

# THE SCOPE OF YOGA TEACHERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES IN ACCORDANCE WITH NEP 2020 AND YCB

**Neha Mandaliya<sup>1</sup>, Aditi Patwardhan<sup>2</sup>, Nehal Dave<sup>3</sup>**

Research Scholar, Lakulish Yoga University, Ahmedabad.  
ndmadaliya143@gmail.com, <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-0685-4252>

Research Scholar, Lakulish Yoga University, Ahmedabad.  
aditi.patwardhan8@gmail.com, <http://orcid.org/0009-0008-1164-9231>

Associate Professor, Lakulish Yoga University, Ahmedabad.  
nehaldca08@gmail.com, <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-5924-7495>

## Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has brought significant reforms to the Indian education system, emphasizing holistic, multidisciplinary, and inclusive learning. A key component of this reform is the promotion of physical and mental well-being, with yoga playing a vital role in achieving these objectives. This policy has opened up a range of opportunities for both online and offline yoga teachers in higher education institutes. The NEP 2020 has placed yoga at the heart of India's educational reform, presenting an unprecedented opportunity for yoga instructors. By adopting innovative teaching methodologies and aligning with institutional goals, yoga teachers can make a meaningful impact on the lives of students. As higher education evolves, yoga educators will play a crucial role in shaping a healthier, smarter generation. The introduction of yoga education is aligned with the broader goals of NEP 2020 to cultivate individuals who are not only academically proficient but also emotionally balanced and socially responsible. The Yoga Certification Board (YCB), established by the Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India, is the first and only government-recognized body dedicated to certifying professionals in the field of yoga. YCB certifies yoga practitioners across various levels and categories, enabling individuals to choose certification pathways aligned with their skills and competencies. YCB is continually working to introduce additional levels to cater to evolving professional demands. This certification system aims to professionalize yoga, transforming it from an informal career choice into a structured profession. Certified yoga professionals gain access to enhanced job opportunities in higher education institutes. This study ultimately aims to provide insights into the transformative role of yoga education, supporting its integration as a core component of higher education in India.

**Keywords:** Yoga Teachers, NEP 2020, YCB, Yoga teachers training.

## INTRODUCTION

NEP 2020 acknowledges the need for integrating physical fitness, wellness, and mindfulness into the curriculum to develop well-rounded individuals. The policy emphasizes that education should not only be about intellectual development but also about nurturing emotional and physical well-being. This aligns perfectly with the philosophy of yoga, which fosters a harmonious balance between body, mind, and spirit. The policy advocates the inclusion of yoga and other traditional practices to foster mindfulness, self-discipline, and harmony between the mind and body. By ensuring standardization and quality in yoga teaching and practice, YCB certifications foster the correct and safe application of yoga. Over time, this initiative is expected to increase the availability of skilled professionals, thereby promoting yoga as a holistic approach to health and a sustainable lifestyle.

### Yoga Education in NEP 2020: A Pathway to Holistic Development

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is a transformative initiative aimed at reshaping India's education system to promote holistic, inclusive, and multidisciplinary learning. Among its various recommendations, NEP 2020 places significant emphasis on integrating yoga into the education system, recognizing its profound impact on physical health, mental well-being, and emotional resilience. NEP 2020 underscores the importance of physical and mental health as critical components of a well-rounded education. Some of the objectives of integration of yoga education are

- **Promoting Physical Health:** Yoga enhances physical fitness, flexibility, and stamina, helping students maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- **Boosting Mental Well-being:** Yoga and mindfulness practices reduce stress and anxiety, improve concentration, and enhance emotional resilience.
- **Cultural Preservation:** Including yoga in education systems helps preserve and promote India's rich cultural heritage.
- **Fostering Values:** Yoga encourages values like discipline, perseverance, and a positive attitude, contributing to character development.
- **Enhancing Academic Performance:** By improving focus and cognitive functions, yoga supports better academic outcomes.

#### **Implementation of Yoga in NEP 2020:**

The NEP 2020 outlines a comprehensive framework for integrating yoga into the curriculum across various educational levels. In school education, yoga is incorporated as part of physical education and extracurricular activities, with schools encouraged to organize yoga sessions, workshops, and competitions. Teacher training programs in yoga education are also promoted to enhance its delivery. At the higher education level, yoga is included in wellness and lifestyle courses for college students, with universities establishing dedicated yoga and wellness centers. Research opportunities are being expanded to explore yoga's scientific and psychological benefits, and certificate and diploma courses are being developed to encourage professional expertise in the field. Additionally, teacher education emphasizes training yoga instructors and integrating yoga into teacher training programs, ensuring educators are well-equipped to practice and impart yoga effectively.

