

EFFECT OF YOGIC PRACTICES ON  
ADOLESCENTS' SELF-CONCEPT,  
AGGRESSION, GRATITUDE AND  
LIFE SATISFACTION

Ms. Chaitali Madan

Mr. Deepak Mulchandani

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## Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

### **ADOLESCENCE**

The term “adolescence” is derived from the Latin word “*adolescere*” meaning “to grow to maturity”. Adolescence has traditionally been viewed as beginning with the onset of puberty, a rapid spurt in physical growth accompanied by sexual maturation, and as ending when individuals assume the responsibilities associated with adult life – the marriage, entry into work force, and so on (Rice, 1992).

Adolescence, which extends from the time the individual becomes sexually mature until eighteen – the age of legal maturity – is divided into early adolescence, which extends to seventeen years, and late adolescence, which extends until legal maturity. It is characteristically an important period in the life span, a transition period a time of change, a problem age, a time when the individual searches for identity, a dreaded age, a time of unrealism, and the threshold of adulthood.

According to psychologists, adolescence starts at the age of 12 or 13 years. The dawn of adolescence is comparatively earlier in girls than in boys. Psychologists generally agree with the following developmental order of adolescence in boys and girls:

Boys

Early adolescence from 11 to 12 and ½ or 13 years

Middle adolescence from 13 to 18 years

Late adolescence from 18 to 21 years

Girls

Early adolescence from 10 to 11 years

Middle adolescence from 12 to 15 years

Late adolescence from 17 to 20 or 21 years

The beginning of adolescence is signaled by sudden increase in the rate of physical growth. While this growth spurt occurs for both sexes, it starts earlier for girls (at about age ten or eleven) than for boys (about age twelve or thirteen). This growth spurt is just one aspect of puberty. During puberty the gonads, or primary sex glands, produce increased levels of sex hormones, and the external sex organs assume their adult form. In addition, both sexes undergo many other shifts relating to sexual maturity. Facial features, too, often change during puberty. Gender differences also exist with respect to the effects of early sexual maturation. In short, the timing of puberty can play important role in adolescents' developing self-identities and so in their later social development.

During adolescence individuals come to realize that others can hold views different from theirs, and that while there are no absolute truths in many areas of life, there are better or worse reasons for holding certain views. They become capable of logical thought. However, this does not mean that they necessarily demonstrate such thinking. In fact, only about 40 percent of adolescent can solve the kind of problems used by Piaget to test for formal operational thinking (e.g., Stanovich, 1993). Moreover, if they do show such logical thought, it may be restricted to topics of types

of problems with which they have had direct experience (Rogoff & Chavajay, 1995).

Important as they are, parents are only part of the total picture in the social development of adolescents. Friendships, primarily with members of their own gender, but also with members of the other gender, become increasingly important. In fact, most adolescents are part of extensive social networks consisting of many friends and acquaintances. One motive for forming friendships during adolescence seems to be the developing need to belong. This need strengthens during early adolescence and leads many preteens and teenagers to reject parental influence and to identify with their peers. Friendships and social success also play an important role in another key aspect of social development during adolescence – the quest for a personal identity. This process is a key element in a famous theory of psychosocial development proposed by Erik Erikson (1950, 1987).

It is widely believed that adolescents are wildly emotional – that they experience huge swings in mood and turbulent outbursts of emotion. In several studies on this issue, large numbers of teenagers wore beepers and were signaled at random times throughout an entire week. When signaled, they entered their thoughts and feelings in a diary. Results indicated that they did show more frequent and larger swings in mood than those shown by older persons (e.g., Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984). Moreover, these swings occurred very quickly, sometimes within only a few minutes. Old people also show shifts in mood, but these tend to be less frequent, slower, and smaller in magnitude.

All adolescents have problems. Such problems are part of the business of living. They are problems neither the “well-adjusted” nor the “maladjusted” can side-step. Adolescents may show signs of their turmoil in a number of ways such as rebelliousness, parental or peer conflict, anxiety, or mood swings. Whereas these phenomena may be signs of underlying psychopathology, they may also occur in adolescents who are coping effectively with their environment. Yogic practices can help adolescents build stability of mind and body and develop their ability to handle challenging experiences, including thoughts and emotions.

Since mental health disorders commonly develop in the teenage years, “Yoga may serve a preventive role in adolescent mental health,” according to the new study, led by Jessica Noggle, PhD, of Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Harvard Medical School, Boston. Studies have demonstrated that yoga yields a wide range of benefits for mental and physical health problems, and there is a growing body of evidence that proves that yoga has a positive impact in children and teens.

## **YOGA**

The word ‘Yoga’ means ‘Union’. This word is derived from the Sanskrit language word (verb) “Yuja” which means ‘to unite’. Actually, Yoga is a way of life which unites first our mind with our body and then unites us with the nature of God or Super cosmic power.

The history of yoga is indeed very old. Nothing can be said firmly about the origin of yoga. Only it can be said that yoga was originated in India. With various references in the ancient past of India, it was found out that the lord Shiva is the founder of Yoga, who taught it to his first



disciple i.e., his wife Parvati. Then on it was taught by one Guru to one disciple at a time. It was always surrounded by mystery as the time, place, teacher and student maintained secrecy with respect to this science. It is also believed that teachings of yoga were imparted not in a classroom or Gurukul, but on the battle field in the epic Mahabharata. Lord Krishna is first said to have imparted the teachings of Yoga to his despondent student Arjuna. Lord Rama about 3000 years before Mahabharata period has said the same thing. The available evidences show that history of yoga is also related to Indus Valley Civilization. At that time people used to do yoga. On the basis of another sources it can be said that yoga was originated approximately in 3000 B.C. in India. The first book on yoga was written by “Patanjali” in 147 B.C. So the date of birth of Yoga is definitely beyond 10,000 years, with reference to different text in India.

Yoga has different types, but all of them reach to the same goal i.e. Moksha or union with divine consciousness. They are nothing but different practices like different roads leading ultimately to the same destination. They are - Hatha Yoga, Ashtanga Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Mantra Yoga, Tantra Yoga, Dhayana Yoga, Karma Yoga, Raja Yoga, etc.

