

Therapeutic Yoga for Spiritual Well-being and Life Skills: Yogis' Perception in Nepal and Thailand

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines how yoga practice enhances spiritual well-being and life skills. With growing interest in non-pharmacological approaches to maintaining health, especially amid environmental changes and pandemics, investigating yoga's role in holistic health is timely. A qualitative design used in-depth interviews with twenty-one professional trained yoga practitioners from Nepal and Thailand. Participants included yogis and instructors from Asian and Western backgrounds who attended yoga session and school while travelling in Thailand and Nepal. Findings indicate that yoga promotes personal spiritual well-being and can be function as a traditional therapeutic tool that supports life-skill development. Core benefits linked to enhanced spiritual well-being include heightened self-awareness, sustained stillness, focused attention, moral sensitivity, detachment from materialism, a sense of sacredness and connectedness, and felt closeness to God in whom they have faith. Improvements in life skill that follow include emotional regulation, clearer decision making, conflict resolution, social empathy and resilient coping. This study offers theoretical and practical contributions regarding how authentic traditional yoga practice foster spiritual well-being and leads to physical and supports psychological health.

Keywords: Spiritual wellbeing, life skills, yoga and tourism, quality of life

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Introduction

Contemporary concern about health promotion, maintenance, and treatment have intensified in response to environmental change, the Covid-19 pandemic, heightened workplace stress, and expanding family responsibilities (He, Liu, & Li, 2021; Majeed & Kim, 2022; O'Connor et al., 2021). While acute stress elicits adaptive fight or flight responses, chronic stress undermines both mental and physical functioning (Desikachar, 1999; Serber, 2000). Moreover, sustained stress and persistent low mood are associated with heightened anxiety and diminished spiritual well-being (du Boulay, 2022; Goldsby, Goldsby, McWalters, & Mills, 2017). Consequently, many travelers increasingly prioritize spiritual retreats as means of pursuing holistic wellness and engaging in deliberate spiritual practice (Abraham, 2024; Ann Suwaree Ashton, 2018; A.S. Ashton, 2021; Bone, 2013). Nevertheless, spiritual retreats participants frequently encounter difficulties in locating activities that are authentic, ethically grounded, and sustainable precisely when they seek to restore spiritual health (Park, Lee, Finkelstein-Fox, Sanderson, & Plante, 2018; Vogler, Salyer, & Giacobbi, 2023). In this context, the cultivation of life skill is critical for coping with these challenges, and practices such as yoga is posited to reduce stress, enhance problem-solving capacities, and support both social and spiritual dimensions of retreat experiences (Martin, 2009; Sinha, 2020).

An important question that remains underexplored from academic perspective is how and why yoga practice may transform practitioners toward greater spiritual well-being and thereby impact essential life skills. Existing literature has examined many facets of yoga, including tourist behavior, motivations, and revisit intentions (Atsız, Ramkissoon, & Öğretmenoğlu, 2023; Chakrabarty & Das, 2023; İnce & Keskin, 2023; Leou & Wang, 2023; Pramod & Nayak, 2018; Sharma & Nayak, 2019). Scholarship has also considered destination development and the broader impact of yoga, for example its transformative role during International Yoga Day and contributions to post-disaster spirituality and well-being (Manjunath, 2023). Additionally, policy and planning issues have begun to receive attention, exemplified by preliminary studies on the prospects for yoga tourism in Nepal (Arora & Sharma, 2023; Charak, Sharma, & Chib, 2021). In marketing, yoga is studied as a promotional tool and competitive advantage for destinations in India, Bali, and Thailand (İnce & Keskin, 2023; Maddox, 2015; Ploadaksorn, Angkananon, & Damrongsakmethee, 2023; Rungsimanop & Ashton, 2021; Telej & Gamble, 2019; Yusuf & Praptika, 2024). Investigations of yoga tourism experiences have addressed emotional transformation, psychological well-being, and destination images (Atsız et al., 2023; Dillette, Douglas, & Andrzejewski, 2019; Sharma & Nayak, 2019), including studies on how yoga enhances learning and skills development among youth and students (Rongali & Sinha, 2024).

