic competence. This is achieved through a strong emphasis on refining their rational thinking abilities and numeric aptitude. The pursuit of financial gain, professional success, recognition, influence, and status, both at the personal and institutional levels, often leads to a devaluation of profound inquiries and more elevated qualitative concerns such as Spirituality, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and Ethics.

The paper subsequently examines the exploration of significant principles of Classical Indian Wisdom, namely the Upanishads or Vedanta and the Bhagavad-Gita. This examination aims to enhance the field of Management education by incorporating insights on Humanistic Philosophy, Holistic Learning, Enlightened Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Ethics, as well as Inspirational Leadership. The ultimate goal is to contribute to the creation of improved and more compassionate organisations. According to Ghosh and Mukherjee (2020),

The incorporation of quality into technology has the potential to overcome the challenges arising from the conventional dichotomous approach. This is due to the fact that quality stimulates technology to integrate elements of nature and the

human essence, resulting in the creation of something that surpasses both. The objective of this study was to investigate the concept of quality and examine the implications of its lack in contemporary society, leading to a state of crisis. Zhao (2019) highlights the imperative of reconciling the inherent tension between human ideals and technology requirements in order to effectively pursue the ultimate objective of augmenting human well-being.

The attainment of global peace, morals, and harmony cannot be only accomplished by the means of science and technology. As a result of the severity of global challenges, the concept of globalisation, formerly seen as significant, today garners limited attention among the majority of educators. In the present era, the philosophical ideas and pedagogical approaches of Sri Aurobindo hold significant relevance for individuals seeking to cultivate a state of tranquilly and concordance in their lives.

The Relevance of Yogatattwopanishad Practises in Contemporary Society

The Yogatattwopanishad presents a range of practises from Hatha Yoga and Raja Yoga, with the intention of offering guidance to Yoga practitioners in ancient times. These practises were designed to be beneficial for anyone seeking spiritual development through Yoga. While the contemporary context differs significantly from ancient times, it is possible to apply the teachings of ancient rishis in the present era. As demonstrated before, there exists a pressing necessity to enhance the lifestyle and cognitive frameworks of individuals in today's society. The practises advocated by the ancient rishis have the potential to yield positive outcomes in enhancing the present circumstances.

In the current era, it is advisable to employ solely those practises that are

viable and practical, while disregarding those that are unattainable or impracticable in contemporary society.

The term "YAMA" refers to a concept that is commonly discussed in various academic disciplines

In the yogic scripture known as Yogatattwopanishad, the author has specifically highlighted a singular significant Yama, namely, Moderate Diet (Mitahara). The Yogic diet not only encompasses the potential benefits for bodily well-being but also contributes to the cultivation of mental equilibrium in individuals.

The phrase "Ahaarshudhau satvashudhau dhruvasmritih" can be interpreted as "Purity of diet leads to purity of mind, According to the Chandogya Upanishad (7/26/2), the phrase "smritilambhesarvagrathinaam vipramoksha" is mentioned.

The consumption of pure food is believed to have a direct impact on the essence of the human body. When the physical body attains a state of purity, it is thought to contribute to the stability of memory. This stability, in turn, can prevent the occurrence of mental conflicts in an individual.

The Shiva Samhita provides an accurate explanation of the Vipaka, or aftertaste, that various types of food have on different physiological levels following the process of digestion. Among the four categories of food, namely those that are chewed, sucked, licked, and drunk, the chyle fluid undergoes a conversion into three distinct components within the human body.

The highest quality portion of sustenance is allocated to nourish the linga sharira, also known as the subtle body, which serves as the locus of vital energy. The second or intermediate component serves to sustain the physical body, which is comprised of

seven dhatus (humours). The third or least superior component is expelled from the body in the form of faeces and urine. The initial two constituents of sustenance are located within the nadis, and are transported by these channels to provide nourishment to the entirety of the human body.

