

The Innovative Methods Of Teaching Of ABC Of Yoga Charts For School Children: Design & Development

Manish Kumar¹ & Paran Gowda²

¹Ph.D Research Scholar, University of Patanjali, Haridwar, India

²Professor, Yoga Science, University of Patanjali, Haridwar, India

Abstract

Background

At primary level of education children are not aware of yogic terminology.^{1,2} Though, books containing twenty six alphabets of English depicting Yoga poses are available which are specific for yoga postures (asanas) only. There is a need for teaching yogic terms in an easy & effective manner to young children. The English alphabets designed & developed in “ABC of Yoga charts” may help children to learn essential yogic terms at initial level of learning.

Aims & Objectives

The main objectives of the study are to design & develop ABC of Yoga charts, assess its efficacy and to find how children may improve learning of basic terms of yoga.

Materials & Methods

A sample of fifty eight students from 1st to 3rd standard aged between 5 to 8 years was taken from a primary school. Pre & post tests were conducted before & after one hour learning of “ABC of Yoga Charts” along with practice of Lotus Pose, Om Chanting, Trataka (Gazing), Hasya Yoga (Laughing), Quiet Breathing and Prayer daily for five days.

Results & Conclusions

After analyzing the data by paired t-test, a significant difference was observed by using the present method in teaching yogic terminology. The use of “ABC of yoga charts”, enabled children to learn yogic terms in a very easy & play way manner. Hence, it may be used as a media for pouring the seeds of yoga in the forthcoming generations at primary level of education system.

Key Words ABC of Yoga, Yogic Terminology.

Key Message

As the results of using ABC of yoga charts designed for school children as a teaching tool or media in the proposed study are highly significant, we request the readers, education policy makers & administrators to popularize it so that children could grasp yogic terms at the initial stage of learning.

Introduction

In schools, especially in elementary schools, children from 1st to 3rd standard in the age group of 5 to 8 years, yoga concepts should be made clearer so that their base could be made stronger and children may understand yogic terminology well before its practical uses. The book “ABC of Yoga for kids” by Power, T. A. (2009)¹ is compiled with the alphabets, rhyming vignettes, and colorful illustrations to introduce children to yoga in a kid-friendly way. Each of the fifty-six

different poses featured in this multiple award-winning book delightfully promote flexibility, strength, and coordination while encouraging children to incorporate healthy activity but factually the posture (asana) is only a mere part of Ashtang Yoga. In this book the other important yogic terms are missing. If we could educate the basics of yogic terms from 1st to 3rd level, it would create seeds of yoga in growing brains of tiny tots. On reviewing the already been performed work it is found that in the published

ABC-for-Me-ABC-Yoga- by Christiane-Engel² main focus is only upon “Yoga postures or Asanas”. In fact, a common man concept of yoga is “asana” or yogic posture only. In the above published book, the different asanas are described with illustrated pictures. In fact “asana” is mere one part of Ashtang Yoga (eight fold yoga). This book illustrates & describes almost all alphabets by different yogic postures and not in terms of yoga as a whole. No doubt, Asana is also an important limb of yoga and a child may understand well about yogic postures (asanas), but the remaining part of ashtang yoga is missing in it. In the proposed study, it has been tried to explore the basic terminology used in yoga along with attractive colored pictures in the form of ABC of Yoga Charts. Most important terms from yoga dictionary³ were chosen with concrete meaning with the help of attractive and appealing pictures. ABC of Yoga charts designed in this study may nourish the child at base level about yogic terminology in English. Later on, it may be explored in other languages also. It has been tried to compile simple yogic terms in this work. The introduction of these terms along with concrete meaning at the earlier stage of education is the need of the hour and should be included in the syllabi. In the schools, “yoga” curriculum is introduced but the main focus is on “asana” only. Even the competitions which are organized are of “yogic poses” only and if a child makes best yoga pose, it is understood that he or she is the master of yoga. A child hardly realizes what yoga is in real terms. It is therefore, important to develop a simple module by which a small child may learn & understand the basic terms used in yoga. The results of the captured study “Effects of a classroom-based yoga intervention on cortisol and behavior in second-and third-grade students: A pilot study” suggests that school-based yoga may be advantageous for stress management and behavior.⁴ Davidson and colleagues suggest that the

