

ADOLESCENT STUDENT'S PROBLEMS AND YOGA AS A PREVENTIVE MEASURE

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Date Received: 13/01/2018

Date Revised: 07/04/2018

Date Accepted: 18/04/2018

ABSTRACT

Adolescence is the period between childhood and adulthood and the most important stage of a human being. Adolescence is a period of stress and storm. Students cannot adjust with their new-fangled role in life. They can have Emotional, Mental, Behavioural, and Adjustment problems known as "disorders". Behavioural patterns that appear in adolescents include consuming alcohol, smoking, using other substances, sexual behaviour, violence, etc. An individual experiences fulfilment when the psychological and physiological requirements are fulfilled. If an individual fails in satisfying the needs, it makes him/her disappointed and depressed. Behavioural disorders of adolescent students are depression, stress, anxiety, risky sexual behaviours, aggressive behaviour, violence, and disobedience. Adolescents find it difficult to adjust with family and society. With regard to somatic variation and problems, he/she is confused with the role of adolescence. The academic performance of the adolescent students at school are greatly affected by these problems. The fact that the behavioural and adjustment problems can be reduced by Yoga is the main aim of this paper. As a solution to their problems, the techniques of Yogasana, Pranayama, and Meditation are given to the Adolescent students to control the mind. The reason for this paper is to give an insight of Yoga and how Yoga helps the adolescents to lesser their stress and stay calm. It benefits the young people not only in school, home, and the community, but throughout their life. The result of Yoga intervention gives positive effects on both physical and mental health of the adolescent students.

Keywords: Needs of Adolescents, Modern Yoga, Classical Yoga, Benefits of Yoga, Preventive Measure.

INTRODUCTION

Mental and human development generally occurs during adolescence that is between childhood and adulthood. In the age group of 10-19 years, 22% of the Indian population are adolescents. In the adolescence stage, a stage of physical, social, sexual, and emotional development and growth happen. During this potentially confused period, many adolescents have problems and make the adjustments without pointless stress to themselves, their friends, their family, and society. In reality, the adolescent people may have mental, emotional adjustment, and behavioural problems. These problems are realistic, copious, and thrashing. And these problems are called as "disorders". The sources of these stress and disorders of the

adolescents are their families, communities, and schools. Adolescents implement their independence typically, by probing and sometimes disloyalty, problems of adolescence are addicted to tobacco, regular drinking, addicted to social media like Facebook, Whats-App, Twitter, etc., repeated episodes of aggressiveness, stealing, and truancy are some problems of adolescents. Other warning signs of adolescence are poor performance at school and running away from home. Adolescents who cause serious hurt or use a weapon in a conflict is of particular concern. Practising yoga can lessen the problems of adolescents and it has been related with many benefits. Yoga helps the adolescent students to reduce their problems like behavioural disorder and adjustment problems and it calms the mind greatly.

1. Adolescence in India

The word 'adolescence' is derived from the Latin word 'adolescere'. Adolescere means 'to grow'. Growth is the spirit of the word adolescence. And adolescence is a period of intensive growth. The aspects, such as physical, mental, social, and emotional life changes during adolescence. Adolescence has been described by Stanley Hall as 'the period of storm and stress of human life'. Very crucial stage of a child's life is between 12-18 years that is the adolescent period. The most important fact about adolescence is that it is a stage of evolution from childhood to adulthood to take the decisions independently. Because of the indiscipline or misbehaviour of the elders in the society, the adolescents are needed to take their own decisions independently. Adolescent problem behaviour is a national alarm, including using substances, school misbehaviour, and felony. Among the adolescent people, smoking and drinking alcohol have become the symbols of growth, maturity, and liberty. It is felt that tobacco use gives a great opportunity for adolescent students. In the conservative social norms they think smoking and consuming alcohol are real growth and maturity. Boys smoke, drink, and use drugs more likely than the girls. But the rate of girls who imitate the behaviour pattern of boys are increasing faster in developing countries too. Adults are the role models for the adolescents. So in the life of an adolescent, the behaviour of elders influence greatly.

Due to behavioural patterns of the adolescent people, premature death happens. According to the World Health Organisation, 70% of the premature deaths among adolescents happen because of smoking, consuming alcohol, violence, and sexual behaviour (WHO, n.d.). Tamil Nadu as the Indian state has the highest suicide rate, due to exam pressure among adolescents and the factor of anxiety according to the National Crime Records Bureau. Adolescents suffer from various problems and conflicts and dysfunctions during the period of adolescence. It aggravates psycho social dysfunctions and it ultimately impairs normal psycho social development.