The literature indicates a paucity of research on how yoga practice promotes spiritual well-being and the development of life skills, especially in the contexts of Thailand and Nepal. Existing work related to Thailand and Nepal, spirituality and yoga are sparse

and fragmented: one rare study examines life-skills development and cognitive outcomes from Buddhist practice among private university educators in Thailand, India, and Nepal (Worapongpat, 2025). Scholars has addressed religion, spirituality and education in Nepal context (B. P. Khanal & Shimizu, 2019; Leve, 2016); another studied have examined yoga's effects on physical function and well-being in older adults in Thailand context (Noradechanunt, Worsley, & Groeller, 2017), Thai yoga massage (Chow, 2002), and links between Buddhism and mental health (Pholphirul & Srijamdee, 2025).

Hence, addressing this gap is important because a holistic academic account of yoga's role in spiritual well-being would, first document and adapt traditional healing practices (e.g., yoga practice, chanting, sound healing) for contemporary therapeutic use (Gerety, 2021); second, inform stakeholders in designing yoga-based programs that foster relaxation and spiritual healing for tourism, and third clarify how yoga cultivates life skills that supports coping, resilience, and balance during crises such as disasters and pandemics (Ross, Bevans, Friedmann, Williams, & Thomas, 2014; Sahu & Gupta, 2013), thereby supporting the therapeutic application of yoga within spiritual retreats (di Fronso, Robazza, Pompa, & Bertollo, 2024).

Yoga tourism destination significant impact global tourism industry, especially in India, and Nepal (Khan, Thapa, & Adamopoulos, 2025; H. Khanal & Khanal, 2021; Manjunath, 2023). An one of the oldest systems for enhancing bodily energy and health, yoga encompasses meaning such as union or reunited between body, mind and spiritual, meditation, physical discipline and practical (Goldman & Goldman, 2017; Musalagaonkar, 1980; Walker, 2014; Woodyard, 2011). It promotes physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, aids recovery from mental disorders and fosters stress reduction, and helps restore bodily balance and homeostasis (Venkateswarlu & Begum, 2023). Common practices include asana (poses), chanting, meditation pranayama (breathwork), and self-humming sound; sound healing practice has been used for health improvement since ancient times (Beaulieu & Perez-Martinez, 2018; Goldman, 2017; Longdon, 2020). Nada Yoga, for example, centers on the sacred syllable Om and demonstrates how Indian practitioners developed mantra science into a method for spiritual elevation and holistic consciousness (Frawley, 2010; Paul, 2006). Mantra and chant in yoga and meditation can facilitate deeper spiritual retreat and psychophysiological healing (Frawley, 2010; Goldsby et al., 2017). Similarly, Tibet bowls meditation used alongside mantra and other sound practices has been proposed as a low- cost, low technology intervention to reduce tension, anxiety, and depression and to enhance spiritual well-being (H. Khanal & Khanal, 2021; Musalagaonkar, 1980; Shrestha, 2009; Stanhope & Weinstein, 2020). Sound therapy applies targeted frequencies to promote harmony and health of body/mind and remains an effective technique for mental and spiritual restoration (Heather, 2007; Pulido, 2021).

What is Spirituality?

Spirituality can be defined as divine love experienced as an assertion that contributes to self-confidence and a feeling of worthiness, divine intercession or inspiration, heightening awareness that involves more than physical states, psychological feelings and social role (Dyson, Cobb, & Forman, 1997; Van Kaam, 1986). Spirituality can reflect positive emotions, love attachment, trust, faith, compassion, gratitude, forgiveness, joy and hope (Barros & Schultz, 2023). Some people travel to join spiritual activity because they want to seek the purpose in life and explore what goes beyond life (Sobihah Abdul Halim, Tatoglu, & Banu Mohamad Hanefar, 2021). On the other hand, spirituality defines as the refining of human consciousness to arrive at truth that is not always explained in religious contexts or specified by religion teachings (Aldridge, 2000, p. 16). Therefore, in this paper spiritual will refer as a non-religion perspective.

