

# Ayurveda And Yoga in The Modern World

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## ABSTRACT

Ayurveda and Yoga have a new medium to be witnessed, and this is where Internet comes in. Internet take on many different forms including social media, magazines, blogs, podcasts, photos, videos and Internet forums. This study aims to find out the impact of web in sensitizing and creating awareness amongst the masses on following Yoga and Ayurveda. Yoga has been around for roughly 5,000 years with its origins in India. Online platform has helped people establish their names while practicing Yoga at their place. People like Meera Watts, the owner and founder of Siddhi Yoga, Singapore, a yoga teacher and yoga therapist, blogger is known around the world for her thought leadership in the wellness industry and was also recognized as a Top 20 International Yoga Blogger. Her writing on holistic health has appeared in Elephant Journal, Cure Joy, FunTimesGuide, OMtimes and other international magazines. On the other hand, Mia Park based in Chicago, teaches yoga to facilitate self integration and personal transformation. She draws from Vedic, Yogic and Tantric techniques that use the breath, body, energy and meditation to cultivate focus, awareness and purpose. To find out the effect of internet on audience, methodological triangulation is done using content analysis, a qualitative method and a survey conducted with 45 respondents of Amritsar to collect the data quantitatively.

**Keywords:** ayurveda, blogging, internet.wellness, yoga

## INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda and Yoga have a new medium to be witnessed, and this is where Internet comes in. For centuries this science of Yoga, the medicine of the mind and heart, seeking refinement of the five senses, development of the clear mind and purity of our heart, it was only taught from word of mouth. Over the years it expanded, and the modern world changed the teacher's accessibility online.

Yoga has grown exponentially over the years in the West and has become a massive industry. You can see photos and videos in the form of reels, YouTube shorts and full-fledged videos of people doing amazing poses and arm balances all over the internet.

Yoga has been around for roughly 5,000 years with its origins in India and has always been a spiritual practice based in meditation. Even in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, Patanjali (the author) emphasized an eightfold path that includes ethical disciplines, postures, breathing, concentration, meditation, control of the senses, and absorption or enlightenment.

Yoga was introduced to the western world as far back as 1851. The yoga practice that we know today started to gain traction in the 1930's and 1940's due to celebrity endorsements. It wasn't until the 1960's that yoga saw its first boom in popularity with teachers such as B.K.S. Iyengar and K. Pattabhi Jois leading the way.

Yet throughout this time, yoga was considered a spiritual practice, and asana was part of the way to enlightenment. It was during the second boom in the 1980's when a report came out connecting yoga to heart health that we see the shift from spiritual to physical begin to take place, and with the expansion of digital media, we can begin to see how digital media is changing the vision of people on Ayurveda and Yoga. The digital content makers have taken notice and promoted yoga as a great way of staying in shape both mentally and physically. These influencers have played a vital role in shaping what yoga is today. From the ads we see for yoga clothing and gear, to the way yoga is represented on social media handles of celebrities, yoga is portrayed as a physical exercise that is similar to Pilates or glorified stretching, and the result is an increased interest of yoga in common man's life.

#### “Role of Internet in Popularization of Ayurveda”

Ayurveda is considered to be the oldest healing science. In Sanskrit, Ayurveda means “The Science of Life.” Ayurvedic knowledge originated in India more than 5,000 years ago and is often called the “Mother of All Healing.” It stems from the ancient Vedic culture and was taught for many thousands of years in an oral tradition from accomplished masters to their disciples. Some of this knowledge was set to print a few thousand years ago, but much of it is inaccessible. The principles of many of the natural healing systems now familiar in the West have their roots in Ayurveda, including Homeopathy and Polarity Therapy.

Ayurveda places great emphasis on prevention and encourages the maintenance of health through close attention to balance in one's life, right thinking, diet, lifestyle and the use of herbs. Knowledge of Ayurveda enables one to understand how to create this balance of body, mind and consciousness according to one's own individual constitution and how to make lifestyle changes to bring about and maintain this balance. Just as everyone has a unique fingerprint, each person has a particular pattern of energy—an individual combination of physical, mental and emotional characteristics—which comprises their own constitution.

