UNIT 10 – SOURCES OF TEACHING METHODS - I

UNIT STRUCTURE

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10.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you would be able to-

- understand the role of teaching methods in Yoga
- describe the various sources of teaching methods
- explain the yogic and psychological principles of Yoga
- Psychological principles of Yoga.

10.2 INTRODUCTION TO TEACHING METHODS

Teaching in India has a long history. The Gurukul education system was a form of residential education system developed by the rishis of the era, which was meant to be the place of learning in a natural environment. While modern techniques have been developed and adapted for audiences around the world to focus specifically on alignment, posture correction, and physical health, traditional teaching methods emphasize the spiritual aspect of yoga practice, such as meditation, mantra chanting, and pranayama, with less emphasis on asana. Ultimately, the best teaching method will depend on the needs and

specific preferences of the students. Yoga teaching is the methodical approach that instructors use to organize, teach, and evaluate yoga classes more precisely. Incorporating an awareness of yogic and psychological principles into yoga teaching and practice can help the yoga instructor provide the best possible benefits to the students. The nature of yogic practices vary, just as the approaching and returning phases of each asana differ and entail diverse processes for obtaining the effects of certain yogic practices. The same is true for pranayama, shatkarma, mudras, and bandhas. It is vital that they must be practiced safely while adhering to yogic principles. Psychological principles cater to the diverse needs of students in the classroom. The four essential instruments of yoga teaching - instructions, demonstration, observation, and adjustments - do not even meet the requirements of a yoga class by avoiding participant behavior, ideas, feelings, and attitudes. Creating a welcoming environment is essential, but the yoga teacher's role is to utilize effective ways to encourage students that adhere to yogic and psychological principles and should be applied in a more precise manner by understanding the nature of the audience in the classroom.

10.3 SOURCES OF TEACHING METHODS

Yogic teaching methods are rooted in ancient yogic scriptures. Traditional teaching methods of yoga focus on spiritual aspects specifically to attain *kaivalya* (liberation). Teaching has long been considered a *Guru-shishya* tradition. In ancient time, the *gurukul* was the home of disciples till the completion of their education. The majority of yoga teaching at the time was practical in nature, such as meditation techniques taught by a Guru who had already gone through this discipline and gained wisdom and knowledge, as well as the desirable ability to lead the yoga class skillfully with a focus on mindful practice and holistic wellbeing.

The second most applicable learning method is verbal, which focuses on the enhancement of memory but requires a great deal of patience. Other techniques of teaching learning include group discussions, personalized instructions, and many more. Teaching was adhered to certain principles like

walking on a non violence path, being truthful to others, personal cleanliness, brahmcharya etc. Currently, these are considered under Yama and Niyama of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga. The traditional method of teaching yoga has changed over time, resulting in a more modern approach that focuses on the physical aspects of yoga such as asana practice and breathing methods, with less emphasis on meditation and other spiritual practices. Traditional yoga teaching methods originated in ancient India with the monks of that time. However modern yoga teaching emerged in response to a desire to be physically healthy and mentally touched. In this section, we will learn about yogic and psychological teaching principles, as well as their importance.

10.3.1 - YOGIC PRINCIPLES

Yogic teachings integrate ancient yoga practices with contemporary therapeutic methods to promote a comprehensive approach for overall healing and well-being.

1. The human body is a holistic entity composed of physical, psychological, social, and spiritual elements that are inextricably linked. According to Taitteriya Upanishad, the human body is composed of five sheaths. These sheaths or layers are Annamaya Kosha or the physical body, Pranamaya Kosha or the vital sheath or the energy body, Manomaya Kosha or mental sheath, Vignanamaya Kosha is the sheath of intellect and Anandamaya Kosha or the bliss sheath. Instead of operating independently, the koshas interact with one another. When the prana in the pranamaya kosha becomes disturbed the physical sheath of existence suffers, and vice versa. In general, sickness or infirmity in one dimension affects the other dimension as well. Similarly, positive interventions through yoga in one domain influence the functioning of other dimensions. In this case, the responsibility of the yoga teacher is to develop a treatment plan that addresses the root cause of the disease while also promoting well-being in other dimensions.