The spirituality definition distinct from religion concept, religion involves institutionally sanctioned beliefs and activities of a particular faith group (Chan, 2018). On the contrary, spiritual is defined as more basic than religiosity and related to transcendent values and the way in which people find purpose in life (Chan, 2018). The spiritual well-being experiences can include, aesthetic thrills, satisfaction with achievements, adjustment to one self or to others, feelings of self-respect and human dignity, that pertains to the unknown future, happiness, elation, gregariousness, empathy, and sympathy, morals, mental health, optimism, and a feeling identify with nature (Moberg, 1971, p. 1).

Spiritual Well-being and Life Skills Theory

Spiritual is a core animating principle, an intimate relationship with the inner self grounded in higher values, morality, and recognition of one's essential nature (Fry, 2003). Consequently, yoga is posited to enhance spiritual well-being. Several weeks of yoga interventions have been shown to increase spiritual experiences, notably feeling of inner peace, harmony, and proximity to the divine aspirations, and existential reflection (Csala, Springinsfeld, & Köteles, 2021). Yoga can foster a sense of divine on natural connection and spiritual presence (Pandya, 2019). As a proposed way of life, yoga integrates body, mind, spirit, particularly supports life-skill development (Park, Lee, Finkelstein-Fox, & Sanderson, 2018). Life skill is essential for daily living because they help reduce mental-health risks and facilitating spiritual transformation (Soni & Chandra, 2018; Yankey & Biswas, 2019).

Life skill defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. There are ten core life skill, including self-awareness, empathy, critical, thinking, creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, effective communication, interpersonal relationship, coping with emotions, and stress (World Health Organization, 1996). Life skill refers to the abilities that help promote mental well-being,

and make people competent to face life, enhance personal development, and increase overall quality of life (Sahu & Gupta, 2013). While Sinha (2020); categorizes life skills into three domains: thinking skills (e.g., self-awareness, critical thinking, decision making), social skills (e.g., effective communication, empathy, interpersonal relational), and emotional skill (e.g., positive self-esteem, balance of pleasant to unpleasant affect, and resilience (Courtwright, Flynn Makic, & Jones, 2020; Langeland, 2024).

In brief, life skill included, decision making, problem solving, creative and critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relations, self-awareness, empathy, coping with emotions and stress are distinct competencies (Sahu & Gupta, 2013) whose training has been shown to improve mental health and spiritual wellbeing (Sobhi-Gharamaleki & Rajabi, 2010; Soni & Chandra, 2018).

Spiritual Well-being Measurement

Given that yoga promote spiritual well-being, its effects can be conceptualized across fourteen dimensions; transcendence, self-awareness, self-engagement, self-efficacy, service to others, innerness, interconnectedness, sacredness of life, non-materialistic, moral standards, four sublime states of mind (loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic joy, equanimity), gratitude, third-eye openness (intuition/nature spirituality); and Quality of Life linking life skill development with holistic spiritual transformation. Each dimension of spiritual well-being is described below:

Transcendence

Transcendence is a spiritual dimension encompassing experiences that extend beyond typical ego-centered awareness and ordinary material reality (Bagis, Adawiyah, Purnomo, & Sudjadi, 2024; Linnhoff, Smith, & Smith, 2024). Derived from Latin transcendere, meaning "to climb across" or "to go beyond"(Von Essen, 2010), transcendence denotes a state above the normal threshold of awareness and individual's ability to move beyond ordinary consciousness and attain a higher level of awareness (Harman, Titiz, & Görürüm, 2026; Oxford Dictionary, 2024).

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is about an ongoing, conscious capacity to observe and understand your own thoughts, feelings, physical sensations, vulnerabilities, values, and reactions in a spirit of acceptance and non-reactivity while engaged in the spiritual retreat aimed at distressed postgraduates (Bagis et al., 2024; Lazar, 2020; Malinakova et al., 2017; Shaver et al., 2020).

Self-Engagement

Self-engagement is different than simply relaxing or escaping for a brief time; it is intentional psychological and existential work (Makkar & Singh, 2021; Tan, 2021). It is a

purposeful practice of turning inward with support and guidance to socially engage through activities and processes in order to heal academic related wounds (Boynton & Margolin, 2025; Fopka-Kowalczyk, Best, & Krajnik, 2023).