All these can lead us to liberation, Salvation, or Samadhi. Yoga is thus known as an experimental science. Yoga as well is one of the six great philosophies of India. In addition to this original goal of union with Divine consciousness of Yoga-Shastra, Yoga is very useful in the achievement of three things.

1. Prevention of Evil Including Diseases
2. Treatment of Evil Including Diseases

### 3. Overall Development of Personality

Therapy by which diseases are treated and prevented by using scientific procedures and techniques from Ashtanga Yoga and Hatha Yoga is known as Yoga Therapy. There are eight elements of Ashtanga Yoga, namely, Yama, Niyam, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharna, Dhayana and Samadhi. Hatha Yoga, on the other hand, includes Kriyas, Asanas, Pranayamas, Bandhas, Mudra and Nadanusandhan.

“Yoga is the inhibition of the functions of mind,” says Patanjali. The functions of the mind must be suppressed. Mind in the wide sense of the term, has three great properties or qualities: cognition, desire or will, and activity. Now Yoga is not immediately concerned with all three, but only with one, cognition, the Samakhyan subject. But cognition cannot be separated from the others completely because consciousness is a unit, and although the concern is with only that part of consciousness called cognition, we cannot get cognition all by itself. Hence the India psychologist investigating this property, cognition, divides it up into three or as the Vedanta says, into four.

Many different types of yoga exist, from very active to very passive and from a focus on physical fitness to a focus on spirituality. But within all the different variations of yoga a common thread exists of at least three fundamental practices: 1.The cultivation of awareness, 2. Conscious breathing and 3.Relaxation.

Yoga for mental wellness cultivates greater functioning on two levels: building stability (in mind, body, breath) and building capacity (the ability to hold or absorb challenging experiences, including thoughts and

feelings). It is an ancient system for physical, mental, and spiritual wellness. It contains practices to strengthen the body, achieve radiant health, focus the mind, steady the emotions, promote a sense of spiritual connectedness, and live a life of ethical behavior.

Nowadays, yoga has become very popular throughout the world. The present age can be said the age of stress, tension and anxiety. So, most of the people have not been living a happy and fruitful life. In Western countries yoga has become a way of life. It has a vital significance in the life of human beings.

### **SELF CONCEPT**

Self-concept is the sum total of the ways in which the individual sees himself or herself. Self-concept is often considered to have two major dimensions – a descriptive component, known as the self-image, and an evaluative component, known as self-esteem, although in practice the term is more commonly used to refer to the evaluative side of self-perception.

Self-concept is a person's sense of identity, the set of beliefs about what he or she is like as an individual. Cognitions about identity comprise self-schema – an organized body of information that relates to a person's self, pertaining to specific domains, such as dependence or femininity. In addition to self-schemas, part of the self is comprised of possible selves, those aspects of self that relate to the future. In addition, the concept of identity reflects roles and group categories to which a person belongs, along with the set of personal meanings and experiences related to the roles and categories.

Self-concept has been referred by Lowe (1961) as one's attitude towards self, and by Pederson (1965) as an organized configuration, of perceptions, beliefs, feelings, attitudes and values which the individual views as a part of characteristics of him. Rogers (1959) defined self-concept as the organized, consistent conceptual gestalt composed of perceptions the characteristics of the "I" or "me" and the perceptions of the relationships of the "I" or "me" to others and to others and to various aspects of life, together with the values attached to these perceptions. It is a gestalt which is available to awareness though not necessarily in awareness. It is a fluid and changing gestalt, a process but at any given moment it is a specific entity.

### **SELF CONCEPT IN ADOLESCENTS**

Adolescents must have stable self-concepts. The self concept usually becomes increasingly more stable as adolescence progresses. This gives adolescents a sense of inner continuity and enables them to see themselves in a consistent manner, rather than one way now and a different way later. This also increases their self-esteem and results in fewer feelings of inadequacy.

Adolescents must be reasonably well satisfied with their achievements and eager to make improvements in any area in which they feel deficient. Self acceptance leads to behaviors that make others like and accept the adolescent. This in turn reinforces the adolescent's favorable behavior and feelings of self acceptance. Attitude toward self thus determines how happy and well adjusted the individual will be.

There are various conditions that influence the adolescents' self-concept. These conditions include

### **Age of Maturing**

Early matures, who are treated as near adults, develop favorable self-concepts and thus make good adjustments. Late matures, who are treated like children, feel misunderstood martyred and thus are predisposed to maladjusted behavior.

### **Appearance**

Being different in appearance makes the adolescent feel inferior, even if the difference adds to physical attractiveness. Any physical defect is a source of embarrassment which leads to feelings of inferiority. Physical attractiveness, by contrast, leads to favorable judgments about personality characteristics and this aids social acceptance.

### **Sex-Appropriateness**

Sex appropriate appearance, interest and behavior help adolescents achieve favorable self concepts. Sex inappropriateness makes them self-conscious and this influences their behavior unfavorably.

### **Names and Nicknames**

Adolescents are sensitive and embarrassed if members of the peer group judge their names unfavorably or if they have nicknames that imply ridicule.

## **Family Relationships**

An adolescent who has a very close relationship with a family member will identify with this person and want to develop a similar personality pattern. If this person is of the same sex, the adolescent will be helped to develop a sex-appropriate self-concept.

## **Peers**

Peers influence the adolescents' personality patterns in two ways. First, the self-concepts of adolescents are reflections of what they believe their peers' concepts of them are and, second, they come under peer pressures to develop personality traits approved by the group.

## **Creativity**

Adolescents who have been encouraged to be creative in their play and academic work as children develop a feeling of individuality and identity that has a favorable effect on their self-concepts. By contrast, adolescents who have been forced to conform to an approved pattern since earliest childhood lack a feeling of identity and individuality.

## **Level of Aspiration**

If adolescents have unrealistically high levels of aspiration, they will experience failure. This will lead to feelings of inadequacy and to defensive reactions in which they blame others for their failures. Adolescents who are realistic about their abilities will experience more successes than failures. This will lead to greater self-confidence and self-satisfaction, both of which contribute to better self-concepts.

