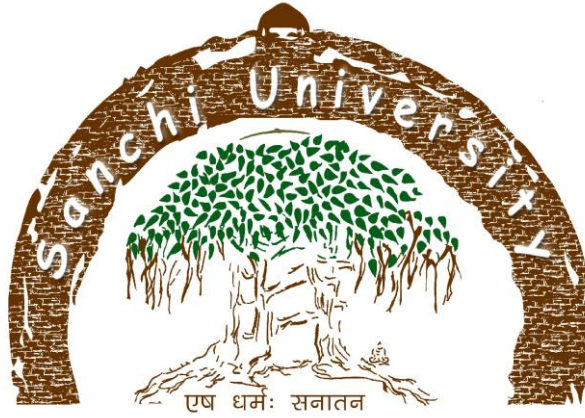


Role of Yogic Practices in General Menstrual Problems and Related Myths: A Study

**A Thesis Submitted for the Award of the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Yoga**



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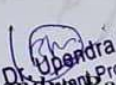
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Preface

This research is an idea developed to analyse the problems which was faced by many school and college going girls during their menstruation. Among them, some fall sick, some faint, some vomit the whole day, some avoid breakfast, some avoid talking with anyone, their face swells and much more. After these observations it was found that these problems are a part of their life and indicate to them that they are going to menstruate soon. These problems are known as General Menstrual Problems (GMP).

Being a researcher and student of *Yoga* it comes to my mind to see the effect of some Yogic practices on GMP. To choose the set of practices which can be performed by any age group at their home by themselves, literature review has been taken into account. Here, some spiritual facts associated with menstruation come into light. So menstruation ethics and its reasons are also explored gradually during the research work.

In every era, menstruation was given attention and provided protection and some isolated space to menstruating women. In present days why menstruation ethics are forbidden and their original meaning which is sometimes associated with mythological tales was the extended part of the research.

This research work is divided into two phases; where in the first phase the selected Yogic practices and their effect on menstruation were studied through the Random Control Trial (RCT). The online *Yoga* class was conducted to see the effect on a selected group of participants. After the *Yoga* class was provided, it was found that the above-mentioned GMP were reduced.

In the second phase of the research the fables associated with menstruation were studied, then it was tried to compile the status of menstruation in different subsets of era. The relation of Moon and menstruation, days and months, the date of the Hindu calendar reveals the future of a girl after her menarche. The tale of *Indra* which was famous throughout India was the base of the myths related to menstruation. In the present time the condition of menstruating women and what spiritual teachers of contemporary time think was explored and tried to raise the awareness in the society.

This work took a long time of three and half year to reach the objectives of the research and it was very challenging to fulfil the requirements of research work with dignity because at the mid of the study all of sudden the Covid-19 Pandemic situation arose in

front of humanity and offline mode *Yoga* class became a challenge in front of me. Before the Covid-19 Pandemic the half portion of RCT had been done but at the time of receiving the final data Covid-19 Pandemic was announced and the data was not collected from the participants and the whole work became void-ab-initio. Then the work again started and tried to contact with many colleges to give offline *Yoga* class and it took one year to convince the one college but they applied one condition that they only allow to take *Yoga* class online mode and not give permission for physical mode class because at that time in the year 2021 April to June 2021 there was second lockdown in whole country. It was not easy to ask participants again and again to fill the questionnaire and conduct *Yoga* class. But yes at the end everything falls in the right place and at the right time.

The work has been concluded here in this small space that the practices of *Yoga* played a positive role in GMP. *Yoga* positively affects the life of practitioners and myths which were drawn by ancient saints of India were developed to secure women not to harm the dignity of women. They respect women and that is why they provide some peace, some rest in the form of isolation. In contemporary times, it is necessary to rectify the meaning of these myths and understand the worth of women so that the upcoming generation will be benefited by this knowledge.

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STANDARD TRANSLITERATION CODE

a	=	अ	ña	=	ङ	pa	=	प
ā	=	आ	ca	=	च	pha	=	फ
i	=	इ	cha	=	छ	ba	=	ब
ī	=	ई	ja	=	ज	bha	=	भ
u	=	उ	jha	=	झ	ma	=	म
ū	=	ऊ	ña	=	ञ	ya	=	य
e	=	ए	ṭa	=	ट	ra	=	र
ai	=	ऐ	ṭha	=	ठ	la	=	ल
o	=	ओ	ḍa	=	ड	va	=	व
au	=	औ	ḍha	=	ढ	śa	=	श
Aṁ	=	अं	ṇa	=	ण	ṣa	=	ष
Aḥ	=	अः	ta	=	त	sa	=	स
ka	=	क	tha	=	थ	ha	=	ह
kha	=	ख	da	=	द	ḷa	=	ळ
ga	=	ग	dha	=	ध	kṣa	=	क्ष
gha	=	घ	na	=	न	jña	=	ञ
ṛ	=	ऋ	ṛ	=	ॠ			

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 *Yoga*, Menstruation and Myths
- 1.2 Identification of problem
- 1.3 Statement of problem
- 1.4 Significance of the Study
- 1.5 Aim and Objectives of the Study
- 1.6 Research Questions
- 1.7 Research Hypothesis
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- 1.9 Menstruation Cycle as per *Āyurveda* and Modern
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- 1.10 General Menstrual Problems (GMP)
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Yoga, Menstruation and Myths*

Yoga helps the people to maintain the lifestyle with awareness. Here, lifestyle is not meant by collection of clothes and luxury assets, rather, it means to rediscover the aim of life, the inner self, the real identity and to realize inner nature.

To reach the aim of life which is known as liberation, and to succeed in life in terms of physical and mental health, the path of *Yoga* is developed. *Yoga* clearly mentions the state of mind, concept of three bodies and five *Kośa*. According to the state of mind, *Yoga* mentions suitable practices to reach the higher state of mind.

Practices of *Yoga* include the *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Śaṭkarma*, *Āsana*, *Prāṇāyāma*, *Pratyāhāra*, *Dhāraṇā*, *Dhyāna*, and *Samādhi*. There are many texts of *Haṭha Yoga* established, which includes many practices and many ways to understand the physical body and mind.

Menstruation

A natural phenomenon occurs in a woman's body during reproductive age, where she bleeds for three to five days every month with approximately four ounces of blood loss each month. Nature provides this specific time for women to take rest and regain important mindful thoughts for further days. Before the menstrual phase begins, nature intimates the mind through hormonal changes and some symptoms appear in women's bodies and they become alert for her menstruation.

Myths

During the menstrual phase women face physical and emotional changes but there is more to the situation, there are some social behaviours too which are directly related to menstruating women. These are the ancient menstruation ethics which includes dos and don'ts. It includes isolation, impurity, no kitchen days, no bath days and not being allowed to talk with anyone.

Some of ethics are part of mythological facts and some facts are a necessity for women to encourage her inner self towards self-realized state of liberation. But today these ethics

have lost their identity in the name of myth and some ethics have become unnecessary and need to be rectified.

1.2 Identification of Problem

This research problem is identified after the many conversations with menstruating women where women found themselves in some unwanted situations. These conversations motivate women to search for the root cause of the General Menstrual Problems (GMP) which were partially or sometimes fully faced by the women. The idea of the present research work developed after gathering the information about the menstrual phase and rituals. This research work is on the idea that **Prevention is always better than Cure**. This work is liable to provide basic information about the women's reproductive clock, and is bound to search for simple Yogic practices for women of reproductive age.

Present research work also tries to find out the relevance of ancient menstruation ethics in contemporary times which are considered as myths today. That's why the research area includes the area where women begin their journey with the menstruation cycle.

1.3 Statement of Problem

Role of Yogic Practices on General Menstrual Problems and Related Myths: A Study

1.4 Significance of the study

To reduce the sign and symptoms and general problems of women related with menstrual phase so that she would be able to do spiritual practices during the menstrual phase and convert the stress of menstruation into special happiness, there are practices of *Yoga* explored which includes the set of micro exercise, macro exercise, *Āsana*, *Prāṇāyāma*, *Bandha* and relaxation techniques. The said Yogic practices are sufficient for those women who are living in sedentary premises and not involved in any physical activities. Household work these days is mostly performed with the help of machines and thus it requires less bodily movement which increases problems related to menstrual phase and if not cured soon then it converts into diseases and most probably results in delayed pregnancy or painful menstrual phase with heavy or less bleeding.

For this research work, some Yogic practices were selected as a form of protocol and then applied to a group of thirty women who were facing many problems related to their

menstrual phase and were not aware about the spiritual facts of the same. It was tried at the level best to provide best utilization of one hour with *Yoga* where women would be able to enjoy herself (at least for these four days) and can understand her worth physically and spiritually. Although she need to perform her household and professional duties every day and she usually has no break or free time but it is also important for women to spend a little bit time with themselves and after learning *Yoga* practices when menstrual phase arrives they may become aware about how to make themselves comfortable and happy in menstrual phase without any pain and/or stress.

Presented research has main aims and objectives which work on signs, symptoms and general problems of menstrual phase and what women face in society in the name of menstrual ethics which sometimes become unnecessary to follow and some of them need to be revived. So there is a need to review the myths related to the menstrual phase and revise them then apply or leave them behind to provide women a secure, safe, honourable and healthy environment during the menstrual phase and respect her dignity where she is directly connected to the nature in form of process of creation. Main aim and objectives of the presented research are as follows:

1.5 Aim and Objectives of the study

Aim of research

To study the ancient menstruation ethics (right and wrongs, principles) from the perspective of *Yoga*.

Objectives of Research

1. To compile the myths related to menstruation in different subsets of era
2. To explore the *Yoga* practices which can be performed during menstruation
3. To study the role of Yogic practices in GMP among women with ages ranging from 18 years to 45 years
4. To study the menstruation ethics among women with ages ranging from 18 years to 45 years

To compile the Myths Related to Menstruation in Different Subsets of Era

The myths related to menstruation are compiled to know about what females faced in varied situations in different subsets of era, how she grew in male dominating society,

allow the World to change their thinking and views related to women and realize the worth of females.

In previous Era(s) some rules and regulations were made for protection of females so that they can keep to themselves for a while; a little distant from family and household work because that time females had burden of work and they had joint family where other females or family members can do the work on their behalf and they would be able to take some rest, give some time to themselves, utilize this space and time for some productive work for her own growth and understanding of the mind. Also to understand her body from time to time and gain perfect health which somehow depend on her menstruation.

In ancient times, people were afraid of menstruation hygiene. Because of this fear they made some scientific rules and some imaginary myths. In that era those things were justified by society. As time has passed, considering the present, many things happened and some of these scientific rules and imaginary myths got vanished completely due to the societal changes like joint family are not seen everywhere, burden of household work shifted on machines, family become nuclear, now there are no helping hand for females at most of the houses. Females fulfil their responsibility alone near to perfection but when menstrual phase begins, some symptoms occur for a while and gradually their behaviour gets changed and sometimes females are not able to settle all things alone, she needs moral support, rest, and space to recover and most important thing is she needs care and positive ambience around her.

Some myths related to menstruation are not in practice anymore because females are now aware about their personal Hygiene. Untouchability is a major part of the myths. Where women need confidence and strong moral values to grow during menstruation she receives insults in the form of untouchability and the same thing she unknowingly transfers as a legacy to her children that does not make any sense in present time because everyone wants scientific reasons. All these myths should be adapted or rejected on the basis of their scientific background.

To Explore the Yogic Practices Which Can be Performed During Menstruation

During menstruation, the daily routine of some females remains unaffected. But some females face many general problems due to Hormonal changes in the body like backache, pain in the lower abdomen, swelling in legs, bloating, flatulence, diarrhoea, sickness, weakness, irritation and so on.

In the present era, lifestyle has changed so has the working module and family structure. Families are nuclear, most family members are working, pressure of professional and household work has increased. For these reasons females cannot take care of themselves properly. Females forgot to pay attention to their natural body clock. They neglect their health, mood, hormonal changes etc. If it continues for a long time then it might convert into diseases.

It is known that ‘Prevention is better than Cure’ and should be given priority. One more important fact is that the females got two gifts through menstruation.

1. Females have the ability to give birth; and,
2. During menstruation, the unconscious mind (*Prasupta Chetnaa*) gets activated. If females got to know about this phenomenon she would be able to grow in spiritual world and it's simply means she get rest of body with peace of mind and redressed her *Karma* in very speedy way, but for all this things she has to learn and earn knowledge related to some specific Yogic practices which can be performed during menstruation.

To study the role of Yogic Practices on GMP among women with ages ranging from 18 years to 45 years

There are many Yogic practices mentioned in the ancient texts. In *Haṭha Yoga* texts there are set of practices i.e. *Ṣaṭkarma Āsana Prāṇāyāma Bandha Pratyāhāra Dhāraṇā* and *Dhyāna* etc. Each practice has its own effect whether physically, psychologically and spiritually.

In the Philosophy of *Yoga ‘Pātnjal Yoga Sutra’* there are some additions in Yogic practices in the form of *Yama* and *Niyam* which provide inner strength and *Sādhak* start to gain the ultimate truth of life which is ‘Liberation’.

During the menstruation Cycle females face several changes in their body and mood. Changes appear in the form of symptoms like pain, swelling, backache, nausea, loss of appetite and so on. These symptoms do not necessarily affect every female, in fact it varies from body to body. If females ignore these symptoms and do not understand the natural phenomenon of the body then these symptoms transform into diseases.

To avoid the medical condition which arises due to ignorance, there is a need of Yogic practices before and during menstruation. But some practices should be avoided which could be harmful. Therefore a set of Yogic practices is prepared for GMP so that females can get rid of unnecessary pain and irritation.

This experimental part of study is based on some Yogic practices where females were asked to adopt a selected set of *Āsana*, *Prāṇāyāma*, *Bandha* and *Mudrā* before menstruation and during menstruation *Sūkṣma Vyāyāma*, *Yoga Nidrā* and *Dhyāna*.

Through this study whatever is observed will let us know how this set of Yogic practices will affect body and mind simultaneously. Channelizing the energies of the body to the subtle body.

To Study the Menstruation Ethics among Women with Ages Ranging From 18 Years to 45 Years

Mythological facts related to menstruation are simultaneously followed as the people of every era accept it and modify it according to their convenience. To study the present conditions of these menstruation ethics, a set of certain questions was prepared to ask the women from the range of 18 years to 45 years (reproductive age). It was a survey based study where women were asked some questions related to some mythological facts and spiritual facts.

1.6 Research Questions

What are the menstruation related myths in different subsets of era?

What are the Yogic practices that can be performed during menstruation?

1.7 Research Hypothesis

There is a Positive Effect of Yogic Practices on GMP.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in post test scores on General Menstrual Problems Assessing Scale (GMPAS) of control and experimental group.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

This research work is limited to compilation of the myths (mythological facts) related to menstruation. Research work is limited to one college woman only (for empirical work only). Further, research work is limited to online class mode due to the pandemic situation

of Covid-19. Apart from these limitations, the research work has vast areas to rediscover ancient facts and its scientific views.

1.9 Menstruation Cycle as per *Āyurveda* and Modern Perspective

Menstruation as per *Āyurveda*

Meaning of Menstrual Cycle: *Ārtavachakra*

Lifespan of women is divided into three stages *Bālāwasthā*, *Madhyamāwasthā*, and *Vrudhāvasthā* which are further divided into sub stages. *Bālāwasthā* divided into *Garbha*, *Bāla* and *Kumara* till sixteen years of life then *Madhyamāwasthā* divided into *Yuvāwastha* till forty years and *Madhyamāwasthā* till seventy years and above seventy years *Vrudhvāsthā* (Tiwari, 2017, p. 32). In the age of *Bālāwasthā* twelve years to sixteen years menstruation starts and this age is known as *Mugdhāwasthā*.

In every normal female body there is a one month *Ārtavachakra*/*Ṛtuchakra* which is also known as *Candarmāsa* which is about 28 days. All masters of *Āyurveda* agreed that *Ārtavachakra* occurs in a normal female body with gap of a month. *Ārtavachakra* is a process which include three phases *Rajaḥsrāva*, *Ṛtukāla*, *Ṛtu vyatītakāla*.

***Rajaḥsrāva*:** It is about 3-5 days and in this phase *Vāta*, among three *Dosa*, is at its peak (*Pradhān*). In this phase *Ārtava Vimochinī* (uterine vessels and their endometrial capillaries) collect the blackish and odorous *Ārtava* and with the help of *Vāyu* it moves towards the vagina which secrete throughout the *Rajaḥsrāvākāla* (Tiwari, 2017, p. 64).

According to *Mahrishi Carak* *Rajaḥsrāva* phase continues for 5 days, *Vāgbhat* said it continues for 3 days, *Bhāvmīśra* mentioned 3 days, *Harīt* and *Bhel* agreed on 7 days. *Bhāvmīśra* also adds and mentions the concept of heavy, middle and low bleeding. If bleeding is heavy or excessive throughout the *Rajaḥkāla* then period of *Rajaḥsrāva* will be 3 days, if bleeding was average then 5 days and if bleeding was low in flow then period varies from 5-16 (Tiwari, 2017, p. 63-64) days. So it may be considered as the *Rajaḥsrāva* phase is varying 3-5 days and depends on the density of bleeding.

***Ṛtukāla*:** This phase is considered best phase to conceive. It is about 12-16 days and *Kafa* *Dosa* is at its peak (*Pradhān*). In this phase, the *Yoni* of women opens up and may allow or accept the *Shukra*/*Beeja* into the uterus. So *Ṛtukāla* is important for reproduction functions.

According to *Mahrishi Sushrut* and *Vāgbhat* *Ṛtukāla* phase remains for 12 nights, *Bhāvmīśra* mentioned that from the *Rajahsrāvakāla* it is 16 days (**Tiwari, 2017, p. 72**).

Ṛtavyatītakāla: In this phase only constriction happens in *yoni*. *Pitta Dosa* is on the peak (*Pradhān*) at that time. After *Ṛtukāla yoni* closed as bloom flower dried and not allow the *Shukra/Beeja* to enter in the uterus. It remains about 9-13 days.

Description of Menstruation

Relation with *Vāta*, *Pitta* and *Kafa*:

Vāta work as a transporter and it brings *Ārtava* towards vagina that is why it presents in dominating form at *Rajahsrāvakāla*.

Kafa works as an accumulator which helps to rejuvenate the uterus walls after bleeding and also helps to conceive. *Ārtava/Strī bēj* are *Agneya* and *Shukra* is *saumya* in nature, so *kafa* help to contact them (fertilized the ova with semen) with each other, that's why it presents in dominating form at *Ṛtukāla*.