#### **Benefits of implementing Yoga Education:**

Yoga education under NEP 2020 offers numerous benefits, emphasizing holistic development. It fosters improved mental health by promoting mental clarity and emotional stability, enabling students to navigate challenges more effectively. Yoga equips learners with practical techniques for stress management, helping them handle academic and personal pressures with resilience. As a universal practice, yoga supports inclusive education by being adaptable to diverse learners, creating an environment that celebrates diversity and promotes unity. Additionally, NEP 2020 encourages interdisciplinary research in yoga, linking it with modern sciences such as neuroscience and psychology, paving the way for innovative studies and applications.

#### **Scope for the Yoga Teachers:**

NEP 2020 has created various avenues for yoga professionals. The policy mandates the inclusion of wellness programs in higher education, increasing the demand for qualified yoga instructors. Institutions are offering yoga teacher training courses, enabling experienced instructors to train future educators. The policy promotes interdisciplinary research, allowing yoga instructors to engage in studies linking yoga with neuroscience, psychology, and healthcare. Universities and colleges are recruiting full-time and part-time yoga instructors, providing stable career paths. The emphasis on holistic learning has expanded the demand for yoga instructors, both in online and offline settings, in higher education institutions. Here's how yoga teachers can contribute:

#### **Offline Yoga Teaching:**

The scope for yoga teachers in offline teaching on campuses is expanding significantly with the increasing emphasis on wellness and holistic education. Higher education institutions are establishing dedicated yoga and wellness departments, where yoga teachers play a pivotal role by conducting regular classes, workshops, and certification programs. As yoga becomes an integral part of physical education and wellness courses, teachers have the opportunity to design curricula and lead practical sessions for students. Additionally, with growing awareness of mental health, yoga instructors can collaborate with counselors to offer mindfulness and stress-relief practices for students and staff. Offline yoga classes also foster community engagement, encouraging group participation, peer interaction, and cultural exchange, thereby contributing to a supportive and inclusive campus environment.

#### **Online Yoga Teaching:**

In the digital era, online yoga teaching offers vast opportunities for yoga instructors to expand their reach and impact. Flexible learning options on online platforms enable students to access yoga classes at their convenience, allowing instructors to create structured courses, live sessions, and video tutorials. The use of digital tools helps yoga teachers transcend geographical barriers, catering to a broader audience, including students from multiple institutions. With many higher education institutions adopting hybrid models, combining online and offline sessions, teachers skilled in both modes have a significant advantage. Additionally, technology integration enhances the teaching experience, as instructors

can utilize wearable fitness devices and apps to monitor student progress and provide personalized feedback, making online yoga instruction more engaging and effective.

#### **Vision and Mission of YCB:**

**Vision:** The vision of YCB is to enable people across the globe to lead a healthy life style and to make Yoga a way of holistic living by ensuring access to quality Yoga trainers.

**Mission:** To define standards for Yoga training for Yoga institutions and Yoga professionals and assist them in achieving the same while imparting Yoga education to society

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The integration of yoga education within the framework of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has been extensively discussed in academic and policy circles. This literature review examines existing research, policy analysis, and scholarly discussions on the significance, implementation, and challenges of yoga education as envisioned by NEP 2020 and role of YCB in Standardizing Yoga Education.

**Yoga as a tool for holistic development:** Several studies have highlighted the transformative potential of yoga in education. According to Bhavanani (2021), yoga fosters a balance between body, mind, and spirit, making it an essential part of a well-rounded education. The inclusion of yoga in NEP 2020 aligns with the global emphasis on wellness and mindfulness in educational settings (Kaushik & Sharma, 2020). By integrating yoga into school and higher education curricula, students can benefit from improved physical fitness, mental clarity, and emotional resilience.

**Integration of Yoga in Educational Curricula:** The NEP 2020 advocates incorporating yoga into physical education programs and extracurricular activities at the school level (Ministry of Education, 2020). At the higher education level, universities are establishing yoga and wellness centers, offering diploma courses, and fostering research in yoga sciences (Sharma & Verma, 2022). Studies by Gupta et al. (2021) suggest that yoga-centric programs in colleges not only promote well-being but also enhance academic performance through better focus and stress management.