2. The Needs of Adolescents

The needs of an individual influence the development to a

great level. For sustained physical and mental development, every adolescent has certain needs. Every individual needs certain basic needs that are functioning into. They are broadly classified into physiological and psychological needs (Denniston and McWilliams, 1975).

2.1 Physiological Needs

The accomplishment of certain needs that are physiological needs depend upon the individual's life. The important physiological needs are water, food, oxygen, sleep and rest, sex gratification, etc.

2.2 Psychological Needs

The needs that are related with socio-cultural environment of an adolescent are psychological needs. The comfort and happiness of an adolescent greatly depends upon the accomplishment of their needs. And the psychological well being is acquired through collective learning.

In the life of an individual, adolescent is a crucial period. When a need is satisfied, the individual experiences satisfaction and the tensions are released.

3. Problems of Adolescents

If an adolescent is leading a stressful life and if he/she faces a major life event, they find it difficult to adjust and manage with. In that situation adjustment problem occurs.

3.1 Perplexity

In connection with puberty, Somatic variation may occur. It is difficult for every adolescent to adjust with somatic variation and perplexity. It leads to confusion and they becomes frustrated. About sex related matters, Adolescents satisfy with crude and distorted knowledge. They do not have scientific knowledge about sex hygiene and values. It makes the children retained and mystifying and creates so many complexes in the minds and guilt feeling among them.

3.2 Lack of Knowledge about Sex

In India, parents do not discuss with their children about sex and provide sexual knowledge. Western countries are different from our country's social value. Somehow adolescents want to satisfy their sexual needs, so they choose discarded ways to lessen their interest. There arises sexual maladjustment in adolescents, due to misguiding of print and electronic media.

3.3 Adjustment Problems with Parents

Choice of education, friends, dress, life-style, recreational interests, mode of behaviour, going out from home, and returning back to home, etc., are greatly influenced by parents as per Indian context. Adjusting becomes difficult for adolescents according to the demands and needs of the parents. The conflict between peer group relationships and behaviour pattern of the parents are different. The expectations of the parents are high. It is so tough for adolescents to fulfil the expectations of the parents. So children react against the parent's needs and demands.

3.4 Clash between Adulthood and Childhood

Neither as a child nor as an adult, the adolescent is considered in our society. They has to fulfil some physical and emotional needs. For that they greatly depend on their parents and elders. When they move from the childhood to adulthood, the poor adolescent is trapped. It leads to be perplexed and frustrated.

3.5 Controlled Discipline of the School

Adjusting with the controlled school discipline is difficult for the adolescents. It becomes a great problem for them to cope up. The expectations of the school are very high. Teachers may be oppressive at times and students must resign themselves to teachers. Towards true independence by implanting habits of unquestioning obedience, the growth and development of the children should not be affected by the schools.

3.6 Demands of the Society

Due to rapid technological changes and by increasing segregation, the adolescent is not able to locate his place in the society. To anticipate and plan for his life, this changing world does not allow the adolescent. To the demands of the society, they find it difficult to adjust their potentiality.

3.7 Behavior Problems during Adolescence

Conditions that are more than just disruptive behaviour is termed as behavioural disorder. They are associated to mental health problems that lead to troublesome behaviour, emotional, and communal problems. Some of the behaviour disorders are,

- Depression

- Anxiety Disorders
- Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
- Bipolar Disorder
- Conduct Disorder
- Learning Disorders

4. Effects of Adolescent Students Problem

Without properly addressing the troublesome behaviour and adjustment problems, it would become worse. Adolescents face long term consequences with the following problems. Substance abuse and addiction, turn down in school performance, deferment or removal from school, commitment in risky behaviours, growth of antisocial personality disorder, social loneliness, expansion of conduct disorder, distressed family relationships, nervousness, sulkiness, disturbance, uncertainty of memory problems, gloominess, trouble with attention and concentration, disconcerting to think in an structured manner underprivileged communication skills, problem with intellectual capacity, evaluation, writing scripts and reading, hallucinations, delusions, behaviour fluctuations, impaired judgement and decision making, social departure, being a risk to himself and others, aggressive behaviour, alterations in mental status, puzzlement and weariness, troubled parent-child relationship, increased risk of injury, law violations and legal dilemma, suicide, and aggression are the long term effects of these problems (WHO, 1998).

These problems of adolescents can be reduced by yoga as a preventive measure.

5. Yoga as a Preventive Measure

Yoga intervention can be a preventive measure for the problems of adolescents such as behavioural disorders and adjustment problems.