Pitta works as a temperature booster. *Ārtava*, *Agneya* in nature and starts to store after *Ṛtukāla* that's why *Pitta* appears in dominating form in *Ṛtavyatītakāla* (**Tiwari, 2017, p. 77**).

Menstrual Blood: *Ārtava*

In female body there is an important element found which differ her from male body as well as provide her ability to reproduction and that element known as *Ārtava*.

Characteristics of Pure Menstrual Blood (*Śhudh Ārtava*)

According to *Mahrishi Sushrut*, menstrual blood is red in colour as blood of Hare or red as *Lākshā* juice and does not leave stains on clothes after washing (**Tiwari, 2017**). It is approximately four ounces, that is four *Añjali*. Time gap between 2 cycles is one month, and 3-5 days bleeding with-out pain and burning sensation. Blood should not be scanty, clotted or excessive etc. when it talk about to feel *Ārtava* is *Anushnashētam*, *Ārtava* is also consists *Panchabōtik* elements and *Pr̥thvī*, *Jala* and *Teja Mahabhūt* predominance in nature. *Sushruta* described that *Rakta* has *Visragandha* and it is due to *Pr̥thvī Mahabhūt*. These qualities are termed as *Shudh Ārtava* (**Kabi et al. 2018**).

Sign and Symptoms of *Ṛtumati Stree* and *Ṛtukāla*

In *Ṛtukāla* a female body ready to conceive properly because there is another *Ārtavachakra* begins and this phase of *Ārtavachakra*; *Bējotsarg*, open up the *Yoni Sthān*, *Yoni* consider in purest form and best time for *Garbhadān*. etc. are termed as the part of *Ārtavachakra*.

In *Ṛtukāla* it is easy to receive *Shukra* because *Yoni Sthān* opened for 12-16 days like a bloom lotus in a day time and after 12-16 days it closed like a lotus which turnoff in the night (Tiwari, 2017, p. 74).

According to *Carak Samhitā* in *Śarīra Sthāna* 4/7 explained when new *Raja* locate in new *Ārtavachakra* (*Bējotsarg*), she took shower/bath, her *Yoni* and *Gṛbhāśaya* is pure now and has pure *Śoṇita* then female in *Ṛtukāla* known as *Ṛtumatī*.

Mahrishi Suśruta in *Suśruta Samhitā* in *Śarīra Sthāna* 3/7 & 8 focused on mental status of a woman and said that in *Ṛtukāla* female who has shining and happy face, her body, teeth and mouth are moist, who desires for love stories and erotic relations, her hair, eyes and flanks are lax, happy and excited women whose arms, pelvic, breasts, buttocks and thighs are quivering is known as *Ṛtumatī* (Tiwari, 2017, p. 75).

So it can be said that after *Rajaḥsrāvakāla* a female is able to enter in sensual activities and is perfectly ready for *Garbhadān*. *Ṛtukāla* has 12-16 days and after that female not able to conceive perfectly, although she may conceive later than but there will be complications in pregnancy in form of physical or mental disability or improper growth of fetus, it is also consider in *Kāśyapa Samhitā* in *Śarīra Sthāna* 5/5 (Tiwari, 2017, p. 74). If after *Rajaḥsrāvakāla* i.e 3-5 days still *Ārtava* appears then in that particular situation the female not consider as *Ṛtumatī*.

Brief Introduction of Modern Medical Science

In the world of medicine, Modern medical science came into existence as a revolution. This research is mainly focused on two personalities; one is Aristotle, and another one is Hippocrates. There is a brief introduction about them and their approaches related to the history of modern medicine.

Aristotle

In the century of 384 BC- 322BC there was a Greek philosopher whose name was Aristotle born in Stagira Chalcidice and he was a disciple of Plato (**Sallam, 2010, p. 11**). He was a great researcher and his writing covered many areas of knowledge like logic, physics, poetry, politics, philosophy, biology, linguistics, zoology, meteorology, astronomy, geography etc. (**Martins, 2018, p. 477**). He also studied anatomy and embryology. Aristotle developed the four causes which may be able to manifest health or disease. These four causes are related to body, mind and soul. Four causes are: *Formal Cause* which was related with soul and considered as essence of the body, the *Material Cause* it was related with body and its organs and all parts whether smallest unit or bigger one, after that *Efficient Cause* which considered originated/creator of the body and *Final Cause* realization of the soul (**Martins, 2018, p. 479**) which was the main purpose of the body and human life.

During the time period of classical Greeks, people who were practicing medicine were not much aware about dissection or it may say that they do not use dissection for the human body (**Dean, 1989, p. 177**). That's why they do not explore the human body deeply and are not able to discover the vital organs at the root level today which is known as cells and tissues theory and it is assumed that there is no evidence based theories on women's bodies. Aristotle's theory implies that a woman's body is inferior to a man's body. According to De Geneatione Animalium I, Aristotle mentioned that women are monsters (this is the word which is derived from generic human type) and on the other hand author said in De Geneatione Animalium II that Aristotle said women are 'mutilated man' which simply means that when deformity in the men happens the born body considered as the women body (**Hufnagel, 2012, p. 15**).

Hippocrates

Hippocrates, who was a Greek physician, was born on the Greek island of Cos in Aegean Sea (**Dhungat, 2015, p. 18**) (460 BC-370 BC). He is considered as the Father of Modern Medicine (**Joshi, 2013, p. 60**). In his revolution he found that diseases are not punishment of God, not happened by superstitions in-fact, causes of diseases are wrong lifestyle, diet and factors related with environment.

It can be assumed that if a medical practitioner who was working in an ignorant, superstition based and mythological environment; where people are not aware about their

environment; their lifestyle is more focused on mythology and superstitions; then how difficult would it be to give them treatment in a scientific manner.

Hippocrates was a person who opposed the surroundings which were covered by superstitious things. He diagnosed the people and observed them, then he found that there is a reason behind the disease and disease is not punishment of God rather than it is mistakes of people or environmental products that affect the ease of the body (**Dhungat, 2015, p. 18**).

Hippocrates opened the many doors of opportunity where the cause of the diseases is found through the diagnostic techniques and close observation. Even he developed the ethical rules for people associated with the medical field which is known as the Hippocratic Oath (**Dhungat, 2015, p. 18**). In ancient India there was a developed approach of *Āyurveda* which described that imbalance in *Vāta*, *Pitta* and *Kafa*, which were the cause of diseases; similarly, Hippocrates also believe that there are some elements that exist in body which are related with nature and then he introduced the approach of four humor (**Tan, 2002, p. 5**) and mentioned that disturbance in bile is cause of the diseases.

Concept of humor includes four terms: yellow bile, black bile, blood and phlegm. People of Greek also kept faith like ancient people of India that disturbance in four bile leads to diseases or disturbed the harmony of the systems of the body (**Tan, 2002, p. 6**).

Like Aristotle, Hippocrates also believed that women's bodies are inferior to men's bodies and he also considered that women are basically different animals from man in structure and process (**Hufnagel, 2012, p. 15**).

Menstruation Related Facts of Aristotle and Hippocrates:

Ancient Greek was slightly silent on the physiology of the woman's body because people were not involved in the discussion about menstruation as it was not a popular topic and was not explored till the fifth century (**Helen, 1998, p. 77**). They believe only those phenomena which justify their ideas about human bodies and reject the ideas which create contradiction in their belief. Ancient Greek theories believed that a woman's body has a compartment in her womb and it has a maximum limit of compartments of two. They derived this theory from pigs and consider things are similar with female bodies. Maybe they thought that pigs have many compartments in their womb that's why they are able

to give birth to multiple children at a time. This is the basic theory developed by the ancient Greek practitioners about the womb of women (**Dean, 1989, p. 177**). According to them, menstrual blood was not part of the women's internal environment; rather it was external and affected by direct observation (**Dean, 1989, p. 178**).

Blood amount/flow: According to Aristotle the blood loss during menstruation is dependent on the size of the breast of women as well as it is also equal in amount of discharged semen in men (**Dean, 1989, p. 180**). During the eighteenth century it was assumed that bleeding from a different orifice was considered as diverted menstruation (**Helen, 1998, p. 14**). If women suppress the menstruation then nose bleed or haemorrhoids may appear and try to balance the menstruation bleeding or it may be said that menstruation bleeding reduces if women face the problems of nose bleed or haemorrhoids or similar problems. Another point related with blood flow or amount is that if the mouth of the womb is open widely then blood flow increases which simply means the flow of blood depends on the mouth of the womb and it will decide that flow will be heavy or less (**Dean, 1989, p. 180 & 184**).

Age of menarche: Aristotle and Hippocrates consider the age of puberty to be fourteen and the age of menarche is also near fourteen (where menstruation is experienced by a girl) (**Hufnagel, 2012, p. 16**).

Days: The time period of menstrual bleeding in a healthy or normal woman continued for 2-3 days and was about one pint. If women bleed less or more than the 2-3 days then it was considered that the woman was not healthy. Shorter time period of menstruation was considered healthy for women (**Dean, 1989, p. 180-181**). Aristotle and Hippocrates agreed that if women menstruated more than one time in a month then somehow she was ill and she needed nutrition in her diet (**Dean, 1989, p. 185-186**).

Time: According to Aristotle the term month which is used is related with the lunar cycle and it was not related with the calendar month (**Dean, 1989, p. 182**). It is also considered that Women menstruate with the waning moon and the effect of the moon.

Flesh: Hippocrates did not have an idea about the menstrual blood (which was discarded lining of the womb) exactly, he thought that it is flesh of a woman's body which over moist and overflows inside the womb and is discharged during the menstruation (**Dean, 1989, p. 182**).

Other facts: Refined menstrual blood which is diverted and converted into breast milk (Glands 16, Loeb VIII, 124) (**Helen, 1998, p. 34**). If women were faced with heavy bleeding during menstruation then a large size of cup glass used to cover the breast so that the over flow of blood converts into breast milk and comes out through the breast simultaneously reduces the bleeding amount inside the vaginal area (**Helen, 1998, p. 34**). According to Hippocrates menstruation is good for women and it is very essential for her health whether Soranos' mentioned in his gynaecology that menstruation, intercourse and pregnancy are bad for women's health except insofar because he considers it necessary for conception (**Helen, 1998, p. 38**). If menstruation is absent then it was considered as a serious issue related to health (**Helen, 1998, p. 60**). Hippocrates has assumptions that women's flesh are spongy and that's why she absorbs more fluid from her meal and if she bleed less than the mouth of her womb was not properly open or jar of womb tilt and menstrual fluid move in other directions (**Helen, 1998, p. 68**). Menstruation occurs due to wet and spongy flesh (there is no role of hormones) which is part of a woman's body's basic nature (**Helen, 1998, p. 146**). Hippocrates's treatises say that disturbance in menstruation affects the other organs of women because of the built up pressure (**Helen, 1998, p. 179**).

Menstruation as per modern medical science

In the modern era the menstruation Cycle has also changed its format from raw to refined. It is like that it always existed but lacking particular knowledge, equipment and theories it did not get its actual state rather than it was a mystery and practitioners of modern medicine try to find the actual phenomenon which women faced every month.

Era and time passed and Aristotle and Hippocrates were trying to develop the science behind menstruation during their time period. Their theories sometimes at some point mentioned similar things and sometimes they differed from each other but the good thing is that they tried and discovered and gave some importance to women's health and found some solution which was also helpful till a time period.

General Anatomy of the Women Reproductive System

Women Reproductive system is a system which consist with many internal and external organs and are named as vulva (external part of genital area), perineum (cover and separate genital and anus part and also related with Yogic practices), and internal genital part: ovaries, fallopian tubes (uterine), vagina, uterus, and mammary glands.

Vulva: It is an external organ (external genitals) and also known as pudendum and it simply means ‘to wrap around’ (**Tortora & Derrickson, 2017, p. 1083**). Vulva made up with mons pubis, labia majora, labia minora, clitoris and vestibule (**Graziottin & Gambini, 2015, 41**). Where mons pubis is made up by adipose tissues and has elevation, covered by skin and coarse pubic hair. It protects the pubic symphysis because it works as cushions. It is positioned anterior to vaginal and urethral openings (**Tortora & Derrickson, 2017, p. 1083**). Labia majora shape like lips and (labia means lips). Made up of adipose tissue and covered by pubic hair it contains sebaceous glands which help to secrete oil on skin of the body, apocrine sudoriferous glands which are helpful in sweating and compatible (homologous) to the scrotum. It is located after mons pubis and it has long folded skin in pairs which extend inferiorly and posteriorly after the mons pubis (**Tortora & Derrickson, 2017, p. 1083**). Labia minora located just after labia majora and before clitoris anterior. It is made by connective and vascular erectile tissues, it has sebaceous glands, sensory nerves ending and receptors (**Graziottin & Gambini, 2015, p. 41**). Clitoris has erectile structure and small cylindrical mass, it contains numerous nerves and blood vessels, it is homologous to the male penis and responsible for sexual stimulation (excitement in the women), the portion which is exposed of the clitoris is known as glans clitoris (**Tortora & Derrickson, 2017, 1083**). Vestibule is located in the region between the labia minora and hymen present in this area. Orifice of vagina, orifice of the external urethra present there and it is also related to the opening of many glands. It is homologous to the man’s intermediate urethra. It is helpful in secretion of mucus during intercourse (**Tortora & Derrickson, 2017, 1083**).

Perineum: It is found in both men and women and is diamond-shaped and medial to the thighs and buttocks. It occupies the external part of anus and genitals (**Tortora & Derrickson, 2017, p. 1083**). During Yogic practices when *Mudrā Bandha* are allowed to practice then in that case area and perineum work to stimulate the spiritual energy and also helpful to strengthen the genital muscles and organs and self-healing process of genitals stimulates and activates by those practices.

Ovaries: It is part of internal genitals and known as gonads (female gonads) which are almond shaped and it is in pairs, it is situated in the superior part of the pelvic cavity and simultaneously the lateral portion of the uterus. Ovaries homologous to the male reproductive organ testes (**Tortora & Derrickson, 2017, p. 1070**). Ovaries responsible to produce the ova and sex hormones (progesterone, estrogens, inhibin, relaxin). Ovaries

are made up of fibrous tissues and connective tissues. In which medulla which is the centre part of the ovary made by fibrous tissues, nerves and blood vessels. Cortex which is covered by the medulla made up of connective tissues, germinal epithelium. Cortex mainly holds ovarian follicles which contain ovum and stroma. Each ovary attached to the uterus with a ligament which also has a way of blood vessels and nerves toward the ovary is known as mesovarium (**Ross & Wilson, 2014, p. 455**).

Fallopian Tubes: It is also known as oviducts, uterine tubes. It lies between the body and the fundus part and it covers the sides of the uterus also. It has finger-like projection which is generally known as fimbriae. There is a peritoneal cavity which is close to the ovary. Fertilization of the egg and sperm generally occurs inside the uterine tube. Uterine tube is helpful in nourishing the spermatozoa and ovum by its secretion. Uterine tubes push the ovum into the uterus and it is pushed by ciliary and peristalsis movement.

Vagina: It extended between the vulva and the cervix. Labia minora covers up some regions of vagina. From sideways it goes upwards and from the back side makes an angle of forty five degree which lies between the anus and the rectum area (**Ross & Wilson, 2014, p. 464**). Vagina work as a receptacle for penis when intercourse occurs, work as an exit for menstrual flow of blood and during childbirth work as a passageway (**Tortora & Derrickson, 2017, p. 1081**).

Uterus: It is also known by the name of womb. It has several parts: the fundus, body, cervix, isthmus, uterine cavity and cervical canal. Situated between rectum and urinary bladder. Uterus helps to deposit the sperm into fallopian tubes, work as a site for implantation of fertilized ovum and when there is no implantation then become the source of menstrual flow of blood (**Tortora & Derrickson, 2017, p. 1076**).

Mammary Glands: it is also known as breasts. It is made up of glandular tissues and at the time of child's birth it is important for milk ejection. It has touch receptors and when it touched or sucked then immediate message travelled to the hypothalamus and it increased the secretion of oxytocin hormone as well as prolactin hormone (which is released from anterior pituitary) which helped to release the milk for infants. After the age of puberty, the size of breasts increase in girl child and is developed by the help of estrogen and progesterone hormones till age of approximately 16-18 years or age group and the size of breasts depends and vary from body to body, nutrition and/or hereditary (**Tortora & Derrickson, 201, p. 1083**).

Four phases of Menstruation Cycle

The menstruation Cycle is a part of the Reproductive system. It occurs between menarche to menopause. Each cycle generally takes twenty six to thirty six days (approximately) to complete one cycle (**Tortora & Derrickson, 2017, p. 1087**).

Menarche: in the age of reproduction, the first time the reproductive cycle appears in women is known as menarche.

Menopause: the permanent cessation of the reproductive cycle is known as menopause (**Tortora & Derrickson, 2017, p. 1105**).

This cycle is divided into four main phases. Each phase has its own role for women's health and mood. These phases are named as follows:

Menstrual phase: it is also known as menstruation or menses. In general terms people call it periods. This phase includes the first five days of the cycle (it may vary anywhere around five to seven days as well).

Pre-ovulatory phase: it is the lengthiest phase and is considered as a gap between the end day of the menstrual phase and ovulation. This phase varies from six to thirteen days.

Ovulation phase: it is the phase where egg release from the ovary and travel to the fallopian tubes if sperm is there then egg fertilized with sperm implant in uterus and if there is no sperm then egg start to burst and with the uterine lining it break down and release from the body during the menstrual phase. Usually it occurs on the fourteenth day.

Post ovulation phase: it is the time gap between ovulation and continues till the beginning of the first day of the menstrual phase. It occurs between fifteen to twenty eight days.

Hormones cycle

Each phase of menstruation has its own worth and indicates the upcoming changes in body and mind simultaneously which are caused by the hormonal changes. There are mainly three types of hormone release or it may be said that responsible for the reproductive organs of women are gonadotropin releasing hormone, follicle stimulating hormone and luteinizing hormone. The luteinizing hormone is responsible for releasing estrogens, inhibin, relaxin and progesterone hormones.

Gonadotropin Releasing Hormone: it secretes by the Hypothalamus which is responsible to control the ovarian and uterine cycles (**Tortora & Derrickson, 2017, p. 1086**).

