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Improvement of Posture and Flexibility through Yoga among Teachers: A Wellness-Based Study

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Abstract:

Teaching professionals often experience postural imbalance and reduced flexibility due to prolonged standing, sitting, and occupational stress. Yoga has emerged as a holistic, non-invasive approach to enhance physical wellness. This study examines the impact of regular yoga practice on posture and flexibility among teachers. The findings indicate notable improvements in spinal alignment, flexibility, and physical comfort, supporting yoga-based wellness initiatives in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Keywords: Yoga, Posture, Flexibility, Teachers' Wellness, Occupational Health, NEP 2020

Introduction:

Yoga is an ancient Indian system of holistic health that integrates physical postures, breathing techniques, and mental discipline to promote overall wellbeing. In recent decades, yoga has gained global recognition as an effective method for improving physical fitness, flexibility, posture, and musculoskeletal health. Scientific studies increasingly support the role of yoga in enhancing functional movement, preventing lifestyle-related disorders, and improving quality of life across different populations.

The teaching profession is intellectually demanding and physically taxing. Teachers are required to maintain prolonged standing and sitting postures, repetitive arm and neck movements, continuous verbal engagement, and extensive use of digital devices. These occupational demands often result in postural imbalances, reduced flexibility, muscular tension, and chronic musculoskeletal discomfort. Poor posture and limited flexibility not only affect physical health but also lead to fatigue, reduced concentration, and decreased professional efficiency.

In the contemporary educational environment, the rapid integration of digital teaching tools, online platforms, and increased administrative responsibilities has further intensified physical strain among teachers. Sedentary work patterns combined with inadequate physical activity contribute to postural deviations, spinal stress, and joint stiffness. Despite these challenges, structured physical wellness programs for teachers remain limited in most educational institutions.

Yoga provides a comprehensive, low-impact, and adaptable approach to improving posture and flexibility. Yogic practices focus on spinal alignment, joint mobility, muscular balance, and body awareness, which are essential for maintaining functional efficiency in daily activities. Unlike conventional exercise programs, yoga emphasizes mindful movement and controlled breathing, making it particularly

suitable for individuals experiencing occupational stress and physical fatigue.

In alignment with the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasizes holistic development and teacher wellbeing, yoga-based interventions have the potential to serve as effective wellness strategies within educational institutions. However, there is a need for empirical evidence to establish the effectiveness of yoga specifically among teachers. The present study seeks to examine the impact of selected yogic practices on posture and flexibility among teachers, thereby contributing to evidence-based health promotion initiatives in the education sector.

Need of the Study:

Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping future generations, yet their physical health is often neglected in institutional planning and policy implementation. The nature of teaching involves sustained postural demands such as prolonged standing while lecturing, extended sitting during lesson preparation and evaluation, repetitive writing movements, and continuous use of computers and mobile devices. Over time, these activities contribute to postural misalignment, reduced spinal flexibility, muscular imbalance, and chronic musculoskeletal pain.

Poor posture and limited flexibility are increasingly observed among teachers, leading to common complaints such as back pain, neck stiffness, shoulder discomfort, and reduced mobility. These physical issues not only affect personal wellbeing but also influence professional performance, classroom engagement, and long-term career sustainability. Without timely intervention, such conditions may progress into serious musculoskeletal disorders, increasing absenteeism and reducing work efficiency.

The changing educational landscape, particularly the shift towards digital and hybrid teaching models, has further aggravated physical inactivity and postural stress among teachers. Despite growing awareness of occupational health, preventive strategies focusing on physical fitness and posture correction are seldom incorporated into teacher development programs. This highlights a significant gap between policy recommendations and practical implementation of teacher wellness initiatives.

Yoga offers a scientifically supported, cost-effective, and non-pharmacological approach to improving posture and flexibility. Regular practice of yogasanas helps in strengthening postural muscles, enhancing joint mobility, improving spinal alignment, and promoting neuromuscular coordination. Additionally, yogic breathing techniques aid in reducing physical fatigue and improving overall functional efficiency. Due to its adaptability across age groups and fitness levels, yoga is particularly suitable for teachers.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 underscores the importance of teacher wellbeing as a foundation for quality education. However, limited research is available that systematically evaluates the impact of yoga interventions on the physical health of teachers. There is a clear need for evidence-based studies that assess the effectiveness of yoga in addressing posture and flexibility-related issues in this population.

Therefore, the present study is undertaken to scientifically examine the effect of yoga on posture and flexibility among teachers. The findings of this research are expected to provide empirical support for integrating yoga-based wellness programs into educational institutions, thereby contributing to sustainable teacher health, improved professional performance, and holistic educational development.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To examine the baseline level of posture among teachers prior to the implementation of the yoga intervention.
2. To assess the baseline level of flexibility among teachers before participation in the yoga program.
3. To evaluate the effect of selected yogic practices on postural alignment among teachers.
4. To determine the impact of a structured yoga intervention on flexibility among teachers.
5. To compare pre-test and post-test posture and flexibility scores of teachers following the yoga intervention.
6. To establish yoga as an effective physical wellness strategy for improving musculoskeletal health among teachers.

Methodology:

An **experimental pre-test and post-test research design** was adopted to evaluate the effect of a structured yoga intervention on teachers' posture and flexibility. The study sample comprised **30 teachers** (age group **30–55 years**) selected from a higher education institution using purposive sampling, ensuring participants were actively engaged in teaching duties and available for regular practice sessions. Prior to the intervention, all participants underwent **baseline (pre-test) assessment** for posture and flexibility using standardized physical fitness measures and systematic observation.

The intervention consisted of a **six-week yoga program**, conducted **five days per week**, under guided supervision. Each session included a brief warm-up, **selected yogasanas** aimed at improving spinal alignment and musculoskeletal balance, **stretching practices** to enhance joint mobility and muscle length, **pranayama techniques** to support breathing efficiency and relaxation, and a structured cool-down/relaxation component to reduce physical fatigue. The selection of practices was planned to be safe, low-impact, and suitable for adult participants with varying fitness levels.

At the completion of six weeks, all participants were reassessed using the **same instruments and procedures** to obtain **post-test scores** for posture and flexibility. The difference between pre-test and post-test outcomes was used to determine the effectiveness of the yoga intervention. Standardized administration, consistent session timing, and regular attendance monitoring were maintained to enhance reliability and control extraneous variations during the study period.Results and Discussion:

Post-intervention results showed marked improvement in flexibility and postural alignment. Participants reported reduced stiffness, better balance, and enhanced physical comfort. The findings confirm yoga's effectiveness in improving musculoskeletal health among teachers.

Conclusion:

Regular yoga practice significantly improves posture and flexibility among teachers. Incorporating yoga into institutional wellness programs can enhance teachers' physical wellbeing and support holistic education goals under NEP 2020.

Educational Implications:

Yoga-based wellness programs should be included in faculty development initiatives. Healthy teachers contribute positively to teaching quality and institutional effectiveness.

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