

Part I: Concept of Sun-Worship and Suryanamaskar (an Ancient Indian Exercise) according to Ancient Text and Literature

Part II: Physical and Psychological Changes following Suryanamaskar Practice

By

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ABSTRACT

Part I: Concept of Sun-Worship and Suryanamaskar (an Ancient Indian Exercise) according to Ancient Text and Literature

The first prapāthaka of Krishna yajurveda taittirīya araēyaka which consist of 32 anuvākas deals mainly with rituals arunaketuka; but it has been laid down by the learned sages of ancient time that this prapāthtaka can be utilized and chanted while making prostration in propitiation of sun – god (Sūryanamaskāra). All the living beings-humans, animals, plants etc. (including single-celled weeds in the sea) have their center of life in the sun. At all stages, life exists on account of the sun. He is the basis of divest facets of the life. There is no meaning in creation without life therein, because there is no conscious without vital energy. Sūryanamaskāra is a yoga - based exercise for over all personality –body, mind & intellect – a gift of Indian heritage to mankind. This being a non – sectarian practice, it is universal in application irrespective of caste, creed, religion, gender and nationality. Sunrays possess therapeutic power that are beneficial to one’s health both physical and mental. Making obeisance to the sun early in the morning helps to purify and harmonise the functioning in the various hormones in the body. In ancient times sun worship was considered as a socio-religious function on public levels so as to regulate those powers of nature which are beyond human control. In recent years people have moved away from mere rituals and are turning to yoga as a method for exploring and improving their inner lives. Though the need for technique to enhance physical, mental and spiritual evolution has been recognized the fast pace of modern, living makes it difficult for even most determined individual to implement yoga practice. So Sūryanamüskāra is the

practice, which is most important and fundamental issue in terms of our betterment. It is complete sādhanā in itself containing āsana prāëyāma and meditation techniques within the main structure of the practice.

PART – II A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SURYA NAMASKÄR AND PHYSICAL EXERCISES ON FLEXIBILITY, ATTENTION AND CONCENTRATION IN ADOLESCENTS

The longitudinal prospective randomized control study was aimed to assess flexibility, attention and concentration in students after the intensive practice of Surya Namaskär as compared to physical exercise. Normal healthy (82) school children (male) 12-16 years (13.21 ± 1.07) from Vivekananda International Public School in Bangalore were randomly assigned into two groups YOGA and CONTROL after signing informed consent. The inclusion criteria were age, sex and health. They were taught Surya Namaskar (SN) and Physical exercises (PE) respectively. Sit-and-reach (SAR) and goniometry tests for spinal flexibility and six letter cancellation test (SLC) for attention & concentration were administered to both the groups before and after twenty-eight days. Result showed that data was normally distributed ($p > 0.05$) and baseline was matched ($p > 0.05$). Paired 't' test (two tailed) showed that there was a significant change between pre and post values in both the groups (Yoga, $p < 0.001$ and Physical exercise $p < 0.001$) on all the variables in both the groups. There is a significant change between the groups ($p < 0.001$) in SLCT, SAR and Goniometry (forward & backward). In summary this study has shown that Surya Namaskär practiced for 30 minutes daily improves spinal flexibility & attention & concentration better than PE in students of 12 – 16 years of age.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

1. The aim of the study was to assess the efficiency of intensive Surya Namaskär practice in children in regard to their flexibility, attention and concentration.
2. 82 children were randomly allocated to 2 groups and were assessed for attention and concentration by Six-letter cancellation test; for spinal flexibility by sit and reach test and goniometry test.
3. The supervised Intervention used was 24 rounds Surya Namaskär practice for 30 minute 6 days /week for 4 weeks to yoga group and a set of physical exercise for Control group.

4. Data was found normally distributed and Baselines were matched.
5. In within the group comparison yoga and control, both the groups showed significant change between pre and post (Paired 't' test two tailed).
6. Between the groups comparison showed that yoga and control are significantly differing in SLCT and SAR. In Goniometry only forward and backward bending had the significant difference between yoga and control.
7. Surya Namaskär and Physical exercises are beneficial to schoolchildren to improve their concentration and attention.
8. Surya Namaskar and Physical exercise are beneficial to school school children in improving their spinal flexibility.
9. Surya Namaskär was significantly different physical exercise group in improving both the physical and cognitive means.

Key Words: Yoga, Physical exercise, Concentration, Flexibility, Attention .