benefits of yoga that have been observed in adults are also relevant for children and adolescents in school-based settings. However, initial results are promising while having research on yoga interventions in schools.⁵ Serwacki and Cook-Cottone reviewed 12 preliminary studies of yoga in schools and concluded that the yoga interventions exerted positive effects on factors such as cognitive efficiency, emotional balance, negative thought patterns, attentional control, anxiety, reactivity, emotional and physical arousal, and negative behavior.⁶ Parshad's study demonstrates that yoga's physical postures and breathing exercises improve muscle strength, blood circulation and oxygen uptake, flexibility, and hormone function. In addition, Parshad found that relaxation induced by meditation helps to stabilize the autonomic nervous system with a tendency toward parasympathetic dominance.⁷ This study aims to analyze the evidence for clinical applications of yoga among the pediatric population. In it, randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and nonrandomized controlled trials (NRCTs) were selected for individuals aged 0 to 21 years and included yoga or yoga-based interventions. This study included physical fitness, motor skills/strength, [irritable bowel syndrome](#), [cardiorespiratory](#) effects, psychological disorders, mental health, behavior and development, and birth outcomes following prenatal yoga.⁸ It suggests that a comprehensive mission for schools is to educate students to be knowledgeable, responsible, socially skilled, healthy, caring, and contributing citizens. ⁹ This study discusses yoga as a potential tool for children to regulate themselves and deal with stress. Yoga provides emotional balance by training of mind and body. They argue that yoga in schools helps students improve resilience, mood, and self-regulation skills pertaining to emotions and stress. They need such tools to listen inward to their bodies, feelings, and ideas. Yoga may assist them in developing in sound ways, to strengthen

themselves, and be contributing social beings. 10 As the number of contemplative practitioners grows, school administrators, more teachers and parents, are exploring ways to introduce contemplation in school settings to support mindful learning. Contemplative education refers more to how one learns than what one learns.11 Yoga is being used by a growing number of youth and adults as a means of improving overall health and fitness. There is also a progressive trend toward use of yoga as a mind-body complementary and alternative medicine intervention to improve specific physical and mental health conditions. The majority of available studies with children and adolescents suggest benefits to using yoga as a therapeutic intervention and show very few adverse effects. Yoga appears promising as a complementary therapy for children and adolescents.12 This study suggests that implementation of yoga is acceptable and feasible in a secondary school setting and has the potential of playing a protective or preventive role in maintaining mental health. 13 This study suggests that little is known about modifying mindfulness-based stress reduction for school children (MBSR) to make it applicable and effective for children. The goals of this is to provide an overview of an MBSR curriculum designed for children in grades 4 through 6 and their parents.14 The objective of this research was to examine the evidence for delivering yoga-based interventions in schools. They concluded that effects of participating in school-based yoga programs appeared to be beneficial for the most part. Findings speak to the need for greater methodological rigor and an increased understanding of the mechanisms of success for school-based yoga interventions. Twelve published studies were identified. Samples for which yoga was implemented as an intervention included youths with autism, intellectual disability, learning disability, and emotional disturbance, as well as typically