If we would have thought this before 20-25 years it would have seemed as a joke or a dream which could be attained only through a miracle, but the scenario has changed, technology has evolved, we are into the age of Internet- the age of “Digital Media”.

Ayurveda knowingly or unknowingly is a part of our day-to-day life. Ayurveda is necessary for human beings for not only providing us relief from diseases but for also keeping us away from diseases. Ayurveda is a pious knowledge, which strives for helping the humans attain the prime goal of their life i.e., Moksha (Salvation). We, especially Indians are lucky enough to have a bit idea about this great science known as “Ayurveda”.

Our Indian culture and life style has always incorporated Ayurveda in our day-to-day life. This prevents us from many of the life-threatening diseases to which the rest of the world strives against. The world has seen us through ages and has studied the Indian population in- depth and has so learnt the importance of Ayurveda. Ayurveda was designed for the whole human race and it would also not be an exaggerated statement if we say that it was designed for the whole universe. So, this makes us-the disciples of Ayurveda, especially the Indian population responsible for propagating this holy knowledge which is designed for the betterment of humans to reach each and every human of this world.

You go to Google and just search for “Ayurveda, Yoga and Social Media” and you surprisingly find more than 2000000 + results within no time. This show how fast is Ayurveda and Yoga spreading as flames in the forest over the social media.

This search contains people who discuss Ayurveda and Yoga, who want to know Ayurveda and Yoga, who have heard about Ayurveda and Yoga and also the ones who want to know more about it. These

people are not only from India but from all parts of the world. Ayurveda and Yoga have seen immense popularity in all parts of the world and the credit goes not only to ayurvedic physicians or yogacharyas, but also the internet and especially the social media these days.

Social media technologies take on many different forms like:

- 1) Instagram posts
- 2) Facebook
- 3) You Tube
- 4) Twitter
- 5) Whatsapp
- 6) E-magazines
- 7) Internet forums
- 8) Weblogs
- 9) Wikis

## **OBJECTIVES**

The intent of this quantitative descriptive research will be:

1. To analyse the influence of digital media on people who prefer to yoga to stay fit.
2. To study the impact of yoga gurus on internet
3. To study the difference between traditional yoga and modern yoga
4. To study the popularity of ayurveda on internet

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Following research questions were to be answered:

1. Which generation is affected the most by online content on yoga and ayurveda?
2. In what manner social media usage effected purchase behaviour of ayurveda medicines?
3. In what manner online content effected traditional yoga?
4. Whether people do yoga to stay clean and fit or just for social media content?

## **SAMPLE SIZE AND TOOLS USED**

The scope of research is the respondents of all age groups, but grouped into four classes, less than 20 years (Gen Z), 20-40 years (Gen Y), 40-60 years (Gen X) and more than 60 years. The data was collected using questionnaire and Google forms and share through internet. This ensures that the respondents use internet and follow their favourite yoga teacher or influencer. The data was collected from the respondents in Amritsar, Canada and Australia to ensure the representation from all the areas, urban, semi-urban and rural. On the social media millions of people are posting images of yoga in any occasion, for any body, age and place, and regardless of how the practice is presented, these images are sending messages of great contribution of yoga to improving the quality of life, achieving personal freedom and joy of life. It is exactly that innate human need for free and joyful life, or at least a falls representation that the ideal is achieved, that make yoga one of the most popular phenomena in the social media. We live in an age where everything is going virtual and social media platforms have crept in our lives. And have become a part of our being. Social media gives us the illusion of deeper connection and community. But in reality, we are far from the real experience and real life. And this is true for yoga too. Yoga is essentially a lifelong practice and a lifestyle. And yoga cannot be captured in one picture or post.

Yoga on social media has intrigued for the past few years. Now one is blown away by the Instagram culture of yogis taking pictures every day in yoga poses and throwing out the most perfect yoga poses. Social media has impacted yoga.