## **AGGRESSION**

Aggression - actions that intentionally inflict harm on others – is all around us, especially in the mass media. It is also frighteningly common in the lives of ordinary people who all too often come face-to-face with assault, rape, and murder, and other acts that have occurred on a massive scale throughout human history. Serial killings, wars, invasions, genocide – these are sadly, a common part of the human story, from ancient times until the present.

A term used in several ways, it is commonly used to describe a deliberate attempt to harm another being. There is no agreed definition, partly because the term is applied sometimes to behavior (hitting), sometimes to an emotional state (feeling aggressive), and sometimes to an intention (wanting to harm). It refers to range of behaviors that can result in both physical and psychological harm to oneself, others or objects in the environment.

“Aggression refers to behavior that result in personal injury or destruction of property” (Bandura, 1973).

“It is the behavior directed towards the goal of harming or injuring another living being who is motivated to avoid such treatment” (Baron, 1977).

“The intentional infliction of some form of harm on others is termed as aggression” (Baron & Byrne, 2000).

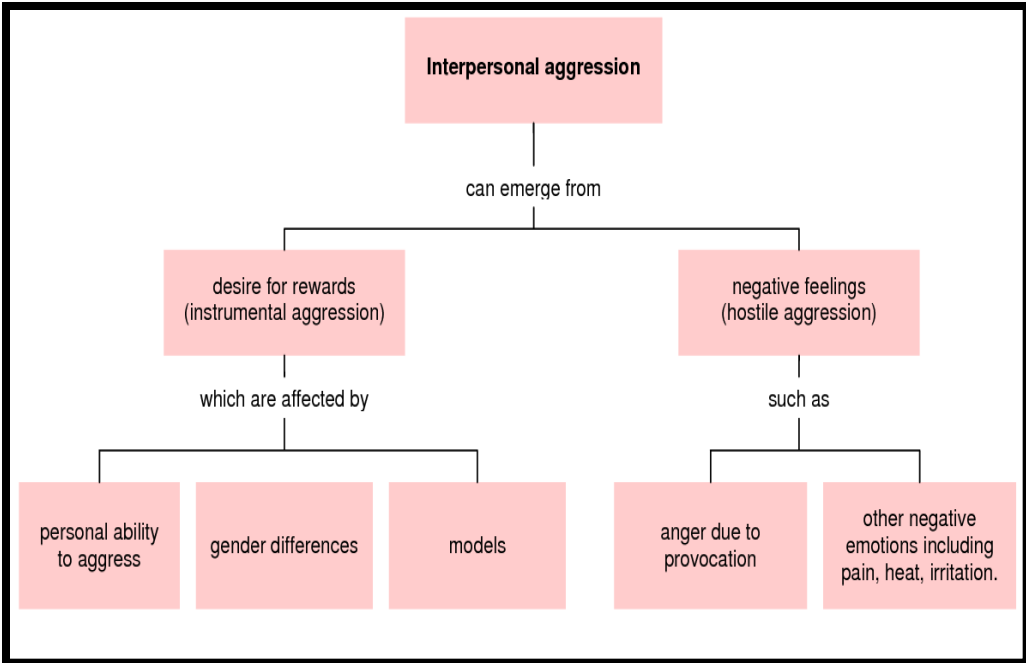
“Aggression is the behavior directed towards another individual carried out with the proximate (immediate) intent to cause harm”(Anderson & Huesmann, 2003)

Aggression can serve a number of different purposes:

- To express anger or hostility
- To assert dominance
- To intimidate or threaten
- To achieve a goal
- To express possession
- A response to fear
- A reaction to pain
- To compete with others



There are several classifications of different kinds of aggression, the most useful distinction being between *instrumental aggression* which is an aggressive act performed in order to achieve some other objective, and *hostile aggression*, which is motivated by antagonistic feelings and



emotions.

Aggressive behaviors can vary from problems with emotional regulation to severe and manipulative behaviors. There are various characteristics of aggression, which can include behaviors such as starting rumors; excluding others; arguing; bullying, both verbally (name-calling) and physically (pushing); threatening; striking back in anger; use of strong-arm tactics (to get something they want); and engaging in physical fights.

Notably, aggressive behaviors do not always involve physical contact with another person. Verbal aggression in elementary school years, such as starting rumors, excluding others, and arguing, can be part of a developmental trajectory leading to adolescent delinquency and Conduct Disorder.

Growing evidence suggests that certain adolescents are at high risk for being rejected by their peers and for engaging in various kinds of antisocial behavior. These individuals are those who show high levels of aggression; who are disruptive or hyperactive; and especially who show what has been termed *irritable-inattentive-behavior* – they complain a lot, “acts like a baby,” and don’t pay attention to others (e.g., French, Conrad, & Turner, 1995).

## **GRATITUDE**

The term gratitude is derived from the Latin concept *gratia*, which entails some variant of grace, gratefulness, and graciousness (Emmons, McCullough, & Tsang, 2003). The ideas flowing from this Latin root pertain to “kindness, generousness, gifts, the beauty of giving and receiving” (Pruyser, 1976, p. 69). In the words of noted University of California – Davis researcher Robert Emmons (2005, personal communication), gratitude emerges upon recognizing that one has obtained a positive outcome from another individual who behaved in a way that was (1) costly to him or her, (2) valuable to the recipient, and (3) intentionally rendered. The positive outcome appears to have come from another person; however, the benefit may be derived from a nonhuman action or event. In a related vein, it has been suggested that events of larger magnitude also should produce higher levels of gratitude (Trivers,

1971). Moreover, Ortony, Clore, and Collins (1988) have reasoned that gratitude should be greater when the giving person's actions are judged praiseworthy and when they deviate positively from which was expected.

Gratitude is widely regarded as a virtue and ingratitude as a vice (Bono, Emmons, & McCullough, 2004). Studies show that feelings of gratitude are among the more commonly experienced positive emotions, making us feel happy, contented, and joyful (Bono et al., 2004; Emmons & McCullough, 2004). Expressions of gratitude can range from a polite and obligatory "thank you" in everyday life to an appreciation and thankfulness for life itself. A prominent feature of gratefulness is an appreciation for the enhanced well-being that derives from another source (e.g., a person, God or nature). Feelings and expressions of gratitude would seem particularly strong when the benefit received was freely given and when the benefactor incurred some cost and sacrifice (Emmons & Shelton, 2002).

