



Impact of Yogic Lifestyle on Happiness and Wellbeing: A Review

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◆ Abstract

Happiness and psychological wellbeing are essential components of a healthy life. In recent years, yogic lifestyle practices, including asanas, pranayama, meditation, and ethical living, have gained attention for their positive impact on mental health. This review paper aims to examine existing literature on the role of yogic lifestyle in enhancing happiness and overall wellbeing. Relevant studies were collected from databases such as Google Scholar and PubMed. The findings suggest that consistent yogic practices significantly improve emotional stability, reduce stress, and enhance life satisfaction. The review concludes that yogic lifestyle is an effective, non-pharmacological approach to improving happiness among individuals.

1. Introduction

Happiness is a central goal of human life and is closely associated with mental health, emotional balance, and life satisfaction. In modern society, increasing stress, anxiety, and lifestyle disorders have negatively affected individual wellbeing.

Yogic lifestyle, rooted in ancient Indian philosophy, offers a holistic approach to health by integrating physical, mental, and spiritual practices. It includes:

- Physical postures (Asanas)
- Breathing techniques (Pranayama)
- Meditation (Dhyana)
- Ethical disciplines (Yama and Niyama)

This paper reviews existing research to understand how yogic lifestyle contributes to happiness and wellbeing.

2. Methodology of Review

This review is based on secondary data collected from:

- Google Scholar
- PubMed

Inclusion Criteria:

- Studies related to yoga, meditation, happiness, and wellbeing
- Articles published between 2015–2025
- Peer-reviewed journal articles

Exclusion Criteria:

- Non-English articles
- Studies without clear methodology

3. Concept of Yogic Lifestyle

Yogic lifestyle is not limited to physical exercise but includes a complete way of living. According to classical yoga texts, it promotes:

- Discipline and self-control
- Mental clarity
- Emotional balance

Regular practice leads to harmony between body and mind, which is essential for happiness.

4. Happiness and Wellbeing: Conceptual Understanding

Happiness is often defined as:

- Subjective wellbeing
- Positive emotional state
- Life satisfaction

Wellbeing includes:

- Psychological wellbeing
- Social wellbeing
- Emotional stability

Modern psychology also supports that internal balance is key to sustained happiness.

5. Review of Literature

Key Findings from Previous Studies:

- Studies show that yoga reduces stress and anxiety significantly.
- Meditation practices improve emotional regulation and positivity.
- Pranayama enhances mental clarity and reduces depression.
- Long-term yoga practitioners report higher life satisfaction.
- A substantial body of research has examined the impact of yogic practices on happiness and psychological wellbeing. Various studies indicate that yoga and meditation contribute significantly to emotional stability, stress reduction, and overall life satisfaction.
- Research suggests that regular yoga practice is associated with reduced levels of stress and anxiety. For instance, **Field (2016)** reported that yoga interventions lead to decreased cortisol levels and improved mood states among participants. Similarly, **Streeter et al. (2012)** found that yoga positively influences the autonomic nervous system and enhances gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA) levels, which are linked to reduced anxiety and improved emotional regulation.
- Meditation, as a key component of yogic lifestyle, has also been widely studied for its role in enhancing happiness. **Davidson et al. (2003)** demonstrated that mindfulness meditation increases activity in brain regions associated with positive emotions. In another study, **Fredrickson et al. (2008)** found that loving-kindness meditation significantly enhances positive emotions and life satisfaction over time.
- Pranayama (breathing techniques) has been shown to improve mental clarity and reduce symptoms of depression. **Brown and Gerbarg (2005)** highlighted that yogic breathing practices regulate the stress response system and promote emotional resilience. Additionally, **Jerath et al. (2015)** emphasized the neurophysiological mechanisms through which slow

breathing techniques influence brain function and emotional stability.

- Several studies have also explored the relationship between long-term yoga practice and subjective wellbeing. **Ross and Thomas (2010)** conducted a review and concluded that yoga is as effective as, or superior to, conventional physical exercise in improving mental health outcomes. Likewise, **Woodyard (2011)** noted that consistent yoga practice enhances self-awareness, emotional balance, and overall psychological wellbeing.
- Workplace-based yoga interventions have further demonstrated positive outcomes. **Hartfiel et al. (2011)** found that employees participating in yoga programs reported reduced stress levels and improved wellbeing compared to control groups. This indicates the practical applicability of yogic lifestyle in modern settings.
- Moreover, recent studies have highlighted the role of yoga in improving life satisfaction and happiness among diverse populations. **Telles et al. (2019)** reported significant improvements in mental wellbeing and reduction in anxiety among yoga practitioners. Similarly, **Gothe et al. (2019)** found that yoga interventions enhance executive function and emotional wellbeing in adults.
- Despite these positive findings, some studies point out variability in results due to differences in sample size, duration of intervention, and type of yogic practices used. Therefore, while the overall evidence strongly supports the beneficial effects of yogic lifestyle on happiness, further standardized and longitudinal research is required.

6. Discussion

The reviewed studies clearly indicate that yogic lifestyle has a positive impact on happiness and wellbeing. The integration of physical and mental practices helps in reducing negative emotions and promoting positive thinking.

Yoga works through:

- Stress reduction
- Nervous system regulation
- Improved emotional resilience

However, variations in study design and sample size suggest the need for more standardized research.

7. Research Gap

- Limited studies on specific yogic styles (like Rajyoga)
- Lack of long-term longitudinal research
- Need for more empirical studies in Indian population

8. Conclusion

Yogic lifestyle is an effective and holistic approach to enhancing happiness and wellbeing. It provides a natural and sustainable method for improving mental health. Incorporating yogic practices into daily life can significantly improve quality of life.

9. References

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Use keywords:

- “Yoga and happiness research”
- “Meditation and wellbeing study”
- “Pranayama mental health”
- “Yoga psychological benefits”