



## DETERMINING THE SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL NECESSITY OF HEALTH-RELATED YOGA IN HIGHER EDUCATION BASED ON A SYSTEMATIC SURVEY

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### Abstract

Despite the popularity of yoga and its positive effects on physical and mental health, little is known about the practice and science of yoga in Uzbekistan. The general purpose of this study is to determine the social necessity of teaching yoga as a practical and theoretical science to students in the field of physical culture of higher educational institutions through a questionnaire. An anonymous survey was conducted among 100 students of Tashkent State Pedagogical University of Tashkent city. Students' perceptions and knowledge about yoga are very low, and almost most of them have not tried it in practice. However, students considered practicing yoga as an optional or curricular subject, so there was some awareness of the benefits of this activity despite the students' general lack of knowledge about yoga in improving education.

**Keywords:** physical culture, yoga, education, science.

### Introduction

Yoga is here treated separately from meditation, which has effects of its own, though yoga and meditation are combined in some schools of yoga. Yoga has been studied scientifically since the 19<sup>th</sup> - century physiology experiments of N. C. Paul. The early 20th-century pioneers Yogendra and Kuvalayananda both set up institutes to study yoga systematically [2]. The science of yoga is the scientific basis of modern yoga as physical exercise in human sciences such as anatomy, physiology, and psychology. Yoga's effects are to some extent shared with other forms of exercise, [1] though it differs in the amount of stretching involved, and because of its frequent use of long holds and relaxation, in its ability to reduce stress. In recent years, very in-depth scientific studies have been carried out by researchers in educational institutions around the world on the teaching of theoretical knowledge of yoga to students, the introduction and application of yoga practice. According to global data on fitness trends for 2022, yoga has been ranked 15<sup>th</sup>, above activities such as mobile training applications, remote online personal training, even collective exercise groups [3]. From the point of view of scientific-pedagogical analysis and learning to apply the elements of yoga gymnastics to the educational process, the most urgent problem is





the selection of competencies and methods of their formation. At the same time, in the development of university yoga programs in our country, it is necessary to use the activities of introducing the curriculum of foreign countries [4]. Although the development of yoga itself has shaped the question of yoga pedagogy: it is very important for future yoga gymnastics professionals to know through research inquiries the development of students' competence in yoga before teaching yoga as a theoretical and practical discipline. Despite its reliable and proven benefits, there is no evidence of university students' knowledge and attitudes about yoga. Therefore, this study aimed to find out the preservice teachers' perceptions and level of understanding of yoga practice, as well as their perspective on the inclusion of yoga in education.

## Methods

A systematic questionnaire survey was conducted among 200 university students. University management teams were contacted to select the sample and students were invited to participate voluntarily in the study. A random and anonymous survey was developed based on common standards and recommended by yoga experts in its preparation to assess knowledge of yoga theory and practice based on participants' opinions.

First, information about the age, gender, course of the participants were obtained. Next, the request is divided into three parts: 1) Yoga knowledge (questions 1-4); 2) Regarding students' competence in yoga (questions 5-10); 3) Using yoga in future activities (questions 11 and 12); 4) Opinion about the need to join education (questions 13 and 14).

The survey consisted of 13 closed questions: 1) What is yoga?; 2) From where did it originate?; 3) When did yoga appear?; 4) What is an asana?; 5) Does learning yoga increase universal competence?; 6) Does the theoretical and practical mastery of yoga affect the quality of education?; 7) Are you interested in learning yoga?; 8) Can yoga be included in the university curriculum?; 9) Do you think doing yoga helps you to study?; 10) Do you think the practice of yoga helps to keep the body healthy?; 11) Does learning yoga affect future career?; 12) Will you be able to use the knowledge you have gained in yoga practice in the future?; 13) Do you want yoga to be taught as a subject in your course?; 14) Do you think yoga can be a method of inclusion?.

Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were calculated using <https://stats.blue/index.html>. Significance was calculated using the chi-square test to determine the validity of the responses or the level of difference, for this study the level of statistical significance was set based on differences between answers.



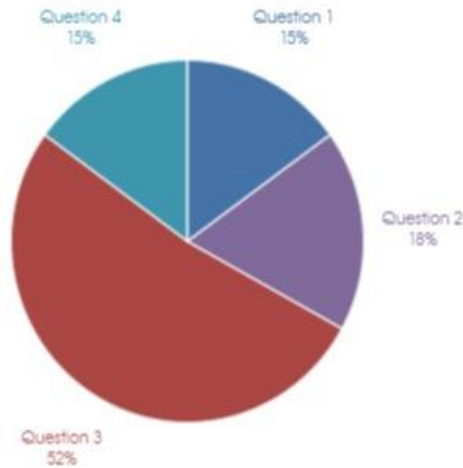


## Results

Information was collected from 100 students, 69 male, 31 female.

