

## **Yoga as a Lifestyle in a Multicultural Society**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Patanjali yoga sutra have guided the management of life for better and healthier. Since its birth in Hinduism, yoga has been known by the world community, especially in the multicultural community. People feel that the presence of yoga as a lifestyle in the midst of extraordinary busyness, can relieve stress, provide fitness, relaxation as well as the body, fit, healthy mind, and calm soul. Multicultural societies with different cultural backgrounds including customs, ways of life have given appreciation, respect to those different. Through yoga will be able to create peace not only for society but also for the universe.

Keywords: lifestyle, multicultural society, yoga

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Yoga Sutras compiled by Maharshi Patanjali are the largest and foremost classical texts in the Indian school of Yoga philosophy. Written 2,500 years ago; so it was more or less contemporary with Gotama Buddha. Some even argue that this text was compiled no less than the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. In it, the sutras on Yoga or its universal union briefly and accurately affirm the essential parts in full and detail. Given the density of its spiritual philosophical meaning, the Yoga Sutras are recommended to be explained and translated by a Yoga teacher through commentaries. The practice of Yoga is seen as

complementary to and in unity with Sankhya philosophy. The main goal is to realize the freedom of the soul from the confines of cyberspace (Gotama, 2009)

Until now, experts and historians have not been able to determine exactly when this yoga was created. Many argue that this sport has existed since the Indus Valley Civilization which is around 3300-1900 BC, but there are also those who argue that this sport existed since the time of the Vedic Civilization which is around 1700-500 BC. Even so, yoga is increasingly developing and accepted by people around the world, especially the people of Western countries who only knew it around the 19th century. Even today, more than 13 million Americans have trusted and made it a sport to improve their health. (historia.id)

Etymologically, the word "yoga" comes from the Old Sanskrit word "yuj" which means unification; rather leads to the union of *atman* (self) and *brahman* (the Almighty), so that through this one will better know the body, mind, soul, and all aspects that exist in him and can make him closer to God. Thus, yoga is a type of exercise that aims to improve the health and well-being of the body, by involving physical activity, breathing exercises, relaxation techniques, and meditation exercises.

Since the term "yoga" comes from old Sanskrit which is an ancient language in South Asia (more inclined to India), the history of the emergence of this sport is derived from Ancient Indian culture. This sport was first introduced from a book called Yoga Sutras by Maharsi Patanjali, a legendary figure from India who lived around 200-500 BC. He interpreted this sport as a cessation of thought and its teachings became a tradition of meditation and ritual among Hindus.

Nowadays, yoga is not only seen from its origin, namely Hinduism, but has developed almost all over the world so that it can be accepted by people who have diverse cultures. Yoga also in a multicultural society has been applied as a lifestyle because of its benefits for the physical and mind.

## **METHOD**

(Bungin, 2005) viewed research methods as the use of scientific methods in an activity to answer curiosity or deepening something, which is done not only by paying attention to scientific truth, but on the other hand also considering ways or procedures to obtain scientific truth itself or more familiarly known as research methods. As one of the scientific research, this research proceeds with a predetermined research method, namely with the type of qualitative research. Data collection is obtained through observation, interviews, and document studies.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Lifestyle**

Lifestyle is an art that is cultivated by everyone. According to the Big Dictionary of Indonesian (2008), lifestyle is the pattern of daily behavior of a group of humans in society. While from the economic side, lifestyle is a person's behavior in spending money and how to allocate his time.

Lifestyle is closely related to the development of the times and technology. Lifestyle becomes an attempt to make oneself exist in a certain way and different from other groups. Based on one's own experience compared to social reality, the individual chooses which series of actions and appearances he thinks are appropriate and which are not appropriate to be displayed with social space.

According to Sunarto, there are three indicators of a person's lifestyle, namely as follows (Mandey, 2009):

1. **Activity** is what consumers do, what products are purchased or used, what activities are carried out to fill spare time. While these activities can usually be observed, the reasons for such actions can rarely be measured directly.
2. **Interest** is the object of an event, or topic in the degree of excitement that accompanies its special or constant attention. Interest can be in the form of likes, hobbies and priorities in the consumer's life. Interest is what consumers find interesting to take their time and spend money on. Interest is a personal factor of consumers in influencing the decision-making process.
3. **Opinion** is the views and feelings of consumers in response to global, local, oral, economic, and social issues. Opinions are used to describe interpretations, expectations and evaluations, such as beliefs about the intentions of others, anticipation with respect to future events and weighing the rewarding or punitive consequences of alternative course of action.

Lifestyle measurements can be done with psychographics. According to (Sumarwan, 2011), psychographics is an instrument to measure lifestyle that can provide quantitative measurements and can be used to analyze very large data. Psychographic analysis is usually used to look at market segments and consumer segments in terms of their lives, work and other activities. Psychographics are often interpreted as AIO (activity, interest, opinion) measurements or statements to describe consumer activities, interests, and opinions.