2. Asana is the most significant and generally applicable therapeutic technique. Swatmarama, the author of Hatha Pradipika, describes 15 essential

asanas, whereas Gherand and Srinivasa yogi talk about 32 and 84 asanas, respectively. The practice of asana must be passed on to the practitioner with care because each individual is unique in terms of age, gender, and living environment. To successfully practice various asanas, you must have strong wrists, arms, and shoulders, as well as flexible hamstrings and other necessary muscles and joints. Practice advance asanas only if you can do them without straining. Yoga asanas should be practiced with caution to avoid injury and maintain a safe practice. Strenuous and/or upside-down poses that raise the heart rate, for example, should be avoided by the elderly or those suffering from cardiovascular disease. Hence the choice of asana must be tailored accordingly.

3. According to yogic scriptures, asana practice must be followed by *shatkarmas*, which cleanse and strengthen the body and its minute channels while also removing ama (toxins) from the body. When one begins the yogic journey with internal purification practices known as *shatkarma* in Hatha yoga, followed by asana practice, one will quickly achieve an ideal state of health and success in yoga begins effortlessly. Maharishi Gheranda has described Shatkarma as the first part of yoga in Gheranda Samhita, in which the body is purified through six special karmas. For yoga practitioners, Maharishi Gherand has described 6 kriyas named Dhauti, Basti, Neti, Lauliki (Nauli), Tratak and Kapalbhati. He believes that without the practice of Shatkarma, it is impossible to achieve success in the path of yoga.

4. Along with it, there are some Yogic principles based on Maharshi Patanjali's ashtanga yoga known as Yama and Niyama. Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya, Brahmcharya, and Aparigraha are Yamas (social ethics), whereas Saunch, Santosh, Tapa, Swadhyaya, and Ishwar Pranidhana are Niyamas (personal practices). One should neither enjoy nor benefit from omitting yoga's core pillars, the Yama and Niyama.

5. Yoga therapy is a type of therapy, which implies that the therapist only helps the practitioner in healing. It simply means that healing occurs from within rather than from the healer or the outside. So, in order to become your own healer, you must first empower yourself.

6. Asana practice is not the same as gym training. A gym workout focuses on specific muscle groups through weight lifting and is strenuous; but asana emphasizes balancing, flexibility, breath work, and creating stability and an entire mind-body connection. Asana practice necessitates smooth bodily movements with breath coordination and a focus on specific regions. Hence, any vigorous movement should be avoided throughout the asana practice.

7. The advantages of asana practice can only be acquired by doing them consistently over an extended period of time. Maharshi Patanjali recommends the practice of asana as "sthir sukham asanam". It means yogasana must be practiced by sitting steadily and comfortably without any effort. When the body is steady and comfortable you are in a state of asana and you are eligible to practice more complex yogic practices like pranayama and dhyana.

8. The nature of various yogic activities such as asana, pranayama, kriya, mudra, and bandha varies and requires distinct channels for execution. For example, pranayama allows the use of any meditative asana as a basic requirement, but it requires regulated and controlled breath in different ways and for different lengths of time, whereas asana practice requires a focus on slow bodily movements with breath coordination to achieve a static and comfortable state of body.

9. All yogic practices should start with beginning prayer and end with shanti-mantra recitation. This routine helps to connect practitioners with inner divine and elevate spiritual awareness and in turn increase the manifold benefits of yoga practice. It also strengthens the feeling of ishwar-pranidhana by which the practitioner attains ultimate bliss.

10. The concept of discipline related to diet can be found in numerous yoga literatures. Gherand samhita, Vashisth samhita, Hatha pradipika, Bhagavad Gita, Vedas, and Upanishads - all contain specific food information for yoga practitioners. The yogic diet emphasizes the intake of natural, unprocessed foods that promote spiritual, mental, and physical health, is consistent with yogic philosophy, and provides the energy required for sustained effort on the yoga mat. It also serves as a bridge to higher level practices.

10.3.2 PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

Psychological principles of teaching are the ways that help the human mind learn, process information, and retain knowledge. They include team learning, breaks between learning, peer teaching, active learning, and techniques for retrieving long-term memories.