developing youths.15 It suggests there is an increasing interest in the use of yoga for children to calm the mind and increase health and wellbeing. Despite scant but increasing evidence supporting the efficacy of yoga in children, special yoga programs within schools are being developed for children and adolescents. This increasing popularity of the potential benefits of yoga may encourage parents to consider yoga for their children and request referrals or clarification of the purported effects. A description of the philosophical basis of yoga, the basic components of a yoga practice, safety concerns, and how to locate and evaluate a yoga program for children will be addressed. 16 The captured research states that school-age children report much stress in their daily lives, which may lead to psychological and physical problems. The purpose of this study was to investigate the efficacy of [mindfulness](#) training through yoga with school-age girls to reduce perceived stress, enhance coping abilities, self-esteem, enhance coping abilities, [self-regulation](#), and explore the relationship between the dose of the intervention and outcomes. Self-esteem and self-regulation increased in both groups. The intervention group was more likely to report greater appraisal of stress ($p < .01$) and greater frequency of coping ($p < .05$).17 This study investigated students' perceptions of an 8-week school-based yoga program designed as a preventive intervention to reduce stress and improve behavior in students at risk for learning problems. The program was implemented in a low-income, urban neighborhood with 24 third grade students. Three themes emerged from the focus groups: The yoga program helped students (a) feel calm and focused, (b) gave them strategies to control their behavior in stressful situations, and (c) supported a positive self-esteem. It suggests that school-based interventions such as yoga programs may help to prevent behavioral problems, improve social participation, and help students to engage in classroom

learning. 18 This study reveals that children in underserved, urban communities are at risk for a range of negative outcomes related to stress, including social-emotional difficulties, behavior problems, and poor academic performance.

Mindfulness-based approaches may improve adjustment among chronically stressed and disadvantaged youth by enhancing self-regulatory capacities. Stress responses, depressive symptoms, and peer relations were assessed at baseline and post-intervention. Findings suggest the intervention was liked by the students, teachers, and school administrators and results a positive impact on problematic responses to stress including rumination, intrusive thoughts, and emotional arousal.¹⁹

In this study it was hypothesized can Yoga be of benefit in students for improving their attention and self-esteem (SE)? The main objective of captured research was to assess attention and SE in girls undergoing Integrated Yoga Module (IYM). Sixty low-income high school girls with 15.17 ± 0.64 years of mean age participated in this single group pre-post study. The data was collected before and after 5 days of IYM. The present study suggests that of IYM can result in improvement of attention and SE among students and thereby enhancing their mental health and can help them in improving their academic achievement.²⁰ This study tests the effectiveness of an elementary school based stress management technique on anxiety symptoms and heart rate variability (HRV). The results reveals that an elementary school based short daily stress management can decrease symptoms of anxiety and improve HRV²¹ This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of a universal yoga-based social-emotional wellness promotion program, Transformative Life Skills, on indicators of adolescent emotional distress, prosocially behavior, and attitudes toward violence in a high-risk sample. Participants included

49 students attending an alternative education school in an urban inner-city school district. Results indicated that students who participated in the Transformative Life Skills program demonstrated significant reductions in anxiety, physical arousal, depression, and global psychological distress. Significant reductions in rumination, intrusive thoughts, and emotional arousal were reported as well. ²² The researchers examined the feasibility and potential for positive effects of yoga sessions within a school setting for children with EBD at an urban elementary school. Thirty-seven children with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) in an urban school completed a yoga intervention in small groups (7–10 students) twice per week for 3 ½ months. This study suggests that yoga administered in small groups in an urban school setting is a feasible school intervention for children with emotional and behavioral disorders and may be effective in reducing symptoms. ²³ Its aim was to assess the impact of yoga intervention in a group of Israeli school children residing in the region affected by the Second Lebanon War. It concluded that yoga may be beneficial as an intervention for children in postwar stress situations.²⁴ The purpose of the study was to directly compare the acute effects of participating in a single yoga class versus a single standard physical education (PE) class on student mood. Forty-seven high school students completed self-report questionnaires assessing mood and affect immediately before and after participating in a single yoga class and a single PE class one week later. Participants reported significantly greater decreases in anger, depression, and fatigue from before to after participating in yoga compared to PE. Results suggest that school-based yoga may provide unique benefits for students above and beyond participation in PE.²⁵

Methodology

A sample of 60 students from 1st to 3rd standard (twenty students from each class) were selected randomly from an urban primary school in Distt. Kurukshetra of Haryana state. Pretest & posttest were carried out on these students. In the pretest they were asked to recognize the pictures related to yoga and fill up the blanks of 26 yogic terms used frequently in yoga. The marks scored by the students was collected as pretest data. They were taught with ABC of Yoga charts for half an hour and asked to practice Lotus pose (Padmasana),