Follicle Stimulating Hormone (egg maturation): It secretes from the anterior pituitary when the Gonadotropin Releasing Hormone stimulates it. This is responsible for growth of the reproductive process, growth of reproductive organs, pubertal maturation and also regulates the development of the reproductive process. It is helpful in the development and growth of the initial follicular (**Tortora & Derrickson, 2017, p. 1086**).

Luteinizing Hormone (egg release): like Follicle Stimulating Hormone it is also secreted from Gonadotropin cells of the anterior pituitary when Gonadotropin Releasing Hormone stimulates it. It works with Follicle Stimulating Hormone and after initial growth of follicular Luteinizing Hormone stimulates, then further growth of ovarian follicles occurs. It also initiates ovulation and then corpus luteum is produced. Luteinizing Hormone stimulates the corpus luteum which further secretes the estrogens, progesterone, relaxin and inhibin.

Estrogens (uterus lining maintenance): when Follicle Stimulating Hormone and Luteinizing Hormone developed the ovarian follicles then these follicles ready to secrete the Estrogens. But there is also a process on a cellular level. Developing follicles has theca cells and when the stimulate by the Luteinizing Hormone then it generate the androgens hormone and simultaneously Follicle Stimulating Hormone influence the androgens then it is taken up by the granulosa cells of follicles and androgens convert itself into Estrogens.

There are mainly three types of estrogens present in women's bodies that are, beta-estradiol, estrone, estriol. It has many functions in women's bodies like development of hair growth, voice pitch, broad pelvis, hips, breast, mons pubis and abdomen. Helpful in increasing the anabolism of protein and also helpful for strong bones because it works as a synergistic of Growth Hormone in human beings. Women who are under the age of fifty have a lower risk of coronary artery diseases because estrogen helps to maintain the level of cholesterol and try to keep it down in women's bodies.

Progesterone: it secretes from the corpus luteum (cells). It is helpful in maintaining the endometrium so that it will become ready to implant the fertilized ovum and it is also helpful in milk secretion from mammary glands.

Relaxin: it is also secreted from corpus luteum. It is helpful in relaxing the uterus after a monthly cycle by inhibiting the contraction of myometrium so that the fertilized ovum sits easily in the uterus and at the time of delivery it helps to expand the uterine cervix and make the delivery easier.

Inhibin: it secretes from two types of cells. First it is secreted from granulosa cells and also with corpus luteum cells (after ovulation). It is helpful in forbidding the secretion of follicle stimulating hormones and luteinizing hormone (**Tortora & Derrickson, 2017, p. 1086-87**).

Menstrual related matters (blood, quantity, quality, colour, days, normal condition, and abnormal conditions)

Quantity: 50-150 ml fluid which contains blood with tissue fluid, epithelial cells (which drain from the endometrium) and mucus.

Colour: red in colour (fresh blood).

Days: five days approximately.

Normal condition: after one menstrual phase when another menstrual phase occurs between right gap (which depends on body and also vary from body to body), when there is no excess or less bleeding, when there is no changes in colour of blood, when there is no blood clots appears, when there is no unnecessary pain or unbearable pain and when no bodily changes or hormonal imbalance appears then it is considered a normal condition during menstrual phase.

Abnormal conditions: dysmenorrhea, menorrhagia, amenorrhea, polymenorrhea, oligomenorrhea, premenstrual symptoms, abnormal vaginal bleeding, irregular menstruation (**Rafique and Al-Sheikh, 2018**).

Dysmenorrhea: it means Painful menstruation. Every month women face unbearable pain and it may be caused due to cysts in ovaries, uterine tumour, and pelvic related diseases like pelvic inflammatory disease. In this condition, the activities of the women which she performs every day get distracted or disturbed by the pain.

Menorrhagia: it means excess bleeding. It happens in some cases when hormones are not secreted in balanced form, sometimes infection in the pelvic area occurs in the

condition of fibroids or endometriosis. In this condition during the menstrual phase women face the heavy bleeding and they face the blood loss and feel the weakness.

Amenorrhea: it means the cessation of the menstruation, primary and secondary. Primary amenorrhea means when in teenage girl menstruation begins but after sometime it stops and secondary amenorrhea means cessation of menses in young women but during pregnancy and menopause it is natural. It is the condition when Gonadotropin Releasing Hormone secrete in less quantity and simultaneously Follicle Stimulating Hormone and Luteinizing Hormone also secrete in less quantity and then the function of development of ovarian follicles get affected and then it became the reason of cessation of bleeding.

Polymenorrhea (short cycle): time gap between two cycles varies from approximately 20-35 days and when this time gap disturbed and reached at twenty one days or less, it is then termed as polymenorrhea and in this condition there is a cause of uterine bleeding.

Oligomenorrhea (long cycle): normal time gap between two cycles when it exceeds 35 days, then it is considered as oligomenorrhea.

Premenstrual symptoms: it is related to emotional and physical distress. It suddenly appears in the post ovulatory phase and slightly disappears when menstruation is about to begin. In this condition, headache, bloating, fatigue, mood swings, need for more sleep, weight gain, breast tendering, constipation, abdominal pain etcetera.

1.10 General Menstrual Problems (GMP)

When symptoms change, then appearing facts will also be different in their natural performance and normal activities. Similarly when reproductive system continues its normal activities and run through the four phases of menstruation cycle then due to some changes in hormones, temperament, weakness in body, stressed lifestyle, ignorance toward menstrual phase, ignorance towards proper diet and many other associated reasons some physical and psychological changes appears in form of general problems related with menstrual phase.

These problems may or may not affect the daily routine of women or it so happens that problems are ignored by women to pursue her daily routine work without any disturbance or without knowing anything about her menstrual phase to her family or surroundings. If a woman pretends to be healthy and happy it does not mean that woman is always happy

and healthy. There might be a number of reasons to hide her pain and problems during her menstrual phase due to some mythological facts, due to some ignorance and responsibilities. Some physical and psychological problems which are signs and symptoms of menstrual phase are listed which should not be ignored by women to attain good health and a happy life.

Physical Problems

Physical problems start to appear just before the menstrual phase begin and this is not exactly able to judge as not every women gets same types of symptoms because they vary from body to body and it is also changes from body weight, lifestyle, environment and nutritional properties (mainly lack of zinc, magnesium, manganese, vitamin D, vitamin E and vitamin B6) (**Anushiya and Murugan, 2013, p. 21**). It also can be said that these symptoms are sometimes moderate, sometimes aggressive and sometimes mild. Situations of every month can also vary and it may reduce or increase the problems.

These problems may include pain in lower abdomen, backache, swelling in lower or upper limb, tenderness or swelling in breasts, constipation, diarrhoea, nausea, headache, disturbance in appetite, sometime 2-3 kilogram weight gain and many other reason which are not listed but appear just before the menstrual phase and continue till starting day or till heavy bleeding or till the end day but it totally depends on the body type and it also vary from body to body (**Gudipally and Sharma, 2021**).

Psychological problems

Like physical problems, psychological problems also depend on the same things but it also included some environmental factors such as professional work load with household work load for working women and household work load with responsibilities of family for home makers.

Further which become cause of stress and sometimes it is not become easy to cope with it and it may disturbed the hormonal function and it results in decreased Estrogen and hypothalamus start to release the message for norepinephrine and further it triggers and decline in acetylcholine, dopamine, serotonin and cause of these changes depression, insomnia, fatigue start to appeared during menstrual phase or just before the menstrual phase. There are other problems like irritability, restlessness, anxiety, fatigue, anger,

crying, laughing, mood swings mainly shown in the behaviour (**Gudipally and Sharma, 2021**).

Social Problems

During menstrual phase society has its own perception which is associated with external purity of women and due to this perception people behave negatively although many people consider menstrual phase as a precautionary days and at their level they try to understand the needs of women and try to give her some space still there is also ignorance about the facts related to this phase which was developed by ancient people for the utmost safety for women from the world. These problems sometimes included isolation, no cooking days, untouchability, lack of proper hygiene because this topic is not allowed to discuss publicly.

Spiritual Aspect

Menstrual phase is a blessing for women for the healthy ovulation and genesis, because women's bodies are developed to give birth and create the world inside and outside to continue the process of nature into the Universe. For the health of the genitals women need to give enough care and protection in the form of peace of mind, detachment with unnecessary things, understand the mind and its functions, spend a piece of time on self-evaluation and most importantly give respect to the higher self which exists within you/her .

Menstrual phase is an opportunity to understand the worth of one's real self and enjoy one's own company by understanding the phenomenon of their body in the form of spirituality. This is the time to isolate ourselves from the outer world and reach the journey of the unconscious mind.

1.11 Summary

Indian texts or modern medicine both agree on one thing that there is a natural phenomenon that occurs every month inside the woman's body which is related to the birth of a child. There are some changes that appear in the body which affect the mind. These changes are considered hormonal changes but during the time period of Hippocrates and Aristotle they are considered as black powers and are at a dominant stage when women menstruate and she is like a witch whereas in Indian texts it is just associated with external impurities. Now there is scientific justification for changes

which affect body and mind and a solution is also available after understanding the nature of these problems.

Menstrual phase is full of those changes which affect body, mind and soul and also an advantage to those women who need rest and self-analyses and some personal time. It is time to educate every woman that she needs to understand her periods and her time management with period. Then she would be able to go deep inside the spiritual realm rather than practicing on material tasks.

After this chapter, the next chapter tries to explore the hidden facts of menstruation and the role of *Yoga*; how to resolve the issues related with menstruation; and discussion to provide an outcome which justify the aim and objectives of the research.

Chapter 2

REVIEW ON LITERATURE

- 2.1 Menstrual Cycle as per Indian Texts and Modern Age
- 2.2 Myths Related to Menstruation Cycle
- 2.3 Role of Yogic Practices for General Menstrual Problems and Related Myths
- 2.4 Summary of the Review of Literature

Chapter 2

REVIEW ON LITERATURE

2.1 Menstrual Cycle as per Indian Texts and Modern Age

In the book by **Clennell and Iyengar (2007)**, the menstrual cycle is described. The menstrual cycle which is dependent and governed by the internal activities and internal participation, and interactions between the pituitary gland and the hypothalamus gland. The ovaries which are shaped like the almond are attached to the uterus. Hypothalamus gland and the pituitary gland manage the coordination between reproductive system and glands so they easily coordinate hormonal messages, which is liable to the stability and the health of the reproductive system and menstrual cycle occurs at the right time.

Thatte and Bhuvesh (2011) mentioned *Rajaḥsrāvakāla* in their book where they explored about the menstruation period which is three to five days according to *Bhāvamiśrā* and *Vāgbhaṭa*, five days according to *Carak* and seven days according to *Ācārya Harīta* and *Bhela*.

Bhishagratna and Dwivedi (2007) stated in their book about the traits of pure and healthy menstrual blood that is catamenial blood (*Ārtava*) which is red like blood of a hare or the washings of shellac and leaves no stains on clothes. It also mentions Menorrhagia, regimen and treatment of deranged *Ārtava* etc.

In the book by **Tortora and Derrickson (2017)**, it was mentioned that during the reproductive years, non-pregnant females normally exhibit cyclic changes in the ovaries and uterus. Each cycle takes a month and involves both oogenesis and preparation of the uterus to receive a fertilized ovum. Hormones secreted by the Hypothalamus, Anterior Pituitary and Ovaries control the main events. In reproductive age women faced four phases of menstruation cycle which are menstrual phase when women get bleed for five to seven days, pre ovulatory phase when there is gap between ovulation and menstrual phase generally it takes thirteen days, the next phase is ovulation and period of conceive, the last phase is post ovulation and it is the time gap between the menstruation and ovulation. The cessation of bleeding attending phase of reproductive age is known as menopause.

Tiwari (2017) explained the division of life of a woman into the stages where the stage of menstruation is known as *Mugdhāwasthā*. Further she explained the days, *Dośa* and

three phases related to menstruation. She further added that the characteristics of menstrual blood are according to the *Āyurveda*.

Mohanty et al. (2018), in their research paper had explored the relation of elements with menstrual blood. They reported that menstrual blood has qualities of three elements of nature; earth, water and fire and it has *Visragandha* as the cause of the Earth element.

Hufnagel (2012) reported that Aristotle assumed that the physical bodies of women are weak in comparison to men. Women mutilated men and also used the word monster for women.

Helen (1998) mentioned that menstruation was neither explored nor discussed around the fifth century. It is also found that Hippocrates also believed that women have inferior body structure in comparison to men. He said that the menstrual blood is converted into breast milk. The flesh of women is spongy in nature and to keep it spongy women eat a fluid diet more and more. The mouth of womb consider as jar and it has a mouth if mouth open properly then women bleed normal and if jar was tilt then bleeding get distracted and move in other side of body and pressurise other body parts.

Dean Jonas (1989) found that the ancient Greek people gave importance to their beliefs and theories; they rejected any contradictory notions related to their understanding. The Hippocratic and the Aristotelian models discussed the woman's interior space and were inferred through observable phenomena. It includes the menstruation, breasts, and its analogy of sponges and cupping instruments. The Classical Greeks did not use it to dissect human bodies, they had just assumptions but no evidence to confirm their theories about women's physiology. They have seen that Pigs have compartmentalized wombs, which help to assume that pigs can give multiple births. On this notion they assumed and confirmed that the women's womb had at least two compartments to accommodate twins.

Graziottin and Gambini (2015) explained the structure of Vulva and related parts which includes glands, nerves, tissues and receptors.

Ross and Wilson, (2014) described the structure of the ovary. Connective and fibrous tissues are found in and around the ovary which help to support and bind nerves, ligaments, blood vessels, and are also attached to the uterus with a ligament. The structure of vagina is also explained, which is found between the vulva and the cervix. Vaginas

help to intercourse and allow the penis for insertion, childbirth and menstrual flow occurs from this place.

Rafique and Sheikh (2018) studied 738 women and they selected the target population with an age range from 18 years to 25 years. In this research they found that there is a relation between psychological stress and menstrual disorders. They found that 91 percent women among 738 were faced with menstrual problems and 39 percent of women were found in stressed condition. 46 percent of women were faced with Premenstrual Syndrome. To find the status of stress they used the Stressed Scale Questionnaire and for menstrual problems they used the Menstrual Problem Identification Questionnaire. They have done data analysis through the SPSS 16.0.

Epstein et al. (2017) gathered the information about how women manage to remember their menstruation dates and why they are cautious about this. Which tool they generally used to remember their upcoming menstruation. They collected data from different sources and from more than 2000 people. They gathered information from participants; among them 12 gave interviews, 687 filled the surveys, and 2000 people used menstrual tracking apps. They found that women are using smartphones and calendar. Further it was found that women were conscious about their monthly cycle and to check the status of health they used these tools. Through these tools they make sure that they are free from any menstrual irregularities or disease, they confirm the fertile time and pregnancy through these apps.

Huhmann (2020) found that some psychological disorders may be the cause of menstrual irregularities. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists said that women athletes who are slender, have a risk of Functional Hypothalamic Amenorrhea (FHA). 16 percent to 47 percent of female athletes found that they have disordered eating and that is why they touch the line FHA. In this research it was also found that the Hypo estrogenic state which arise cause due to Hypothalamic Dysfunction affect the levels of estrogen and it negatively affects the bone mineral density, breast and vaginal atrophy, and leads to Amenorrhea, Dyspareunia and Infertility.

Gudipally and Sharma (2021) observed that in many countries students from Women University have Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) which affects their academic performance. By the studies of Epidemiological it was come in front of researcher that 80 percent to 90 percent women suffer from at least one PMS symptoms in their life and

among them 2.5 percent to 3 percent women suffer from Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder and it affect their social life and day-to-day activities. The rate of PMS in different countries are 79 percent in Japan, 37 percent in Ethiopia, 33.82 percent in China, 65 percent in Egypt, 39.9 percent in Taiwan, and 72.1 percent to 91.8 percent in Turkey.

2.2 Myths related to Menstruation Cycle

Alharbi et al. (2018) reported in their research paper that the researchers aimed to find out the taboos related to menstruation in Princess Nora Bint Abdul Rahman University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. They choose 500 young girls for their research randomly. Convenient sampling method and Cross sectional study method was used. The research was conducted from January 2016 to March 2016. A Validated Questionnaire was used for this research. Out of the total 500 girls, 60 percent girls got their first information about menstruation from their mother, 4 percent girls got the information from the doctors and nurses. During this research they found that the attitude, knowledge, and readiness of participants about their menstruation was not complete; rather, it was really poor. 73.4 percent of girls were not aware and not able to correctly recognize menstruation and why it happens to girls. Less than 23 percent of girls were ready before their menarche. 370 girls had a negative attitude about menstruation. Conclusion of this research depicts that the school, college, University should provide proper information related to menstruation.

Kumar and Srivastava (2011) aimed to find out the cultural and social practices related to menstruation. This research was conducted with 117 adolescent girls who were among the age range of 11 years to 20 years; residents of urban sums of Ranchi comprising residential colonies. Findings of this research are social and cultural restrictions, taboos and misconception related to menstruation influence the adolescent girls which appear in their reaction. The changes in behaviour are caused by the reaction of the family and society towards menstruation further it was realized the importance of menstruation. This research concludes that social and cultural practices related to menstruation depend on the education of the girl, environment of family, attitude, belief and culture.

Bhartiya (2013), in her research paper, worked on the restrictions imposed by the different religions on the menstruating women. She researched from a vast perspective and found that only the women from the culture and religion of Sikhism are free from any restrictions and the texts of Sikhism condemn Sexism. The other religion such as

Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Jainism believed to impose the restrictions on menstruating women. The paper focuses on behaviour of society, views of the girl and women on menstruation and euphemisms used by girls to talk freely about their menstruation days. The paper concludes with how advertisements affect the mind and what changes media need to rectify their presentation on the menstruation still demand for right words in right manners.

Pathak (2019) suggested that there was profound respect for the feminine principle which was clearly mentioned in the ancient Indian scriptures such as *Veda* and *Upaniṣad*. It is said that women are the Supreme Being. A woman was worshipped as a Goddess. Condition of women during the ancient period was in conformity with the religion and they enjoyed equality, freedom, and liberty in all aspects of life. However, subsequently texts like the Epics, *Sastras*, *Smṛti*, oral traditions and vernacular writings modified the ideal woman and developed such practices where women were treated as subservient to men. This conflict and dissonance between religious practices and beliefs has strengthened in the present era, resulting in the rise of crimes against women. Which includes the increase the domestic violence, dowry, sexual violation, deaths, female feticide, declining ratio of women and men. The taboos related to menstruation are causing distress, widespread criticism and revolt among women and society.

