

Yoga as a Tool for Women's Well-Being and Nation Building in Viksit Bharat @2047

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Abstract: India's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 envisions a healthy, empowered, and inclusive nation where the well-being of women is central to sustainable progress. Women's physical, emotional, and mental health significantly impacts family health, community development, and economic productivity. In this study, yoga, an ancient Indian practice, is a holistic tool to enhance women's well-being and promote nation-building. This paper explores the multifaceted benefits of yoga in supporting women through various life stages—from adolescence and reproductive years to menopause and elderhood. Yogic practices such as Asana (postures), Pranayama (breath regulation), and Dhyana (meditation) have been shown to alleviate stress, regulate hormonal imbalances, and improve emotional resilience (Sengupta, 2012; Rakhshani et al., 2010). Regular yoga practice enhances body awareness, self-esteem, and cognitive function, making it especially beneficial for women juggling personal, social, and professional roles (Woodyard, 2011). Yoga also contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—particularly those related to health (SDG 3), gender equality (SDG 5), and education (SDG 4). Government programs like the Fit India Movement and AYUSH initiatives leverage yoga for community well-being. Embedding yoga in school curricula, workplace wellness programs, and maternal health services can empower women and uplift families and communities, thereby strengthening the foundation of Viksit Bharat. With the help of scientific data, traditional knowledge, and policy frameworks, this study signifies that yoga should play a bigger part in determining India's future, where strong, independent Women will clear the way for a strong, developed nation.

Keywords: Viksit Bharat 2047, Yogic Practices, Women's Well-Being, Female Health

1. Introduction

'Viksit Bharat' means 'Developed India.' Viksit Bharat @2047 is the government's vision to drive the mission of making India a completely developed nation by its 100th anniversary of independence in 2047. The vision is based on four pillars: Yuva (Youth), Garib (Poor), Mahila (Women), and Annadata (Farmers).

The concept goes beyond economic growth, encompassing inclusive development, technological advancement, social equity, environmental sustainability, and citizen empowerment. The vision of Viksit Bharat is rooted in:

- Holistic human development, including education, health, and skill-building
- Empowerment of women, youth, and marginalized communities
- Innovation and self-reliance (Atmanirbhar Bharat)
- Good governance and strong institutions
- Cultural pride and global leadership

In this context, yoga, the ancient Indian discipline of mind-body and soul integration, emerges as a powerful tool to empower women and foster their overall well-being. Yoga promotes physical fitness, mental clarity, emotional stability, and spiritual growth—dimensions that are particularly significant for women who often juggle multiple roles in society. Studies have shown that regular yoga practice reduces stress, anxiety, and symptoms of depression among women, while enhancing self-esteem, hormonal balance, and reproductive health (Woodyard, 2011; Field, 2016). Furthermore, yoga practices such as asanas, pranayama, and meditation have proven beneficial in managing lifestyle disorders, menstrual health issues, and menopausal symptoms

(Goyal et al., 2014). Empowered and healthy women can contribute more effectively to education, healthcare, governance, and the economic sectors integral to India's vision of becoming a Viksit Bharat. The integration of yoga in national health missions, school curricula, and women-centric welfare programs can thus catalyze inclusive development. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi has highlighted, "Yoga is not just about fitness; it is a passport to health assurance," underscoring its potential in building a resilient and self-reliant India (Modi, 2021).

By mainstreaming yoga as a lifestyle and preventive healthcare practice, India can create a foundation for gender-equitable progress. Investing in women's wellness through yoga is not just an investment in individual health but in the health of the nation.

The importance of Women's Well-being in nation-building

The well-being of women is not merely a matter of individual health, but a crucial determinant of a nation's overall development and resilience. Women are central to families, communities, and the economy. When women are healthy physically, mentally, and emotionally, they contribute more effectively to social, educational, and economic growth, thereby directly influencing national progress.

1) **Health and Economic Productivity:** - Women's well-being enhances their ability to participate in the workplace, access education, and contribute to household and national incomes. According to the World Bank, improving women's health and education can raise productivity and significantly boost GDP (World Bank, 2020). Poor health, on the other hand, leads to

absenteeism, reduced earning capacity, and increased healthcare costs.

- 2) **Maternal and Child Health:** Healthy women ensure better pregnancy outcomes and healthier children. The World Health Organization (WHO) emphasizes that maternal health strongly predicts child survival, growth, and development. A mother's physical and mental well-being is crucial during the first 1,000 days of a child's life—a critical window for brain development and lifelong health.
- 3) **Education and Social Development:** - Women who are mentally and emotionally well are more likely to educate their children, engage in community work, and uphold social values. Studies show that educated and healthy mothers are more inclined to prioritize health, nutrition, and education within families (UNICEF, 2019), creating a ripple effect of progress across generations.
- 4) **Gender Equity and Empowerment:** - Well-being forms the foundation for empowerment. Women who are healthy and confident are more likely to engage in leadership roles, participate in governance, and make informed decisions about their lives. This, in turn, enhances democratic participation and social justice, key elements of a developed society.
- 5) **Nation Building and Policy Implementation:** - Women's well-being ensures their full participation in implementing national missions, be it in health, education, environment, or economy. Their involvement in community-level planning and policy execution, especially through self-help groups and panchayats, makes development more inclusive and effective.