According to the Taittiriya, the process of creation extended to the terrestrial realm, resulting in the emergence of diverse forms of vegetation. These plants, referred to as herbs or aushadhis, subsequently became the dietary source for individuals, specifically the Purusha. In general, the Yogic diet predominantly consists of vegetarian (Sattwik) fare, characterised by its ease of digestion and ability to sustain high energy levels and overall well-being. The adoption of a vegetarian diet has been associated with several health benefits, such as a reduced susceptibility to heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity, and colon cancer. According to Muktibodhananda (1998), those who adhere to a vegetarian diet typically have reduced blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

The concept of "Niyama" refers to a set of ethical observances in the In the yogic text known as Yogatattwopanishad, the author highlights a singular significant Niyama, namely Non-Violence (Ahimsa).

The pursuit of peace has been an enduring aspiration of humanity throughout history, with its significance and breadth expanding significantly in the contemporary era. The term "Peace" lacks a universally accepted, singular definition. Various interpretations have been put up, including tranquilly or quietness, the absence of disturbance or conflict, the cessation of war, a condition of security or order, and the process of reconciliation following struggle (Costain & Costain, 2016).

The concept could be more comprehensively comprehended and valued through the absence of antonyms such as war, conflict, unrest, violence, terrorism, devastation, and similar terms. According to Basole (2006), the great religions of Humanity have consistently advocated for tranquilly and encouraged individuals to embrace world brotherhood.

Ahimsa, also known as non-violence, is a fundamental principle observed in various Aryan religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. Similarly, Semitic religions, including Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, share common beliefs in Monotheism, Prophets, and Life after death. These religions emphasise the significance of peace and reconciliation among both intra and interreligious groups, as they are believed to hold significant rewards in the afterlife. Religions typically encompass a set of moral principles that pertain to the conduct of individuals; nevertheless, individuals do not consistently adhere to the principles they profess. (Anjum, 2017)

The term "asanas" refers to the physical postures practised in yoga.

In Yogattatwopanishad, the author enumerates four specific asanas, namely Siddhasana, Padmasana, Bhhadrasana, and Simhhasana. Regular practise of asanas can have a positive impact on physical health, promoting the normal functioning of bodily tissues and organs. If an organ or tissue fails to function effectively, it can lead to substantial health detriments. Therefore, the rejuvenation of damaged body organs is necessary, and this can be achieved through the practise of yoga asanas.

The coordination of muscles, bones, neurons, glands, respiratory systems, and blood circulation allows for mutual support and interdependence among these tissue systems. The stimulation of digestive

activities results in the appropriate secretion of digestive fluids, including saliva and enzymes. The comprehensive regulation of the organ system ensures a condition of equilibrium, wherein the internal organs under its control exhibit neither excessive nor insufficient activity.

Yoga asanas encompass a distinct form of movement that distinguishes itself from other types of physical activity. These motions are characterised by a deliberate and unhurried pace, promoting a sense of fluidity. Moreover, they incorporate a profound focus on the respiratory system, facilitating deep and mindful breathing. Additionally, yoga asanas foster a state of profound relaxation, benefiting both the physical and spiritual aspects of the individual. Yoga asanas have the potential to enhance physiological functioning by engaging in the pranayama stage, wherein the body absorbs vital life force from nature, known as prana. This process results in an enhanced prana content within the body, which in turn revitalises all bodily systems. The practise of yoga asanas has been found to be highly beneficial in the revitalization and maintenance of the spinal column and its associated glands, facilitating their optimal functioning. Located within the central region of the vertebral column, the spinal cord consists of neural tissue responsible for the synthesis and secretion of two potent hormones, specifically adrenaline and noradrenaline. According to Isaacs (2018), both of these hormones have a tendency to elevate blood pressure.

