



AMC Journal (Pp. 53-68)
(A Peer-Reviewed, Open Access Journal, Indexed in NepJOL)

Research Management Cell

Adarsha Multiple Campus, Gajuri, Dhading

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/amcj.v5i1.75961>

ISSN: 2717-4808 (Print) 2738-9987 (Online)

Emerging Trends and Geographical Influences on Yoga: A Study of Yogic Practices

Suman Kumar Shrestha^{*}, Sapana Adhikari^{},
Jant Raj Karky^{***} & Saroj Kumar Timsina^{****}**

Abstract

This study explores the complex interplay between geography and yoga, highlighting how geographical factors such as location, climate, and time of day influence yogic practices, and discusses the various ways in which these elements of place, climate, and time interlink with and impact the practice of yoga. The idea of yoga evolved from the very roots of Indus Saraswati Valley Civilization in order to integrate body, mind, and spirit into the environment to ensure well-being. The Sanskrit word "Yuj" means "to unite" and shows yoga's goal of balancing mind and body. Employing qualitative descriptive methods, including interviews, in Kerabari Municipality, Nepal, the research highlights the influence of geographical contexts on the practice and benefits of yoga. The concept of Yoga-Geography underscores yoga's adaptability across time and space, enhancing physical fitness, mental clarity, emotional stability, and educational harmony. The reviews of the history of yoga throughout five key periods: the Vedic period, which focused on spirituality around 3000–4000 BCE; the Pre-Classical period, which spoke of philosophical ideas in the Upanishads from 2000–1000 BCE; the Classical era, when Patanjali organized yoga into a system from 184–148 BCE; the Post-Classical period,

^{*} Mr. Shrestha is a lecturer at Tribhuvan University, Sanathimi Campus Sanathimi, Bhaktapur. Email: shresthasuman1971@gmail.com.

^{**} Miss Adhikari is a lecturer at Tribhuvan University, Mahendra Ratna Campus, Tahachal. Email: adhikari.sapana1234@gmail.com.

^{***} Mr. Karky is an Associate Professor and Assistant Dean, Faculty of Education, Dean Office Balkhu, TU. Email: jantrajkarki90@hma.com.

^{****} Mr. Timsina is a lecturer at Tribhuvan University, Bhaktapur Multiple Campus, Bhaktapur. Email: timsinasaroj8@gmail.com.

which introduced practices like Tantra and Hatha Yoga from 800–1700 AD; and the Modern era, which saw yoga spread throughout the world from 1700 AD to the present. A blend of ancient tradition and the present world, yoga continues to foster personal and collective growth, environmental awareness, and well-being in general. The practice of yoga is influenced by the environment, with climates shaping whether people practice more active or relaxing postures, and time affecting whether sessions focus on energy or relaxation. Nepal's spiritual traditions draw people looking for a traditional yoga experience. The research highlights how the climate influences different yoga asanas and how time of day affects the focus of yoga sessions. It also contrasts global yoga trends with Nepal's spiritual heritage, showing how yoga practices are interconnected with both cultural and environmental factors.

Keywords: Environment, Geography, Harmony, Well-being, and Yoga

Introduction

Yoga, originating from the Indus Saraswati Valley civilization, has grown through the ages into a universally accepted method of attainment for physical, mental, and spiritual perfection. The word 'Yoga', is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Yuj' meaning 'to unite,' implies communion of the individual consciousness with the universal consciousness (Bhavanani, 2016). Beyond its spiritual essence, yoga is a practical discipline that harmonizes the body, mind, and spirit, promoting balance and health (Lehto et al., 2006). It is a holistic way of life that leads to complete well-being and aligns the individual with nature (Taneja, 2014). As modern science increasingly recognizes the interconnectedness of all things, yoga offers a path toward self-realization and freedom, often referred to as *moksha* or *nirvana*. While yoga is widely known for its physical benefits, including improving flexibility and promoting overall health, its relation to the environment is very crucial for its effectiveness. Traditionally, yoga is practiced in serene, peaceful environments that aid in enhancing the concentration and focus of the person.