Om chanting, Quiet breathing, Hasya Yoga (Laughing Practice), Trataka (Gazing) and Prayer for the next half an hour daily for five days. In the posttest, the students of 2nd & 3rd standard were asked to complete yogic alphabets and match the pictures with yogic terms, whereas 1st standard students were asked to match the pictures with yogic terms only. The score achieved was saved as posttest data of 58 students as two students were absent on posttest day. Thus, the proposed study is based on 58 students.

Designing

In the structured study (designing & developing of ABC of Yoga charts), the following yogic terms have been used:-

A	Asana	Stable and blissful yogic posture
B	Body	1 Gross Sthool sharira 2. Subtle Sukshm sharira 3. Causal Kaaran sharira
C	Chakra	Seven power points in the body
D	Dhyana	Deeper stage of concentration
E	Eagle pose	Pose like eagle (Garurasana)
F	Five Senses	Eyes, Ears, Nostrils, Skin & Tongue
G	Gyan Mudra	Pose in which knowledge is increased
H	Hasya Yoga	Laughing internally
I	Ieeshwer Pranidhana	Surrender to Almighty
J	Jal Neti	The process of cleansing nasal passage
K	Kapal Bhati	A type of cleansing process
L	Lotus pose	Pose like lotus (Padamasana)
M	Mantra	Sacred chanting
N	Nauli	A type of cleansing process
O	Om	The holy word to address God
P	Patanjali	The author sage of Yoga philosophy

Q	Quiet Breathing	Breathing in a quiet way
R	Rishi	A sage, who discovers internal truths
S	Swadhyaya	Self-study or study of scriptures
T	Trataka	A cleansing as well as meditation technique
U	Upnishads	Receiving wisdom by sitting near to spiritual teacher
V	Vedas	Oldest sacred texts
W	Wheel Pose	Pose like wheel (Chakrasana)
X	X-Ray Vision	The third eye vision
Y	Yamas	Duties of a yoga aspirant
Z	Zazen	Meditative practice

26 alphabets of English designed and developed as ABC of Yoga charts are illustrated along with colored pictures as in the fig.1 & fig.2.

RESULTS

By using SPSS version 25 following results were obtained which are significant at level of 99.9%.

Paired Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PRE	58	26.7931	11.94837	1.56890
POST	58	42.9224	6.21035	1..81546

Paired Sample Test
Paired 95% Confidence
Differences Interval of the Difference

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	T	df	Sig.(two tailed)
Pair1 Pre-Post	- 16.12931	11.63840	1.52820	- 19.18947	- 13.06915	- 10.554	57	.000

The calculated absolute value of paired t statistic was found 10.554 which is compared with table value 3.291 at 57 degree of freedom which was significant at .0005 level of significance. As the calculated value of t was very much greater than the table value so it could be argued that the media developed in the present study is very much significant and could be used as teaching aid for primary level children .

Conclusions

It may also be concluded that ABC of Yoga charts may improve the learning of basic terms used in yoga. It may also be useful for teaching yogic terms at elementary level of education besides being a wonderful tool for primary school teachers / anganwari and balwari workers to teach essence of yoga at initial stage of schooling. Thus teaching above mentioned terms at initial level of schooling may easily make children curious to learn more

& more about yoga. The education policy makers and administrators may popularize it by making it a part of syllabus for primary classes so that children could be benefitted at the initial age of learning.

Limitations

In the proposed research, the yogic terms have been explained using 26 alphabets of English language only.

As Yoga is a vast subject, many other important terms could not be included in this research and hence missing.

The study is not exhaustive and further researchers may develop yogic charts by using missing important terms in future.

Discussions

The above said designed & developed ABC of Yoga charts may also be shared with the help of mobile applications to globalize it.

Such charts could also be developed in other languages.

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