### **Factors Influencing Lifestyle**

According to Armstrong, the factors that influence a person's lifestyle are attitudes, experiences and

observations, personality, self-concept, motives, perceptions, reference groups, social class, family and culture (Nugraheni, 2003). The explanation for each factor that affects lifestyle is as follows:

1. **Attitude.** Attitude means a state of the soul and a state of mind prepared to respond to an object organized through experience and directly influencing behavior. The state of the soul is strongly influenced by traditions, habits, culture and social environment.
2. **Experience and observation.** Experience can influence social observation in behavior, experience can be gained from all his actions in the past and can be learned, through learning people will be able to gain experience. The results of social experience will be able to form a view of an object.
3. **Personality.** Personality is the configuration of individual characteristics and ways of behaving that determine the behavioral differences of each individual.
4. **Self-Concept.** Another factor that determines an individual's personality is self-concept. Self-concept has become a very widely known approach to describe the relationship between consumer self-concept and brand image. How an individual perceives itself will affect interest in an object. Self-concept as the core of personality patterns will determine individual behavior in dealing with life problems.
5. **Motives.** Individual behavior arises because of motives, the need to feel secure and the need for prestige are some examples of motives. If a person's motive for the need for prestige is great, it will form a lifestyle that tends to lead to a hedonistic lifestyle.
6. **Perception.** Perception is the process by which a person selects, organizes, and interprets information to form a meaningful picture of the world.

The expected lifestyle through yoga is a healthy lifestyle. It is not only about living longer, but also about living with better quality. Such as a healthy diet, stress management, adequate sleep, and better mental health. With a healthy lifestyle through yoga, you will feel fitter, energetic, and able to live your daily life better.

### **Multicultural Society**

Currently, there are various choices of physical activity so that the body is always healthy and fit. One of them is yoga, a type of exercise that focuses on breathing techniques, flexibility, and body strength. Quoted from the official website of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, the term multicultural society consists of three words, namely community, multi, and cultural. Society means a unity of human life that interacts according to a certain system of customs that are continuous and bound by common feelings. Multi means many or variegated. While cultural means culture. So, a multicultural society is a society consisting of many cultural structures. The root of multiculturalism is culture. The number of cultural structures is due to the large number of ethnic groups that have their own cultural structures, which are different from the cultures of other ethnic groups. In essence, the concept of a multicultural society is a society that has many ethnic groups and cultures with various customs. Within the framework of living together side by side with each other who are equal and intersect each other in an order of socio-political unity. Indonesian society is a multicultural society. This is evidenced by the many tribes and cultures (“Masyarakat Multikultural: Pengertian Dan Ciri-Ciri,” n.d.).

Multicultural societies that live in modern times make yoga a healthy lifestyle, of course, for certain reasons. According to Merdeka.com how to maintain

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**Multiculturalism** is an ideology that recognizes and glorifies differences. The difference in question is the difference between individuals and other individuals or differences in values adhered to, such as differences in systems, culture, religion, customs, and politics. (healthy lifestyle is not only about living longer, but also about living with better quality. You will feel fitter, energetic, and able to live your daily life better (From Wikipedia Indonesian, the free encyclopedia)

### **Types of Multiculturalism**

Various kinds of understandings and trends in the development of the concept and practice of multiculturalism expressed by experts, make a figure named Parekh distinguish five kinds of multiculturalism (Azra, 2007) summarizing Parekh's description:

1. Multiculturalism, refers to a society in which various cultural groups live autonomously and engage in minimal interaction with each other.
2. Accommodating multiculturalism, where people have a dominant culture that makes certain adjustments and accommodations for the cultural needs of minorities. These societies formulate and implement culturally sensitive laws, laws, and regulations, and give minorities the freedom to maintain and develop their culture. Vice versa, minorities do not challenge the dominant culture. This multiculturalism is applied in several European countries.
3. Autonomist multiculturalism, a plural society in which major polar groups seek equality with the dominant culture and desire autonomous life within a collectively acceptable political framework. The main

concern of these cultural subjects is to defend their way of life, which has the same rights as the dominant group; They challenge the dominant group and seek to create a society in which all groups can exist as equal partners.

4. Critical or interactive multiculturalism, i.e. plural societies in which cultural groups are less concerned with autonomous cultural life; but rather form collective creations that reflect and affirm their distinctive perspectives.
5. Cosmopolitan multiculturalism, seeking to remove cultural boundaries altogether in order to create a society in which individuals are no longer bound to a particular culture and, instead, freely engage in intercultural experiments and simultaneously develop their own cultural life. <sup>[11]</sup>

### **Multiculturalism in Indonesia**

Indonesian society is a society with a very complex level of diversity. Societies with various diversity are known as multicultural societies. If we know society as a group of humans who have lived and worked together long enough so that they are able to organize themselves and think of themselves as a social unit with certain limits (Linton), then the concept of society when combined with multicultural has a very broad meaning and a deep understanding is needed to be able to understand what a multicultural society really is.