5.1 Yoga-meaning

An old discipline of India is yoga. It is both physical and spiritual. Breathing techniques and some physical exercises and meditation are used in yoga (Brena, 1975). Yoga calms the mind and develops the health and makes the people feel fresh and so it brings happiness (Sharma, 2012). The Sanskrit meaning of Yoga is "union".

5.2 Pioneer of Yoga

The father of yoga is often considered, Patanjali. He is the compiler of the Yoga Sutras. It is a text on Yoga theory and practice. He is a scholar of Samkya school of Hindu Philosophy. In modern yoga his styles are still practiced.

5.3 The History of Yoga

In ancient India, there were no texts for yoga. It was practiced orally. So there were no proper texts to know about yoga history. The sacred texts were destroyed. It is difficult to know about the history of yoga due to its anonymity, vagueness, and its oral diffusion. During early days, yoga techniques and teachings and its history were written in easily spoilt palm leaves. Now it is difficult to find it because it was spoilt, damaged and vanished. The assumption made by the researchers was that yoga may be 10000 years old and they think that gradually yoga was developed before 5000 years ago. The history of yoga can be divided into the main periods like modernization, preparation, and improvement.

5.4 Yoga during Pre-Classical Period

The Pre-classical period of yoga starts after the creation of Upanishads. In North India, the Yoga was developed by the Indus-Saraswati civilization 5000 years ago. The word yoga was first found in the Rig Veda, the ancient sacred text.

5.5 Classical Yoga

During the classical period, Patanjali wrote the ancient text Yoga-Sutras. "Classical Yoga" is based on the system of eight limbs. Yoga Sutras describes the Classical Yoga, the path of Raja Yoga in the second century (Chidananda, 1985).

5.6 Modern Yoga

From India, yoga gurus travelled to western countries to spread yoga and to attract the followers during the late 1800 century and the early 1900 century (Venkatesananda, 2010). In 1893, Swami Vivekananda went to Parliament of Religions in Chicago and attracted the followers by his lectures on yoga. In India, Hatha yoga was practiced and it was very popular in 1920s and 1930s. Even now, Hatha Yoga is practiced in the schools of India and all over the world.

6. Details of the Yoga Package

Yoga package will be practiced to the adolescent student as a preventive measure of their problem.

6.1 Yogasana

Asana is defined as a "steady, comfortable posture" in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. Asana is usually defined as a "comfortable seat". Hatha Yoga is practiced now and the exercises are termed as yogasana. It develops both mental and physical health that calms the mind and makes it fresh. Asana practice is considered important by yogis. Agreed that the body is the vehicle for the spirit and so looking after the physical body is essential for spiritual development. By practicing asanas, one can strengthen the body and mind (Grade, 1975). It increases discipline and concentration, and prepare the mind for meditation.

6.2 Pranayama

The conscious awareness of breath is Pranayama, the life force that both relaxes and energizes the body. In Sanskrit the meaning of prana is 'life force' and the meaning of ayama is 'extension'. An integral part of yoga is Pranayama. The pranayama enables both the tempo of performing yoga poses and relaxing the mind for meditation (Kualayananda and Venekar, 1971). Pranayama is the "limb", of the spiritual Ashtanga yoga.

6.3 Meditation

Meditation is a practice where an individual focuses his/her mind on a particular thought to achieve a mentally clear and emotionally calm state (Narasimhan et al., 2011). The practice given to focus one's attention on one thing or to perceive and without any judgement observing external and internal sensations or both is termed as Meditation.

7. Benefits of the Package

7.1 Asanas

7.1.1 Vajrasana

It calms the mind, helps to relieve all the stress and feel relaxed and stress-free. This asana can also help students who are going to take important exams as it calms their mind and improves their reasoning and memory (Figure 1).

7.1.2 Pavanamuktasana

It calms the mind, helps to reduce anxiety and depression. It improves memory and concentration. It is the perfect

way to clear the mind and calm the senses and it enables to focus, and increase memory power and concentration (Figure 2).

7.1.3 Bhujangasana

It is good to ease stress and reduce tension of the body, and helps to overcome the stress and anxiety. The adrenal glands receives a good massage and so are encouraged to work more efficiently. The hormones of these glands are good for our mind (Figure 3).

7.1.4 Salabhasana

It relieves back pain and stress. It also helps to relieve stress and anxiety by calming the mind. Salabhasana is shown in Figure 4.

7.1.5 Dhanurasana

It acts as a stress reliever, improves focus and concentration, and lowers stress. It increases the confidence of an adolescent (Figure 5).