Garg and Anand (2015) found that the taboos related to menstruation in India are developed by the sin of *Indra* who killed one saint and got cursed; he shared this curse with women and because of this curse women get red marks on their clothes during her menstruation. This famous tale is considered as a reason for menstruation taboos in India. 23 percent girls of India avoid to go to school during their menstruation because they have less facility, unfriendly infrastructure of school, lack of sanitary products or not able to buy, even not only girls, their teachers also suffer from these problems and they also avoid to go to school to teach the children during their menstruation. In many parts of India 77 percent women used cloth and they reuse it, 88 percent women used dried leaves, ashes, husk sand and newspapers for absorption of the menstrual blood. Lack of protection of women, lack of washing facilities lead to infection.

Gundi and Subramanyam (2019) tried to find out the status among boys and girls who are in the age of adolescence. The cross sectional survey method they used for their research and collected data from Nashik, India. 1421 participants answered. 21 boys also

participated in the research and provided information through the semi structured interview. They used thematic analysis methods for the qualitative data which fit for Multivariable Logistic Regression to Model Risk Ratios. They found that boys are more curious about this menstruation communication whether girls responded slightly uncomfortable still they were seeking treatment related to menstruation illness. The communication cycle seems to have a huge gap of information between the male and the female youth which may lead to reproductive-health related inequities in their adult lives.

Singh (2006) worked on the perception of women regarding menstruation and their experiences. Qualitative and quantitative research has been done with 2 primary health centres in the rural area of North India where 1205 women participated in this research. Through this research it comes into light that women consider menstruation as a dirty phenomenon and they follow the taboos related to menstruation. 72 percent of women knew about menarche from their friends and relatives and the average age of menarche is 15 years. Girls became scared when they got their Menarche. Women are not generally aware about sanitary napkins because it was found that only 0.4 percent of women use sanitary napkins. Women in majority agreed that diet affected their menstruation. The final finding of this research suggests that women of rural North India still believe in traditional folk lore and still follow the taboos related to menstruation.

Shridhar (2019) tried to describe menstruation from a different perspective. Menstruation myths and its origin from Vedic period to the contemporary period was discussed. The texts explored the perspective related to menstruation from Vedic, Hindu, *Yoga*, *Āyurveda*, Buddhism, Sikhism, Muslim, Christian, Chinese, Thailand, Jain and other culture. In this text the author explored the practices. It is a comparative analysis comprising the various civilizations, faiths and cultures. Men and Women find this book to understand the misconceptions regarding menstruation; the book tries to resolve these misconceptions from different perspectives.

Joseph (2020) tried to describe the menstruation phenomenon with the help of *Āyurved*, *Ṣaḍ-Darśana*, *Yoga*, *Tantra*, *Āgama* and *Jyotish Sāstra*. This book is dedicated to answering questions related to menstruation in an ancient scientific manner. Here, ancient techniques were discovered for women through sports which do not harm their menstruation. This text helps to see menstruation from a positive perspective.

Chaudhary (1956) had mentioned that in the Vedic period daughters have important positions in rituals. They were not treated any less than boys. Wife and husband equally took part in rituals and held equal positions. Mother and father always receive respect but the mother was honoured with more respect and an important position than the father. Vedic rituals respect humanity and treat men and women equally.

Roy and Yadav (1998) observed in their thesis that the tradition of *Pūraṇa* vary from places to places and does not provide unified information. In *Matsya Pūraṇa* it was mentioned that a virtuous daughter is equal to ten sons. After that she observed that the *Soma*, *Gandharva*, and *Agni* are considered divine guardians of the girl and before puberty she should get married to secure from these three guardians because when the pubic hair start to grow the *Soma* enjoy the girl, when breast start to appear the *Agni* enjoys the girl and when menstruation begins the *Gandharva* enjoy the girl. If the father or elder brother wanted to gain the benefits of *Kanyādāna*, she should be given to her groom before menarche.

Dwivedi (2014) mentioned that at the time of menstruation there are restrictions on taking food from that particular female as well as on touching her and living with her; she was not allowed to perform rituals & fasting; in-fact other women could do the same in place of her.

In *Sadhna*, **Gitapress, (2000)** mentioned that if one touches the female during her menstruation and then worship the *Śrī Viṅṇa* then it is considered as a sin named *Nāmaparādh*.

Sankshipt Garudpuran, Geetapress (2005), it was explained that in *Sutikā* ward, if the father touches the mother of the new born then he also gets impure.

In this text *of Naari Ank* **Gitapress, (2017)**, it was mentioned that female caste is valued and sacred, she cannot be impure because every month she gets purified by her menses.

Kishore and Braja (2011) observed that apart from periods of menstruation and confinement, females were not regarded as impure by religion.

2.3 Role of Yogic Practices for GMP and Related Myths

Muktanand (2014) found that the origin of menstruation myths aimed to develop the menstruation ethics in the form of rest which need to be provided to women during

menstruation. But it had been forgotten and misinterpreted. People started to consider the women impure during menstruation and need to protect the family from her. But this text rectified these myths and asked society to provide protection to women from their families during her menstruation and give her freedom to choose her activities during menstruation. This text provides some general practices to give relief in pain and menstrual disorder. Women and their health related issues mainly focus on these texts.

In the text of **Saraswati (2019)**, the concept of five *Kōsa* and its relation with the five elements of nature are described. Yogic practices for stages of Pregnancy are also described. The learning of a child begins from the womb of the mother and if the mother follow the *Yoga* during her Pregnancy and her thoughts, her actions, her deeds helps the mother and child throughout their life because this is the time to sow the seeds in the field of *Citta* of foetus.

Digambarji and Sahay (1984), in their book (*Vasistha Samhitā*) had mentioned that sage *Vasistha* was the first author of this text where he elaborated the *Yoga* practices which include 10 types of *Yama* and *Niyama*, and 10 types of *Āsana*. It also includes the knowledge of *Nāḍī*, *Vāyu*, *Pratyāhāra* *Dhāraṇā* and *Dhyāna* etcetera. Mainly Anatomy of Yogic body and its relation with wisdom was mentioned in this book. This text is made for seekers of wisdom and liberation.

Saraswati (2013) tried to explain some diseases in layman's terms so that the general public may understand their body and cure the diseases by practices of *Yoga* which are described to perform for a particular disease. It is a supportive way to attain health. In this text diseases related to male and female bodies are explained and then *Yoga* treatment is described. It is also mentioned in this text that the unconscious mind of a female is activated during menstruation and this is the best time to give her space and peace to take advantage of their spiritual growth.

Brhamchari (1988) found that some *Yogic Sūkṣma Vyāyāma* are needed to understand the worth of the body and enhance the capacity to grasp the micro energy of the universe. *Yogic Sūkṣma Vyāyāma* developed to attain the state of awakening and after these practices practitioner will able to perform *Āsana* and *Prāṇāyāma*. These practices are divided into two parts: Micro and Macro practices. Where micro practices contain 48 practices and macro practices contain 5 practices.

Swami Satyanada Saraswati (2009) in his book on Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha had mentioned that the practices of *Yoga* may be divided into 3 parts where micro practices named as Pawan Mukta Series Part 1, Pawan Mukta Series Part 2 and Pawan Mukta Series Part 3. These practices aim to provide a healthy body to every age group of people including women in their menstrual phase. After that *Sūrya Namaskāra*, *Āsana*, *Prāṇāyāma*, *Mudrā*, and *Bandha* are explained with pictures and clear instructions.

Tsai (2016) has studied Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) with 64 working women of Taiwan who are within the age group of 20 years to 45 years. Researchers prepared one Self Report Questionnaire and gave it to participants to see the status of PMS. After seeing the status of their PMS, the selected participants underwent the 12 week *Yoga* practice which is the main intervention of the study. Four *Yoga* classes were set weekly and each session was of 50 minutes. The *Yoga* intervention included *Kapālbhati*, Cat-cow pose, Child pose, Cobra pose, Plank pose, Downward Dog pose and Relaxation in Dead Body Posture. After that the same Questionnaire was sent to the same participants to evaluate the changes in PMS of the participants. Statistical Analysis System software (SAS 9.3; SAS Institute, Cary, NC, USA) was used for statistical calculations. As a conclusion, it was found that the PMS decreases after the Yogic Intervention and improves the health of the women of Taiwan.

Before providing the *Yoga* class, 90.6 percent of 64 participants had PMS which mainly consisted of pain at the time of their menstruation. After the Yogic Intervention it was found that participants reduce the use of analgesics ($p = 0.0290$), pain during menstruation at workplace reduces ($p = 0.0011$), physical function scale ($p = 0.0340$), pain in body ($p = 0.0087$), of the SF-36 which was significantly reduced the swelling in abdomen ($p = 0.0011$), cold sweats ($p = 0.0143$), tenderness in breast ($p = 0.0348$), and cramps in abdomen ($p = 0.0016$).

Rani et al. (2013) had studied the effect of *Yoga Nidra* on menstrual irregularities with hormonal imbalance. It was a random control trial design used for the research where two groups are associated with the research and each group contains 75 participants. The experimental group had received the intervention of *Yoga Nidra* and another group was a control group. Among these two groups 126 participants completed the research protocol. The protocol was for 6 months, 5 days in a week and the time duration set for *Yoga Nidra* was 35-40 minutes. The hormonal profile was tested before and after the

intervention which means at day 0 and after 60 days of completion the intervention duration. The result of Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH) is $p < 0.002$, Follicle Stimulating Hormone (FSH) is $p < 0.02$, luteinizing hormone is $p < 0.001$, and prolactin is $p < 0.02$ and these were reduced significantly in the experimental group, which was compared with the control group. The intervention of *Yoga Nidra* was successful to provide the hormone balances, and reduce the symptoms of hypomenorrhea, dysmenorrhea, menorrhagia, oligomenorrhea, and metrorrhagia.

Kim (2017) had worked with those women who were facing menstrual disorders due to some psychological problems. Researchers gave them an intervention which included the practice of *Yoga Nidra*. There were two groups settled for studies, one for experiment and another for control. There is a significant difference found between both groups. Anxiety and Depression reduces in the experimental grouped women in comparison to the control group. There was a favourable effect found to reduce the psychological problems related with menstrual disorders.

McGovern and Cheung (2018), in their research, 1409 participants were selected for the study with 8 random control trials and 6 quasi experimental studies. Sleep, physical pain, concentration, social relationship, negative feelings, work capacity, and overall Quality of life (QOL) were assessed after a Yogic intervention and it was found that it is statistically significant. Final results showed that *Yoga* is a safe and effective QOL improvement method to cure primary dysmenorrhea.

Yonglitthipagon et al. (2017), in their research, selected the 68 non-athlete women from the age group of 18 years to 22 years, who were suffering from primary dysmenorrhea. Set of *Yoga* practices designed to improve their Quality of life and treat menstrual pain and physical fitness. 34 women were selected for the control group and 34 women were selected for the experimental group. The time period for intervention was 12 weeks. Quality of life, menstrual pain and physical fitness were evaluated at day 0 and at the end of 12 weeks. Intervention duration set for 2 days in a week. Significant differences were found in Quality of life, menstrual pain and physical fitness among control and experimental groups. It was found that the set of *Yoga* practices was considered a complementary treatment of primary dysmenorrhea.

Parkhad et al. (2013) found that practices of *Yoga* helps to reduce PMS. This work was done with the 200 adolescents who were facing PMS and they were from *Pravara Kanya*

Vidya Mandir School, Loni. The intervention provide for 6 months which includes *Āsana* and *Prāṇāyāma*. After providing the intervention the results found through the pre-designed questionnaire were backache, lack of concentration, scanty blood loss, and reduced dysmenorrhoea. The Z test was applied to analyse the data. Where menstrual cycle length (58.5%) was normalized to 95.5% (Z value 6.98), 69.5% dysmenorrhoea was reduced to 6.5% (Z value 12.1), Heavy blood loss (40%) was reduced to 5.5% of girls (Z value 6.38), menstrual bleeding phase (82.5%) was normalized to 97% (Z value 3.5), Scanty blood loss was noted in 42.5%, which later reduced to 8% girls, (Z value 6.16) and normal menstruation (17.5%) was increased to 86.5% (Z value 36.87) girls. Hence it was the final result of the research that practices of *Yoga* are helpful tools to reduce the PMS in adolescents.

Jennifer Oates, (2017) studied the effect of *Yoga* on the menstrual disorders where practices of *Yoga* includes the *Āsana Prāṇāyāma* and yogic relaxation or meditation techniques which were used as an intervention. The 15 research papers or research work which was found on PubMed, CINAHL, Scopus, AMED, Web of Science were selected to review. Three research papers based on the Case Control Trials, nine research papers based on Random Control Trial, and the last three research papers based on the Intervention Study. These researches were conducted to see the effect of practices of *Yoga* on PMS and menstrual distress. These studies provide the positive report that *Yoga* as an intervention is effective and beneficial for PMS and menstrual distress. Main findings are lower serum homocysteine, reduced pain scores, lower negative affect, increased well-being scores, and autonomic system changes, decreased menstrual disorder symptoms and heightened relaxation response. Most studies concluded that *Yoga* had a beneficial effect on menstrual disorder and PMS.

2.4 Summary of the Review of Literature

- The research has a scope to work further on menstruation cycle with ancient perspective
- It helped a lot to develop a set of *Yoga* Practices as intervention.
- Mythological facts with their effect on women and young girls can be found with the help of texts and research papers.

In the next chapter, the research methods are described.

Chapter 3

Research Methods

- 3.1. Research Methodology
- 3.2. Procedure
- 3.3. Tools
- 3.4. Methods

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Research Methodology

Research Objectives

For this research, analytical and descriptive approaches were used. The main objectives are:

1. **To compile the myths related to menstruation in different subsets of era:** A set of myths (mythological facts) has been compiled from different subsets of era. After studying the texts and ancient literature, the content analysis has been done.
2. **To explore the *Yoga* practices which can be performed during menstruation:** To justify this objective, texts of *Yoga* have been explored. Some micro practices and *Yoga Nidra* were selected for research and to study the effect of these practices on the menstrual phase. It is a proposed set of practices.
3. **To study the role of Yogic practices on GMP among the women with age from ranging 18 years to 45 years:** The text of *Yoga* and practical aspects of different practices were studied deeply and after that some basic practices were selected for those women group who are totally unaware from the practices of *Yoga* and whenever they want to do these set of practices can do easily at their home or at any place whenever they get free time for themselves. The requirement of this objective is to do practice on a daily basis at least six days in a week during either morning or evening.
4. **To study the menstruation ethics among the women with age ranging from 18 years to 45 years:** Menstruation ethics, which are generally known as myths in present time are forbidden in the modern and contemporary times. This objective is developed to see the thinking of people and how people see this ethics in present days and how they react to it and to find out the behavior of people towards menstruating women. After compilation of the myths, some questions were developed to be asked to women and it was developed after three phases of item analysis. Questions compiled are set in the form of survey based questionnaire which was open ended and self-made for this research work.

Variables

To find out the density of GMP among the women some set off questions were prepared after the review of many previous researches and then converted into a close ended questionnaire which is mentioned below. This research work is dedicated to see the effect of Yogic practices on GMP. Therefore GMP are dependent variables, set of Yogic practices are independent variables and mythological facts are extraneous variables of this work. The dependant variables are as follows:

Dependant variable: GMP (sign and symptoms)

1. Pain in lower abdomen
2. Pain in legs
3. Pain in back
4. Nausea
5. Loss of Appetite
6. Vomiting
7. Headache
8. Constipation
9. Diarrhoea
10. Muscles spasm
11. Breast tenderness
12. Swelling in hands-legs
13. Anger
14. Irritation
15. Impulsiveness
16. Less tolerance
17. Fatigue
18. Depressed

19. Anxiety
20. Self esteem
21. Guilt
22. Lack of concentration

Independent variable: Yogic practices

Set of Yogic Practices for GMP (Pre and Post Menstrual Phase)

Table 1: Yogic Intervention

S. No.	Practices Name	Rounds	Time (Minutes)
1	<i>Prārthanā: Opening Prayer</i>		
	a) Om Chanting	3	1 minute
	b) <i>Gāyatrī Mantra</i>	1	1 minute
2	<i>Yoga Mudrā</i> (Iyenger, 1995, p. 502)	1	5 minutes
3	<i>Tāḍāsana</i> (Basavaraddi, 2013, p.11)	1	1 minute
4	<i>Triyaka Tāḍāsana</i>	1-1	2 minutes
5	<i>Kaṭicakrāsana</i> (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 11)	1-1	2 minutes
6	<i>Sūrya Namaskāra</i> (Saraswati, 2013, p. 222)	6	6 minutes
7	<i>Śvāsana</i> (Iyenger, 1995, p. 502)	1	5 minutes
8	<i>Maṇḍūkāsana</i>	1	2 minutes
9	<i>Vakrāsana</i>	1-1	2 minutes
10	<i>Uṣṭrāsana</i> (Iyenger, 1995, p. 490)	2	2 minutes
11	<i>Śaśāmkāsana</i>	2	2 minutes
12	<i>Makarāsana</i> (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 11)	1	1 minute
13	<i>Ślabhāsana</i> (Iyenger, 1995, p. 496)	3	3 minutes
14	<i>Dhanurāsana</i> (Iyenger, 1995, p. 490)	1	2 minutes
15	<i>Setubandhāsana</i>	1	1 minute
16	<i>Pavana Mukta Āsana</i> (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 11)	1	1 minute
17	<i>Naukāsana</i>	3	1 minute

18	<i>Śvāsana</i> (Iyenger, 1995, p. 500)	1	5 minutes
23	<i>Mūla Bandha</i> (Jha, 2017)	20	2 minutes
24	<i>Nāḍī Śodhana</i> (Iyenger, 1995, p. 502)	6	5 minutes
25	<i>Bhrāmarī</i> (Gharote et al , 2019)	6	5 minutes
26	<i>Śānti Pāṭha</i>		
	a) <i>Om</i> Chanting	3	1 minutes
	b) <i>Prārthanā</i>	1	1 minutes
	c) <i>Yoga Mudrā</i> (Iyenger, 1995, p. 502)	1	1 minutes
	Total		60 Minutes

Extraneous Variable: myths (mythological facts) related to menstruation

1. Discrimination
2. Not allowed to enter in worship places
3. Separate room
4. Deprived of selected food items
5. Happiness
6. Positivity
7. Let go negativity
8. Inner peace
9. Isolate room to remain calm
10. Spend time on self-analyses
11. Spend time on interest area work

Research Hypothesis

There is a positive effect of Yogic Practices on General Menstrual Problems.