Gratitude is an important component of positive psychology and essential to living the good life, but until recently psychologists have largely ignored it. Although the developmental trajectory of gratitude remains unclear, children seem to first experience and express gratitude around 6–8 years of age. Unfortunately, gratitude measures designed specifically for youth are currently nonexistent. Therefore, although data support using adult gratitude scales with children and adolescents, youth measures are needed. Gratitude is related to a host of positive outcomes, including subjective well-being, relational support, and prosocial behavior. Counting blessings daily for 2 weeks has been associated with greater school satisfaction at immediate posttest and at 3-week follow-up. Beyond

improving social and emotional functioning, gratitude also may promote academic gains via achievement motivation.

Gratitude research with adolescents is critically needed to understand and promote the full spectrum of youth development – namely, flourishing into happy, productive and contributing members of society. There are five known published studies examining gratitude in adolescence. Three of the studies use cross-sectional designs (Baumgarten-Tramer, 1938; Froh, Yurkewicz, & Kashdan, 2009b; Gleason & Weintraub, 1976), and the remaining two used experimental designs (Froh, Kashdan, Ozimkowski, & Miller, 2009a; Froh, Sefick, & Emmons, 2008). The first published study on gratitude in adolescence investigated its development (Baumgarten-Tramer, 1938).aside from one study examining politeness routines in youth (Gleason & Weintraub, 1976) – where they found that children before the age of 6 thanked an adult for giving them candy considerably less often (21%) than 10 (83%) and 11-16 year-olds (88%) – and another study exclusively examining some of gratitude’s benefits to early adolescent development (Froh et al., 2009b), this remains the only known attempt at scientifically elucidating the developmental trajectory and manifestation of gratitude in youth.

In the second study (Froh et al., 2009a), children and adolescents from a parochial school were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: a gratitude intervention or a control condition. Students in the gratitude conditions were asked to write the letter to a benefactor whom they have never properly thanked, to read the letter to the benefactor in person, and to then share their experience with other students in the same condition. Students in the controlled condition were asked to record and think about

daily events. Findings indicate that youth low in positive affect in the gratitude condition, compared with youth in the control condition, reported greater gratitude and positive affect at post treatment and greater positive affect at the 2-month follow-up.

It is now known that grateful adolescents are happy adolescents, and the effect of gratitude interventions with adolescents mirror those with adults.

### **LIFE SATISFACTION**

Human is an objective creature always evaluating his life situation. He will feel no satisfaction until he gains his goals. Perhaps it can be said that the final aspiration of every human being is to attain his goals and desires and this attainment leads to life satisfaction. Therefore, life satisfaction is the central aspect of human welfare. It is ultimate goal and every human being strives to achieve this goal throughout the life.

Life satisfaction is a multidimensional concept related to psychological and environmental life conditions. The term life satisfaction can be split into two words – life and satisfaction.

Life is the state of functional activity peculiar to organized matter and especially to the portion of it such as, constituting on animal or plant before death (Oxford Dictionary, 1990).

Life is what one's thinking makes it, one makes it human or hell through one's thinking (Bartlett, 1986). Life is an object to which the effect or ambition is directed. In fact, no life can be without a goal.

Satisfaction is a Latin word that means to make or do enough. Satisfaction is a word difficult to define. Webster's Encyclopedic Dictionary of English Language (1997) defines it as an "act of satisfying or state of being satisfied, contentment in possession and enjoyment; and to satisfy is to gratify fully the wants, wishes or desires of any to supply to the full extent, with what is wished for". In general, the word satisfaction is defined as fulfillment or gratification of desires, feelings or expressing pleasures, happiness, contentment and optimism. It is the knack of finding a positive for every negative. Satisfaction wholly depends upon the individual's environment, caliber, behavior and nature. It is more concerned with mind than the material world. Psychologically speaking, satisfaction may occur on a conscious, pre conscious and unconscious level and brings an organism to a balanced state. Satisfaction with one's life implies a contentment with 'or' acceptance of one's life circumstances, or the fulfillment of one's wants and needs for one's life as a whole (Goldenson, 1984).

Life satisfaction is, thus, a global concept, referring to life as a whole rather than to specific aspects (Bowling 1997). It is defined as cognitive evaluation administered by each individual about general life quality or its special domains. It reflects our assessments of many different facets of our lives, such as physical health, mental health, social relationships, and our sense of accomplishment (such as through paid and unpaid work).

The distinction between life satisfaction and quality of life is not clear and the concepts are sometimes used interchangeably (Mannel & Dupuis 1996). According to Mannel and Dupuis (1996), p. 60), 'Life

satisfaction and morale scales measure more enduring and stable cognitions, whereas happiness scales measure more temporary and transient affective states'. Further, they consider life satisfaction as a well-being measure of quality of life. They also suggest that research on life satisfaction has changed from focusing on pathology and coping to quality of life (Mannel & Dupuis 1996), which confirms the idea of a strong relation between the concepts. The distinction between health related quality of life and life satisfaction is more obvious since health-related quality of life focuses on factors related to health only (Spiro & Bosse´ 2000).

Despite conceptualizations of health as lack of disease, recent studies indicated that some adolescents in spite of manifesting few psychological disorder signs have low life satisfaction. These adolescents indicate low level of social performance, physical health and education in comparison to adolescents having few disorders and high life satisfaction.

The ideas and attitudes adolescents have regarding themselves influence, and are influenced by, their responses to everything that happens in their lives. Their tendency to be angry will be influenced strongly by their attitudes toward themselves. A physically fit person tends to have a positive self-concept, which will make him see and understand himself, others and things in the environment with clarity and will help him deal with them more effectively. It also results in a decrease in his level of aggression. He will also be able to appreciate things and people around him and show gratitude towards them and in turn will be satisfied with himself, others and life in general. Yoga has the surest remedies for the physical as well psychological problems. Yoga practices are the surest

way to acquire a disease free and vigorous body and the positive health is sure to facilitate the process of mind control. It makes the organs of the body active in their functioning and has good effects on the internal functioning of the human body as well as mind. Yoga changes our attitude towards life.