The hormones secreted by the endocrine glands are transported via the bloodstream, enabling them to circulate throughout the entire body. The presence and distribution of these hormones inside the human body give rise to a multitude of physiological and psychological alterations, encompassing both physical and

cognitive domains. The practise of yoga asanas has the potential to mitigate the occurrence of calcification, a pathological process characterised by the hardening of blood vessels in their outer layers. Calcification has the potential to induce constriction inside the channels of blood vessels, resulting in elevated blood pressure and the subsequent development of hypertension. In addition, numerous patients have reported experiencing enhanced feelings of well-being, increased relaxation, satisfaction, and a notable reduction in anxiety following the practise of yoga-asanas. The subjects exhibited heightened levels of vigilance and physical engagement, potentially attributable to the release of opioids and modified adreno-cortical functioning. The practise of yoga asanas, which involve altering body positions, along with controlled breathing techniques in pranayama, has been found to have an impact on the psychological state of individuals. This practise helps to alleviate feelings of anxiety and stress, promoting a sense of well-being and hormonal equilibrium (Harinath et al., 2004; Udupa, Singh, Settiwar, 1975).

According to Satyananda (2002), the practise of yoga asanas has been found to have a positive impact on the functioning of the thyroid gland, promoting the appropriate production of its primary hormone. Additionally, yoga asanas have been observed to contribute to the overall well-being of both the physical and spiritual aspects of the body, facilitating the transformation of unhealthy conditions into a state of health.

The integration of yoga asanas, a movement discipline, and the recitation of prayer with deep gratitude might result in a harmonious execution of yoga asanas motions, hence yielding favourable outcomes for physical, physiological, and psychological well-being. Another advantage that can be

derived is the manifestation of self-regulation in individuals, encompassing both the physical and spiritual aspects. This capacity for self-control has the potential to shape human attitudes and behaviours in response to external stimuli, so promoting the development of a composed and patient mindset that facilitates the generation of intelligent thinking.

The engagement in yoga asanas has been found to have a positive influence on the enhancement of spiritual attributes among adolescents in South Africa. The provision of enlightening words by the yoga asanas instructor, particularly during the execution of relaxation or savasana movements, is a key aspect of the application of yoga asanas practise (Abioye, 2020).

Pranayama is a yogic practise that involves controlling and regulating one's breath.

The current lifestyle patterns have significantly increased the busyness of life, thereby limiting individuals' ability to pause and relax. Consequently, this phenomenon has contributed to the accelerated prevalence of various respiratory diseases.

Yoga originated in India thousands of years ago. In contemporary times, there has been a notable increase in individuals' understanding of health and natural cures through the practise of yoga and pranayama. This approach has been substantiated as an efficacious means of enhancing health and mitigating the occurrence and control of diseases (Ghiya, 2017).

The field of pranayama focuses on the regulation and enhancement of the vital force, leading to a condition of rhythmic respiration and a tranquil, attentive mental state. Pranayama is a practise that involves the regulation and manipulation of the vital energy inherent in the act of breathing. In addition to its specialised impact on respiratory functions, this substance

elicits other systemic psychophysical effects within the body. Incorporating yogic breathing into one's daily routine can be a beneficial activity, particularly for individuals who have limited time available for physical exercise (Levin & Swoap, 2019).

The Yogatattwopanishad discusses the practise of Alternate Nostril Breathing. Numerous studies have been undertaken in contemporary times to investigate the potential advantages of Alternate Nostril Breathing, also known as Nadi Shuddhi Pranayama, on different physiological systems. Several research studies are given below.

The Impact of Pranayama on Brain Function

The practise of Alternate Nostril Breathing has been found to have a positive impact on autonomic processes. There was an absence of alteration in parasympathetic reactivity, as evidenced by a lack of statistically significant change in the Valsalva ratio. A modification in sympathetic reactivity was noted as a consequence of alterations in the blood pressure response during the hand grip test.

In general, there is a tendency towards parasympathetic dominance following the practise of alternate nostril breathing. Based on the available evidence, it is advisable to incorporate frequent practise of alternate nostril breathing as a supplementary intervention, in conjunction with medical therapy, for hypertensive patients. However, it is important to emphasise the need for careful monitoring during the implementation of this practise (Dhanvijay, Harish Bagade, et al., 2015).

According to Amrutha and Alagesan (2021), the implementation of a six-week programme involving Alternate Nostril Breathing practises and Meditation practises significantly

enhanced many psychological variables among the student population.