Null Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in post test scores on General Menstrual Problems Assessing Scale (GMPAS) in control and experimental groups.

Methodology

Descriptive for study the role of Yogic practices in GMP and compile the myths.

Analytical for Random Control Trial, to establish the role of selected Yogic practices in GMP.

Research design

Pre-test Post-test with control design was used for this research.

Table 2: Research Design

Description	Pre-test	Intervention	Post-test
Experiment	O*	X**	O
Control	O	-	O

*O stands for Observation or measurement of scores and **X stands for intervention provided

3.2 Procedure

Participants

Sample size: 60 women. Sample size derived from the G power software at power of 0.47, effect size 0.5, alpha 0.05.

Source of participants: The present study conducted among the women with the age group of 18-42 years. The research work was conducted between 15th May to 30th June 2021 with the students of Department of Drawing and Paintings, Shri Tika Ram Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh.

Sampling method

For the Analytical phase under the Probability Sampling the **Simple Randomization Sampling** method was chosen for the selection of required sample size from the target population. Where each participant gets a unique number distributed among two groups where one is an experimental group and another one is a control group, 30-30 women were chosen for the study respectively.

For the **Descriptive phase** of research, under the Non-Probability Sampling the **SnowBall Sampling** method was chosen for the selection of required sample size from the target population. The questionnaire was distributed to the target population of the

Department of Drawing and Paintings, Shri Tika Ram Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Aligarh. Uttar Pradesh and further it was distributed by the sample itself till required sample size 100 and more was achieved.

A questionnaire was prepared to assess the role of selected Yogic practices in GMP (sign and symptoms). The questionnaire asked to fill at Day₀ and Day₄₅. The questionnaire contains the compilation of common menstrual problems in simple and understandable language.

For evaluation of the GMP of the target population the **Self Report Technique** was used where the target population expresses their condition in which they found themselves. This questionnaire is the written form of standardized interview which is prepared logically in form of the question, its sequence, and language in advance.

The result and analyses assessed on the basis of pre and post results of Yogic intervention. The data received through questionnaire was kept confidential and the identity of sample participants is not to be disclosed to any third party.

First of all, applications were send to many places and colleges and required permissions to take *Yoga* classes with the women. Due to Covid-19 pandemic situation two medical colleges become ineligible to provide proper data after that it was decided that classes will be conducted through online mode and Department of Drawing and Paintings, Shri Tika Ram Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Aligarh provided the permission to conduct *Yoga* classes with their students but only in online mode and for forty five days only.

After that the research based and questionnaire based seminar was organised and then introduced the participants to the proposed work. Seeing the interest of participants, the distribution process began where the target population actively participated to fill the questionnaire. Within three days a questionnaire was received from all the participants. More than 120 women filled both the questionnaires but among them some women become ineligible to participate due to inadequate data or due to some illness.

First, the consent form was attached with both the questionnaires and only after their consent, women became eligible to fill the rest of the questionnaire. Then the procedure of first screening begins where conditions of women, their lifestyle, and any medical conditions assessed through the questionnaire and then women who were facing the sign and symptoms were selected for the Random Control Trial study. After the first screening women were divided into two groups: control group and experimental group. Where the

experimental group received Yogic intervention in the form of *Yoga* class, affirmations and prayers through online mode and social media whereas the control group only gets affirmations through the social media.

General Menstruation Problems Assessing Scale (GMPAS) which was used for evaluation, the GMPAS is a closed form of questionnaire which has one consent form, one cover letter, 22 objective type small and simple questions, numerical analysis possible and Five Likert scale used. Questionnaires were sent through social media such as Gmail accounts and WhatsApp groups of the Department of Drawing and Paintings, Shri Tika Ram Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Aligarh. Uttar Pradesh.

More than 115 girls were requested to fill the questionnaire and who gave their consent through the filling of consent form were able to see the further part of the questionnaire and after filling the cover page information it became easy to know that the women are eligible to take part in the research work or not.

After that 90 women were selected for the research work, through the **Simple Randomization Sampling Method** 75 women were finalised for the study. Among them 30 women were selected for the control group and 30 women were selected for the experimental group.

Before beginning the final protocol, one week of loosening and stretching practices were taught to target samples because in the final protocol there were combinations of sets of *Āsana*. After that the main protocol begins from 15th May 2021 onwards.

The Yogic intervention in the form of *Yoga* class was begun to be given to the experimental group continuously for 45 days. After 45 days of the intervention, the experimental group and control group were again asked to fill the same questionnaire. Fortunately all 60 women successfully filled the post study questionnaire.

Forty five days Yogic intervention become successful after the third attempt. The questionnaire related to the analytical phase of study was redistributed to both the group's participants and all women responded to the questionnaire within 10 days.

3.3 Tools

Questionnaire

Questionnaire was prepared in two parts where it was necessary to find out the condition of women and their awareness towards their body and ancient menstruation related ethics. First part of the questionnaire used to collect the data for pre and post study. Another part of the questionnaire was prepared to see the status of mythological facts behind the menstruation and related menstruation ethics. The second questionnaire was used for a survey based study only. Due to Covid-19 situations both questionnaires were converted to online mode (google forms).

GMPAS is related to the Analytical phase. This questionnaire was used twice for collection of pre and post data. Because the people who were chosen as a sample get a treatment in the form of *Yoga* class for forty five days. To see the effects it is necessary to send the same questionnaire twice and get to a result.

Menstruation Ethics Scale (MES) is a formal way to interview women at large scale, which is self-made and used to just gather the information for the assessment of the myths related to the menstrual phase. It is part of the Descriptive phase of research and also for a small survey there is a need to develop such a questionnaire which is open-ended. So the participants will be able to express their views easily. Because it is a survey and interview based questionnaire so there is no need to send it twice to the same participants or target population.

Reliability and Validity of the Questionnaire

Reliability

Reliability is used to check the consistency of the result which is produced after use of the particular tool and its items. When it was checked again on the target population and got the similar result and it showed the consistency among the both results. Then the tool was considered as a reliable tool and was able to be used for further research work. For the present research, test and retest method and internal consistency method was used.

On the very first stage, the **GMPAS** questionnaire was constructed and with the help of literature review, items were finalized for this questionnaire. Time to time, items were modified when internal experts gave their valuable suggestions and then sent to the *Yoga*, Psychology, English, and Gynaecologist professors and teachers of their esteemed fields.

They provided their valuable suggestions and comments. After review, the changes were applied on the questionnaire. Further updated questionnaire was sent to the 700 women for a reliability test, where the data was collected from 250 women twice at the interval of 30 days successfully. For the reliability test women of Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat were randomly selected and asked to fill the questionnaire, Scores were kept in form of pre data and after 30 days again the same questionnaire was sent to the same group of women and received the post data. In between no yogic intervention and no affirmations were provided.

After collection of pre and post data, calculations were done through the SPSS, then applied the Guttman Split-Half Coefficient and Cronbach's Alpha method to check the reliability of the scale. These test was applied on 250 sample which was different from the control and experimental group and the result of reliability from the **Guttman Split-Half Coefficient 0.764** and from the **Cronbach's Alpha 0.741** and after see this result of reliability it was found that the questionnaire is able and ready for the further final research work and ready for distribution among the target population.

Validity

It is part of the research which showed that the tool is really fulfilling the purpose of the research and is measurable. Validity is an important property of the measurable and reliable tool.

Content Validity

In this type of validity, it was checked that selected items are chosen for making the tool and scale and it is based on the literature review. For content validity the questionnaire was sent to the expert panel of Yoga, Language, Psychology, and Gynaecologist. After their suggestions and comments the content of the questionnaire was revised and sent to the target population for a reliability test. After confirming the reliability it becomes easy to give the conclusion and findings based upon the validity. It also explores the variety of depth tools used to cover different areas.

Face Validity

Questionnaire is prepared to evaluate the GMP among the women of the 18-45 age group. Questionnaire intends to check the status of physical and psychological changes during menstrual phases. After receiving the data from the same group of women, it showed the

consistency among the results and the tool became reliable. After that, continued to work on the measurement of the tool. When it was found that the tool is capable for measurement of the physical and psychological changes during menstrual phases, the aim of the tool was fulfilled.

Inclusive criteria

Age group: 18-35 years

Education: 12th standard and above.

Exclusive criteria

Abnormal condition: Menstrual problems due to pituitary carcinoma, ovarian carcinoma, carcinoma uterus, related to female reproductive organs and other related complicated problems, congenital deformity.

Pregnancy: The situation of pregnancy is excluded from this research.

Informed consent

Informed consent was sent with the questionnaire and if participants agreed to fill the consent form only then they were allowed to fill the rest details and questionnaire. Informed consent is the first priority to participate in this research work. Consent form is the prior stage before filling the questionnaire, application of intervention, and sampling method. Consent form received from the 115 participants for survey based study and more than 110 for analytical phase of pre-post study.

3.4 Method

For analytical phase

For both pre and post studies, T test was applied on both groups. For statistical analyses SPSS software was used.

For descriptive phase

The survey, which was an open **ended questionnaire**, used to gather the information about the mythological facts and ancient menstruation ethics. Surveys are the systems which are generally used to collect the information from the target population. This information includes the explanation of the knowledge, comparison, description of the behaviour, and attitudes.

Cross-Sectional Survey method used for this research work. Cross sectional survey is like a picture which shows the seeking area of the researcher by observation at one point of time. Further it helps to see the different areas, different conditions and their relation (Connelly, 2016, p. 369). Data was collected from the target population once during the research. This survey was important to explore the present status of mythological facts and describe its effect among the target population.

This phase is based on the menstruation related mythological facts where women share their personal experiences and their assumptions related to menstruation.

Questionnaire constructed and items were developed by **Self Report Technique** after the review of ancient Indian texts such as *Purāṇa*, *Veda*, *Upniṣada* and *Smṛti*. The purpose of this questionnaire was to evaluate the mythological understanding and belief of the target population and because it is an open form of questionnaire then the target population may be able to express their condition in their own words freely. This questionnaire too is the written form of standardized interview which is prepared logically through the question, its sequence, and language in advance. Since it is an open ended form of questionnaire, it provides free space to express their views after reading the questions. The data received through questionnaire is kept confidential and the identity of sample participants is not to be disclosed to any third party.

Due to Covid-19 pandemic situation, it is decided that questionnaire will be distributed through online mode. It is a separate questionnaire and sent to more than 110 women for a survey on menstruation related mythological facts.

In the next chapter, menstruation related myths in different subsets of era are discussed.

Chapter 4

Menstruation Related Myths in Different Subsets of Era

- 4.1. *Vedic* Era
- 4.2. Post *Vedic* Era
- 4.3. Existence of Myths in Contemporary Period
- 4.4. Spiritual Aspect Related to Menstrual Phase
- 4.5. Summary

Chapter 4

MENSTRUATION RELATED MYTHS IN DIFFERENT SUBSETS OF ERA

Myths and its brief description

The stories which express ancient religious beliefs and which are extra-terrestrial in nature are called mythology or myth (**Sonia, 2019, p. 80**). When there is no clear indication of separation lines between human and nature then myths were created (**Singh, 2011, p. 1**).

Myth word has different aspects to see things in creative and exemplary (**Fic & Doublova, 2014, p. 340**) manner, myths are short tales (fables) which contain the historical culture with some practices which are based on faith and old beliefs.

Sometimes myths do not justify themselves scientifically but are suited to the poetry (*Kāvya*) and justify it which seems like a true phenomenon (**Mishr, 2017, p. 329**). Myths are called the primary image of the consciousness of the primitive man (**Mishr, 2017, p. 330**).

Myths are related to religion and folklore because both talk about the astral world (*Atilok*) (**Mishr, 2017, p. 342**) and narrate stories according to it. Myths are neither mental morphology nor fictional narrative. In-fact myths are expressions of the moral values which relate to the real and astral world in the form of tales.

Now it is well known that myth is a kind of folklore and there is a very thin line between fact and the imagination which is hard to differentiate between what is related to the real world and the astral world. Myths seems to be developed or derived for development the *Purāṇa* (**Singh, 2011, p. 2**).

Division of Era

The Era mainly divided according to *Vedic* Era and post *Vedic* Era (**Verma, 2006**). According to Indian Philosophy the main divisions of era are The Vedic Period, the Epic period, the Sutra period and the Modern and Contemporary period (**Sinha, 2018, p. 4**). Where the Vedic period includes *Ṛgveda Samhitā* as a master texts and then *Samhitā*,

Brāhmaṇa, *Grantha*, *Āraṇyaka*, and *Upniśada* texts counts (Verma, 2006, p. 68). The post Vedic era includes the Epic period where *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Mahābhārata*, *Purāṇa*, *Baūddha* and *Jaina* texts were developed. After that the Sutra period begins which includes Sutra, and six Indian Philosophy. Modern and contemporary period assume to begin from the time period of Raja Ram Mohan Rai and Mahatma Gandhi, Ravindrnaath Thakur, Dr. Radha Krishnan, K.C. Bhattacharya, Swami Vivekanand, and Shri Arvind (Sinha, 2018, p. 6).

4.1 Vedic Era

Historical facts related to Women

Indian history consists of different eras, where each era carries its own history with different stories. In the era of *Tretāyuga*, *Rāma* denied to fight with his brothers even in the practice field, whether in era of *Dvāparayuga*, *Pāṇḍava* fight with their cousins for sake of *Dharma*.

The knowledge of *Veda* is eternal and it is useful and equally applicable at all times in every aspect of life. In pre *Vedic era* there is more focus on *Mantra*, *Homa* and *Yajñā*. Women were equally allowed to practice *Yajñā* and spiritual practices. Women were educated in the pre *Vedic era* (Arya, 2018). To perform *Yajñā* there is need to provide the knowledge to women about Indian ancient cultures and after that, these knowledge found in form of *Veda*.

In *Vedic era* women had high status for education and standard of living in terms of *Sātvik* lifestyle. For women, education was also important to sustain in society and maintain their status (Roy, 2017, p. 357). In *Vedic era* it was believed that if women get education then she will be able to acquire freedom, self-confidence, and self-reliance, be worthy and able to preserve the culture and hand it over to the next generation with mindfulness (Roy, 2017, p. 357).

It is also noted from *Rgvedic* society that there is not existence of child marriage and this also can be the reason that a girl can study easily and therefore women education was given high importance (Roy, 2017, p. 357).

In *Vedic era* women also performed *Vedic* sacrifices with men, husband-wife used to perform sacrifices equally and it shows that a woman had equal status as man so it is

somehow confirmed that the system of patriarchy does not deny rights and privileges to the women **(Roy, 2017, p. 357)**.

In *Vedic* era *Lopāmudrā* was a *Vedic* preacher, her name has appeared as preacher with her husband *Agastya Muni*, and she wrote 19 hymns in first part of *R̥gveda*. Like *Lopāmudrā*, *Apālā*, *Ghoṣā* and *Viśvarā* were sages of *Vedic* era and they were renowned scholars of that period **(Roy, 2017, p. 358)**.

It is now clear that women in *Vedic* era were truly aware of the ultimate goal of life and she was liberated to choose her path of life without much interference from others and she was easily living her life on her own terms be it spiritual or worldly aspects. So she would be clearly aware about the menstruation ethics and its actual reasons to make it.

But in the present time menstruation ethics are considered as taboos and people called them myths whether it is beneficial or not.

Menstruation Ethics

Myths are traditional stories or fables that serve to uncover some of the world's heroics and explain a practice, belief, or natural phenomena **(Chawla, 1994, p. 2818)** similarly menstruation myths which relate to menstrual phase are also covered under the umbrella of myth. In *Vedic* era, ancient people were very well aware about consciousness and depend only on nature and not much indulge in worldly things and believe to live life according to nature. Might be therefore women followed the rule of isolation and allowed the flow of energy with nature.

Vedic era was well known for its combination of scientific and spiritual facts. If we talk about the present scenario, science and spirituality still works on those facts which were developed and achieved by the people of the *Vedic* era.

It was accspted that women had equal rights as men in all the dimensions of the society. Where women were treated equally then how could this assume that women were treated like an object and declared as an impure being during four days it is still needed to look into deeply. Might be saints of ancient India were full of compassion towards all beings that is why they provide women some rest from household duties and heavy work related with *Yajñā* and space for self-assessment. Due to some hygiene related issues and for the safety of women they set some ethics to provide rest in form of isolation.

During the menstrual phase women were living in isolation for some days and then got back to her home after the menstrual bath and met with her husband. For a healthy and divine child she follows the celibacy during the menstrual phase and where she lives she stays alone and lives with nature with true intention. This time she might utilize her inner self growth. Texts are somehow not explored much about the menstrual phase but one facts related with *Indra* is mentioned in *Yajur Veda Taittiriya Samhitā* as below to search the reasons of menstruation related myths.

Well Known tale related to Menstruation (Sin of *Indra*) (Kashyap, 2014, p. 174-178)

A tale of sin of *Indra* which is related to menstruation is famous in the entire world. In brief *Indra* is considered king of all deities of the paradise where his job is to sustain the natural phenomenon in the universe like rain and seasons (Sridhar, 2019, p.9). *Indra* was sitting in his palace and enjoying the life of paradise. At the same time *Deva Guru Bṛhaspati* had arrived but *Indra* did not get up to salute the *Guru* due to ignorance and ego. *Bṛhaspati* got upset and angry and leave the palace to live in an unknown place.

After that *Indra* appointed a priest *Viśvarupā* who was the son of *Tvastr* to become priest of *Devtā*. *Viśvarupā* had three heads and he used his three heads to eat food, drink *Soma* and drink *Sura*. One day *Indra* found that *Viśvarupā* secretly give the portion of *Yajña* to the *Asura* and *Indra* became angry and afraid to lose his kingdom of paradise he killed the *Viśvarupā* by his thunderbolt. *Indra* smashed the three heads of *Viśvarupā* and these heads became francolin (head which drank *Soma*), a sparrow (head which drank *Sura*), partridge (head which ate food) and flew in different directions (Kashyap, 2014, p. 174-178).