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to one's belief in one's ability to successfully manage one's thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and circumstances to achieve a desired outcome (Bagis et al., 2024; Chiesi, Tagliaferro, Marunic, & Bonacchi, 2024; Hudha & Mardapi, 2018). This includes confidence in one's ability to: achieve their goal successfully and be able to deal with stress and emotional distress. They can be creativity person, problem solving, display perseverance through difficulties; regulate one's mental and emotional states; seek and use helping resources; and recover from raging adversity (Kristensen, Larsen, Urke, & Danielsen, 2023).

Services to others

Giving cause of happiness, hence when people love to serve others, its shows the acts of intentionally endeavoring to support the wellbeing of other human beings with acts of kindness without benefits in returnee, out of true concern for the flourishing of others (Cook, 2019; Mas-Machuca & Marimon, 2019; Roof, Bocarnea, & Winston, 2017). Helping other can include donation, volunteering works, teaching others in remote area without remuneration, offering words of encouragement, sharing resources, creating safe spaces, or taking the time with another person's suffering (Nichol, Wilson, Rodrigues, & Haighton, 2024).

Innerness

Innerness within spiritual retreats designed to heal the bodies and minds of distressed (Bagis et al., 2024; Nora, 2024; Patneau, 2006). It refers to the intentional, sustained practice of directing attention inward to explore, inhabit and care for one's internal landscape—the rich inner world of thoughts, emotions, physical sensations, memories, intuitions, values, spiritual longings, and the essential sense of self that exists beneath roles and achievements (Harvey, 2013; Helminski, 2017; Walsh, 2000).

Interconnectedness

Interconnectedness in spiritual designed to heal the bodies and minds of stressed (Unterrainer, 2023; Yusof, Kadir, Zakaria, & Malik, 2023). It is the felt recognition and embodied knowledge that they are not individuals, separate beings, but part of many overlapping systems of relationship—between humans, between non-human life, in natural and social environments, with others and the universe. It reflects feelings of harmony and relatedness to all being (Mas-Machuca & Marimon, 2019; Shaver et al., 2020; Yusof et al., 2023).

Sacredness of Life

Sacredness life refers to the deep recognition and embodied conviction that existence itself—one's own life, others' lives, and life in its myriad expressions—possesses inherent worth, dignity, and value that transcends utility, achievement, or external judgment (Ambrosio & Lanzilao, 2013). This concept differs from religious doctrine, though it appears across spiritual traditions (Lazar, 2020).

Detachment from materialism

Detachment from materialism refers to a values orientation and way of being that acknowledges the insufficiency of reliance on material accomplishment and externally normed validation to produce authentic wellbeing, happiness, or meaning (Martela, 2024; Smallenbroek, Zelenski, & Whelan, 2017). In other words, non-materialism embodies several interconnected dimensions: the realization that true fulfillment is derived primarily, it seems, from inner qualities (wisdom, compassion, integrity, presence) and relationships with others, rather than the aggregation of possessions, credentials, and status (Lazar, 2020).

Moral Standards

Participate in spiritual healing activity is a morally good response that attends to personal wellbeing and professional responsibility (Nora, 2024). Maintaining rigorous moral standards when seeking holistic approaches to an individual's self-care can help to pursuit and facilitating the maintenance of their physical and mental well-being (Kondrath, 2022).

Four Sublime States of Mind

The “Four Sublime States of Mind” refer to inner peace, emotional equilibrium, and compassionate living, known as "Brahmaviharas" or "Four Heavenly Abodes" in Buddhist philosophy (An-ard, Kangpheng, & Techathammo, 2025; Nareerak, 2023a). The Four Sublime States of Mind are loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic joy, and equanimity (Vuttiyangkoon, 2023). The sublime states of mind represent useful tools to negotiate stress and mental disorder, it mean something that much deeper a philosophical framework for living awareness, balance, and authenticity (An-ard et al., 2025; Nareerak, 2023b).