The geographical space—encompassing factors like location, climate, and natural surroundings—along with the specific time of practice, such as early morning or evening, significantly influence the outcomes of yoga (Feuerstein, 1998; Sivananda, 2004). These geographical and temporal aspects, collectively referred to as Yoga-Geography, shape the mind-body connection and enhance the practitioner's experience, making the environment an integral part of the practice. Geography, as the study of the relationship between humans and their environment, shares common themes with yoga, which also emphasizes aligning the human body with the natural world (Feuerstein, 1998). By

exploring the geographical influences on yoga, we can understand how the physical surroundings—whether in nature or urban spaces—affect the practice. Furthermore, the focus of yoga on prana, or life energy, would also support that energy flow across the body is intrinsically interrelated with the environment (Caspersen, Powell, & Christenson, 1985). This geography-yoga connection demonstrates how space-time impacts the capabilities of practitioners to connect with their inner selves, thus finding a balance between physical, mental, and spiritual health.

This article, therefore, serves to fill this gap in the literature by establishing how variant places and times of practice can influence the benefits of yoga. We have gone through how climate, landscape, and time of day are only a few geographical elements that outline the results of yoga in their contribution to the greater concept of *prana*. Understanding this interplay between geography and yoga can help optimize the practice for better physical fitness, mental health, and spiritual growth. By incorporating these insights, yoga can become an integrated and universal mind-body-environment practice in modern culture, fostering deeper connection and harmony with the world around us (Khalsa, 2013).

Objectives

The objectives of the research article are given below:

- To analyze the historical evolution of yoga across different time periods and its adaptation in modern contexts
- To examine how geographical factors such as location, climate, and time influence yogic practices.
- To explore the role of Yoga-Geography in enhancing physical, mental, and emotional well being

Methods

This study explores the relationship between yoga and geography, emphasizing how yoga impacts social structures, cultural values, and individual well-being within specific geographical contexts. A qualitative research approach with a descriptive research design was employed to examine how local geographical factors shape yogic practices while documenting the perspectives and experiences of participants. The research was conducted in Kerabari Municipality, Morang District, Nepal, chosen for its diverse geographical features, cultural importance, and increasing popularity of yoga practices. The study involved yoga teachers, students, parents, and school administrators, who were purposively selected to capture a wide range of insights into the interplay between geography and yoga.

Data collection involved both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources included semi-structured interviews with yoga teachers, students, parents, and school administrators to gather in-depth insights, focus group discussions with students and parents to explore collective perspectives, and observations of yoga sessions in schools to understand environmental influences on practices. Secondary sources comprised of literature reviews on yoga and geography, as well as analyses of classical Sanskrit yogic philosophies, such as that of Patanjali, in order to create a theoretical platform. Thematic analysis was used, noting the repeated patterns and themes, with triangulation of primary and secondary data to enhance the reliability and validity of findings. Although the study provides several factors regarding the intersection of yoga and geography, it also accepts the exploratory nature of this research and the limitations in conducting an in-depth analysis.

Result and Discussion

Brief History of Yoga Based on Geographical Phenomenon

The practice of Yoga is assumed to have ongoing with the very dawn of civilization. The science of yoga has its origin thousands of years ago, even before the first religions or belief systems were born. According to yogic lore, Shiva is considered the first yogi or Adiyogi, and is also considered the first Guru or Adi Guru. Yogasana is taught as a measure for health, discipline, and emotional balance by teachers and parents. Similarly, yoga teachers emphasize its benefits for mental clarity, physical fitness, and social harmony, which align with public health and education. Integrating yoga into social studies helps students explore its impact on individual and societal well-being, encourages positive social behavior, and supports the development of harmonious communities. To understand yoga's role in society, it is important to explore its historical roots. The history of yoga is divided into five broad categories:

Vedic Yoga (ca. 3000 – 4000 BCE): Yoga originated in the geographical and cultural area of ancient India. The oldest, Vedic Yoga, has its historical roots in the Rig Veda, one of the oldest compositions in the world, composed in the Indo-Gangetic Plain (Flood, 1996). With its salient natural beauty and productive environs, this region sets the ideal scene for spiritual and intellectual interests, which were to lay the very foundation for developing early yogic practices. As Sri Yukteswar claims, Vedic teachings date back as far as the Satya Yuga, more than ten thousand years ago, and thus outline the timeless connection of yoga to its geographical roots too (Yukteswar, 1949). The Bhagavad-Gîtâ, a famous yogic scripture written around 500 B.C.E., represents the philosophical maturity developed by the varied landscapes of the Indian subcontinent (Eliade, 1975). These

ancient texts not only signify the cultural heritage of their time but also reveal how geography shaped and preserved the contemplative traditions that underpin yoga. By exploring such historical ties, the interplay between geography and yoga illuminates the profound ways physical and cultural landscapes have influenced the evolution of yogic practices.