Indra killed his *Guru* and become guilty of being a *Brahāmaṇa* slayer. He was afraid and he hid himself in the flower and worshipped lord *Viṣṇu* then he got the boon from *Viṣṇu* that he may share the sin of *Brahāmaṇa* slayer with four entities such as river, earth, trees and women. Then *Indra* went to the river and asked to take one fourth of his sin and in lieu of that he would give a boon. Then the river agreed to take part of his sin and the river gets a boon that it gets an ability to clean everything. After that *Indra* went to earth and earth also agreed to take his part of sin and in lieu its get the boon that it shall overcome in a year after digging. Then *Indra* went to the trees. He also agreed and asked for a boon then *Indra* gave a boon that after the pruning it shall be overcome by more

springs on it. At the end *Indra* went to the women and women agreed to take his part of sin of *Brahāmaṇa* slayer in lieu she get the boon in form of enjoying the *Kāma* and able to give the birth (Ghosh, 1977, p. 168).

Moon and Menstruation

Menses means the month of the lunar calendar (Kak, 2000, p. 23). Menstruation cycle runs freely in accordance with the lunar cycle of the moon (Kak, 2000 p. 23). Indian ancient sages also discussed in detail how every day of the lunar cycle affects the life sketch of a girl child.

There is a conversation tale on menstruation where Goddess *Pārvatī* asked God *Śiva* that is there any relation or influence of the moon on the first day of first menstruation? Again she asked about the influence of waxing and waning days of the moon on the first day of first menstruation. Then the Goddess asked her third question: what are the auspicious or inauspicious nature of appearance of the menstruation on the several *Tithi* of the moon (Ghosh, 1977, p. 35-36). God *Śiva* replied to Goddess *Pārvatī* that there is no influence of waxing and waning days of the moon on first menstruation (Ghosh, 1977, p. 36). After that he described the effect of several *Tithi* on menstruation (Ghosh, 1977, p. 37-40).

Effect of *Tithi* on first Menstruation

God *Śiva* said if beginning *Tithi* of first menstruation on the *Pratipadā*, the girl lives a short life but she will have high intellect.

If first menstruation occurs on the *Dvitiyā*, the girl will face the problems related with mental faculties such as memory. If lotus open first time on the *Tṛtīyā*, the girl will not experience the motherhood by giving the birth cause of unproductive problems. Although she leads a happy and pious life. If first menstruation commences on the *Caturthī*, the girl will be barren and most probably will face many abortions.

If the first menstruation starts on the *Pañcami*, the girl will live a short or premature life and her children will face sickness or health issues. If it is on the *Ṣaṣṭhi*, the girl face the problem as *Pañcami* which means it is also not auspicious for the girl and her next generation.

On the *Saptamī* first menstruation begins, then the girl gives birth to one child only and enjoys a rich and comfortable life. On the *Aṣṭamī* lotus open first time, then the girl influence others easily but she will be short temper. If the first menstruation occurs on the *Navamī*, then the girl will be a kind woman and become popular for her good deeds. Girls will live a good life and will have good human qualities. If menarche on the *Daśamī*, then the girl has qualities of a female demon although she has noble character, high esteem, noble demeanor and she will shine among other women as the moon shines among the stars.

If menarche commences on the *Ekādaśī*, then the girl also has qualities of a female demon, but still she will be full of etiquette, character and beauty. If first menstruation commences on the *Dvādaśī*, then the girl will be prone to temper still she is influenced by a nature of *Yoginī*. If first menstruation commences on the *Trayodaśī*, then the girl will fulfill her responsibilities nicely. She will be pure hearted and caring. She will be able to bring prosperity in her family and she will be faithful to her husband. She will become the mother of many children.

If first menstruation begins on the *Caturadaśī*, then the girl spends a moderate life with moderate fortune and moderate prosperity. Although she will be clever and pure. If first menstruation starts on the *Pūrṇimā*, then the girl will be influenced by the nature of Goddess itself. She will be full of piousness and fortune. It is auspicious in every way. The girl will shine like the moon among her family and her community. Her children will also be well built and fortunate like her. She brings luck and fortune for her husband too. If first menstruation begins on the *Amāvasyā*, then the girl will face many health issues, and bad luck follows her path.

Effect of month on first Menstruation

If menses opens on *Caitra* which is not an auspicious month because the girl after marriage may lose her husband and face many problems (**Gambers, 2015, p. 128**), she will be not satisfied in her sensual life, if menarche begins on the *Baisākha* then the girl become sweet spoken (**Ghosh, 1977, p. 42**), pious, honest (**Gambers, 2015, p. 128**) and her life will be full of joy and success as well as her children will be healthy, happy and intelligent. If first day of first menstruation begins on the month of *Jyeṣṭha* then the girl will enjoy her married life and will be happy (**Gambers, 2015, p. 128**) but she will lose

her husband and experience the suffering in the form of widowhood (**Gambers, 2015, p. 42**).

Similarly, if a girl attain her maturity on the month of *Āṣāḍha* then the girl will be rich during her life (**Ghosh, 1977, p. 42**) although she will face sufferings in forms of disease, she will be childless (**Gambers, 2015, p. 128**). If a girl reach her womanhood in the month of *Śrāvaṇa* then she will be happy but in case of her children, she will see the death of her many children during their infancy. If menarche occurs in the month of *Bhādrapada* then the girl will face many challenges in the form of sickness and troubles around her. If lotus opens in the month of *Āśvina* then the girl will live a pious, virtuous life. She would be an honest wife and will be blessed with many children but many of them will die in their infancy (**Gambers, 2015, p. 129**).

In the month of *Kārtika* lotus opens then the girl brings good luck to her husband and his family although her own parents' family face many issues related with her ill luck (**Gambers, 2015, p. 129**). Menarche in the month of *Mārgaśīrṣa* brings results in the form of piousness, virtuousness (**Ghosh, 1977, p. 42**), a girl will be loyal to her husband, and she serves many saints and is blessed with their blessings (**Gambers, 2015, p. 129**). If lotus blooms in the month of *Pauṣa* then the girl will be a social person and liked by old and young people because she performed her duties wisely and with noble actions. First menstruation begins in the month of *Māgha* then the girl will be excellent in her education and take interest in her studies, her life will be full of luxuries and she will help to needy one. At the end if menarche happens in the month of the *Fālguna* then the girl marries a wealthy person and becomes the mother of many children (**Gambers, 2015, p. 130**).

Effect of week days on first Menstruation

After this explanation God *Śiva* narrates about the influence of week days of first menstruation. God *Śiva* said if menarche begins on Sunday then the girl will become widow at early age and she has to do work hard for her daily requirements (**Gambers, 2015, p. 123**), if begins on Monday then the girl become loyal wife (**Ghosh, 1977, p. 40**) but she will not have many children (**Gambers, 2015, p. 123**), on Tuesday she will most probably lose her purity will live unhappy life, become sick frequently, she may get divorced, and will face financial issues (**Gambers, 2015, p. 123**), if menses commences

on Wednesday then the girl will be crowned with luck (**Ghosh, 1977, p. 41**), she will live in a beautiful house and will have beautiful children of both sex, she will have servants and maids, life of princess which she will enjoy and live a long life (**Gambers, 2015, p. 124**) if menses opens on Thursday then the girl will most probably get a wealthy spouse who is loyal also (**Gambers, 2015, p. 124**), on Friday if menarche opens then the girl will become mother of many male children (**Ghosh, 1977, p. 41**), she will be free from disease and will look young at her old age (**Gambers, 2015, p. 125**), if lotus opens on Saturday then the girl will become infertile and she will not be happy in her life but she influences others easily (**Ghosh, 1977, p. 41**).

Effect of day and night on first Menstruation

God *Śiva* said about the effect of day and night on menarche. God *Śiva* said if menarche begins at day time or part of day time then the girl will live a happy life with luck, if menarche begins at night time or any part of night then the husband of the girl will be happy from her. If menarche occurs on the last part of night (just before sunrise) and evening time then the girl will face the problems of infertility (**Ghosh, 1977, p. 49**).

4.2 Post Vedic Era

Upaniṣada

According to the *Yoga-śikhopaniṣad*, when *Rajasa* mingles with *Retas* it is called the *Rāja-Yoga*. Here *Rajasa* represents the *Śakti* and the *Retas* represent the *Śiva*. *Rajasa* is menstrual fluid (**Ayyaṅgār & Śāstrī, 1938, p. 353**).

Darśanopniṣad stated that stay away from every woman, do not talk with her by words, by gestures and not even in mind, stay away from own wife too immediately after menstrual phase (**Ayyaṅgār & Śāstrī, 1938, p. 118**) completely, is celibacy.

Dhyāna-bindūpaniṣad mentioned that bindu are found in two forms white and red. White one known as semen and the red one is known as *Rajasa* both represent the *Śiva* and *Śakti*. When both unite it takes the form of a body. Here *Rajasa* is considered as sun and semen as moon (**Ayyaṅgār and Śāstrī, 1938, p. 165**).

Yoga-cūḍāmaṇyopaniṣad described the benefits of *Vajrolī* and mentioned that seminal fluid which includes either *Rajasa* if it is in red color or semen if it is in white color, should be flash during the *Yoni-Mudrā*.

Yoga-kundalyopnisad stated that when *Rajasa* which resides in lower part merges with semen which resides in upper part by the help of *Vāyu* then it further unites with *Śiva* along with *Prāna* and *Apāna* (Sharma, 2005, p. 201).

Brihadarnyakaupnisad describes that the women who are under the menstrual phase and her body is weak then provide her a cup of *Kaṇsa* for three days. Other women and *Śūdra* caste people are not allowed to touch the menstruating women. After three nights of the rest, women should take a menstrual bath and wear new clothes (Mādhavānanda, 1950, Verses 6.4.13).

Dharmashatra and Smṛti

Baudhayana Dharmasutra mentioned that *Manu* said that if a girl stayed at father's home and her menstruation appears and she still has not got married then her father becomes a mortal sinner of destroying embryos (Muller, 1882, p. 314).

Vāśistha Dharmaśāstra stated that before puberty, the daughter may live or play naked; but it's the father's duty to have her married before her puberty; if he fails to do so then he would be guilty of a sin (Muller, 1882, p. 91). If a person has touched the menstruating women he should take a full body bath (Muller, 1882, p. 30). Story of Indra is repeated in this text also. If a *Brāhman* family allows the menstruating women to sit in their home and do sacred fire and *Srottriya* rule were absent then these people are considered as a *Sūdra* (Muller, 1882, p. 33-34). When a child takes birth, the woman menstruates for nearly a month. Menstrual flow is considered impure so at that time women were also considered as impure beings. In that case male did not consider it impure if he stayed away from that woman and did not touch her because men did not menstruate. Only women are considered impure due to menstrual flow (Muller, 1882, p. 29). It is also assumed that, when menstrual flow occurs the woman gets rid of her sin (Muller, 1882, p. 32).

Manu Smṛti stated that when girl attain the age of puberty then after or within three years if she did not get married then she has the right to choose and find her husband by herself (Doniger & Smith, 1991, p. 208). If a man goes to the menstruating women his wisdom, vitality, sight, energy and strength will go down or destroy (Doniger & Smith, 1991, p. 78). Menstruating women not allowed to see the *Brāhmaṇa* while they taking their meal (Doniger & Smith, 1991, p. 68). A *Snātaka* is not allowed to talk with menstruating

women. Menstruating women are not allowed to give food to a priest after spiritual practices (**Doniger & Smith, 1991, p. 93**). If there is any miscarriage occurs then women get purified after and equal to number of months of conception and menstruating women consider pure when she took menstrual bath after cease the menstrual flow (**Doniger & Smith, 1991, p. 106**). The impure or negative thoughts of women get purified by menstruation (**Doniger & Smith, 1991, p. 111**). If a man secrete his semen into the menstruating women then he should perform *Samtapana Krikkhra* (a painful heating vow) (**Swasina, 1900, p. 628**).

Harita Samhitā stated the same story alike *Brahamvaivarta Purāṇa* on first day she is *Chāṇḍala* and so on (**Dutt, 1906**).

Atri Samhita stated that if a *Brāhmaṇa* receive food from a menstruating women he should perform half *Prājāpatya* (**Dutt, 1907, p. 306**). When a woman gives birth to a child and menstrual blood starts to be seen then women consider pure as a gold (**Dutt, 1907, p. 309**). If a woman worshipping from a long time and following austerities and menstruation appears, still her spiritual observances will not be destroyed (**Dutt, 1907, p. 309**).

Usana Samhita or *Shukracharya* stated that people should not touch the menstruating women. If anyone is involved with menstruating women he should keep fast for three nights to purify himself (**Dutt, 1906, p. 255**). In case of food intake from the menstruating women, people should keep fast for three nights (**Dutt, 1906, p. 260**). If someone touches the menstruating women, the person should take a bath for purification (**Dutt, 1906, p. 263**). A person does not go to his wife after menstruation or does not know her then he should perform the half *Prajāpatya* to become pure again (**Dutt, 1906, p. 264**).

Aṅgiras Samhita stated that after fourth day of menstruation women should take bath and then follow the penance. If menstruation continues then women are not considered pure till the bleeding ceases and when bleeding gets stopped the women are ready for household duties and for intercourse (**Dutt, 1906, p. 272**). If any menstruating women gets in touch with *Brāhmaṇa*, then he should purify himself with *Pañchgavya* and fasting for a night (**Dutt, 1906, p. 273**). A woman is considered pure after her menstruation (**Dutt, 1906, p. 273**).

Yama Samhita mentioned that a girl who is in her menstrual phase known as *Vṛishali*. If a girl becomes at the age of puberty and menarche occurs then her parents and elder brother move to hell (Dutt, 1906, p. 279). If women who are in their menstruation and touch the other menstruating women or other women of different cast then there are different ways to purify themselves. If women are from same family then only a bath is needed for purification, if *Brāhmaṇa* women and *Sūdra* women touch each other than women from *Brāhmaṇa* has to perform *Prājāpatya* and women from *Sūdra* family has to perform the part of *Prājāpatya*, if *Kshatriya* women and *Sūdra* women touch each other than women from *Kshatriya* has to perform a complete penance and women from *Sūdra* family has to perform the part of penance, if *Vaiśya* women and *Sūdra* women touch each other than women from *Vaiśya* has to perform *Padakṛichha* and women from *Sūdra* family has to perform the part of *Padakṛichha* (Dutt, 1906, p. 283). If a Dog, Ass, Jackal or Goat go near a menstruating woman and touch her then she should keep fast and take a bath after the fourth day. If a menstruating women contacted by a *Chāṇḍal* she has to follow the *Prājāpatya* (Dutt, 1906, p. 284).

Katyana Samhita stated that when the *Śrāvaṇa* begins, the rivers leave for two months because it is consider that the rivers are in their menstruation and people should not go to the rivers and avoid to disturb them (Dutt, 1907, p. 377). If a woman is in menstruation at the time of *Bhūtapravāchana* then she is not allowed to participate and another woman from the family will complete the rituals (Dutt, 1907, p. 398).

Vyāsa Samhita stated that *Garbhādhana* should be performed after the appearance of menstruation.

Purāṇa

According to *Garuḍa Purāṇa* during menstrual phase women are not allowed to come in front of people and show her face cause of sin. On the fourth day after bath (Wood & Subrahmanyam, 1911, p. 142) she may be allowed to do her regular activities. In *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* there is a small description about the menstruating women, she should avoid to see the bad people or people indulge in criminal activities or kill people otherwise her children will become the curse for the human beings and the humanity. During the menstrual phase people of all castes should avoid the women (Pargiter, 1904, p. 177).

In *Padam Purāṇa*, the role of women was divided according to the number of days such as on first day of menstruation she is in the state of *Cāṇḍālī*, on the second day *Brahamaghātini*, on the third day washerwomen and on the fourth day after bath she become pure (Tagare, 2000, p. 729). Misbehavior with menstruating women is sin (Chaturvedi, 2006, p. 226). After menstruation, a girl may choose her groom (Goyanka, 1992, p. 48).

Brahamāṇḍa Purāṇa mentioned if any person involve in intercourse with his spouse during menstruation then he has to perform the *Prājāpatya* rite (Tagare, 2000, p. 1052) also it correlate the relation between the menstrual blood with five elements and three *dosa*, menstrual blood is related with fire element of nature and *Pitta* (Tagare, 2000, p. 906). There are six *Ṛtu* mentioned and each *Ṛtu* made up by two months, and they are considered the sons of *Nimi* who is created by *Brhamā* hence sons of *Ṛtu* are human beings (Tagare, 2000, p. 122). Here is the indication of women and her menstruation cycle in form of *Ṛtukāla*. Alike *Ṛtu* (season) changes her phenomenon of menstruation also has four phases. It also stated that during the *Treta Yuga* women did not face the menstrual phase again and again in her life cause of the power of that particular *Yuga* but after *treta Yuga* sexual intercourse takes place in the life of human beings therefore menstruation occurs every month (Tagare, 2000, p. 73).

Skanda Purāṇa mentioned that the menstrual flow take away the sin of women and make her pure so she never become impure (Tagare, 1991, p. 442). If girl see her menarche before her marriage and at her father's home then her father is considered as *Bhrūṇahā* and girl as *Vṛṣālī* (Tagare, 1991, p. 442). Women were enjoyed by the moon when her pubic hair started to grow, *Gandharva* enjoys her at the time of development of the breasts and at the time of menstruation fire enjoys her virginity that's why a father needs to marry his daughter before the sign of puberty appears (Trivedi, 1907, p. 511). Otherwise the daughter will be the cause of destruction of her father and *Kula* (Trivedi, 1907, p. 512).

Vāyu Purāṇa stated that women used to menstruate once in her lifetime but due to effect of *Kaliyuga* she started to menstruate every month (Eraly, 2011, p. 356). In the *Kṛta Yuga* menstruation did not occurred monthly and women did not get pregnant even after the intercourse rather, she used to conceive by the end of her life and give birth to a boy and a girl (Shastri, 1997, p. 57). During *Satyuga* women had the power to reproduce at the ending phase of her life but in the beginning of *Tretā Yuga* there were emotional

changes appearing in people in the form of attachments and greed which also affected the menstruation of the women and they started to menstruate monthly (**Shastri, 1997, p. 61**).