Ancient yogis lived a much more austere, disciplined and rigorous practice-oriented life. When researcher say practice, she does not mean yoga asanas and going to 2 yoga classes a day. But other aspects of rituals, philosophy, discussions, meditation practice, chanting, contemplation, some asana, service to the community, household duties and much more. They chose to eliminate all distractions, had minimal relationships and never taught or studied yoga for monetary success. Today, when we look at social media for yoga, we will undoubtedly see perfect looking poses, slim bodies, random words of wisdom on how to live free, wild and happy. But more importantly, it's a means to an end. Most social media accounts lead to some sort of yoga business.

Rarely, do you see a 60+ yoga practitioner featured on the cover of a leading yoga magazine. Usually, it is a 20 something, attractive, smiling woman who seem to have a perfect life and if you open a website like Yoga Journal or Yoga International, you will see a host of young yoga practitioners mostly women, in all yoga poses looking flawless. Yoga legends like BKS Iyengar practiced till he was 95. Young yoga teachers are a modern phenomenon due to modern yoga teacher trainings. Traditionally, yoga teachers were much older, who spent 20 to 30 years in rigorous study. This ensured that yoga was passed on correctly through the generations.

Before social media, any pant you did yoga in was yoga pants. It is only much later that people understood the role of yoga fashion especially for Instagram and pinterest pics. Some social media sites have greater virality. Out of these different kinds of social media's the ones which are used largely are Wikipedia, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Youtube. Major companies, investors, authors, industries, business people, and also many non-profit organizations use this social media for marketing and propagating their own services and activities. This thus may also prove to be a boon for Popularization of Ayurveda and Yoga.

It is said that "With great powers comes great responsibility". This is also possible as there are many people who without any background or formal education of Ayurveda keep on talking about Ayurveda for their personal benefits. So, we must make people aware about the real Ayurveda instead of commercial Ayurveda, which is designed these days for simply monetary benefits and not for the benefit of the society. Sharing pictures or photographs of patients with Ayurvedic diagnosis or sharing pictures of plant species and their identification by teachers on certain social media like Instagram or even Facebook may prove to be a boon for Ayurveda students and the people who are concerned for a particular answer or doubt about Ayurveda or Ayurvedic herbs. Youtube may serve as a social media where teachers, professors, or surgeons of Ayurveda may post videos of many procedures like Kshar sutra bandhan or Nasya techniques or many other panchkarma techniques and also discuss about the correctness and appropriateness of the procedure with their efficacy. This may also popularize Ayurveda in terms of clearing doubts about safety or efficacy or results in the general population. Ayurveda may become more and more popular through these social media sites, gaining back the position which it should have acquired long back. There still are certain social media sites like Wikipedia where publications, researches and information can be uploaded in a huge amount and also can be edited and modified according to the group discussions. This may serve for providing maximum reach of recent publications and researches in different fields and branches of Ayurveda in no time. This also becomes important in terms of preservation as we know that Ayurveda has already suffered huge loss due to this kind of missing data, may it be the lost chapters of "Charak

Samhita” or may it be the incomplete “Kashyap Samhita”, social media may surely prove to be a boon. As this is the age of social media, it has always and from every aspect helped to popularize Ayurveda .

Some of the popular bloggers of Yoga are:

**Meera Watts** is the owner and founder of Siddhi Yoga. She is known around the world for her thought leadership in the wellness industry and was also recognized as a Top 20 International Yoga Blogger. Her writing on holistic health has appeared in Elephant Journal, CureJoy, FunTimesGuide, OMtimes and other international magazines. Meera is a yoga teacher and yoga therapist, though now she focuses primarily on leading Siddhi Yoga, blogging and spending time with her family in Singapore.