Pre-classical (2000–1000 BCE): The Pre-Classical period of yoga, marked by the writing of the Upanishads, represents a significant transition in yogic practices highly influenced by the geographical and cultural features that characterized ancient India. This period extended the teachings of the Vedas, particularly within the context of the Indo-Gangetic Plain, where intellectual and spiritual activities flourished (Flood, 1996). The Upanishads, over 200, represent discourses on the ultimate reality and the transcendental self, and the relationship between the two. These teachings reflect the geographical milieu that supported introspection and integration of ritual practices into self-knowledge, action (karma yoga), and wisdom (*jnana yoga*) (Eliade, 1975). The interplay of geography and yoga during the Pre-Classical period brings out how natural and cultural settings shaped the internalization of rituals. By turning the Vedic notion of external sacrifice into an inner sacrifice of ego, the Upanishads show how yogic practices adapted to the changing spiritual needs of society. This period underlines those geographical and philosophical forces that shaped the course of yoga and, therefore, is a profound subject when it deals with the relation between geography and yogic traditions.

Classical (184 BC to 148 BC): The Classical period of yoga, epitomized by the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali, represents a pivotal moment in the systematization of yoga practices. Emerging in ancient India, likely in regions influenced by both northern and southern cultural traditions, the *Yoga Sutras* codify the eight-limbed (*Ashtanga*) path, providing a structured approach to spiritual and physical discipline (Eliade, 1975). It was the geographical surroundings of the Indian subcontinent that provided diverse environments for introspection and meditation that helped shape such practices. Within this framework, asana, the third limb of Patanjali's system, reflects the geographical and cultural emphasis on the integration of physical postures with mental focus. The geographical landscapes of ancient India, particularly its serene natural environments, offered practitioners an ideal setting for mastering these postures and progressing through the eight-fold path (Feuerstein, 1998). This period underlines the interaction between geography and the evolution of yogic philosophy, how the natural and cultural landscapes of ancient India influenced the development and formalization of practices that continue to shape modern yoga traditions.

Post-Classical Yoga (800 AD to 1700 AD): The Post-Classical period (800 CE to 1700 CE) represents a transformative era in yoga's evolution, where geography and

culture played vital roles in shaping its practices. Following Patanjali's foundational contributions, yoga masters in this period emphasized practices aimed at rejuvenating the body and prolonging life, reflecting the influence of India's diverse natural landscapes and spiritual philosophies (Feuerstein, 1998). These practices evolved into Tantra Yoga, which integrated techniques for cleansing the body and mind, exploring the intricate connections between the physical and spiritual realms. This era also saw the emergence of Hatha Yoga (a branch of Yoga) which emphasizes physical postures and breathing techniques. Its development was influenced by the geographic spread of yogic traditions across India, fostering diverse interpretations and practices suited to various communities and environments (White, 2012). The body-centered focus of Hatha Yoga, deeply rooted in the Indian subcontinent's spiritual and cultural ethos, forms the basis of what is commonly associated with yoga in the West today.

Geography not only provided the environmental backdrop for these practices but also facilitated the cultural exchanges that led to the synthesis of Tantra and Hatha Yoga. The physical-spiritual integration characteristic of Post-Classical Yoga highlights the profound interplay between geographical influences and the evolution of yogic traditions, offering insights into how landscapes and culture shape spiritual practices.

Modern period (1700 AD onward): Modern Yoga has spread quite significantly throughout the globe, mainly through the efforts of an Indian master of yoga in the West during the late 1800s and early 1900s. A significant development within this expansion was when Swami Vivekananda gave an address at the 1893 Parliament of Religions in Chicago, where he explained yoga and its universal philosophy to the world. This created an international interest in yogic practices (Vivekananda, 1999). This moment initiates the global spread of yoga, underpinning the impact of geographical mobility on facilitating the exchange of culture and making yoga a global activity. As yoga moved from Indian into global context, the foundational principles of Hatha Yoga - in texts such as the Shadangayoga of Gorakshashatakam, the Chaturanga-yoga of Hathayogapradipika and the Saptanga-yoga of Gheranda Samhita - became central to the global philosophy of yoga itself (Feuerstein, 1998). These foundational texts, deeply rooted in the rich cultural and spiritual heritage of India, stand for the development of body and soul through physical disciplines, arising from the multifaceted nature of India's landscape and intellectual traditions. The geographical and cultural contexts in which these practices evolved in India played a significant role in their global acceptance and adaptation. In the areas surrounding India, such as Nepal, yoga continued to grow and was influenced by the geographic and cultural proximity to the Indian subcontinent. Nepal, due to its location in the Himalayas and for its spiritual reasons, has always been a focal point of yogic and meditative traditions.