Gratitude

Gratitude is a rich psychological and emotional experience in which the individual recognizes, appreciates, and is genuinely thankful for positive experiences and attributes (Emmons, Froh, & Rose, 2019; Yoshimura & Berzins, 2017). Participating in spiritual retreats focused on creating feelings of appreciation and thankfulness provides opportunity to people to rebalance their cognitive and emotional orientation from purely deficit-focused, to noticing and acknowledging the blessings and resources they have (Diniz et al., 2023; Fuertes, 2024).

Intuition

Intuition denotes a deep sense of connection, unity, and sacredness in one's relationship with the natural world (Bagis et al., 2024; Davis et al., 2015; Groen, 2016). It is the ability to know something immediately, without conscious reasoning or deliberate analysis. Combining intuition with analysis reasoning can improve decision making and help align action with long-term goals and visions (Katsikopoulos & Gigerenzer, 2026). This spiritual element encompasses feelings of oneness with nature, recognizing of an interconnected web of life beyond a human-centered perspective, and seeing the natural environment as a source of meaning, transcendence, and spiritual nourishment (Md Sahak et al., 2024; Ryff, 2021).

Quality of Life

Quality of life is a complex construct that encompasses a person's overall sense of wellness, satisfaction, and fulfillment within many aspects of human experience (A.S. Ashton, 2024; Ciziceno, 2022; Steihauser et al., 2024). It is a holistic assessment of a person's situation, performance, and subjective experience, going well beyond material wealth or even the absence of illness to include not just physical health, mental health, personal autonomy, social relationships, and the environment but also beliefs or spirituality (Gautam et al., 2024; Steihauser et al., 2024). Methodology

Research Objectives

This study aims to bridge an academic gap by examining how yoga practice enhances spiritual well-being and foster life skills, based on yogis' perspectives from Thailand and Nepal.

- To find out participants' sociodemographic and yoga backgrounds.
- To investigate participants' yoga spiritual well-being experiences and benefits for life skills.

Research Methodology

This study used a qualitative approach with data collected through in-depth interviews technique. The study focused on collecting data from Nepal and Thailand. Kathmandu, Nepal was selected because it is a well-known yoga destination and the researcher had attended a yoga school there for a month in 2024, where permission was granted to interview consenting students, facilitating access to detailed accounts of yoga experiencers. In Chiangmai, Thailand, participants were recruited from everyone around the world who attend yoga at the studio or health parks (where they are offering free yoga

sessions). Participant was voluntary after agreeing to take part, participate received study information and ethics briefing and provided consent for video recording and transcription. Data were analyze using content analysis.

Participants' Profile

21 participants were interviewed: eight males and thirteen females, aged 20 to 50. Most were single (13) and seven were married. Educational levels were bachelor's (14), master's (5) and PhD (2). Participants were primarily from Nepal, Thailand, with one each from Canada, Spain, Wales, Germany and the USA. Their occupations varied and included yoga studio owner, yoga instructors, medical doctor, post graduate students, lawyers, government officers, psychologists, monks and professionals (as Seen Table 1).

Table 1: *Yogi participant's profiles*

ID	Sex	Age	Status	Education	Country	Career	Spiritual activity
1	M	42	Married	PhD	Indian	Own yoga studio	Yoga
2	M	36	Married	Bachelor	Nepal	Own yoga studio	Yoga
3	F	30	Married	Bachelor	Nepal	Own Yoga studio	Yoga
4	F	26	Single	Master	Nepal	Instructor	Yoga
5	M	25	Single	Bachelor	Indian	Teacher	Yoga
6	F	27	Single	Master	Nepal	Medical DR	Yoga
7	F	42	Married	Bachelor	Nepal	Organic cosmetic	Yoga
8	F	36	Single	Bachelor	Nepal	Teacher	Yoga
9	M	32	Single	Master	Indian	Yoga instructor	Yoga
10	F	20	Single	Bachelor	Nepal	Student	Yoga
11	F	45	Married	Bachelor	Thai	Own yoga studio	Yoga
12	F	40	Married	Bachelor	Thai	Own yoga studio	Yoga
13	M	37	Single	Bachelor	Canada	Psychologist	Yoga
14	F	28	Single	Bachelor	Spain	Lawyer	Yoga
15	M	31	Single	Bachelor	Wales	Employee	Yoga
16	F	31	Single	Bachelor	Germany	Employee	Yoga
17	F	31	Single	Bachelor	USA	Tattoo shop	Yoga
18	M	42	Single	Bachelor	Nepal	Monk	Yoga
19	M	50	Single	PhD	Thai	Monk	Yoga
20	F	28	Single	Master	Nepal	Government	Yoga
21	F	29	Married	Master	Nepal	Medical/psychologist	Yoga