**Research on Yoga's psychological and cognitive benefits:** The psychological benefits of yoga have been well-documented. Mishra et al. (2020) conducted a meta-analysis revealing that yoga improves mental health by reducing anxiety and stress, particularly in academic settings. These findings support the inclusion of yoga under NEP 2020, which aims to address students' holistic needs, including mental health and emotional well-being. Additionally, yoga's role in enhancing cognitive functions such as memory, attention, and decision-making has been emphasized in studies by Kumar and Bhattacharya (2021).

**Challenges in implementation of yoga education:** Despite its benefits, implementing yoga education faces challenges. Limited availability of trained yoga instructors, insufficient infrastructure, and varying levels of awareness about yoga's benefits hinder widespread adoption (Singh et al., 2020). To address these challenges, NEP 2020 recommends teacher training programs, capacity building, and the standardization of yoga curricula (Ministry of Education, 2020).

**The role of technology in yoga education:** Digital platforms have enabled the delivery of yoga education through online classes, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic (Rana et al., 2021). The blended learning model proposed in NEP 2020 leverages technology to make yoga education accessible to a wider audience. Studies indicate that online yoga programs are effective in promoting mindfulness and well-being, although they require robust digital infrastructure for optimal implementation.

**YCB promoting Professionalism in Yoga:** By certifying individuals and institutions, the YCB helps elevate yoga as a professional discipline. The certification process involves rigorous assessment of practical and theoretical knowledge, encouraging candidates to attain high levels of competency. As noted by Verma (2021), YCB-certified professionals are increasingly recognized for their qualifications, enhancing their employability in schools, wellness centers, and corporate sectors.

**Encouraging International Collaboration:** The YCB has contributed significantly to the global promotion of yoga. Its certification is recognized internationally, facilitating cross-border mobility of yoga professionals (Saxena & Mishra, 2022). This has led to collaborations between Indian yoga institutions and global wellness organizations, fostering cultural exchange and the integration of yoga into mainstream healthcare and education systems worldwide.

**Research and Development:** In addition to certification, the YCB actively supports research in yoga. It collaborates with academic and healthcare institutions to study the therapeutic benefits of yoga, further establishing its relevance in contemporary health practices (Kumar et al., 2021). This focus on evidence-based practice aligns with the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 to integrate traditional knowledge with modern scientific inquiry.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The primary objective of studying the topic is to explore and analyze the evolving role and opportunities for yoga educators within the framework of modern education reforms. Specific objectives include:

1. **Understanding integration of Yoga in Higher education:** To assess how yoga has been incorporated into higher education systems under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, emphasizing its role in holistic student development.
2. **Evaluating Professional Opportunities:** To identify the employment prospects for yoga teachers in higher education institutions, including teaching, research, and administrative roles in wellness centers.
3. **Examining the role of YCB Certification:** To evaluate how Yoga Certification Board (YCB) accreditation and certifications enhance the career prospects of yoga professionals and ensure standardized practices in higher education.
4. **Analyzing benefits of Students and Institutions:** To investigate the physical, mental, and academic benefits of integrating yoga into the curricula of higher education institutions, promoting health and well-being among students.
5. **Identifying challenges and solutions:** To explore the barriers faced by yoga teachers in establishing careers in higher education and recommend strategies to overcome these challenges.
6. **Promoting Yoga as a Sustainable Career Option:** To highlight how NEP 2020 and YCB certifications are transforming yoga into an organized and recognized career path within academia.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore and analyze the role, opportunities, and challenges for yoga educators within the context of education reforms. The methodology includes the following components:

**Research Design:** The research was descriptive and analytical, focusing on secondary data from policy documents, published articles, government reports, and institutional guidelines related to NEP 2020 and YCB certifications.

**Data Collection (Secondary Data Sources):** The data was gathered from official publications, including the National Education Policy 2020, documents from the Yoga Certification Board (YCB), and research articles from academic journals.

**Web-Based Resources:** Websites of government bodies such as the Ministry of Education and Ministry of AYUSH, as well as institutional portals of accredited yoga centers, were reviewed for updated information.

**Data Analysis:** Content analysis was conducted to identify themes related to the integration of yoga in higher education, the certification process, and career opportunities for yoga teachers. Analysis was done to evaluate the benefits and challenges associated with the implementation of NEP 2020 and YCB guidelines.