The emergence of Vedanta, Bhakti Yoga, Nath Yoga, and Hatha Yoga during this time had a significant impact on the spiritual landscape of Nepal. Nepalese practitioners embraced and adapted practices such as Shadangayoga of Gorakshashatakam, Chaturanga-yoga of Hathayogapradipika, and Saptanga-yoga of Gheranda Samhita, integrating them into the country's yogic traditions due to its shared spiritual heritage and geographical proximity to India (Feuerstein, 1998). Furthermore, that, the geographical identity of Nepal, along with its serene Himalayan landscapes and sacred temples, was highly favorable for the development of yoga. Commonly referred to as the "abode of gods," the Himalayas have carved the meditative and spiritual practices of Nepalese yogis. However, in recent decades, with the resurrection of yoga globally, Nepal started to be regarded as one of the destinations that offer retreat and teacher training related to yoga practices, continuing the cultural-geographical interrelation between the country and this broader yoga world. This does show how even now, geography still keeps influencing and encouraging the development and growth of yoga both locally and worldwide. According to Swami Satyananda Saraswati, Vedas are thought to be mankind's oldest identified texts. In one of his articles, he estimates they could be more than 45,000 years old (Saraswati, 2016). Furthermore, Swami Satyananda Saraswati stated that geographical references in many passages of the Vedas which differ totally with the geography existing today.

The great astronomers have also studied some of the passages in the Vedas and found references to astrological unifications which occurred as far back as one hundred thousand years ago. It is expected that the Vedic hymns were discovered over different locations and time periods during the history of yoga. Many of these hymns seem to have come down from the Arctic zone in the North Pole. Now, of course, this region is filled from ice and snow, but once upon a time an advanced civilization of unlimited culture and learning existed there. This would hint at the fact that the Vedic accounts of geography are totally different from what exists today, therefore carrying with themselves the knowledge of landscapes and climate of times past. Ancient astronomers found in the Vedas references to astrological events dating as far back as 100,000 years, showing an advanced knowledge in astronomy and celestial phenomena. The Vedic hymns are thus said to be discovered at different places and eras, which show a rich and varied cultural history linked with the development of yoga and the wide geographical and temporal expanse of the Vedic traditions. Additionally, some hymns are thought to have originated in the Arctic region, which was once home to an advanced civilization of immense culture and learning, suggesting that this now icy region was once central to cultural evolution.

Yoga

Yoga evolved during a significant religious and philosophical period, alongside major Indian spiritual traditions like Buddhism, Jainism, and the Shramana movement. During this period, the ideas of *karma* (activity) and *bhakti* (devotion), which were investigated as routes to liberation (*moksha*), were further developed by intellectual writings like the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. Spiritual ideas played a crucial role in shaping the practice of yoga and broader social and cultural systems. In this context, one of the students shared,

Yoga promotes a state of calmness, centeredness, and balance within the body.

This enhances stress management and decision-making abilities, contributing to socialization. This method improves study concentration, encourages physical activity, and instills patience and mindfulness. Yoga provides a peaceful escape from daily stress and fosters a serene environment for self-reflection. In addition, learning about the cultural and historical background of yoga is beneficial as it enhances personal and social well-being.

In the same way a teacher stated,

Yoga is gaining popularity as it offers protection against various diseases commonly associated with physical labor. Students are taught to utilize such work as a valuable tool for enhancing discipline and emotional well-being. Furthermore, it fosters a positive and serene learning environment, reducing stress and increasing student engagement. Yoga has been found to foster good behavior and teamwork among students by promoting mindfulness and empathy. It has also been established that yoga enhances good behavior and teamwork in students by increasing their mindfulness and empathy. Yoga is a kind of activity that balances physical health with mental clarity. Yoga is an activity for all because modifications can always be made to fit any individual's needs, which in turn allows for self-care and cultural appreciation.

In the same way, one of the parents expressed,

I now wake up at 4 am and practice yoga as instructed by Ramdev. The process helps control my sugar and blood pressure, resulting in a sense of happiness. The use of this tool aids in maintaining calmness, enhancing focus, and effectively managing stress. Our children are enhancing their physical health, emotional balance, and academic performance through yoga practice.