Results

The researcher asked questions aligned with the study objectives: first, describe participants' sociodemographic and yoga backgrounds. Second, investigate participants' yoga spiritual well-being experiences and benefit for life skills. Results are presented below:

Yogis' Socio-demographic Backgrounds

The results revealed that most participants began practicing yoga to address psychological, physical health issues and were also influenced by their environment (family

or friends who practiced yoga). Physical concerns included back pain, office syndrome, and work or life-related injury (ID3, ID4, ID6, ID13, ID15). Some began after serious illness, one participant with cancer reported, “I have cancer and practice yoga; it has really helped my mental well-being.” (ID15). Another participant said:

“I had back pain and was under a lot of stress, so I began stretching on my own with YouTube videos. I originally started yoga in Bangladesh during medical school but was stuck at home and went deeper into the practice online (during Covid-19). I learned Vinyasa flow and found it really strengthened my body. That inspired me to do teacher training—telling patients to care for themselves isn’t always enough; as a doctor I want to provide holistic care, not just medical advice. Yoga has helped me, and I want to help my patients too” (ID 6).

Another said,

“When I was 22 I had health problem and didn’t want to see doctor, so I sought a cure outside the hospital. I found yoga VDO on YouTub and practiced on my own until I need proper training from professionals and gurus. I also change my diet, started eating healthier, and have been vegetarian for almost five years.” (ID4).

Many participants were yoga teachers or master yoga teachers (ID1, ID2, ID3, ID4, ID8, ID9, ID11, ID12 and ID14). Several cited family influences as their introduction to yoga and motivation to teach (ID1, ID2). For example, one participant recalled, “My father practiced yoga throughout my life. I also me my teacher, I called her “mother’s guru” and spent a few years meditating in a cave with her and other students. (ID1). Another said, “When I was 19 my mother often took me to her yoga studio. I resumed practice, and for four years ago, fell in love with yoga and became an instructor” (ID14).

Yoga Experiences and Benefit for Life Skills

The findings showed most participants experienced increased spiritual well-being. When asked, “what they gained from yoga, many cited improvements in spiritual, emotional well-being (ID4, ID5, ID6, ID8, ID9, ID14, ID15). For example, one participant said yoga improved their spiritual well-being by encouraging introspection rather than external goals (ID9). Several others reported spiritual growth through transcending the ego and a accepting life’s events more easily (ID1, ID2, ID3, ID4, ID9).

Participant said that,

“Yoga helped restore balance to my life. It cleansed me from the inside, when I focused on stillness, balance, observed and intended to my intentions and awareness. I began to feel calm, peaceful and my spiritual well-being gradually

improved. Yoga also strengthened my Chakras and deepened my understanding of spirituality, helping to reopen energy centres and bring balanced back into my life.”(ID9).

Another said,

Yoga gave me spiritual well-being experience; I feel closer to God. I became more obedient to God’s words, less angry calmer, kind, merciful, and ethics toward all beings, this is why I became vegetarian. Spiritual well-being led to self-love and, self-realization; understanding who I am, loving myself and loving others.” (ID 4).

Participant (ID5) said, yoga improved spiritual well-being, making him more positive, self-confident, peaceful, kind and generous. Practice increased his body awareness and injury prevention, helped him stay present, and left him satisfied with life and his work as a dance and yoga teacher. Yoga enhanced his practice and deepened his spiritual well-being, boosting his self-confidence so he can teach with love and passion. He sacrifices and devotes time to his career because teaching and learning benefits him professionally, sharing knowledge helps him gain experience and refine teaching techniques for better student outcomes. Yoga has brought him peace and internal spiritual journey, including chakra work, opening body energy through practice, and singing Tibet bowl training. He knows his spiritual well-being has improved because giving to other make him happier; when knows his spiritual well-being has improved because giving to others makes him happier; when his students achieve their goals and he has helped them, he feels profound inner joy.