Figure 1. Vjrasana



Figure 2. Pavanamuktasana



Figure 3. Bhujangasana

7.1.6 Sasangasana

This asana reduces depression in adolescents, refreshes the brain, relieves mental fatigue, insomnia and depression (Figure 6). It also improves memory and focuses of adolescents in order to score high marks in their exams.

7.1.7 Vakrasana

The healthy body is very important in adolescent period. Vakrasana helps to keep the spine healthy and reduces stress. It brings relief to hyper-tension (Figure 7).

7.1.8 Sarvangasana

It reduces of emotional and mental stress. It improves concentration (Figure 8), alleviates anxiety and hypochondria, stimulates life force, and steadies the energy of adolescents.

7.1.9 Matsyasana

It makes feel one comfortable. It creates strength and

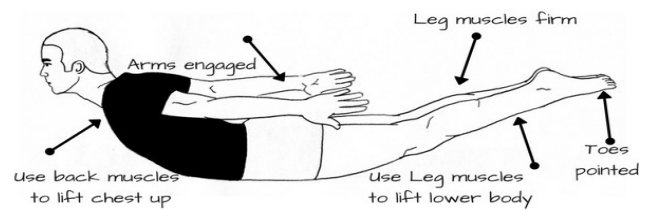


Figure 4. Salabhasana

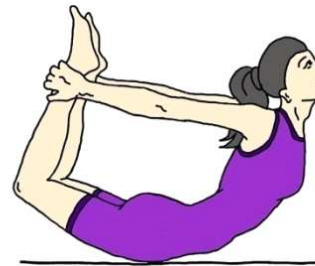


Figure 5. Dhanurasana



Figure 6. Sasangasana

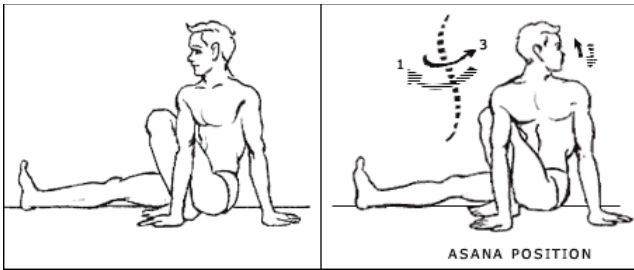


Figure 7. Vakrasana



Figure 8. Sarvangasana



Figure 9. Matsyasana

awareness both in the mind and body (Figure 9).

7.1.10 Kandharasana

For stress and anxiety, Kandharasana calms the mind. It increases concentration and focus (Figure 10), and improves self control. Self control prevents the adolescents from various behavioural disorders.

7.1.11 Naukasana

This asana gives a comfortable feel and relief from pain. It calms the mind and reduces stress. It improves concentration and focus (Figure 11), and enhances relaxation.

7.1.12 Viruksasana

It reduces stress and anxiety and improves focusing



Figure 10. Kandharasana

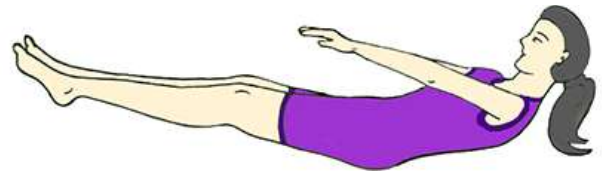


Figure 11. Naukasana

capability of mind and concentration.

7.1.13 Savasana

It also improves one's mental concentration and reduces blood pressure.

7.2 Pranayama

1. Abdominal Breath- for relaxation and reduces stress and anxiety.
2. Kapal Bhati Pranayama- the nervous system becomes active and new brain cells and formed.
3. Nadi Suddhi- gives energy, refreshment, clear mind, and enriches the soul.
4. Brahmari- feel calm and at ease and be able to focus and reduce tension and anxiety.

8. Meditation

It removes any negativity from the mind, such as hatred, anger, restlessness, fears, stress, and anxiety. It will immediately refresh the mind with calmness and positive energy (Saraswathi, 1965).

Conclusion

Yoga helps chronically stressed youth by enhancing their ability to regulate their thoughts and emotions. It brings positive effects on mental and physical health. To cope with stress, it improves the thoughts of youth. Yoga package might be related to a host of positive outcomes, such as

decreased negative effects and increased positive effects, self acceptance and improved self awareness, reduced symptoms of anxiety, depression, stress and increased attention, concentration, memory power, academic achievement, improved quality of life, and overall well-being of adolescent students.

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