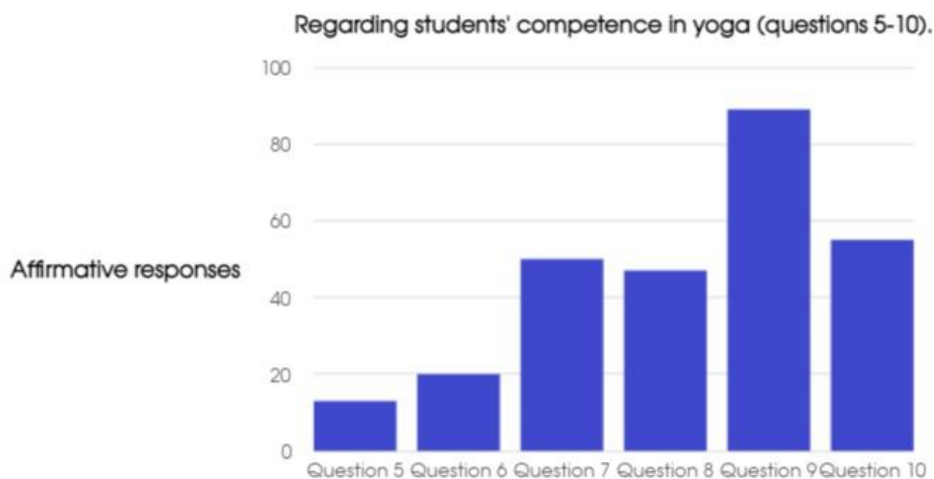
Table 1. Yoga knowledge (questions 1-4).

Validity of the correct answers to the questions about the knowledge of yoga.



Despite the table below, 68% of the participants recognized yoga as an exercise practiced only by women, while the remaining 32% answered that yoga is equally important for everyone. After the initial questions, critical thinking began among the participants about the social necessity of yoga.

Bar chart 1.



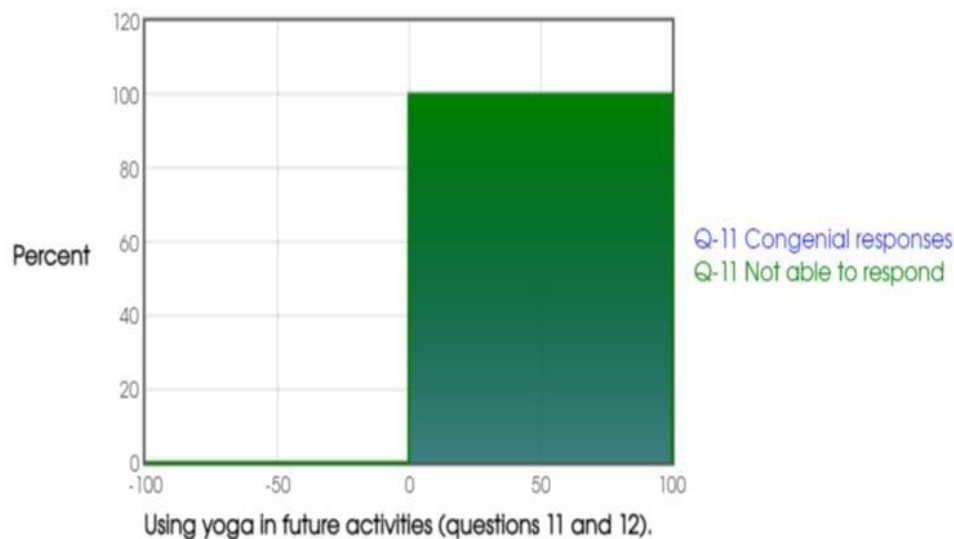
As we can see from the bar chart above, 89% of participants on the response of question 9 said that yoga helps them study and concentrate, 7% percent said that it serves as a means of relaxation before the exam, and 4% percent said that it does not help.



Using yoga in future activities (questions 11 and 12).

Most of the participants had difficulty answering questions 11 and 12. Figure 1 shows that about 32% of the participants answered 11 and 12 questions in the following way: if I use the knowledge I have acquired about yoga in the future, I will only use it for my own needs.

Figure 1.



Opinion about the need to join education (questions 13 and 14): The 78% considered the possibility of yoga relevant, either as an elective or curricular subject. The 42.8% considered yoga as a way of effective inclusion in the circle of students in the face of adaptation problems in the classroom, absenteeism and physical and psychological harassment to which students submit to their own classmates.

## Discussion

In terms of higher education, according to this study, students are not fully aware of the uniqueness and effectiveness of yoga. In general, the knowledge of yogic exercises among students is vague and confusing. They are unaware of the practice of yoga and its cost-effective, health-related, evidence-based proofs, especially in the field of physical culture, its origins, and the health benefits provided by the practice. To date, from the point of view of this study, no specific research studies have been conducted in our country that examine the level of thinking, understanding and knowledge about yoga in the higher education, even in the adult population. Despite the large number of practitioners around the world, yoga remains unknown in the society of Uzbekistan, and the psychological and physical benefits that can be derived from this practice are still unknown.



Every educator is intuitively aware that the state of the body directly affects learning. We know that a malnourished student will have difficulty concentrating and that a student in chronic pain may find his or her ability to connect with other students in the class diminished. Bodily well-being directly affects our thoughts and ability to successfully engage in learning. While educators are intuitively aware of this process, the relatively new field of neuroscience began to fill in the gaps of exactly how the body based practices of yoga impacts cognition, memory and learning [6].

As for the adolescent educational stage, in general, it is not knowledgeable about the origins of yoga. Yoga, although its origin dates back to India, according to Iyengar [5], "the need for yoga is felt by all human beings from all parts of the world, regardless of their caste, class, nationality and sex". According to it, yoga is a "global exercise", a true "holistic discipline", "an invigorating exercise", an essential part of life that ranges from physiological, psychological to ethical, mental and intellectual aspects.

### **Conclusion**

The knowledge of higher education students about yoga is very limited, not knowing the history and its origin. Most of the students considered the practice of yoga relevant, either as an elective or curricular subject, so that, despite the lack of knowledge of students about yoga in general, there was a position in favor of this activity in the education improvement.

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