Agni Purāṇa suggested to the people that do not talk with a women while she is in her menstrual phase (**Shastri & Kunst, 1998, p. 438**). After the fourth day when a woman gets a bath she becomes pure (**Shastri & Kunst, 1998, p. 440**). If a women caught by enemy and sexually assaulted by them then stay away from her till her upcoming menstrual phase then accept her because after the discharged (**Geete Press, Samvat 2076, p. 342**) she become pure as moon, *Gandharva* and fire. Women never become impure even after fornication because her menstrual discharge makes her pure every month. If a woman gets pregnant by another caste then after the delivery when menstrual discharge takes place she becomes pure (**Shastri & Kunst, 1998, p. 463**). The anger of God *Rudrā* created the many planets which create troubles in human beings' life and it is found near the tank, river, ponds, trees in a lonely place, mountain, bridge, gardens, house which is deserted, confluence points of river. These planets mainly catch and keep focus on the menstruating women, or women who are taking bath after menstruation, or women taking bath in naked condition, women who are pregnant and in sleep condition (**Geete Press, Samvat 2076, p. 614**). If a women want to be a mother of a son, she should take milk and butter with some ancient medicinal plants such as fibrous roots of *Lakṣmi* and *Kaunti*, *Vajra*, *Lodhara* and *Dhātri*, sprouts of banyan tree during her menstrual phase (**Shastri & Kunst, 1998, p. 834**). Used cloth of menstruating women further used to take revenge from the enemy to destroy the peace of his family (**Shastri & Kunst, 1998, p. 872**). In this *Purāṇa* anatomy of vagina and uterus is also mentioned. According to this, the uterus expands during the menstrual phase. Menstrual discharge count is four *Añjali* according to this *Purāṇa* (**Geete Press, Samvat 2076, p. 816**).

Kūrma Purāṇa described the eligibility to take part in *Yajña* of a person which includes a fact related to menstruation which express that a person who go to his wife after the menstrual phase (only in prescribed days after menstrual phase) are allow to participate (**Tagare, 1998, p. 454**). The person who does not meet with his wife during her ovulation, then he has to perform the ardha *Prājāpatya* ritual to purify himself (**Kuram Puranam, p. 339**).

Sīva Purāṇa consider menstruating women as prohibition while listen the *Sīva Purāṇa* as a rite, that the person should not look at the menstruating women when he is listening the *Sīva Purāṇa* although there are many other restrictions but it is also part of restriction. It is a sin to be sexually involved with a menstruating women. Application of the *Tripunḍra* may destroy this sin (Shastri, 1970, p. 159). During the menstruation phase and after the menstrual bath women should not see towards the wicked man to get a powerful child (Shastri, 1970, p. 258). If a woman does not conceive and not give birth then her menstruation is fruitless (Shastri, 1970, p. 1385). Any woman in any condition even during the menstrual phase, leaves her *Prāna* then she attains salvation (Shastri, 1970, p. 1345).

Bhagwata Purāṇa mentioned that in *Kali Yuga* the girl will face the menstrual phase during the age of eight year she will become pregnant every year (Vijñanananda, 1921, p. 835), unchaste women will cooked food for families of *Brāhmin* during her menstruation (Vijñanananda, 1921, p. 836) and during the menstrual phase people will go to their wife (Vijñanananda, 1921, p. 837). During menstruation women become pure even if she was guilty of adultery (Vijñanananda, 1921, p. 37). For getting a son *Ambikā* and *Ambālikā* the wife of *Vichitravīrya* and their servant went to the *Vyāsa* after their menstruation bath but *Ambikā* got afraid and closed her eyes seeing *Vyāsa* and got a blind son *Dhritarāstra*, and *Ambālikā* also got afraid and her body became pale and she got very weak child *Pāndu* their maid who willingly went to *Vyāsa* with a happy heart got divine soul as a son whose name was *Vidura* (Vijñanananda, 1921, p. 77). The importance of the menstruation bath and the emotions of the women is described by these phenomena. The menstruating women are not allowed to worship during the ceremony and festival of *Navrātra* (Vijñanananda, 1921, p. 230). When *Duśāsan* was dragging *Draupadī* she was menstruating (Vijñanananda, 1921, p.313). During *Śrāvan* and *Bhādra* all the rivers flow heavily and supply the water to all places simultaneously. It is advised to keep away from the rivers because ancient people knew that the rivers are in their menstrual phase (Vijñanananda, 1921, p. 522) and it is not advisable to disturb them. In the auspicious place of *Kāmākhya* there is a *Yonimaṇḍala* which is considered the best place and place of *S'ritripurābhairavī*, which is pious place of the earth and many saints live there, even mountains of that place are also consider as a *Deva*. This place is also very much famous for the menstruation of the Goddess and every month the Goddess leaves for rest (Vijñanananda, 1921, p. 732). If *Brahāmin* eat food made by the women

who just took the bath after the menstruation then the food is considered as poisoned (**Vijñanananda, 1921, p. 907**). People are advised to keep away from menstruated women and should not talk with their wife during her menstrual phase (**Vijñanananda, 1921, p. 1130**). If a person goes near her wife during night time after her menstrual phase then there is no violation of his *Brahmacharya* (**Vijñanananda, 1921, p. 1128**). During the *Home* the oblation offered to the sun and the *Prasâdam* provided to the women under menstruation then she will be blessed with the male child with Excellency (**Vijñanananda, 1921, p. 1134**).

Varāh Purāṇa mentioned about the menstruating women that if the husband approach his wife after her menstrual bath then they may get the good child (**Iyer, 2003, p. 209**). If someone touches the *Vārāh* after touching the menstruating women because of lust then he will drink the menstrual blood in hell for a period of one thousand years (**Iyer, 2003, p. 337**). According to *Vārāh* red garments are considered as a menstrual flow and no one should approach them while wearing red clothes (**Iyer, 2003, p. 344**). Women should worship the *Vārāh* after her menstruation bath.

Brahmavaivṛta Purāṇa mentioned that the women whose menses not occurs or who is in menstrual phase and the person went to the menstruating women and eat the food made by her, he attracts aging sign and symptoms of old age (**Chaturvedi, 2005, p. 77**). At the age of eight the girl became young and her menstruation also started at this age and she would be able to conceive (**Chaturvedi, 2005, p. 181**). On the first day of menstruation women consider as a *Cāṇḍāla*, on second day *Mleccha*, on third day washer-women, on the fourth day she is available for her husband although not suit for the worships and good deeds and remain impure like *Śūdra* (**Chaturvedi, 2005, p. 422**). If a man involve in intercourse with the women on the first day of menstruation then he became the sinner of *Brahmahatyā*, on the second day *Gauhatyā*, on third day *Bhrūṇahatyā*, and on the fourth day the wise people should not go to near the menstruated women, and these people are not able to do the worship of God, *Deva*, and ancestors (**Geeta press, 1963, p. 636**).

liṅga Purāṇa mentioned that if a women follow all the code of conduct related to menstruation then she get excellent sons (**Shastri, 1998, p. 6**). Householders are allowed to go to their wife after her menstruation bath and it will not affect their celibacy (**Shastri, 1998, p. 29**). Like death and birth menstrual discharge is also impure (**Shastri, 1998, p. 475**). During *Tretā Yuga* women get her menstruation and in *Satyuga* she gets

menstruation every month due to the lust of men (**Shastri, 1998, p. 475**). On the fifth day of the menstrual phase if blood appears then still women are untouchable (**Shastri, 1998, p. 475**).

Matsya Purāṇa mentioned that if women fasting on *Ananta Trītiya* and she got her menstruation then she should follow the conducts related with fasting but asked other women to keep fast on her behalf and fulfill or requirements related with fasting (**Geeta Press, 2016, p. 240**). During menstruation time the air helps to grasp the semen and settle it into the uterus and further it develops in the shape of embryo (**Basu, 1916, p. 105**).

Vāmana Purāṇa mentioned about menstruating women it stated that intercourse is forbidden during menstruation time, people should avoid to touch, greetings and sight of menstruating women (**Chandra, 1968, p. 78**). It is advised to people that if they come into contact with menstruating women they should take a bath to regain their purity (**Joshi, 2020, p. 69**). It is well known that during the rainy season rivers are considered as menstruating and leave for rest but the rivers which are situated near the places of *Tīrtha* are not impure because of the power of the *Tīrtha* (**Chandra, 1968, p. 168**).

Bhaviṣya Purāṇa stated that the girl who attain the age of twelve and whose menarche occurs then the girl is known as *Rajasavalā* (**Chaturvedi, 2006, p. 47**) which simply justify the stage of life where menstruation begins to happen in the life of a girl. If a girl begins menstruating at her father's home before her marriage then her father becomes sinner and now the girl has the right to choose her groom (**Chaturvedi, 2006, p. 48**). The God of supreme is different from the three genders where men have the quality of *Satva*, women have the quality of *Rajasa* therefore she got the menstruation (**Bose, 2016, p. 56**) as a process in her body, and spado has the quality of *Tamasa*. There are four *Puruṣārtha*, and *Kāma* is the third one and wife of *Kāma* is responsible for the menstruation cycle (**Bose, 2016, p. 116**). After the menstrual phase when the phase of seasonal mating arrived but the person did not provide satisfaction and child, then it is considered a sin and the sinner has to fall into the hell as well as in the next birth fall into the bird *Yoni* (**Bose, 2016, p. 139**). The body of the human being is a male body but to fulfil the menstruation some of them or near to half body are female body (**Bose, 2016, p. 139**).

In Buddhist community

The Buddhist way of view towards menstruation is very scientific because it considers menstruation as a natural phenomenon in women's bodies where every month the natural excretion occurs (**Bhartiya, 2013, p. 524**). But the people from China, Japan, Tibet, Thailand, and South-East Asia consider menstruation as an impure process and not allow women to circumambulate around the *Stūpa* (**Bhartiya, 2013, p. 524**).

In Jainism community

People from Jainism also consider women impure during menstruation and women are not allowed to touch the idols, neither cook food nor meditate (**Sridhar, 2019, p. 83**).

In Sikha community

The religion of Sikha believes that impurity is the subject of mind and heart therefore they do not believe and not consider women impure during the menstrual phase. They consider women equal to men and allow her to do *Bhajana*, *Laṅgara* and *Pāṭha*. Women are always allowed to visit *Gurudwārā* and offer prayers even during her menstruation (**Sridhar, 2019, p. 90**).

In Islamic community

Islamic culture also believes that women are impure during their menstruation and are not allowed to touch the Arab Quran, prohibited to go to mosque and offer spiritual prayers for seven days of menstruation (**Bhartiya, 2013, p. 524**).

In Christian community

People from Christianity also believe that women should not go church and do not take part in prayers and church activities because she is not pure. They even believe that women should not gaze towards the sky during her menstruation otherwise the weather is affected negatively (**Bhartiya, 2013, p. 523**).

Some facts in geographical parts of India.

It is very much famous for the *Kāmkyā* temple in *Asama*, menstruation of Goddess celebrated during the rainy season (**Chawla, 1994, p. 2817**) as a festival named by *Ambuvāci*. Menarche is also celebrated in this region and it is known by the name of

Nuwa Tuloni and gifts, jewellery, new clothes and sweets are given to girls along with a flower shower bath.

In *Uḍisā* also rainy season consider as menstrual phase of mother earth and celebrated (**Chawla, 1994, p. 2817**). It is known as *Rajah Parba*. Fourth day is known as *Vāsumati Snāna*. People believe that to give honour to mother earth they should not do harvesting and construction activity till three days. People followed the customs where they eat uncooked food, swinging, and rope swinging. After three days the girls are worshiped.

Keddasa is a *Tulu* festival. It is celebrated in the region of south especially in *Karnataka* and is well famous for its spring fertility ritual and providing rest to mother earth (**Dusche, 2017, p. 16**). Half Sari festival is known as for menarche of a girl where her relatives pour water on her through the net and apply turmeric on her cheeks, give her gifts her first sari, gold jewellery, pour flowers on her and after bath she is ready as a bride and then her relatives worship her. They give her jaggery and sesame to eat. A similar way of celebration also followed in Andhra Pradesh.

In Tamilnadu, when a girl attains puberty then her family members provide her one room to live alone there and give her *Gingili* oil (sesame oil) to drink empty stomach every day during the menstrual phase to give strength to her spine. Then her relatives, especially *Māmi*, come to her and offer her garlands made of flowers, give her gifts and new sari, jewellery and accessories, apply sandal paste on her cheeks, on odd days these rituals repeat. On the seventh day all relatives are invited for a puberty function where everyone gathers in a hall and in that hall or premise the seasonal fruits, dry fruits, sweets, keep in a bowl with odd numbers.¹

In Kerala menarche celebrated by the name of *Kuṇikalyānāma*. Which means a small wedding. Relatives of the girl are invited to celebrate it and they give gifts, gold jewellery, accessories to girls.

In the region of Uttarakhand people of Kumauni community give unmarried girls the *Pudi* made by cow milk butter and wheat flour, to eat on her menarche. That day is consider to make the *Kuṇḍli* of the girl and after the menarche they pierce the left nose of the girl and give her gold nose pin to wear. People did not disclose this news to the

¹ K Viganeshwari, PhD Scholar, Department of Management, Central University of Tamilnadu, Thiruvavur. 30/07/2021.

public until the marriage of the girl was pure during her menstruation.² If there is a married girl whose menstruation begins at her in-laws home then she is left alone in a room for 21 days and after 21 days family members of menstruating women give her new clothes, jewellery and gifts and celebrate her reproductive age. During menstruation women sleep on paddy straw beddings which change every day and keep away from animals and other beings. During menstruation women do all household work but are not allowed to touch food and water. Until 5 days of menstruation women are not allowed to go temple. Till menarche girls are not allowed to cook rice and after first menstruation she is allowed to make dishes of rice. People of Uttarakhand stay away from menstruating women and are not allowed to come near the temples and kitchens. At night women live in cowsheds at that time and do not take baths for at least four days. People of Kumauni consider women pure when they take menstrual baths with cow urine, otherwise treat her impure.³

In the region of Punjab, people believe that mother earth also menstruates once in a month for a week (**Chawla, 1994, p. 2817**), meanwhile she needs rest and it is advisable to people that they should not disturb her. People who live in Deccan believe that Goddesses need rest the day after the *Navarātri* (**Chawla, 1994, p. 2817**) and rest continues till the full moon. People of Malabar believe that mother earth takes rest during the summer time and rest continues till the first shower of rain (first rain of rainy season) (**Chawla, 1994, p. 2817**).

In North India it is not seen as a festival, rather people believe to hide this phenomenon and want to protect their daughters from the society. They consider it as a shameful event and try to hide it as much as possible.

Spiritual leaders of Contemporary period

In Andhra Pradesh there is a temple named as *Devipūram* and famous for *Śrīvidyā* which is a part of tantric tradition. The temple is built in *Śrīcakra* form and the important part of this temple is *Kamkhyā Pīthama*. The priest of this temple Sri Amrithananda Nath said

² Sharda Devi Ji, Old Women from Village Taraari, Post Office Taya, Tehsil Molehal, District, Almora, Uttarakhand-263680. Sharda Devi Ji, her lineage and village followed menstrual rituals which she described in one to one conversation.

³ Heera Devi, Gram Shri Kot Nahori, Bhikyasen, Uttarakhand. In her village there are different rituals for married and unmarried girls for their menarche. Her family and people of village followed these rituals from many years.

that the thing which is pure we do not touch it, and then the untouchability concept becomes taboo further he added in his sentence that in this temple during menstrual phase women are free to stay in this temple. The woman in her menstrual phase is pure and that is why she is treated as Goddess because she is living Goddess at that time and therefore why she needs to go to temple to perform outer world related rituals **(Sridhar, 2019, p. 40)**.

During a Delhi shivir (in presents) in November 2011 one of the disciples of Dr. Avdhoot Shivanand (who is founder of Shiv Yog) asked one question to her Guru that during menstruation women should Meditate or not ? Then Dr. Avdhoot Shivanand replied to his disciple that women should not search the reason to avoid the Meditation in the name of menstruation. He asked every woman to do *Sādhna* on a regular basis all thirty days in a month⁴.

The founder of Isha Foundation, Jaggi Vasudev, well famous by the name of Sadguru has said about menstruation that menstruation occurs only at physical level, and psychologically it does not occur. But some physiological factors affect the psychological factors. Women of ancient time around thousands years ago there was need to understand the work load because it was related to many people in home, hygiene conditions and there was regular cooking, washing, sweeping tasks in day to day life so it was good idea to give her break and women sing songs, chants, read books, enjoy on her own terms but after that some people came and started discrimination. If menstruation is impure then the birth of a child is also impure then creation is impure. Menstruation comes from a practical reason not from an impure and pure concept. In the present time women suffer a lot during menstruation because they go to work and do not even get rest. It is a fundamental phenomenon of the body and needs importance **(Vasudev, 2019)**.

In a video which was taken from you tube, it was asked to Krish Murali Ishwar; menstruation versus meditation. Then he replied women can do shanti meditation which is related to *Mūlādhāra Cakra*. This technique is taught in sky *Yoga* centres all over the world. This meditation can be practiced throughout the day and anytime during menstruation **(Eswar, 2019)**.

⁴ Shri Vidya Shivir, Markandeya Bhawan, Chatarpur, Delhi, November 2011.

When it was asked to Acharya Prashant that women should go to temple or not during menstruation then he replied that people go temple to wash the impurities of mind. Then why is it related to temples? Further he said why women follow such rules, and apply to next generations and then expect women to follow the rules and accept them as it is without thinking it over. He said that sanitation rules must be followed because it is not related to spirituality but related to sanitation and it is a natural process and not in the hands of women **(Prashant, 2021)**.

It was asked to Acharya Pratishtha facts related to menstruation, then she said in Indian culture women kept on top at every place and during ancient time women do two main jobs one is related to kitchen and another one is related to temple and worship. During menstruation ancient people exempt women from these two works also and asked her to take rest. This indicates that liberalisation and understanding exist in our culture. In ancient times temples were built in the outer region of the village and at that time constructed paths and buildings were not available and to reach the temple, people used to go to the temple by crossing the forest and it was well known that forest animals smell blood and attack on that creature. In this condition if women go out to a temple, there are maximum chances that forest animals will attack her. So it was asked of women to not go to the temple also and not worship, just take rest and take good care of yourself. So women are not prohibited rather she is exempted from these works **(Pratishtha, 2021)**.

In library of Aurobindo Ashram there was collection of work of Sri Maa and one asked him what attitude girls maintain during her menstruation then Sri Maa replied that girl should give little importance to it and should not avoid it but simultaneously go with their usual life and not change their life because of it **(Collected works of the mother, volume 12)**.

Raman Mahrishi once entered in his *Āshram's* kitchen and he saw the lentil dish was cooking he asked to Tenammal why it was cooking it was not discussed in the morning then Tenammal replied that one of them has menstruation and for them they are cooking lentil dish. Ramana Maharshi got upset and disappointed and said in his *Āshram* all are equal and all will eat the same food at the same place with everyone and if anyone has any objection they may eat separately. They denied untouchability during the menstrual phase completely **(Ganesan, p. 297)**.