The study observed a reduction in the relative power of brain waves in the theta band following the practise of alternate nostril yoga breathing (ANYB). Additionally, a decrease in beta amplitude was observed subsequent to the ANYB exercise. During the period of calm sitting, there was an observed increase in the relative power within the beta frequency range, accompanied by a decrease in the amplitude of the alpha frequency range. The findings indicate that the presence of ANYB was linked to heightened feelings of tranquilly, while engaging in silent sitting without explicit instructions was associated with increased levels of arousal. The findings suggest a potential application of ANYB in the context of stress and anxiety alleviation, as shown by Telles et al. (2017).

The Impact of Pranayama on the Cardiovascular System

According to a recent study by Jahan et al. (2021), the impact of alternate nostril breathing exercise on cardiorespiratory functions in healthy young adults was investigated. The findings of the study indicate that the breathing exercise led to improvements in cardiorespiratory functions. Consequently, the researchers suggest that the practise of alternate nostril breathing can be recommended as a means to enhance cardiorespiratory efficiency.

The practise of Pranayama has been found to have a positive impact on the autonomic nervous system. Specifically, it has been observed to decrease sympathetic activity and enhance parasympathetic activity. This results in an improvement in vagal tone, as evidenced by a considerable decrease in heart rate, systolic blood pressure, and Rate Pressure Product. In addition, these acts of focus serve to divert one's

attention from mundane concerns and alleviate tension. The state of mind characterised by a lack of stress induces a response of relaxation (Goel et al., 2016).

The Impact of Pranayama on the Respiratory System

A study was conducted to examine the impact of a 12-week intervention including Alternate Nostril Breathing on various cardiorespiratory parameters, including pulse rate, blood pressure, respiratory rate, and Peak Expiratory Flow Rate. The study focused on a group of healthy young volunteers.

The researchers discovered that the practise of Nadi shodhana pranayama resulted in a decrease in pulse rate, respiratory rate, and an increase in Peak Expiratory Flow Rate. A decrease in both systolic and diastolic blood pressure was observed in the entire study population, encompassing both male and female individuals. Consequently, this uncomplicated physical activity may be recommended to individuals with hypertension, in conjunction with appropriate supervision, in addition to their prescribed medicinal treatment.

The practise of alternate nostril breathing has been shown to result in an evident rise in peak expiratory flow rate (PEFR), hence contributing to enhanced cardiorespiratory efficiency. Consequently, it can be recommended as a beneficial intervention for individuals with early bronchitis and as a preventive measure for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) (Dhanvijay, Dhokne, et al., 2015).

Pratyahara is a concept derived from ancient Indian philosophy and is a fundamental aspect of

The practise of pratyahara emphasises the attainment of mastery over sensory experiences and the subsequent response of the chitta to these stimuli.

This is precisely why the practise of pratyahara can serve as a powerful technique for understanding the chitta, which may become entangled in a network of thoughts. Citta perpetually contends with the deeply entrenched apprehension of defeat, doubt, and uncertainty.

By integrating the principle of pratyahara, individuals can effectively mitigate the disruptive influences, diversions, and distortions that can impede their sense of objective reality. In contrast to the prevailing notion of mindfulness within clinical interventions, the present study elucidates the concept of attentive awareness as a method for transcending chitta through the practise of pratyahara (Rao et al., 2021).

In the contemporary period, there is a growing prevalence of individuals exhibiting traits such as short-temperedness, anxiety, criminal tendencies, impulsivity, and sensory overload due to their exposure to technology and the allure of a glossy world shown through various media channels. The proliferation of technology has provided numerous conveniences for human beings, resulting in a greater reliance on technology. Consequently, this heightened dependence has inadvertently led to an escalation in stress levels.

In order to mitigate the aforementioned issues, the most efficacious approach is to engage in the practise of Pratyahara, which involves the deliberate withdrawal or control of the senses. It is imperative to prioritise self-reflection and cultivate qualities such as patience, stability, empathy, and discernment in order to effectively discern between ethical and unethical actions. It is imperative to exercise restraint in our utilisation of resources, employing them just for their intended purpose, and refraining from developing dependencies on material possessions.