This methodological framework ensures a comprehensive understanding of the scope of yoga teachers in higher education while highlighting the implications of NEP 2020 and YCB for the professionalization of yoga education.

## DISCUSSION

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has introduced transformative changes to India's education system, emphasizing holistic, multidisciplinary, and inclusive learning. A significant aspect of this reform is the integration of physical and mental well-being into the curriculum, with yoga playing a pivotal role. This policy shift has expanded opportunities for both online and offline yoga instructors within higher education institutions.

### NEP 2020: Emphasizing Holistic Education

NEP 2020 underscores the importance of incorporating physical fitness, wellness, and mindfulness into educational frameworks to cultivate well-rounded individuals. The policy advocates for education that nurtures not only intellectual growth but also emotional and physical health, aligning seamlessly with yoga's philosophy of harmonizing the body, mind, and spirit. NEP 2020 has unlocked various avenues for yoga professionals stated below:

- **Mandatory Wellness Programs:** Higher education institutions are required to include wellness programs, creating steady demand for qualified yoga teachers.
- **Teacher Training Programs:** Institutions are offering yoga teacher training courses, allowing experienced instructors to train the next generation of yoga educators.
- **Research Opportunities:** The policy promotes interdisciplinary research, enabling yoga teachers to collaborate on studies linking yoga with neuroscience, psychology, and healthcare.
- **Employment Security:** Universities and colleges are recruiting full-time and part-time yoga instructors, providing stable career paths.

**Opportunities for Yoga Instructors:** The focus on holistic education has increased the demand for yoga instructors in both online and offline settings within higher education institutions.

### Offline Yoga Instruction

- **Establishment of Yoga Departments:** Many institutions are creating dedicated departments for yoga and wellness, providing platforms for instructors to conduct regular classes, workshops, and certification programs.

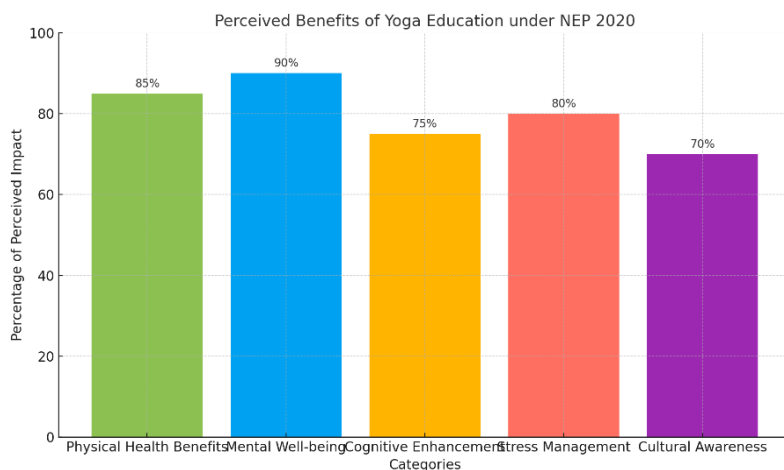


- **Curriculum Integration:** Yoga is being incorporated into physical education and wellness courses, allowing instructors to design curricula and lead practical sessions.
- **Mental Health Initiatives:** With growing awareness of mental health, yoga instructors can collaborate with counselors to offer mindfulness and stress-relief practices for students and staff.
- **Community Building:** Offline yoga classes foster community engagement, encouraging group participation, peer interaction, and cultural exchange.

#### Online Yoga Instruction

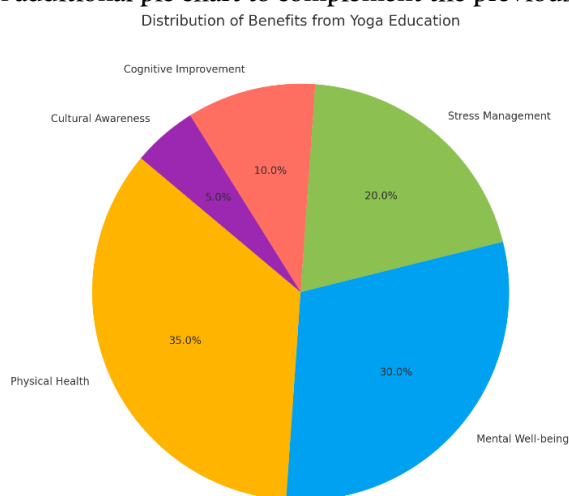
- **Flexible Learning:** Online platforms enable students to access yoga classes at their convenience. Instructors can develop structured online courses, live sessions, and video tutorials.
- **Expanded Reach:** Online tools allow yoga instructors to cater to students across multiple institutions, overcoming geographical limitations.
- **Blended Learning Models:** Many institutions are adopting hybrid models, where yoga sessions are delivered both online and offline, benefiting instructors proficient in both modalities.
- **Technological Integration:** Instructors can utilize technology, such as wearable fitness devices and apps, to monitor progress and enhance the learning experience.