Multicultural can be defined as diversity or differences between one culture and another. So that multicultural society can be interpreted as a group of humans who live and live sedentary in a place that has its own culture and characteristics that are able to distinguish between one society and another. Each society will produce



its own culture that will be characteristic of that community.

From this came the term multiculturalism. There are many definitions of multiculturalism, including multiculturalism is basically a worldview -which can then be translated into various cultural policies- which emphasizes acceptance of the reality of diversity, plurality, and multicultural contained in people's lives. Multiculturalism can also be understood as a worldview that is then embodied in the "politics of recognition" (Azra, 2007). Lawrence Blum revealed that multiculturalism includes an understanding, appreciation, and assessment of one's culture, as well as respect and curiosity about another's ethnic culture. Various notions of multiculturalism can be concluded that the essence of multiculturalism is about acceptance and appreciation of a culture, both one's own culture and the culture of others. Everyone is emphasized to respect and respect each other in society. Whatever form a culture takes, it must be acceptable to everyone without discriminating between one culture and another.

Basically, multiculturalism formed in Indonesia is the result of socio-cultural and geographical conditions that are so diverse and wide. According to geographical conditions, Indonesia has many islands where each island is inhabited by a group of humans who form a society. From this society a culture about the community itself is formed. Of course, this has an impact on the existence of many and diverse cultures.

In the concept of multiculturalism, there is a close relationship for the formation of a society based on unity in diversity and realizing a national culture that becomes a unifier for the Indonesian nation. However, in its implementation, there are still various obstacles that prevent the formation of multiculturalism in society.

Multicultural can occur in Indonesia because: (1) Indonesia's geographical location, (2) Mixed marriage, (3) climate.

This life of multiculturalism seeks to erase cultural boundaries to create a society where each individual is not bound to a particular culture. It usually occurs in societies that are heterogeneous, tolerant, and willing to coexist with each other with existing differences.

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Yoga is one of the best solutions to maintain fitness in today's increasingly complex era with solid activities. The reason why you should choose Yoga is actually quite simple. Many positive effects are produced by doing Yoga.

According to Health Me Up alerts (26/05), Yoga helps to understand the relationship between mind, body, and spirit. Not only that, Yoga also has one step better than other health therapies such as Pilates, namely adding an injection of spirit. It is even able to explore your spirituality very deeply.

Yoga has a more holistic approach, so it not only strengthens muscles, tissues, and ligaments, but also improves flexibility. It also relieves knee pain, improves digestion, relieves stress, improves sleep, and much more. Even Yoga is also able to improve mental health, maintain levels of depression and anxiety.

Not only that, Yoga has a breathing technique that is more advanced and developed than Pilates, for example.

Yoga is an ancient practice that originated in India and has become an integral part of many multicultural

societies around the world. Yoga as a lifestyle in a multicultural society offers a variety of benefits and has inspired many to seek physical, mental, and spiritual balance in a diverse environment. Here are some of the ways in which yoga plays a role in a multicultural society:

### **Yoga as a lifestyle in a multicultural society**

1. **Merging of Culture and Tradition:** Yoga is a prime example of how the culture and traditions of one country can be adopted and adapted to diverse cultures. Yogic practices such as meditation, *asanas*, and *pranayama* have been integrated in various cultures, creating a deeper understanding of diversity.
2. **Community Formation:** In many multicultural societies, yoga groups have emerged, bringing together people from different backgrounds. These communities promote tolerance, mutual understanding, and friendship among their members, overcoming cultural, racial, and religious differences.
3. **Health and Wellness Promotion:** Yoga is known for its physical and mental health benefits. Yoga practices can help reduce stress, increase flexibility, and improve overall well-being. This leads to a healthier and happier multicultural society.
4. **Diversity in Instructors and Participants:** Yoga classes are often attended by people from a variety of backgrounds, including a variety of ages, genders, religions, and cultures. Yoga instructors also often represent diverse backgrounds, creating an inclusive space for all participants.
5. **Spiritual Understanding:** Although yoga is not a religion, many people who practice yoga find a

spiritual dimension in their practice. This can help in increasing understanding and appreciation of diverse religious beliefs in a multicultural society.

6. Environmental Awareness: Most yogic practices support policies that are sustainable and care for the natural environment. This creates greater awareness of environmental issues among yoga participants, and supports efforts to keep the universe together.
7. Merging Art and Culture: Yoga has influenced art, music, and popular culture in many multicultural societies. This creates opportunities for artists and artists to create artworks that reflect the influence of yoga in everyday life.

Yoga as a lifestyle in a multicultural society encourages respect for diversity, mutual understanding, and peace. This practice allows people to unite differences and feel happiness and balance in everyday life, regardless of their background.

## CONCLUSION

Yoga which at the beginning of its birth originated from Hinduism, but now as a healthy lifestyle has been accepted in a multicultural society. People who have diverse cultures, customs, and languages have experienced how yoga can provide positive benefits in the midst of a very busy life. Through breathing exercises also relaxation has given multicultural Society to feel fit and have a healthy and calm mind and spirit.

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