The achievement of this outcome is contingent upon the regulation of our senses, thus emphasising the significance of Pratyahara, which encompasses the control or withdrawal of the senses, namely indriya pratyahara, karma pratyahara, mano pratyahara, and prana pratyahara. It is imperative to coexist with technology inside society while ensuring minimal impact on our intrinsic being (Thakur et al., 2019). According to Mallison (2004), the practise of controlling sensory organs contributes to the development of inner mental power.

Dharana, often known as concentration, is a concept within the realm of yoga and meditation practises.

According to Telles and Raghavendra (2012), the practises of dharana, which involves meditative concentration, and ekagrata, which involves focusing without meditation, yield similar outcomes. However, it has been found that dharana leads to superior incidental learning and greater accuracy, as measured by the substitution task.

Dharana refers to the practise of directing and focusing the attention on a singular point, object, or specific location. The Mahabharata is a notable illustration of focused attention. During the process of imparting archery skills to the Pandavas, their esteemed mentor, Drona, inquired about the visual perception of a certain object by the aforementioned individuals. Arjuna asserted his limited visual perception during the archery exercise, stating that he alone perceived the eye of the avian target and no other surrounding elements. This exemplifies the concept of concentration.

When the cognitive faculties are focused on a certain focal point, the level of perceptual acuity significantly increases. When the eyes are closed, the item, whether it be a concept, an idea, or a word, becomes prominently present

within the individual's mind. The cognitive faculties remain fixed and undistracted from the focal topic of attention.

The presence of increased cerebral blood flow might lead to cerebral vibration and thus impair focus abilities. It is imperative to decrease the volume of blood flow and eliminate any instances of vibrations. In this context, the optic system is employed.

The visual system serves to attenuate the oscillations of the cerebral cortex. If an individual focuses their gaze on a fixed place while keeping their eyes open, refraining from blinking for a certain duration, and subsequently closing their eyes, they will enter a state of sleep within a span of five minutes. Similar to the undulations or disturbances observed on the surface of water within a container when the water is kept tranquil, the cessation of numerous disruptive factors can likewise halt the vibrations occurring within the brain. According to Muktibodhananda (1998), it is proposed that even the physiological functioning of the brain can be halted.

Dhyana, often known as meditation, is a practise that involves focusing one's attention and achieving a state of mental clarity and

Due to the broad nature of the term 'meditation' and its therapeutic applications across various ailments such as pain, mental health, and somatic problems, doing research on diverse modalities and outcomes has posed challenges in terms of systematic scientific investigation (Behan, 2020).

The research investigation focused on examining the impact of meditation practise on brain wave patterns. The meditation intervention yielded significant and diverse effects on EEG spectra, with increases of up to 50% and decreases of up to 24%. Additionally, there was a notable and statistically

significant rate of change from the pre-meditation to post-meditation state of the EEG co-spectra, with a 0.76 chance of transitioning to the end-meditation condition within the first minute.

Stapleton et al. (2020) reported a significant reduction of 5% in delta power, along with a substantial increase of 29% in theta power, a notable increase of 16% in alpha power, and a significant main effect of condition, resulting in a 17% increase in global beta power. Additionally, there was an observed 11% increase in gamma power from the pre-meditation to the end-meditation phase.

According to Lusnig et al. (2022), the practise of meditation has been associated with potential enhancements in attention, visual discrimination, attentional focus, and a reduction in mind-wandering.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be inferred that the provided information supports the notion that the user's

The Yogatattwopanishad discusses the concept of the eight limbs of yoga, namely Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi. The primary objective of the Upanishads is to facilitate the realisation of the soul's authentic nature and liberation from the cycle of reincarnation. The Upanishads place significant importance on the pursuit of Tatvgyan, emphasising that individuals who prioritise the well-being of others should consistently strive for its attainment. This can be achieved through practises such as contemplation, self-study, and sat sang, as well as by cultivating stability and peace of mind. By consistently contemplating the soul-Parmatma and maintaining contentment in all circumstances, as well as associating with individuals who possess knowledge of the soul, one can utilise these four methods to approach the path of salvation (Kumar, 2015)

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