## **Chapter 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

1. The present study is on the impact of yogic practices on some psychological variables among adolescents. A group of 30 boys and 20 girls aged between 16 to 18 years and similar in educational standard and economic status were tested on seven psychological variables, viz; Self- Concept, Aggressive Reactions to Frustration, Tolerance, Ahimsa, Truth fullness, Faith and Fidelity. The group was then divided into two having boys and girls of similar characteristics on these variables. One group (Experimental) was given yogic practices of Asanas, Pranayama and Yogic Jogging for 15 days daily for 1:30 hours in the morning while the other group (control) was set free to adopt their original life style. At the end of 15th day both the groups were tested on seven psychological variables. It was found that the subjects of experimental group receiving yogic practices have significantly high scores on Self-concept, Tolerance, Ahimsa, Truthfulness, Faith and Fidelity but low on Extragression and Ego defense and high on Obstacle-Dominance, Need Persistence and Introgression of aggressive reactions to frustration as compared to their scores on these variables before start of the yogic practices. There was no significant change in scores of control group of subjects on these variables. Yoga is a science. It is a part of Rig-Veda a holy book in India written millions of year ago. That is the reason India has a glorious history of yoga. (S.N. Dubey)

2. In the present study physiological effects of yoga practices and

transcendental meditation is seen on health and disease. Since a decade, there has been a surge in the research on yoga, but we do find very few reviews regarding yogic practices and transcendental meditation (TM) in health and disease. Keeping this in view, a Medline search was done to review relevant articles in English literature on evaluation of physiological effects of yogic practices and TM. Data were constructed; issues were reviewed and found that there were considerable health benefits, including improved cognition, respiration, reduced cardiovascular risk, body mass index, blood pressure, and diabetes. Yoga also influenced immunity and ameliorated joint disorders. (P A Balaji, Smitha R Varne, and Syed Sadat Ali)

3. In 2008, researchers at the University of Utah presented preliminary results from a study of varied participants' responses to pain. They note that people who have a poorly regulated response to stress are also more sensitive to pain. Their subjects were 12 experienced yoga practitioners, 14 people with fibromyalgia (a condition many researchers consider a stress-related illness that is characterized by hypersensitivity to pain), and 16 healthy volunteers. When the three groups were subjected to more or less painful thumbnail pressure, the participants with fibromyalgia — as expected — perceived pain at lower pressure levels compared with the other subjects. Functional MRIs showed they also had the greatest activity in areas of the brain associated with the pain response. In contrast, the yoga practitioners had the highest pain tolerance and lowest pain-related brain activity during the MRI.

The study underscores the value of techniques, such as yoga, that can help a person regulate their stress and, therefore, pain responses. (University Of Utah)

4. Several studies have shown that yoga helps to improve symptoms of anxiety and depression in prisoners, and now a study at the University of Oxford has found that it also increases focus and, crucially, decreases impulsivity—a known factor in much prison violence... ‘Attention and impulsivity are very important for this population, which has problems dealing with aggressive impulses,’ says Oxford psychologist Miguel Farias, one of the study's authors. With less anxiety and aggression, he notes, prisoners should be better able to reintegrate into society when they are released. (Miguel Farias)
  
5. A report by the Institute of Science in Society (ISIS) discusses how meditative practices such as yoga, qigong, and many others can alter your genetic expression, through its beneficial effects on your mind. One recent study came to the conclusion that happiness, optimism, life satisfaction, and other positive psychological attributes are associated with a lower risk of heart disease. As reported by ISIS: "Yogic meditative practices were shown to have positive effects on the heart rate, blood pressure, and low density lipoprotein cholesterol, and decrease the levels of salivary cortisol, the stress hormone. These findings are consistent with a down regulation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis and the sympathetic nervous system, both of which are known to be

over-activated by the stressful western lifestyle. Now, a series of new studies on gene expression profiles in immune cells circulating in the blood are showing that yogic/meditative practices have profound effects at the molecular level." (Institute of Science in Society)

6. In a German study published in 2005, 24 women who described themselves as "emotionally distressed" took two 90-minute yoga classes a week for three months. Women in a control group maintained their normal activities and were asked not to begin an exercise or stress-reduction program during the study period. Though not formally diagnosed with depression, all participants had experienced emotional distress for at least half of the previous 90 days. They were also one standard deviation above the population norm in scores for perceived stress (measured by the Cohen Perceived Stress Scale), anxiety (measured using the Spielberger State-Trait Anxiety Inventory), and depression (scored with the Profile of Mood States and the Centre for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale, or CES-D). At the end of three months, women in the yoga group reported improvements in perceived stress, depression, anxiety, energy, fatigue, and well-being. Results indicate that depression scores improved by 50%, anxiety scores by 30%, and overall well-being scores by 65%. Initial complaints of headaches, back pain, and poor sleep quality also resolved much more often in the yoga group than in the control group.
7. One uncontrolled, descriptive 2005 study examined the effects of a

single yoga class for inpatients at a New Hampshire psychiatric hospital. The 113 participants included patients with bipolar disorder, major depression, and schizophrenia. After the class, average levels of tension, anxiety, depression, anger, hostility, and fatigue dropped significantly, as measured by the Profile of Mood States, a standard 65-item questionnaire that participants answered on their own before and after the class. Patients who chose to participate in additional classes experienced similar short-term positive effects.

Some of the studies suggest yoga can have a similar effect to antidepressants and psychotherapy, by influencing neurotransmitters and boosting serotonin. More recent research has also found that yoga reduces anxiety and aggression among prison inmates. After doing yoga once a week for 10 weeks, participants reported feeling less stressed, and also scored better on tests of executive control, indicating a higher degree of thoughtfulness and attention to their surroundings.

## Chapter 3 METHODOLOGY

For psychological studies to be scientific and sound, research methodology is necessary. Considering the nature of the topic a systematic research design was planned and care was taken at every step that things are being carried out significantly.

