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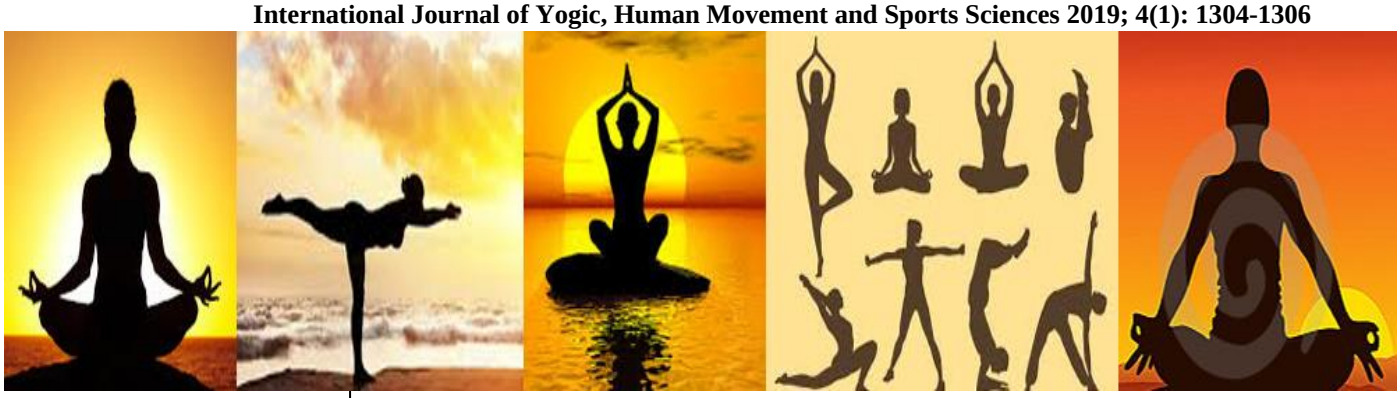

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Introduction of yoga education in schools-the need of the hour to handle cognitive disability

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Abstract
Proper cognitive or intellectual functioning refers to an individual's ability to comprehend, plan and reason. Children with I.Q. scores around 70 or lower are generally classified as having cognitive disabilities. The present paper seeks to study the modalities of cognitive disability and to know about the need of yoga education in schools to face cognitive disability. The study reveals that as education is the process of growth, development and adding new to experiences, yogic education can help a lot in the process. All learning is actually based on nerves. So, proper co-ordination of neuro-muscles is essential to it. Yogic education which is an integrated system for the body, mind and spirit, improves concentration and attention span, can increase intelligence and stimulate creativity. For the data, secondary sources were consulted, and analytical method was used for treating the same.

Keywords: Cognitive, disability, yogic, education, mind

Introduction
Proper cognitive or intellectual functioning refers to an individual's ability to comprehend, plan and reason. A child's intellectual functioning can be assessed by an intelligence test. Children with I.Q. scores around 70 or lower are generally classified as having cognitive disabilities, because the score indicates low intellectual functioning. As education is the process of growth, development and adding new to experiences, yogic education can help a lot in the process. All learning is, actually, based on nerves. So, proper co-ordination of neuro-muscles is essential to it. Yogic education which is an integrated system for the body, mind and spirit, improves concentration and attention span, can increase intelligence and stimulate creativity.

Operational Definitions
Cognitive Disability: Cognitive impairment or intellectual disability is a term used when a person has certain limitations in mental functioning and in skills such as communication, self-help, and social skills. These limitations cause a child to learn and develop more slowly than a typical child. Cognitive disabilities can affect a person's performance in any of the following areas: memory, attention, problem solving, math calculations, and reading comprehension. Cognitive disability ranges from mild to severe.

Yoga Education: Yoga is a form of exercise; yogic education is the integrated system of the body, mind and spirit. It can improve concentration, attention-span, intelligence and creativity. Yoga education brings both physical and mental beauty for all who have it in the true sense of the term.

Reviewing relevant studies
Vazalwar, and Padhi (2008) [4] tried to address some of the issues relate to present educational system and also stress the importance of yoga for the benefit of individuals as well as society as a whole.
Smith-Spark *et al.* [1] Showed that in comparison to the group without dyslexia, the participants with dyslexia self-reported more frequent EF problems in day-to-day life, with these difficulties centering on metacognitive processes (working memory, planning, task monitoring,

and organization) rather than on the regulation of emotion and behaviour. The participants with dyslexia showed significant deficits in EF (inhibition, set shifting, and working memory).

Sudhamayi (2012) [3] wanted to assess the mental health status of teachers and executives and the impact of yoga on their mental health. The hypotheses were-(i) There would be significant difference between teachers and executives on mental health. (ii) There would be significant impact of yoga on mental health of individuals. The sample was 100, and the method was descriptive. The findings showed significant differences in both the cases.

Kumar (2012) [2] sought to study the effect of yogic practices on selected health related physical fitness components and physiological variables among obese women. The sample size was 30 between 30-45 age-group. The method was experimental. The results revealed that experimental group had achieved significant improvement on muscular endurance, cardiorespiratory endurance, body composition, systolic-diastolic blood pressure and heart rate when compared to control group.