Spiritual Well-being Enhancing Life-skills

The findings indicate that yoga cultivates life skills through spiritual well-being, fostering through transcendence, self-awareness, service to others, inner reflection, interconnectedness, sacredness, detachment from materialistic, morale growth, love, compassion, kindness, gratitude, resilience, and overall quality of life. Practitioners reported greater awareness, emotional stability, and present moment peace (Harman et al., 2026; Oxford Dictionary, 2024).

Yoga also influences decision making, such as encouraging some to become teachers and join the yoga community and shape healthier habits, such as mindful communication, better food choices, and practical self-care (e.g. using herbes, vegetables, or fruit for minor ailments). Overall, yoga’s improvements in spiritual well-being translate into adaptive, positive behaviors that help cope effectively with life’s challenges.

For instance,

Yoga has improved my life skills, I wake up very early for class and meditation, train challenging asanas to increase flexibility, and strengthen my mind and soul. This deepened awareness has become a spiritual journey; my heart and soul give more than take. Yoga helped me believe in myself, build strong self-confidence, and achieve better life balance.” (ID5).

Moreover, during meditation it help in our dairy life, making decision, and dealing with issues or crisis better, as evidence below:

“During meditation we let go of all the thoughts in our mind. When the mind becomes quiet and empty, it creates space and energy to receive new ideas. With that clarity, we can use our mental abilities more effectively and handle whatever life brings with greater skill.” (ID18).

Contribution of the Study

The study advances theoretical understanding at the intersection of yoga, spiritual well-being and life-skill development by processing a coherent model of how yogic practices facilitate self-actualization and adaptive functioning. The primary contribution of this study is proposing that physical and psychological issues can heal by spiritual well-being fostered by authentic traditional yoga practice. Specifically, it theorizes that regular engagement in yoga cultivates core psycho-spiritual capacities, heightened awareness, sustained stillness, focused attention, moral sensitivity, and healthy detachment from materialism, which together foster meaning purpose, and an orientation toward transcendence. These capacities function as mechanism that convert contemplative practice into life skills: improved emotional regulation, clearer decision-making, conflict resolution, social empathy, and resilient coping.

The model also reframes yoga-based health benefits as rooted in traditional, embodied therapeutic processes rather than solely in biomedical interventions, suggesting complementary pathways for physical, mental, and spiritual healing.

Study findings showed many participants began to exposure yoga through social media, VDO on YouTube when they first start to have physical and mental problem. Yoga school or institutes that teach authentic traditional yoga practices would be more beneficial than treating yoga merely as modern exercise. Contemporary, exercise focused approaches lacking authentic instruction and process are less likely to enhance spiritual well-being and modern way of practice, and this modern practice will not help to enhance the spiritual well-being due to the not authentic yoga learning and process. Hence, the study identifies translation gaps, particular the need for educational outreach and media and community-based strategies to encourage adoption of yoga and offers practical theory driven implications:

development of best-practice guidelines for spiritual-retreat healing, integration of yoga-informed curricula into life-skill education, and use of yoga-based interventions as holistic therapeutic modalities. Specifically, it theorizes that regular engagement in yoga cultivates core psycho-spiritual capacities, heightened awareness, sustained stillness, focused attention, moral sensitivity, and healthy detachment from materialism, which together foster meaning purpose, and an orientation toward transcendence. (As seen in Figure 1).