### AIM OF THE STUDY:

The aim of the study was to find out the effect of Yogic Practices on self concept, aggression, gratitude and life satisfaction of adolescents.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To find out the effect of Yogic Practices on Self Concept of adolescents.
- To find out the effect of Yogic practices on Aggression of adolescents.
- To find out the effect of Yogic Practices on Gratitude of adolescents.
- To find out the effect of Yogic Practices on Life Satisfaction of adolescents.

### HYPOTHESIS:

- There is a significant positive effect of yogic practices on self-concept
- There is a significant positive effect of yogic practices on

aggression

- There is a significant positive effect of yogic practices on gratitude
- There is a significant positive effect of yogic practices on life satisfaction

### **SAMPLE:**

A group of 50 adolescents aged between 15 to 18 years of Nagpur city in India were selected to serve as subjects. The subjects were selected through simple random sampling. Utmost care was taken while selecting the subjects. The subjects belonged to different schools and junior colleges. The subjects were selected from Baba Nanak Junior College, Mount Carmel Girls' High School, Vidya Niketan Convent, New English High School, Hadas High School and Junior College and Lady Amritbai Daga and Smt. Ratnidevi Purohit College for Women.

### **TOOLS USED FOR DATA COLLECTION:**

Standardized scales with high reliability co-efficient were selected for measuring different variables in the study.

#### **1. Self-Evaluation Scale**

This scale was developed by Bina Awasthi. It was standardized in 1990 on a large sample of college students. It was found most suitable for measuring six different types of self concepts namely, physical, intellectual, social, moral, emotional and aesthetic. The reliability co-efficient ranges from 0.89 to 0.91. The scale consists of 52 bipolar adjectives. Each bipolar adjective or a pair of adjectives was providing

with 5 rating points on which the subject has to rate himself or herself. To obtain the overall self-concept of the subjects, the scores of all the dimensions of the self-concept are added.

## **2. Gratitude Questionnaire**

The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form (GQ-6) by McCullough, Emmons, and Tsang (2001) has been used to assess individual differences in the proneness to experience gratitude in daily life. The GQ-6 is a short, self-report measure of the disposition to experience gratitude. Participants answer 6 items on a 1 to 7 scale (1 = "strongly disagree", 7 = "strongly agree"). Two items are reverse-scored to inhibit response bias. The GQ-6 has good internal reliability, with alphas between .82 and .87, and there is evidence that the GQ-6 is positively related to optimism, life satisfaction, hope, spirituality and religiousness, forgiveness, empathy and prosocial behavior, and negatively related to depression, anxiety, materialism and envy. The GQ-6 takes less than 5 minutes to complete, but there is no time limit.

## **3. Aggression Questionnaire**

Aggression Questionnaire developed by Buss and Perry consists of 29 items related with 4 factors viz. Physical Aggression (PA), Verbal Aggression (VA), Anger (A) and Hostility (H). The subjects had to rate the statements on a 5- point scale indicating how uncharacteristic or characteristic each statement was in describing them individually. The ratings were 1- extremely uncharacteristic of me, 2- somewhat uncharacteristic of me, 3- neither uncharacteristic nor characteristic of me, 4- somewhat characteristic of me, 5- extremely characteristic of me. The total score of aggression is the sum of the factor scores. There is no time limit for the Questionnaire to complete.



#### **4. Satisfaction with Life Scale**

Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffen, 1985) is a 5-item scale designed to measure global cognitive judgments of one's life satisfaction (not a measure of either positive or negative affect). Participants indicate how much they agree or disagree with each of the 5 items using 7-point scale that ranges from 7 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree. To score the responses, the ratings across all the five items are added. Normative data are presented for the scale, which shows good convergent validity with other scales and with other types of assessments of subjective well-being. Life satisfaction as assessed by the SWLS shows a degree of temporal stability (e.g., .54 for 4 years), yet the SWLS has shown sufficient sensitivity to be potentially valuable to detect change in life satisfaction during the course of clinical intervention. Further, the scale shows discriminant validity from emotional well-being measures. The SWLS is recommended as a complement to scales that focus on psychopathology or emotional well-being because it assesses an individuals' conscious evaluative judgment of his or her life by using the person's own criteria.

#### **VARIABLES UNDER STUDY:**

Independent Variable: Yogic Practices

Dependent Variables: 1. Self-concept  
2. Aggression  
3. Gratitude  
4. Life Satisfaction

#### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

The pre-test post-test design was used for assessing the effectiveness of Yogic Practices on self concept, aggression, gratitude and life satisfaction of adolescents.

### **PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION**

The subjects were made comfortable, rapport was established and then the subject was assured that the responses given by them will be kept confidential and they should feel free to mark their response truthfully.

All the subjects were tested to assess self- concept, aggression, gratitude, life satisfaction. After assessing the group on variables under study, the group was given Yogic practices for 30 days daily in the morning from 6.00 to 7.30 am. The Yogic practice included:

**TABLE-1: Session Plan**

Sr. No	Yogic Practices	Duration
1	Chanting of 'OM'	5 minutes
2	Surya Namaskar	8 minutes
3	<b>Asanas</b> Tadasana Vrikshasana Trikonasana Gomukhasana Padmasana Vajrasana Matsyaasana Bhujangasana Shalabhasana Charkasana Paschitmotanasana Mayurasana Halasana Sarvangasana Bakasana Shavasana	40 minutes
4	Silent Meditation	2 minutes
5	Pranayama Bhastarika Kapalabhati Sheetli Sheetkari Ujjai Anulom- Vilom Bhramari	30 minutes
6	Hasyasana	5 minutes

On 15th day the subjects were tested on the same variables on which they were tested at the start of the study.

**STATISTICAL TREATMENT OF DATA**

After computing means and SD for describing the data, they were further treated by 'correlated t test' in order to draw inference about them.

Computing 'correlated t test' also facilitated conclusions about the significance of obtained results.

Step 1. Computing means and SD

Step 2. Computing correlated t test

## **DISCUSSION**

First the descriptive statistical values of means and SD were discussed.

Then based on the inferential t values the findings were interpreted with regard to whether the hypothesis got sufficient support or not.