#### Benefits of Yoga Education under NEP 2020



**Figure 1: Perceived Benefits of Yoga**

Here is an additional pie chart to complement the previous bar chart.



**Figure 2: Benefits from Yoga Education  
Role of YCB**

The Yoga Certification Board has established itself as a cornerstone in the global yoga ecosystem. Through its initiatives to standardize education, promote professionalism, and encourage international collaboration, the YCB has significantly contributed to the credibility and growth of yoga as a holistic practice. The Yoga Certification Board (YCB) accredits yoga institutions and centers, evaluating them based on factors such as years of existence, scale of operations, and experience in the field of yoga. This accreditation process recognizes and validates the contributions of these institutions to the growth and promotion of yoga. Institutions are accredited across four levels, fostering consistency and quality in the teaching and practice of yoga. These certifications range from basic yoga protocols to advanced levels such as yoga master, and from assistant yoga therapist to yoga therapy consultant. Furthermore, YCB offers certifications for practicing yoga as therapy, providing a platform for experienced professionals to expand their scope while promoting yoga as a recognized therapeutic tool. This initiative establishes standards among various yoga institutions while respecting their individual teaching methodologies. By aligning the rich legacy of yoga with standardized certification processes, YCB ensures the development of trained and qualified yoga professionals who uphold the highest standards in the field. Availability of trained and certified yoga professionals and institutions empowers public in selections of right yoga Instructor, trainer and institutions.

### **Challenges and Solutions:**

#### **Challenges:**

**Lack of Awareness:** Some institutions and students may lack understanding of yoga's benefits. Awareness campaigns and evidence-based results can address this gap.

**Digital Divide:** Limited access to technology in certain areas can hinder online instruction. Implementing hybrid models and offline outreach programs can mitigate this issue.

**Curriculum Standardization:** Establishing uniform guidelines for yoga education across institutions will ensure quality and consistency.

**Resource Constraints:** Limited availability of trained yoga teachers and infrastructure.

#### **Solutions:**

**Capacity Building:** Training programs for yoga educators to meet increasing demand.

**Curriculum Design:** Developing age-appropriate, standardized yoga curricula for schools and colleges.

**Research and Advocacy:** Promoting evidence-based studies on yoga's impact to increase acceptance and adoption.

## **CONCLUSION**

The integration of yoga education in NEP 2020 amplifies its significance in fostering holistic development. While there is substantial evidence supporting its benefits, addressing implementation challenges is crucial to realizing the policy's vision. Yoga education in NEP 2020 reflects a progressive step towards integrating traditional wisdom with modern education. By cultivating physical health, mental well-being, and emotional intelligence, yoga aligns with the policy's vision of holistic and transformative learning. As institutions embrace these reforms, yoga will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in shaping a healthier and more mindful generation of learners. NEP 2020 and YCB positions yoga as a central element of India's educational reform, presenting significant opportunities for yoga instructors. It brings quality and standards in practice of Yoga and to promote Yoga as career skill. By embracing innovative teaching methods and aligning with institutional objectives, both online and offline yoga teachers can profoundly impact students' lives. As higher education evolves, yoga educators will play a crucial role in bringing up a healthier, more mindful generation.

## **LIMITATIONS**

The study relied heavily on secondary data, and primary data through surveys or interviews was not included due to time constraints. The findings may not fully capture region-specific challenges or opportunities in yoga education. Future research should focus on evaluating the long-term impact of yoga education on students' academic, psychological, and physical outcomes.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. This study was conducted independently, and no financial, professional, or personal affiliations influenced the research, analysis, or conclusions presented. Any information cited from external sources has been appropriately acknowledged to ensure transparency and academic integrity.

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