Rationale

Education is holistic in nature acknowledging the multiple dimensions of the human personality-physical, intellectual, aesthetic, emotional and spiritual. And yoga is an important prerequisite to the all-round development of human beings. There is an English proverb "A healthy mind lives in a healthy body." So maintenance of good health and sound mind is extremely essential as the same affects the human personality. Out of the multiple dimensions of human personality, intellectual or cognitive aspect is the most important. If there is any obstruction to the intellectual development of a child, it will affect the personality of the child negatively. But in reality it is observed that there are many children who have cognitive disability which is a block to their cognitive development. Yoga education being an integrated system of the mind can do a lot in repairing cognitive disability among the school children.

Objectives

The present study was undertaken with the following objectives

1. To study the modalities of cognitive disability of school children, and
2. To know about the need of yoga education in schools to face cognitive disability.

Sources & method

For the data sources of the present study, primary sources were consulted and analytical method was followed for the treatment of the same.

Modalities of cognitive disability

IQ test is the most common intelligence test through which we can determine the extent of cognitive disability among the subjects. Such disability may appear at any stage, but the same among the school children demands serious attention. The American Association on Mental Deficiency (1973) has identified four levels of mental retardation on its degree

a. **Mild cognitive disability:** This type of disability accounts for around 85% of all cognitive disabilities. Children in this category have IQ scores between 52 and 68 and are usually included in the regular classroom. Common characteristics of mild intellectual disabilities include difficulty remembering previously learned material, problems making predictions, short attention spans, poor short-term memories, and challenges generalizing skills to new situations. These children are slow in learning and are educable.
b. **Moderate cognitive disability:** Students with this type of disability have IQ scores between 36 and 51. 10-11% of the cognitive disabilities fall under this category. These children may have simple communication skills, difficulties in social situations, and also might present with noticeable delays. These children are trainable.
c. **Severe cognitive disability:** Children with severe cognitive disabilities have IQ scores falling between 20-35. They have few communication skills, and they need supervision. They can develop limited levels of personal hygiene and occupational tasks, and many profit from training. Of all cognitive disabilities, only about 3 to 4% of children have a severe cognitive disability.
d. **Profound cognitive disability:** Children with severe cognitive disabilities have IQ scores falling below 20. These children are severely deficient in adaptive behavior and unable to master any but simple tasks. Of all cognitive disabilities only 1-2% of children have profound disability. Both physical and neurological anomalies are there. Resistance to disease and life expectancy are low. They are totally uneducable and not trainable.

However, the National Institute of Mentally Handicapped, Govt. of India fixes the IQ ranges as follows.

Mild level-50-70, Moderate level-35-49, severe level-20-34, profound level-below 20.

Yoga education in schools

Yogasana seeks to attain a sustained and comfortable sitting posture to facilitate meditation. It also harmonizes the basic structure of the human mind. Pranayama seeks to release tensions and develop a relaxed state of mind. It balances our nervous system and stimulates creative thinking. Pranayama is the fourth part of the eight-fold yoga described in the yoga sutra of Patanjali. Prana is the life force which we absorb through breath, and Yama is control, discipline, regulation or mastery; another meaning is expansion, magnification, growth, extension or augmentation. So Pranayama is breath control or expansion of the life force. It increases the amount of oxygen in our brain. As a result it brings mental clarity, alertness and physical well-being. Practice of meditation is one of the important steps of the eight-fold path guided by Patanjali. This is mentioned also in the Vedic scripts, Upanishads, Geeta and Puranas. The central principle of yogic meditation is to concentrate one's mental faculties upon the object of quest.

The following structure of yoga lessons may be followed in school curriculum

For Class-I, vajrasana, Padmasana, shabasan, Sukhasana and meditation for 5 minutes; for Class-II, vajrasana, Padmasana, pashchimottasan, and meditation for 5 minutes; for Class-III, Bhujangasana chakras an, Dhanurasana, sarvangasana, utthita padmasana, and meditation for 5 minutes; for Class-IV, Brikshasana, gomukhasana, Singhasan, Utkatasana and meditation for 10 minutes; for lass-V, chakras an, Dhanurasana, Halasana, Padmasana, sarbangasan,10 minutes meditation; for Class-VI, vajrasana, Bhujangasana, Kara Padmasana, Shalabhasana, and meditation for 10 minutes; for Class-VII, Baddha Padmasana, bhadrasana, chakras an,

Dhanurasana, and meditation for 10 minutes; for Class-VIII, chakras an, Gomukhasana, Halasana, pashchimottasan, Sarvangasana, and meditation for 15 minutes; for Class-IX, Bhujangasana, Chakrasana, Halasana, Padahastasan, Shirsan, Suryanamaskar, Agnisara, Kapalbhati, and meditation for 15 minutes; for Class-X, Bhujangasana, chakras an, Halasana, Mayursan, Matsasan, Padahastasan, Shirsan, Surya Namaskar, Agnisara, Kapalbhati, and meditation for 20 minutes.

Conclusion

Cognitive science is the scientific study of the human mind. Yoga is also a science of the mind and soul, which links the body with the mind, the mind with the Athma, and the Athma with the piranha-the Universe. So yoga education in schools can help a lot in bringing about holistic development in general and cognitive development in particular and in checking cognitive disability among school children. Policy-makers, curriculum planners, teachers, students-all will be well aware of the necessity of introducing yoga education in the school curriculum. Practice of yoga in true spirit will help a student not only to excel but also to make him/her a healthier and happier. And introduction of yoga in schools may thus bring a revolutionary change in the society as well as in the country. At present science is very clear about the effect of yoga on human brain, consciousness and character. So this is the right time to decide how to implement it in reality.

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