In the same way a Yoga teacher said,

Yoga is a potent method for enhancing mental concentration and physical fitness, with significant connections to social studies. It promotes body and mind balance, thereby enhancing personal well-being. Social studies can explore the influence of physical health and mental clarity on individual and societal functioning. It enhances students' alertness, focus, and relaxation, enhancing their personal lives and enhancing engagement in educational and social settings. It enhances physical flexibility, strength, and overall health, which is closely related to social studies themes like public health and well-being. It promotes emotional well-being, teaching virtues like patience, self-discipline, and resilience, fostering personal growth and positively impacting social interactions and community involvement. Additionally, its role in fostering a calm and positive environment aligns with social studies concepts of community, peace, and social harmony, making it a crucial tool for fostering a helpful society.

It reveals that the Yoga provides comprehensive benefits across mental, physical, educational, and social aspects. It enhances mental calmness, emotional balance, and stress management while improving physical health through flexibility, strength, and disease prevention. In education, yoga boosts focus, reduces stress, and fosters a positive environment. Culturally, it cultivates virtues like patience and resilience, enriching both personal and social well-being.

The Interconnection of Yoga and Geography: Exploring the Geography of *Prana* and the Role of Outer Environment in Yoga Practice

The connection between Yoga and Geography highlights how geographical factors influence both the body and mind, especially in educational settings. The concept of Yoga-Geography refers to the relationship between yoga practices and the specific time and space in which they are performed. The environment plays a key role in yoga's effectiveness, impacting concentration, self-regulation, and awareness. Practicing yoga in a suitable geographical space can enhance physical fitness, cognitive abilities, and foster a positive classroom climate (Feuerstein, 1998).

Yoga and Geography share the elements of time and space. Geography studies the relationship between these two aspects, while yoga is also practiced within specific spaces and times. There are two important aspects of Yoga-Geography to consider:

Yoga in a Particular Environment: Yoga is most effective when practiced in a peaceful environment that promotes focus and relaxation. Early morning or evening yoga,

for example, creates a serene setting that enhances mental concentration and spiritual alignment (Feuerstein, 1998). These times align with traditional teachings that emphasize the importance of time and space for spiritual growth.

Yoga and Aging: The body changes with age, and so should the practice of yoga. At each stage of life, different practices are recommended to help the body transition smoothly through its constantly changing needs (Sivananda, 2004). The best times for yoga practice—early morning and evening—show how time and space influence yoga. Morning practice, following basic cleansing routines, helps rejuvenate both the body and mind for the day. Evening practice, at sunset, aligns with the body's natural rhythm, promoting relaxation and mindfulness.

Yoga-Geography can be defined as the geography of space and time, where yoga aligns the body with its environment to achieve liberation, or *moksha*. This relationship illustrates how geography and timing contribute to balance in yoga practice.

While yoga is often seen as a health and fitness system, its deeper purpose is to harmonize the individual with the universe. Yoga aligns personal geometry with the cosmic being, aiming to achieve the highest level of perception and harmony. The environment in which yoga is practiced is crucial for this alignment. Historically, ashrams were located in natural, peaceful spaces like forests or riversides, providing pollution-free environments. However, industrialization has altered these spaces, and modern yoga practices have adapted to meet contemporary needs.

For a proper mind-body connection, time and space are essential. Yoga postures should be performed when the body feels stiff or tense, avoiding over stimulating poses before bedtime. *Asanas* should be practiced first, followed by *Pranayama* and meditation. *Pranayama* can be practiced at any time, but it is most effective 2-3 hours after meals and right after *asanas*. Meditation, requiring relaxation and awareness, should take place in a quiet, clean space with fresh air to enhance focus and mindfulness.

The relationship between yoga and geographical epistemology can be seen in the "geography of *prana*" (life). Yoga practitioners believe that our physical and mental energies interact with our environment, stimulating or draining our *prana*, or life force. Through various activities like yoga, eating well, or spending time in nature, people can feel more alive and energized, enhancing their *prana* (Caspersen, Powell, & Christenson, 1985). This concept reflects how yoga defines the ideal geographical environment for students, where they can thrive physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Impact of Yoga-Geography to the Students

In this study it is very important to look at what science says about the growth of a child, what psychoanalysis says about child psychology and how the hormones and glands alter and affect the rationality, emotional structure and creative output of the child.