Psychological principles of yoga assist the yoga instructor in better understanding the behaviour of participants, thoughts, feelings, and attitudes, as well as to govern aspects that affect yogasana practice and performance. As we all know, psychology is the study of behaviour, and by understanding a practitioner's behaviour, one can improve their performance by focusing on specific psychological parameters. The yoga teacher can better adapt with their students by applying the laws of psychology and also improve their skill and performance. The laws which govern the behaviour and apply to skill enhancement are the laws of learning and feedback. Motivation also plays an important part in helping the practitioners achieve their goals by understanding the psychological demands. The yoga class has a diverse group of students. Each participant will have a distinct nature and background, as well as different strengths and limitations. As a result, before teaching a yoga class, the instructor should be well-versed with the practitioners' capabilities.

Emotional factors such as stress, anxiety, motivation, and cultural context and certain physical and social factors affect the learning ability and interest of participants. Interest motivates learning by drawing attention to a topic of interest. Interest is a drive that comes from within but the yoga teacher can create interest in practitioners. As a result, individual differences must be considered in order for the yoga class to flow smoothly and effectively.

Psychological principles assist participants in learning more effectively, yet interest, motivation, and mental set all have a negative impact on learning. So by understanding the psychological learning and addressing the variables that limit learning is a key concept in psychological principles. The best way to apply psychological principles is to understand how practitioners behave in various contexts, such as during practice or in a competitive atmosphere. When these concepts are successfully utilized during a yoga session, they can help

students retain the same mental state during practice or competition. As a result, psychological principles can be applied to skill development, allowing yoga teachers to better understand their students' performance.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1. What was the nature of yoga teaching in ancient times?

Q2. What are group discussion and personalized instruction.

Q3. According to Gherand samhita, asana practice must be followed by which karma?

Q4. Yama and Niyama fall under which category of principles?

Q5. What should the first step in yogic practices be?

Q6. Which category of principles can help the yoga instructor better comprehend the behaviour of the participants?

10.4 LET US SUM UP

From this chapter, we discussed the following topics–

- Yogic teaching methods are rooted in ancient yogic scriptures. Teaching has long been considered a *Guru-shishya* tradition.
- The majority of the yoga teaching during the ancient time was practical in nature.
- The second most applicable learning method is verbal, which focuses on the enhancement of memory but requires a great deal of patience.
- According to yogic scriptures, asana practice must be followed by shatkarmas, which cleanse and strengthen the body and its minute channels while also removing ama (toxins) from the body.
- Along with it, there are some Yogic principles based on Maharshi Patanjali's ashtanga yoga known as Yama and Niyama.
- The nature of various yogic activities such as asana, pranayama, kriya, mudra, and bandha varies and requires distinct channels for execution.
- All yogic practices should start with beginning prayer and end with shanti-mantra recitation.

- Psychological principles of yoga assist the yoga instructor in better understanding the behavior of participants, thoughts, feelings, and attitudes, as well as to govern aspects that affect yogasana practice and performance.
- Psychological principles can be applied to skill development, allowing yoga teachers to better understand their students' performance.

10. 5 FURTHER READING

1. Digambaraji, S & Gharote, ML (1997) Gherand Samhita. Kaivalyadhama Samiti Lonavla.

2. Vivekananda, R. (2006) Practical Yoga Psychology. Yoga Publication Trust, Munger, Bihar, India.

3. Arya, S. (2017). Patanjal Yoga Darshan. PP.

10.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q1: Practical based

Answer to Q2: Teaching techniques

Answer to Q3: Shatkarma

Answer to Q4: Yogic Principles

Answer to Q5: Beginning prayer.

Answer to Q6: Psychological Principles

10.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Objective Questions

Q1: Name any two sources of teaching methods.

Q2: How many entities make up the human body holistically?

Q3: What is the name for the internal purification practices of yoga?

B) Short Questions

Q1: Briefly discuss the advantages of beginning prayer and shanti-mantra recitation.

Q2: Write a short note on the psychological principles of yoga.

C) Essay type Question

Q1: Explain in detail the yogic principles of teaching.

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