# **Chapter 4** STATISTICAL INTERPRETATION OF RESULT

The present study was designed to see the effect of Yogic Practices on Self-Concept, Aggression, Gratitude and Life Satisfaction of adolescents. 50 adolescents were randomly selected for the study. It was hypothesized that giving yogic practices to adolescents will help increase their self-concept, gratitude and life satisfaction as well reduce their aggressive behavior. The Self-Evaluation Scale by Bina Awasthi, Aggression Questionnaire by Buss and Perry, Gratitude Questionnaire by Michael. E. McCullough, Robert A. Emmons and Jo Ann Tsung and Satisfaction with Life Scale by Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffen were used for the study.

Mean and Standard Deviation were calculated for the Pre-test and Post-test.

TABLE – 4.1

Mean, SD, pre and post test scores of adolescents on various psychological variables under study

<b>VARIABLES</b>	<b>PRE-TEST</b>		<b>POST-TEST</b>	
	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>SELF CONCEPT</b>	<b>88.60</b>	<b>29.37</b>	<b>94.02</b>	<b>24.25</b>
<b>AGGRESSION</b>	<b>92.74</b>	<b>3.13</b>	<b>84.66</b>	<b>21.21</b>
<b>GRATITUDE</b>	<b>18.50</b>	<b>6.58</b>	<b>21.4</b>	<b>6.29</b>
<b>LIFE SATISFACTION</b>	<b>17.02</b>	<b>4.70</b>	<b>22.04</b>	<b>3.90</b>

From the mean values it could be seen that the post-test mean of Self-Concept is more than the pre-test mean. In the pre-test, the mean score of the group was 88.60 (SD = 29.37) which increased to 94.02 (SD = 24.25). In Aggression scores, a significant decrease is observed from pre-test to post-test session in the adolescents. The mean reduced from 92.74 (SD = 3.13) in pre-test to 84.66 (SD = 21.21) in post-test. As it can be seen, there is a significant increase in gratitude of adolescents from pre-test to post-test. The gratitude scores increased from 18.50 (SD = 6.58) in pre-test to 21.4 (SD = 6.29) in post-test. A significant increase is observed in adolescents' life satisfaction scores from pre-test to the post-test. The mean score in the pre-test was 17.02 (SD = 4.70) which increased to 22.04 (SD = 3.90).

Apparently, it appears that Yogic Practices do have positive and significant effects on Self-Concept, Aggression, Gratitude and Life Satisfaction of adolescents. However, only on the basis of descriptive statistical technique, conclusions cannot be drawn. Hence to find out the difference between two means, the data was treated by t test for correlated means.

TABLE- 4.2

Table showing t summary for Self-Concept

	PRE-TEST		POST-TEST		t
SELF CONCEPT	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	
	88.6	29.37	94.02	24.25	7.63**

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

In total self concept scores a significant increase was observed from pre test to post test session in the adolescents ( $t = 7.63$ ,  $df = 49$ ). In the pre test the mean of Self-Concept was 88.6 which increased to 94.02. From the above table it is observed that the t is significant at 0.01 level which shows that giving yogic practices to adolescents helps increasing their self-concept. TABLE-4.3

Table showing t summary for Aggression

	PRE-TEST		POST-TEST		t
AGGRESSION	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	
	92.74	3.13	84.66	21.21	7.15**

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

As it can be seen from the table, there is a significant decrease in aggression of the adolescents from pre test to post test ( $t = 7.15$ ,  $df = 49$ ). In the pre test the mean was 92.74 which reduced to 21.21. The t value for aggression is found to be significant at 0.01 level indicating that giving yogic practices to adolescents helps in reducing their aggression level.

TABLE-4.4

Table showing t summary for Gratitude

	PRE-TEST		POST-TEST		t
GRATITUDE	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	
	18.5	6.58	21.4	6.29	11.5**

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

With respect to gratitude, a significant increase was observed in the adolescents from pre test to post test ( $t = 11.5$ ,  $df = 49$ ). The mean value increased from 18.5 in the pre test to 21.4 in the post test. The t value is found to be significant at 0.01 level suggesting that giving yogic practices to adolescents helps in increasing their gratitude level.



TABLE -4.5

Table showing t summary for Life Satisfaction

	PRE-TEST		POST-TEST		t
LIFE SATISFACTION	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	
	17.02	4.70	22.04	3.90	11.20**

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

It can be seen from the above table that there was significant increase in the life satisfaction from pre test to post test ( $t = 11.20$ ,  $df = 49$ ). The mean value increased from 17.02 in the pre test to 22.04 in the post test. It is observed from the table that the t value is significant at 0.01 level which shows that giving yogic practices to adolescents helps in increasing their life satisfaction.

## **Chapter 5** DISCUSSION

Yoga therapy, as it is practiced today, is the systematic application of yogic practices in the treatment of physiological and psychological aspects of any disequilibrium in the mind and the body.

The present study was designed to assess the impact of yogic practices in increasing self-concept, gratitude, and life satisfaction as well as in reducing aggression. The aim of the research was to facilitate change through the use of yoga as therapy in the adolescents' behavior with particular emphasis on self-concept, aggression, gratitude and life satisfaction. The results revealed that Yogic Practices were highly effective in increasing the self-concept, gratitude and life satisfaction and in reducing aggression in adolescents. The results of this study affirm the hypothesis that a significant positive impact of yogic practice will exist on self concept, aggression, gratitude and life satisfaction.

There are various conditions like appearance, relationship with family members and peers, and aspiration levels etc. that influence the adolescents' self-concept. Yogic practices help them become healthy physically as well as mentally. Being physically fit and mentally stable helps the adolescents have positive self-image, healthy relationships with others as well as have realistic expectations from themselves and others. This can be clearly seen from the results of the study as it shows a significant increase in self-concept of adolescents from pre test to post test. S.N. Dubey (2011) found that yogic practices of Asanas, Pranayama and Yogic Jogging are highly successful in increasing self-concept in adolescents.

Growing evidence suggests that certain adolescents are at high risk for being rejected by their peers and for engaging in various kinds of antisocial behavior. Aggressive behaviors do not always involve physical contact with another person. Verbal aggression such as starting rumors, excluding others, and arguing, can be part of a developmental trajectory leading to adolescent delinquency and Conduct Disorder. Yogic practice helps adolescents maintain positive mental and emotional health. It helps them to be calm and think rationally before speaking or acting, thus, reducing their aggressive behavior. As it can be seen from the results of the study, there is a significant decrease in aggression of adolescents after giving the yogic practices. S.N. Dubey (2011) observed that yogic practices of Asanas, Pranayama and Yogic Jogging are highly successful in reducing aggression in adolescents. Most recent research has found that yoga reduces anxiety and aggression among prison inmates.