Balancing both hemispheres of the brain

Science tells us that there are two hemispheres in our brain, the right and the left. These two hemispheres make different functions. The functions of the left hemisphere are linear, logical and knowledgeable (Gould, 2012). The right hemispheres are creative, and intuitive. In this context education in formal subjects like mathematics, history, geography, physics, chemistry, or medicine follows a linear, logical system, whether it's advanced or secondary education. In this process only one side of the brain is stimulated - the linear, logical side (Sarswati & Sitaram, 2015). In order to balance the other aspects, we teach children the arts. We encourage them to practice music, to paint, to perform plays. We encourage them to use their creativity. But if you compare the influence of the different lobes of the brain, you will find that the linear and logical are more pronounced than the artistic and creative. This is one point.

Developing the whole mind

The brain is only the medium through which people educate their mind. The mind consists of four faculties, known as *manas*, *buddhi*, *chitta*, and *ahamkara*, which are defined in yogic terminology. The word *manas* means to rationalize, to think about something. *Buddhi* means brainpower. *Chitta* is an area of consciousness where impressions are deposited. *Ahamkara* is the concept of ego. In modern education system people are feeding only one aspect of the mind - *buddhi*. They are not dealing with the *manas* aspect, which deals with the faculty to know what is right and what is wrong. They are not dealing with *chitta*, where impressions of knowledge are deposited in the form of memory and experience. Nor they are dealing with *ahamkara*, the ego. Rather they are cramming *buddhi* with information without boosting up the other aspects of their mind. Therefore, despite all our education, they are not able to apply it fruitfully and creatively in their lives.

Curriculum of Yoga- Geography

Sample classroom yoga lesson plans typically include a mix of yoga postures, brain boosting movements, breath exercises, visualizations, mindfulness activities, creative movement and community-building games. Elements of the yoga curriculum

work synergistically to teach strategies that help children develop resilience, positive perceptions, good health habits and mindful awareness. Wellness, positive psychology and character-building discussion points, such as the power of positive thinking, nutrition, and being a peacemaker, address the child's physical, social and emotive needs, while improving learning-readiness. The activities should be suitable for the typical classroom space and schedule, and be easily implemented in a variety of contexts. That means all activities can be done standing beside or sitting at desks, while bodies remain off the floor, away from dirt, germs and chemicals. One aspect of contemplative yogic practices worth emphasizing is training of the mind through imagination. Imagination makes it possible to perceive our inner world. There are Problem-solving skills, creative and critical thinking, vocabulary enrichment, cooperative play, sensory release, relaxation and focus are just a few of the skills imagination develops in children. Suitable curriculum can encourage the students to go for studying the subject. Curriculum of yoga geography can be included from primary to post graduation level as follows-

- Primary level: Here the students are immature thus prayer, nature study, free hand exercises and simple *asanas*, will be given more emphasis.
- Secondary level: In this level the students are little bit matured thus importance of yoga in life, need of fresh environment for yoga, need of proper time for yoga, yoga and epistemology.
- Graduation level: Origins of yoga, how yoga works, how Environmental Geography, Biogeography, Climatology, Indian Philosophy, Western Philosophy, Idealism, Naturalism, Pragmatism, types of yoga and over all its advantages, influence of geographical phenomenon on yoga, parts of human body and its relation to yoga, risks of doing yoga wrongly, dealing with problem cases with injuries by using geographical ideas, should be studied in the curriculum.
- Post-graduation level: Geography of *Prana* (life), How to prolong vitality with yoga, Epistemology of Yoga, Salvation through yoga, concept of realism (Geography), behaviourism (Geography), human body as a space and its relation to nature, development of personality through yoga, awakening and listening to the body's intelligence in a perfect geographical environment, hatha yoga and its relation to geography.

Prospects

Yoga, in contemporary times, has become a global practice, contributing significantly to health and wellness (Feuerstein, 2003). The ancient practice, originating from India, is influenced by geographical and cultural factors, which have led to its global evolution and spread (Satchidananda, 1990). Swami Sivananda, Shri T.

Krishnamacharya, and Swami Kuvalayananda have significantly contributed to the rise of yoga in India (Desikachar, 1995). B.K.S. Iyengar, a renowned personality, introduced the "Iyengar Yoga" style, which emphasizes precision and alignment in *asanas* (Iyengar, 1966).