**Mia Park** teaches yoga to facilitate self integration and personal transformation. She draws from Vedic, Yogic and Tantric techniques that use the breath, body, energy and meditation to cultivate focus, awareness and purpose. Based in Chicago, she teaches weekly tantra hatha yoga and yoga nidra classes and leads a variety of workshops. Initiated in the Sri Vidya lineage, Mia is a certified ParaYoga and Rest and Renew teacher, 500E-RYT and is an actress, drummer, and producer. She manifests it all thanks to a dedicated practice and with the grace and guidance from her teachers.

**Arundhati Baimangalkar** is an Indian immigrant yoga teacher, host of the Let's Talk Yoga podcast, accidental studio business owner, ex-Bollywood dancer, Blogger, YouTuber & dog mom. Living in Seattle, US Arundhati is recognized as one of the top 20 yoga teachers of color to watch out for by Yogawalla.

Some of the top Ayurveda websites and bloggers trending in 2023 are:

### 1. Easy Ayurveda



Moobdidri,

Mangalore,

India

An Ayurveda, lifestyle, herbs and home remedies website to disseminate authentic, science backed, ancient Ayurveda wisdom to the world. Health and lifestyle blog by Dr JV Hebbar. Dr. hebbar is Ayurvedic Doctor, Pharma Consultant, Writer, Columnist, Blogger & Devotee.

### 2. Dr. Douillard's LifeSpa

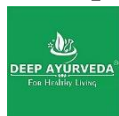
Boulder,

Colorado,

US

Leading alternative health and wellness with a specialty in Ayurveda, LifeSpa.com is evolving the way Ayurveda is understood around the world.

### 3. Deep Ayurveda



Mohali,

Punjab,

India

A leading brand of multispecialty chain of clinics provide holistic healing through Ayurveda, Yoga, Panchkarma, Diet and Life style modification.  
[deepayurveda.com/blog](http://deepayurveda.com/blog)

### 4. PAAVANI Ayurveda | The Ayurvedic Lifestyle



Nevada

City,

California,

US

PAAVANI offers Ayurvedic skincare products and body therapies to the modern world. Organic health, body & skin care products that carry on the ancient wisdom of Ayurveda with dosha specific skin care and 100% pure & natural ingredients. [paavaniayurveda.co](http://paavaniayurveda.co).

### 5. Simple Ayurveda - Podcast



Simple Ayurveda is here to make ancient science easy to understand, relatable and totally possible for you to apply into your modern day life so that you can be your healthiest, most vibrant self. [simpleayurveda.com](http://simpleayurveda.com).

### FINDINGS

From this study it has been analysed that Generation Y or the Millennial Generation broadly defined as people born between 1981 and 1999 are considered as digital natives. This generation has spent their lives throughout in the digital environment. There is a significant impact of digital media on the way they live and work as they have continuous access to internet.

55.4% of the digital media users were males and 44.6% were females. Majority of the users (61.7%) were in age group of 24 to 40 years, (23.4%) were age group of 15 to 23 years, (9.3%) were in more than 40 to 50 years and rest (5.6%) were age group of 50 to 60 years. This study shows 55% of people follow influencers and do Yoga to stay fit, 35% respondents were just following the fashion trend, and 10% respondents were people who find it easy to search for any remedy in Ayurveda on digital media.

### ANALYSIS

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram and You Tube are examples of online social networks, as well as virtual platforms such as webpages, microblogs, and search engines, which come back to mind when we think about digital channels. Formerly existing yoga is now referred to as “traditional yoga” and modern, fit influencers have attracted youth to follow yoga. Internet has helped reach the masses in every corner of the world which has made easy for people to have knowledge of ayurveda and yoga.

### CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to research the role of Internet on popularization of Ayurveda and Yoga. It is found that there are many people who seek information on easy and permanent solution about their health problems on the internet and the social media. When these people read blogs of patients sharing their positive experiences about Yoga on the internet or the social media, then they automatically tend to start searching about Ayurveda therapies and different Yoga Asana. Yoga is becoming popular day by day on social media and it has become a fashion trend and modern yoga has been also being known as Pilates. Thus Internet has helped a lot in the upliftment of Ayurveda and Yoga at a global platform.

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