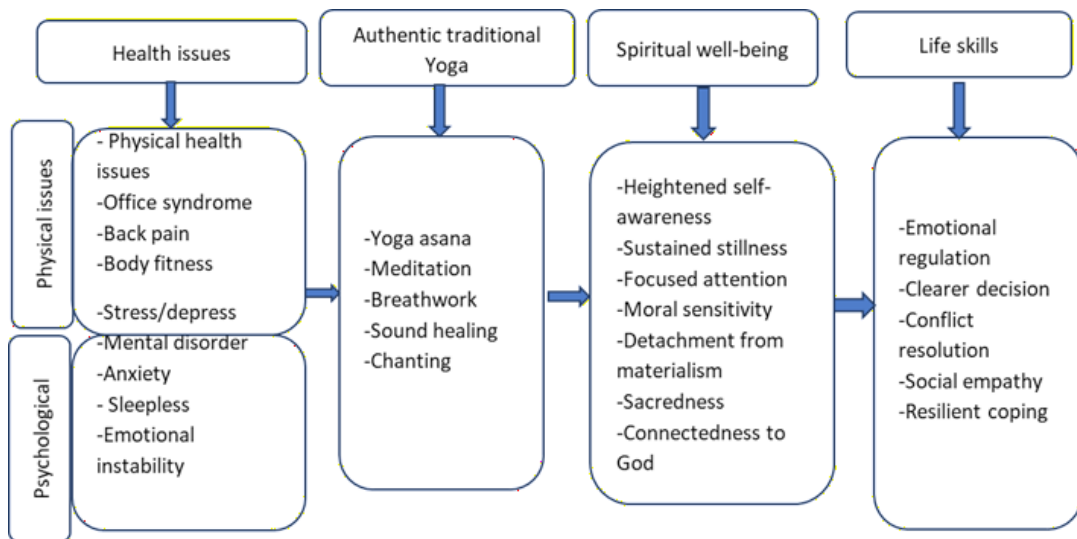


Figure 1: *Spirituals well-being and life skill development through yoga*

Source: Developed for this study

This study contributes to practical implications by informing best-practice guidelines for spiritual healing programs aimed at enhancing holistic health and well-being. It also provides a framework for integrating yoga-based practices into life-skill development within social contexts, positioning these practices as therapeutic intervention that support physical, mental, and spiritual healing.

Discussion and Conclusion

In today’s turbulent world, many people seek a sacred, connected, and meaningful existence, one that brings peace and equips them with the life skills needed to cope with toxic, fast-paced modern environment. Rather than focusing solely on material gain and productivity, cultivating wisdom, compassion, and practical life skills helps individuals fulfill deeper aspirations. This study therefore examines how yoga practice enhances spiritual well-being and fosters life skills from the perspectives of yogis in Thailand and Nepal.

It can be concluded from findings that most participants initially turned to yoga for physical health reason, persistent pain or fitness problems, and for psychological concerns such as mental instability requiring long-term healing. These motivations align with Telles, Sharma, Singh, and Balkrishna (2017) who reported that many people prioritize yoga for physical fitness improvement and disease management.

Another objective of this research was to examine how spirituality experience in yoga lead to transformation and enhance life skills. Improved A life skills, in turn, help individuals navigate a turbulent world. In this study, spiritual well-being is described as an inner journey of growth that cultivates peace, awareness, life realizations, harmony with nature, non-attachment, and contentment. Similarly, Bryan, Zipp, and Breitzkreuz (2021) found that gentle yoga and mindfulness improve measures of spiritual well-being, including stress management, sleep, and a sense of social connectedness. In addition, yoga practice supports spiritual well-being and fosters life skills across several dimensions. For example, in a world where people often chase material success and are exposed to negativity environments, many neglect the developing wisdom, compassion, and practical coping skills in favor of productivity and money. Likewise, Soni and Chandra (2018) mentioned that spiritual well-being fostered through yoga, advances life skills such as learning to know (self-awareness an insight), to do skill (skillful action), to live together (preventing and resolving conflicts, promoting peace, and respecting others), and to be (personal growth and lifelog learning). Yoga practices skills, such as yoga asana, chanting, meditation, sound healing, pranayama (breathwork), and a vegetarian diet can meaningfully enhance spiritual well-being. It can be summarized from study findings that yoga promote spiritual well-being and enhance life skills, especially self-awareness, problem solving, critical thinking, empathy, coping with emotional (Sahu & Gupta, 2013).

Recommendation for future research

Yoga widely offered at holistic wellness centers, so scholars interested in authentic wellness tourism and its health benefits should attend yoga and sound-healing sessions. Future research should examine the experiences of yoga studios and wellness providers to identify factors that contribute to success in the wellness industry. A quantitative study should be conducted to examine experiential and behavioral changes, and to assess the influence of spiritual leaders or gurus on well-being outcomes.

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