These teachings by him and other great personalities have been responsible for the wide acceptance and adaptation of yoga across diversified cultures and countries (Feuerstein, 2003). In the context of Nepal, Yoga, originating from Nepal's Himalayan location, holds significant spiritual and ecological significance due to its unique geographical location (Tiwari, 2007). The natural environment, with its distinctive terrain and climate, provides a serene environment that enhances the practice of yoga (Singh, 2004). Nepal's social customs and rituals emphasize a profound connection with nature, balancing ecological systems and promoting compassion towards all living beings (Tiwari, 2007). Yoga's interconnected nature shows its ability to support a well-rounded approach to health, addressing personal, social, and environmental well-being (Satchidananda, 1990). Yoga education in Nepal has evolved significantly, with institutions, yoga colleges, and research centers offering formal education and training (Council for Technical and Vocational Training, 2017). These centers not only focus on physical aspects but also impart knowledge about the therapeutic and preventive dimensions of yoga (Feuerstein, 2003). Yoga therapy has also gained a foothold in various hospitals, medical institutions, and wellness centers to further uphold one's health and prevent disease (Desikachar, 1995). The integration of yoga into the curriculum, for example, the three-year Diploma, Certificate Level, relating to Yoga and Naturopathy by the Council for Technical and Vocational Training, indicates increased recognition that yoga is an integral part of health education (Council for Technical and Vocational Training, 2017).

The geographical influences on yogic practices are profound. The mountainous regions of Nepal, with their spiritual significance and serene landscapes, have been crucial in shaping the yogic traditions (Singh, 2004). Yoga, when practiced in harmony with the environment, promotes a profound comprehension of oneself, nature, and society (Tiwari, 2007). Yoga's interconnectedness highlights its potential to contribute to a holistic health approach, including individual, social, and ecological aspects (Satchidananda, 1990). First, the border-crossing expansion of yoga testifies to its universal appeal and adaptability of its principles to various cultures, which makes it such an important tool for holistic well-being in today's world. This is so according to Feuerstein, 2003. The study of geography and its relation to yoga offers salient lessons that can be derived on how natural environments enhance and shape spiritual and physical practices (Tiwari, 2007). By understanding the geographical influences on yoga, we can

better appreciate how it contributes to the health and sustainability of individuals and societies (Singh, 2004). In Nepal, yoga's deep integration into social customs, coupled with its educational framework, holds great promise for the future generations, fostering not only personal health but also environmental and societal harmony (Council for Technical and Vocational Training, 2017). It means that this yoga, originating from India's culture, has become an important factor in improving health and wellness throughout the world. The influential figures of Swami Sivananda and B.K.S. Iyengar popularized yoga. Nepal is called the land of yoga. Nepal has advanced the education in yoga and included it in the healthcare system. Nepal's geographical and spiritual importance places it as a leading country in the world towards the path of interconnected well-being for the future generations. Yoga Teacher Training: In Nepal includes courses taught by award-winning teachers here in Nepal. The courses are based on *Sanatan* yoga, originating from Hatha and Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga, which includes Patanjali's 8 Limbs. Patanjali's 8 Limbs of Yoga provide a path to self-realization and spiritual growth. The first limb, *Yama* (Ethical Disciplines), consists of moral principles that guide ethical behavior and self-restraint. *Ahimsa* means non-violence by words, thoughts, and actions against others; *Satya* speaks about truthfulness and honesty, while *Asteya* relates to not stealing and envying others. *Brahmacharya* refers to self-control, while *Aparigraha* focuses on non-possession or letting go of material greed. The second limb, *Niyama*, or Personal Disciplines, balances inner life through practices like cleanliness, *Santosha*, *Tapas*, self-study, and surrender to the Divine. The third limb, *Asana* or postures, are physical exercises that strengthen, be flexible, and balance the body, preparing it for meditation and calming the mind. The fourth limb, *Pranayama*, or Breath Control, is a practice that involves controlling one's breath to enhance energy, mental clarity, and body-mind connection.

The fifth limb, *Pratyahara* (Withdrawal of the Senses), teaches practitioners to turn inward and detach from sensory distractions, fostering focus and introspection. The sixth limb, *Dharana*, concentration, insists on deep focus on only one single point or thought; it trains the mind to become steady and prepared for meditation. The seventh, *Dhyana*, or Meditation, means continuously focusing and contemplating to build a quiet mind, which brings in spiritual awareness. Finally, the eighth limb, *Samadhi* (Union or Absorption), represents the ultimate goal of yoga, where the individual achieves complete integration of body, mind, and spirit, experiencing a state of oneness with the universe and pure paradise.