Gratitude research with adolescents is critically needed to understand and promote the full spectrum of youth development – namely, flourishing into happy, productive and contributing members of society. It is known that grateful adolescents are happy adolescents, and the effect of gratitude interventions with adolescents mirror those with adults. Yogic practices are highly effective in maintaining a positive physical and mental health. A physically and mentally healthy adolescent will also be able to appreciate things and people around him and show gratitude towards them. A significant increase in the gratitude of adolescents after giving yogic practices has been found in this study. Studies show that feelings of gratitude are among the more commonly experienced positive emotions,

making us feel happy, contented, and joyful (Bono et al., 2004; Emmons & McCulloch, 2004).

Yoga has the surest remedies for the physical as well psychological problems. Yoga practices are the surest way to acquire a disease free and vigorous body and the positive health is sure to facilitate the process of mind control. It makes the organs of the body active in their functioning and has good effects on the internal functioning of the human body as well as mind. Yoga changes our attitude towards life. Adolescents who are physically and mentally stable will have positive experiences in life. They will also be able to deal effectively with unfavorable situations and environment. They are able to see and understand themselves, others and life with better clarity. They will be satisfied with themselves, others and life in general.

One recent study came to the conclusion that happiness, optimism, life satisfaction, and other positive psychological attributes are associated with a lower risk of heart disease. Yogic meditative practices were shown to have positive effects on the heart rate, blood pressure, and low density lipoprotein cholesterol, and decrease the levels of salivary cortisol, the stress hormone (Bohem J K, Kubansky LD, 2012).

## **Chapter 6** CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

The findings of the study “IMPACT OF YOGIC PRACTICES ON SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES” clearly indicate that yoga is an effective form of psychological intervention. It has positive effects on the physical as well as psychological well-being of people. There is no doubt about the strong connection existing between yoga and psychological variables.

It is concluded that Yogic Practices has helped in increasing self-concept, gratitude and life satisfaction of adolescents as well as in reducing their level of aggression. Thus the hypothesis that a significant positive impact of yogic practices will exist on self-concept, aggression, gratitude and life satisfaction is supported. However more research is required in this area.

In conclusion, results show that yogic practices may increase self-concept, gratitude and life satisfaction as well as reduce the level of aggression in adolescents.

### **LIMITATIONS:-**

The sample size is small. Multiple follow up sessions are required to actually evaluate the long term effects of yogic practices on the psychological variables under study. The results of the study are in line with the hypothesis that the yogic practices have a positive effect on a number of psychological factors. However, further extensive research in the area is required to make the results more generalizable.

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## **The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form (GQ-6)**

**Michael E. McCullough, Ph.D., Robert A. Emmons, Ph.D., Jo-Ann  
Tsang, Ph.D.**

Using the scale below as a guide, write a number beside each statement to indicate how much you agree with it.

1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree

3 = slightly disagree 4 = neutral

5 = slightly agree 6 = agree

7 = strongly agree

\_\_\_ 1. I have so much in life to be thankful for.

\_\_\_ 2. If I had to list everything that I felt grateful for, it would be a very long list.

\_\_\_ 3. When I look at the world, I don't see much to be grateful for.

\_\_\_ 4. I am grateful to a wide variety of people.

\_\_\_ 5. As I get older I find myself more able to appreciate the people, events, and situations that have been part of my life history.

\_\_\_ 6. Long amounts of time can go by before I feel grateful to something or someone.

# Aggression Questionnaire

## BUSS AND PERRY

Instructions:

Using the 5 point scale shown below, indicate how uncharacteristic or characteristic each of the following statements is in describing you. Place your rating in the box to the right of the statement.

1 = extremely uncharacteristic of me

2 = somewhat uncharacteristic of me

3 = neither uncharacteristic nor characteristic of me

4 = somewhat characteristic of me

5 = extremely characteristic of me

1. Some of my friends think I am a hothead.
2. If I have to resort to violence to protect my rights, I will.
3. When people are especially nice to me, I wonder what they want.
4. I tell my friends openly when I disagree with them.
5. I have become so mad that I have broken things.
6. I can't help getting into arguments when people disagree with me.
7. I wonder why sometimes I feel so bitter about things.
8. Once in a while, I can't control the urge to strike another person.
9. I am an even-tempered person.
10. I am suspicious of overly friendly strangers.
11. I have threatened people I know.
12. I flare up quickly but get over it quickly.
13. Given enough provocation, I may hit another person.
14. When people annoy me, I may tell them what I think of them.

- 15. I am sometimes eaten up with jealousy.
- 16. I can think of no good reason for ever hitting a person.
- 17. At times I feel I have gotten a raw deal out of life.
- 18. I have trouble controlling my temper.
- 19. When frustrated, I let my irritation show.
- 20. I sometimes feel that people are laughing at me behind my back.
- 21. I often find myself disagreeing with people.
- 22. If somebody hits me, I hit back.
- 23. I sometimes feel like a powder keg ready to explode.
- 24. Other people always seem to get the breaks.
- 25. There are people who pushed me so far that we came to blows.
- 26. I know that “friends” talk about me behind my back.
- 27. My friends say that I’m somewhat argumentative.
- 28. Sometimes I fly off the handle for no good reason.
- 29. I get into fights a little more than the average person.

# SATISFACTION WITH LIFE SCALE

**DIENER, E., EMMONS, R. A., LARSEN, R. J., & GRIFFIN, S.**

Instructions: Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1 - 7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

- 7 - Strongly agree
- 6 - Agree
- 5 - Slightly agree
- 4 - Neither agree nor disagree
- 3 - Slightly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 1 - Strongly disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ In most ways my life is close to my ideal.

\_\_\_\_\_ The conditions of my life are excellent.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am satisfied with my life.

\_\_\_\_\_ So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

\_\_\_\_\_ If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.