Yoga as a Holistic Wellness Tool for Women

- Yoga is part of our ancient Rishi-Muni and spiritual traditions, representing one of humanity's oldest and most intriguing cultures. This ancient natural therapy originated in India roughly 5000 years ago and has gained popularity as an alternative therapy in recent years.
 - **Yoga** derives from the Sanskrit word “**Yuj**,” which denotes the union of the soul with the Supersoul, to unite, relate, join, attach, direct, concentrate one's attention on, use, and apply.
 - Swami Vivekananda (2005). has stated that yoga has a key role in the mind to keep it calm and quiet, and to produce relaxation of the body. Yoga is explained in the great scriptures like the Vedas, Upanishads, Gita, and Ramayana.
 - **Bhagavad-Gita says-** Yoga is equanimity in success and failure.
 - Yoga is skill and efficiency in action.
 - Yoga is supreme and successful in life.
 - Yoga is serenity. Yoga is a destroyer of pain.
 - B.K.S. Iyengar (2008), the founder of Iyengar yoga, states that the “primary aim of yoga is to restore the mind to simplicity and peace, to free it from confusion and distress. Unlike other forms of exercise, which strain muscles and bones, yoga gently rejuvenates the body.”
 - It is an all-inclusive, holistic practice, focused on achieving balance, restoration, rejuvenation, and strength for the body, mind, and spirit; it addresses “every aspect of health and well-being from the periphery to the core.”
- Yoga works in every aspect of life & many studies have been done so far, and I am also doing my research work on the

“Management of Menopause through Yogic Intervention.” Here we see the all-health aspect benefits through Yogic Intervention.

1) Physical Health Benefits

- Yoga enhances flexibility, strength, stamina, and overall physical fitness. Specific *asanas* (postures) such as TTK Asanas, **Bhujangasana (Cobra Pose)**, **Trikonasana (Triangle Pose)**, and **Setu Bandhasana (Bridge Pose)**, etc, help improve reproductive health, regulate menstrual cycles, and support the musculoskeletal system.
- **Menstrual and Hormonal Health:** Regular yoga practice has been shown to reduce symptoms of PMS, PCOS, and hormonal imbalances (Telles et al., 2013).
- **Pregnancy and Postpartum Care:** Prenatal yoga improves blood circulation, reduces pregnancy-related discomforts, and prepares the body for childbirth. Postnatal yoga aids in faster recovery and mental well-being.
- **Menopause Management:** Yoga alleviates hot flashes, sleep disturbances, joint pain & many more symptoms experienced during menopause.

2) Mental and Emotional Well-being

- Yoga plays a critical role in mental health by reducing stress, anxiety, and depression, issues that disproportionately affect women due to hormonal fluctuations, multitasking roles, and societal pressures.
- **Meditation (Dhyana) and Pranayama (breathing techniques)** calm the nervous system and activate the parasympathetic response, helping reduce cortisol levels (Goyal et al., 2014).
- Practices like **Anulom Vilom**, **Bhramari**, and **Yoga Nidra** improve emotional regulation and promote restful sleep.
- Yoga enhances self-awareness, builds emotional resilience, and nurtures a positive body image and self-concept.

3) Lifestyle Disease Management

With rising lifestyle-related disorders such as obesity, thyroid dysfunction, diabetes, and hypertension among women, yoga offers an affordable, preventive, and sustainable solution.

- **Scientific studies** have shown that yoga can improve insulin sensitivity, lipid profiles, and blood pressure (Innes et al., 2005).
- Yogic detoxification practices (Shatkarmas) and dietary discipline (Mitahara) help maintain metabolic balance.
- **Spiritual and Inner Wellness:** Yoga also nurtures the **inner dimension** of wellness through practices that promote introspection, compassion, and self-realization.
- **Chanting Mantra**, **Bhakti yoga**, and **Karma yoga** help women reconnect with their inner selves and develop a sense of purpose and peace.
- It helps women navigate challenges with equanimity and live with greater mindfulness and meaning.

4) Government Initiatives Supporting Yoga and Women's Health

- **Ministry of AYUSH:** Promotes yoga through training, research, and integration with modern healthcare

- **Poshan Abhiyan:** Focuses on nutrition and lifestyle practices, including yoga for adolescent girls and pregnant women
- **National Education Policy 2020:** Introduces yoga in the school curriculum
- **International Day of Yoga (June 21):** Celebrates yoga's global relevance and cultural pride

5) Flagship Programs Involving Yoga:

- Fit India Movement
- Ayushman Bharat – Health and Wellness Centres
- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (Health and education focus)
- Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan

Agenda for Viksit Bharat @2047 through Women and Yoga

1) Policy Integration

- Include yoga in all women-centric health and welfare schemes.
- Mandate yoga sessions in schools, colleges, workplaces, and maternity centers.

2) Capacity Building

- Train women as certified yoga instructors, especially in rural and tribal areas.
- Promote community-level women's yoga groups and self-help circles.

3) Awareness and Accessibility

- Launch awareness campaigns on yoga's benefits for women's health and empowerment.
- Set up free or low-cost yoga and wellness centers across urban and rural India.

4) Research and Innovation

- Encourage research on yoga's impact on women's health issues (e.g., PCOS, menopause, mental health).
- Develop digital tools and apps for yoga learning tailored to women's needs.

5) Entrepreneurship and Leadership

- Support women-led yoga startups and wellness enterprises.
- Encourage yoga-based microenterprises for livelihood generation.
- **Goal:** Empower healthy, confident, and self-reliant women as key drivers of a strong, inclusive, and prosperous *Viksit Bharat @2047*.

2. Conclusion

The journey toward *Viksit Bharat @2047* necessitates a comprehensive focus on women's health and empowerment. Yoga, as a holistic discipline, plays a crucial role in enhancing women's physical, mental, and emotional well-being. By fostering inner strength, resilience, and self-awareness, yoga enables women to become active contributors to national development. Thus, integrating yoga into women-focused policies and programs can accelerate the nation's progress toward a more inclusive and sustainable future.

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