Conclusion

The study highlights that yoga is more than just physical exercise; it offers mental, emotional, and social benefits that support broader educational and public health

objectives. Geographical factors, such as location and environment, significantly enhance its practice, emphasizing the need to adapt yoga to local conditions for optimal outcomes. Teachers, parents, and practitioners recognize yoga as a valuable tool for promoting health, discipline, and emotional stability. Integrating yoga into education and social studies fosters positive behaviors, strengthens community harmony, and aligns individual practices with cultural and environmental contexts.

The evolution of yoga illustrates a profound connection between geographical landscapes and spiritual practices, from its ancient origins in India to its global reach today. Geography has shaped yoga's philosophies, techniques, and adaptability, highlighting the alignment of body and mind with time and space. Despite the industrialization and modernization of traditional ashram settings, yoga continues to evolve, maintaining its universal appeal by bridging individual and cosmic harmony.

This research underscores the timeless relevance of yoga as a holistic practice that unites physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions while adapting to diverse cultural and environmental settings. By linking geography and yoga, the study reinforces the importance of local contexts in maximizing the benefits of yoga, ensuring its role in fostering well-being, community cohesion, and universal harmony.

References

- Bhavanani, A. B. (2016). *History, philosophy, and practice of yoga*. Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth University. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/304474895>
- Caspersen, C. J, Powell, K.E, & Christenson, G.M. (1985). Physical activity, exercise, and physical fitness: definitions and distinctions for health-related research. *Public Health Reports*. 100 (2):126.
- Council for Technical and Vocational Training (2017). *Diploma (Certificate Level) Yoga and naturopathy curriculum*. Sanothimi.
- Desikachar, T. K. V. (1995). *The heart of Yoga: Developing a personal practice*. Inner Traditions.
- Eliade, M. (1975). *Yoga: Immortality and freedom* (W. R. Trask, Trans.). Princeton University Press.
- Feuerstein, G. (1998). *The yoga tradition: Its history, literature, philosophy, and practice*. Hohm Press.
- Feuerstein, G. (2003). *The yoga tradition: Its history, literature, philosophy, and practice*. Hohm Press.
- Flood, G. (1996). *An introduction to Hinduism*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gould, J. (2012). Your brain on Yoga. *Harvard Medical School Guide*. RosettaBooks.
- Iyengar, B. K. S. (1966). *Light on Yoga*. Harper Collins.

- Khalsa, S. B. S. (2013). The role of yoga in modern education. *International Journal of Yoga*, 6(2), 103-108.
- Khalsa, S. B. (2013). Yoga for psychiatry and mental health: An ancient practice with modern relevance. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry* 3(9):330-334.
- Lehto, R., Brown, M., Chen, L., & Morrison, S. (2006). Yoga and mental health: The benefits of yoga in managing stress and promoting emotional well-being. *Journal of Yoga Therapy*, 2(1), 25-30.
- Lehto, X., Brown, S., Chen, Y., & Morrison A. (2006). Yoga tourism as a niche within tourism market. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 31, 25- 35.
- Saraswati, S. & Sitaraman, R. (2015). Aging and the human gut microbiota—from correlation to causality. *Frontiers in Microbiology*. 12;5:764. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmicb.2014.00764>
- Saraswati, Swami Satyananda. (2006). *A systematic course in the ancient tantric techniques of yoga and kriya*. Yoga Publications Trust.
- Satchidananda, S. (1990). *The yoga sutras of Patanjali*. Integral Yoga Publications.
- Singh, B. (2004). *Yoga in the Himalayas: Ecological and spiritual dimensions*. Himalayan Journal of Yoga, 20(1), 34-45.
- Sivananda, S. (2004). *The complete book of yoga: The philosophy of yoga and practical instructions on how to practice it*. Yoga-Vedanta Publications.
- Sivananda, S. (2004). *The complete illustrated book of Yoga*. DK Publishing.
- Taneja, A. (2014). *Yoga for holistic living*. Shree Publications.
- Taneja, M. K. (2014). Improving hearing performance through yoga. *Journal of Yoga & Physical Therapy*, 5(3), 194-200. <https://doi:10.4172/2157-7595.1000194>.
- Tiwari, P. (2007). Yoga and spirituality in the Himalayan region: Geographical and cultural perspectives. *Journal of Himalayan Studies*, 15(2), 56-70.
- Vivekananda, S. (1999). *Complete works of Swami Vivekananda*. Advaita Ashrama.
- White, D. G. (2012). *The yoga sutra of Patanjali: A biography*. Princeton University Press.
- Yukteswar, S. (1949). *The holy science*. Self-Realization Fellowship.