In life sketch of Maa Sharda, Swami Shrddhanand wrote that Ram Krishan Paramhans asked Maa Sharda for food and she denied to give him due to her menstruation and further she said that she is impure that is why she is not able to give him food. After that Ram Krishan Paramhans asked her that bring food for me and purity and impurity is the matter of mind and not for the body. He always wants from his wife that she become a role model for other women also and break all the unnecessary traditions (**Muktanand, 2014, p. 39**).

Pandit Shree Ram Sharma Acharya has said in his book *Gaytri Samyak Shnkaa Samādhān* that women can do mental practice during their menstrual phase and they can chant *Gāyatrī Mantra* without beads and throughout the day during their menstruation.

4.3 Existence of Myths in contemporary period

Thinking of people

In the contemporary period people are considered to be educated with wisdom and knowledge. It is assumed that education which is received from school-colleges is enough to make people aware and knowledgeable to survive in the society and live their life full of success and happiness but the reality is different from this assumption that people are mechanically developing their mind in a single field and remain ignorant on other aspect of life.

On the other hand people who developed their skills with their own mind set and choose their career according to their passion might be happy and satisfied with their living standard and succeeding in their professional area. But still one thing is needed to add in this educational criteria is to sow some seeds of humanity and equality on the basis of gender because today people are running for wealth, for health, for name-fame and for successful journey of life but the main thing is that they forget to achieve the main aim of life which usually known as liberation.

People need to re-think

Liberation is not just a word which anybody can understand and may achieve it easily by doing nothing or by doing little work. Liberation required a ton of hard work with the feeling of equanimity in every situation in every breath of life with the practice of mindfulness.

Women need to know

Women who are important and equal part of society and even more than equal are achieving their all targets fluently and flawlessly, running to grasp their success but in the meanwhile she became ignorant about her precious and important time which she gets every month in the name of menstrual phase. It is not expecting from women to leave all tasks of daily routine or leave things and take off for the sake of menstrual phase but the thing which is been asked from women is to sit with herself, analyse her inner-self and search and realise self which is bound with this body and mind and stuck with old and present *Karma*.

Myths and its effect

In the contemporary period people are highly educated and some regions of India are still stuck with all myths without knowing the actual fact and avoid giving women a break from the post of home maker or household work. It is also true that women also do not demand any break but from the inside she actually needs and wants some rest except she is athlete, player or the women from defence or professional field. Here it is not voluntary to choose to break or not, these things are not in their hands independently.

Choice of women

So it is totally dependent on women that she wants to avail herself a break or doesn't want to avail. There are some reasons also lie that is why women not interested to take break and those reasons are that, people follow untouchability, see her as a dirty object, and ask her to live in isolated place even she is not supposed to cook food during that time so women take decision that she is not going to reveal anybody about her menstrual phase and especially to those people who discouraged her and see her from the offensive eyes.

All these things did not happen in all families. It is the story of some places of India, especially in village area although situation is changing and women have now started to cook, take bath, washcloths in menstrual phase because now times have changed and families are nuclear and men also don't know how to do household work properly and give rest to the women during her menstrual phase because they thought and assumed that menstruation ethics which developed by the ancient people of India are just too made on the basis of impurity which was myth and there is not any other reason except impurity.

But the reality behind this is just a question mark in front of those people in the name of myth. There are some spiritual facts hidden behind these myths which are menstrual ethics for the growth of women in the spiritual aspect of life and simultaneously give her space for herself because during the menstrual phase women have capability to achieve higher state of mind.

Ground reality

So in the contemporary period people are not exactly aware about the menstrual ethics and some people correlate them with the concept of impurity and that is why women are not allowed to enter temples and kitchens. On the other hand people ignored the concept of impurity and allow women to go inside the kitchen but not give her space for recover her health because they don't know how to manage menstruated women with menstrual ethics simultaneously those people also not allow women to go inside the temple and it simply means women can cook but cannot go inside the temple.

There is one more fact related to menstrual phase that women are also not shown interest about her menstrual phase and she take it easily somehow it is good for those women who understand her value and keep silent on this topic and not give chance to people to judge her with her menstrual ethics but for rest part of women may or may not suffer some epidemic conditions because she hide her pain and sacrifice her health for her responsibilities. This is the ground reality of the myth related to the menstrual phase in the contemporary period.

4.4 Spiritual Aspect Which Need to Educate to Utilise the Time of Menstruation

During the menstrual phase a number of restrictions are applied on women. Most of the restrictions are related to the concept of purity and others are related to the health of the women. The concept of *Yoga* is based on the purification of mind and withdrawal of all senses from outer world to inner world, and cessation of mental modification is considered as *Yoga* (Vivekanand, 2021).

Here one thing is clear about *Yoga* that mental purification is the main thing, bodily changes are another thing and for growth in the spiritual aspect of life people need to be focused on purification of mind more than the body and worldly things.

Menstrual Phase and Mind

The present research is focused on the menstrual phase and menstrual ethics and how it is correlated with *Yoga* and mind. Practitioners of *Yoga* and spirituality, may be aware of this fact that during the menstrual phase women have the opportunity to reach up-to the unconscious mind easily in comparison to other days.

It is well known that women face hormonal changes during the menstrual phase and they behave differently in comparison to normal days, so leave women at isolated places and give her food according to nature.

The basic concept behind this it to connect the women with nature in the form of restrictions like give her food in utensils made up by with clay or leaf, keep her away from worldly things, don't allow her to enter into kitchen, nobody is allow to touch her, none of her family member go near to her, and the main thing is she is not allow to enter into the temples as well as she has to live alone for a while till continuity of her bleed days.

All these things connected with spiritual aspect which was forbidden by the world or might be it hide from the world or it is also possible that to protect the women from outer world or her family members because of the pressure of responsibilities which she bear and perform whole days and give her rest during menstrual phase and regain the energy for upcoming times.

To regain the energy there is the concept of mind that needs to be understood deeply and utilise the time for recovery of the self and to reach a higher state of bliss. Beyond the body and the mind there is a higher dimension of consciousness (**Saraswati, 2013, p. 220**) which is hidden by the layer of ignorance. Which resulted in the cause of problems related to body and mind. It affects the personality and behaviour.

Ancient people of India knew about the fact that during the menstrual phase the higher dimension of consciousness opens and she has to go through some special rituals during her menstrual phase where she is allowed to live with nature rather than the outer world. It is a well-known fact that the lunar cycle of the Moon which was a twenty eight days cycle is also associated with menstruation.

Isolation

When there is need to do meditation or self-analyses then people need some isolated place free from noise and other disturbing entities so they can sit properly for a long time and utilise their time for inner growth. Similarly women also need some isolated space during her menstrual phase if she properly learns the techniques of self-analyses or meditation because this is the perfect time to enhance the inner consciousness, sixth sense and intuitive power by these practices (**Saraswati, 2013, p. 220**).

Śauca

In general *Śauca* means purification process. It has a two way process of purification, one is internal purification and another one is external purification (**Parivraajak, 2003, p. 192**). External purification is related to the physical body which includes bath, pack, cleansing practices of *Yoga* whereas internal purification includes the purification of mind and *Citta* by the practices of eight limbs of *Yoga*. Internal purification is more important than external purification because people may not take bath daily but keep their intention pure behind every thought and every work. Then they start to live a peaceful life and attain the state of equanimity and bliss.

Similarly menstruation is a phenomenon of the body where discharged blood is considered as impure blood according to the tale of sin. In ancient times women were asked to live separately due to some hygiene practices and some relaxation practices, for her safety it was not advised to put eye makeup and heavy jewellery because the insulator points of the body gets more activated than other days. Unnatural things will disturb the natural process of cleaning. That is why women suggested to follow the rule of isolation, food restrictions, and live life as a nun during four days. These things help the woman to take advantage of these four days and pure her mind and *Citta* by the mental practices of *Yoga*. Truly it is time for purification of body and mind altogether.

Relaxation

Yoga includes many types of practice for different conditions. If one wants to do some relaxation then some relaxation techniques are also there with the awareness towards body and mind which is known as *Yoga Nidra*. During the menstrual phase women also need some special rest and it is not advisable to do heavy practices of *Yoga*. Therefore there is a technique of *Yoga Nidra*, it provides deep and sound healing with nice

relaxation and women should learn this technique before the menstrual phase arrives and practice it during menstrual phase and grasp some positive changes which may bring some spiritual or emotional strength.

Higher dimension of consciousness

In many texts it is not well defined in ancient texts but the lifestyle and type of food simply indicates towards the state of consciousness. Menstruation ethics might be developed by the sages of India to take advantage of the menstrual phase. Simultaneously try to aware the women about her hidden talents, hidden powers, hidden peace and hidden seeds of spirituality. In *Tantra*, it is a valuable issue and they consider women like Goddess during her menstrual phase (Sridhar, 2019, p. 41) so her state of consciousness is in pure and delicate form and it is strongly needed to do the right practices of *Yoga* in the right direction.

Connection with divinity

Nature is the biggest creator of the universe. Each and every living being or non-living things are part of nature. In this universe women play a role like nature where she is able to do an identical creation in the form of her child and for her best creation nature gave her a gift to enjoy motherhood. When a woman menstruates she seems like nature and this is the right time to go with nature and understand the similarities between women and nature. Women need to respect this dignity, this ability to give birth and evaluate her inner self by spiritual practices. For betterment of motherhood, women clearly need to understand the correlation between nature and the self. All these positive changes are possible only when women understand the menstruation ethics and follow these rules for her betterment. Because this time is precious to understand the spiritual seeds within, where it is needed to rope and nourish them to follow the path of *Yoga* and spirituality.

Search of self

Indian philosophy is based on the concept of searching for something which lies inside this physical body. This is the search of self where everyone needs to find the reason of birth and reach the state of bliss and state of liberation. Similarly women should spend her menstrual time for her liberation and search for the real self which is beyond the body, mind, senses, and ego.

Feeling of let go

Feeling let go means to forgive easily and accept the situation and move on. Sometimes the whole month women do not realise the worth of feeling of letting go and during the menstrual phase when she sits with herself she is able to see the things thoroughly and reach at the decision that lot of things need to be let go and these are not necessary to retain in mind for a long time. She starts to learn lessons from the past. She let go of things and started to easily forgive and accept the situation by the practices of searching for the self.

Feeling of Peace

Peace of mind is the feeling from beyond the physical body and can be experienced by the mind and heart. Sometimes body feels pain and mind is in peace then people don't react on pain of body and bear it silently whereas when mind is disturbed and body is fine still people do not feel satisfaction in any task. Feeling of peace can be read during the menstrual phase when women upgrade their knowledge about the menstrual phase in terms of menstruation ethics. There are some spiritual causes also behind the menstruation ethics development. Peace of mind is one of those. Women should work to attain the peace of mind and value their energies by practices of letting go and whenever she will get the peace of mind during her menstrual phase she may be able to feel the bliss.

Time for self-assessment

Menstrual phase is like a two sided mirror where one side indicates the bodily changes which sometimes includes pain and sufferings but on the other side of this mirror there is a break from all the responsibilities and freedom from day to day activity. This time is applicable for self-assessment through the practice of meditation and rethinking about the monthly activities by rewinding what things are necessary for self-growth and for worldly life. During the whole month women seem busy in their day to day tasks where they fulfil all the requirements of their family or professional life and somehow neglect the self-improvement such as food, rest, sit for deep relaxation, sleep, reading of books, writing etcetera. This is the time that she may utilize these activities and enhance the improvement for upcoming months.

Feeling of Happiness

It is well known that the menstrual phase is associated with hormonal changes but it is not necessary that mood swings always appear in a negative way; it may happen that women can feel inner happiness. But to read these emotions women need to understand the self by the practices of meditation and self-assessment. Here women can learn to manage these emotions nicely and secure their energies by following noble peace.

Feeling of positivity

It is a natural feeling which comes from the mind. To retain the attitude of positivity there is a need to train the mind. To think positive in every kind of situation women should analyse the thought pattern by the method of thought observation or breathe observation again and again. Afterwards, a trained mind also stays in a positive state even during the menstrual phase and stops the self-criticism in the name of impurity. After that it becomes easy to enter into the dimensions of the consciousness.

4.5 Summary

Era has changed but the stories related to menstruation appear in similar ways. The Vedic era did not explain much about the menstruation but the era of *Upniṣada* and *Smṛti* explain it in wider range. In the modern era people follow the rules and regulations but the contemporary time still needs to understand the justification behind these regulations, stories and mythological facts.

In the next chapter Yogic Practices for General Menstrual Problems are discussed.

Chapter 5

Yogic Practices for General Menstrual Problems (GMP)

- 5.1 Yogic Practices: an overview
- 5.2 Role of Yogic Practices for GMP
- 5.3 *Yoga* Protocol for GMP
- 5.4 Role of Yogic Practices and Myths related to
Menstruation
- 5.5 Summary

Chapter 5

YOGIC PRACTICES FOR GENERAL MENSTRUAL PROBLEMS (GMP)

5.1 Yogic Practices: an overview

The concept of *Yoga* covers a wide area of consciousness where many practices are developed for purification of *Citta*. *Yogic* concept includes the concept of *Śarīra* and *Kośa* which help to know about the dimensions of *Citta* (consciousness). Awareness towards body, towards mind and travel towards the soul is the main objective of *Yoga* which is known as *Samādhi*. Philosophy of *Yoga* and other texts related with *Yoga* believe that practices of *Yoga* were developed thousands of years ago and developed for the ultimate goal of life that is *Samādhi*. If people go through the *Yogic* way they may find that there are many things to know about self, before they go beyond the self and simultaneously break the self-made limits with the help of practices of *Yoga*. Before starting the practices of *Yoga* one should know about the concept of *Śarīra*, *Kośa* and *Citta*.

Table 3: *Śarīra* and *Kośa*

<i>Śarīra</i>	<i>Kośa</i>	<i>Elements related to Kośa</i>
<i>Sthūla Śarīra</i>	<i>Annamaya Kośa</i>	Five <i>Tanmātrā</i> , and five <i>Mahābhūta</i> (<i>Tamasa Guna</i>). (Saraswati, 2019, p. 7)
	<i>Prāṇamaya Kosa</i>	Five <i>Prāṇa</i> . (<i>Rajasa Guna</i>). (Saraswati, 2019, p. 7)
<i>Sūkṣma Śarīra</i>	<i>Manomaya Kośa</i>	<i>Manas</i> , Five <i>Jnanendriyas</i> , five <i>Karmendriya</i> (<i>Satva Guna</i>) (Saraswati, 2019, p. 7)
	<i>Vijñānamaya Kośa</i>	<i>Mahata</i> , <i>Citta</i> , and <i>Ahaṁkāra</i> . (Saraswati, 2019, p. 7)
<i>Kāraṇa Śarīra</i>	<i>Ānandamaya Kośa</i>	<i>Ātman</i> and <i>Prakṛti</i> with active <i>Guna</i> . (Saraswati, 2019, p. 7)

Concept of *Śarīra*

Śarīra is divided into *Sthūla Śarīra*, *Sūkṣma Śarīra* and *Kāraṇa Śarīra* (Telles et al. 2007, p. 504) which covers the soul. Here the journey of life begins to find the self and reach to the soul. Each *Śarīra* has its own worth and own agenda to resolve the *karma*. These *Śarīra* are interconnected and affect each other and are also affected by other *Śarīra*. These *Śarīra* include the *Kośa* and *Kośa* are five in numbers and like *Śarīra*, *Kośa* is also connected with each other, they are influenced by each other and affect each other.

Sthūla Śarīra

Existence of human beings is divided into three parts and the first one is *Sthūla Śarīra* which can be seen by normal vision. *Sthūla Śarīra* is made up of five elements and it can be seen in the form of skin, blood, muscles, bone, and bone marrow etc. Five *Karmendriya* (mouth, legs, hands, sex organs and anus) lies in this body (Acharya, 2003) and help to do physical activities like speak, stand, sit, walk, hold, remove morbid matter and reproduction. *Sthūla Śarīra* is experienced in the state of consciousness (*Jāgratavastha*) (Shivananda Yoga Europe). Movement and activeness are the main characteristics of this body. *Sthūla Śarīra* helps to achieve worldly desires, name, and fame. Fruits of *karma* are set off with the help of this *Sthūla Śarīra*. It provides worldly pleasure and happiness and if this body is perfectly healthy and people use it carefully for their ultimate goals and worldly goals simultaneously, then they may achieve success and prosperity with honour and respect and can be leaders in their field. In this body *Annamaya Kośa* lies. It is made up of and grows with the help of food elements. For protection of this body there are many practices made by ancient saints of India which include physical practices and cleansing techniques.

Sūkṣma Śarīra

After *Sthūla Śarīra*, the next existence of human beings is *Sūkṣma Śarīra* and it cannot be seen by normal vision or naked eyes; in fact it presents itself by behaviour, thinking pattern and lifestyle. In general *Sūkṣma Śarīra* is made up by mind (related with thinking, understanding) and unconsciousness (related with nature, habits and blood circulation, breathing, contract and relaxation, blinking the eyes). So the main characteristics of this body are understanding, learning and brain activities. Five *Jñānendriya* and mind lies in this body (Acharya, 2003). This body can be experienced in dreaming and awakened

states (**Shivananda Yoga Europe**). This body provides the sharpness in brain activity and memory.

Kāraṇa Śarīra

After *Sūkṣma Śarīra*, the next existence of human being is *Kāraṇa Śarīra* which is made up by spirit, emotions, mind, consciousness and ego (**Acharya, 2003, p. 18**). This body can be experienced in wakened, dreaming and deep sleep states (**Shivananda Yoga Europe**). Main characteristics of this body are emotions, faith, inspiration, courage, belief, ideas, leadership qualities, people walk alone and take decisions alone, to reach a high level of consciousness like Yogis, sages, ascetics.

Concept of Kośa

There are five *Kośa* (**Jakhar, 2018, p. 1383**). It can be understood with this example. Cabbage has many layers on it and if you try to remove the top layer, again another layer appears then again and again layers appear and like cabbage, the soul also has five layers which are usually known by the name of *Kośa* (**Shastri, 2002, p. 86**). These are not visible by naked eyes to experience this state; only awakened states of consciousness may experience it.

Annamaya Kośa

In *Sthūla Śarīra*, the first sheath of soul is known as *Annamaya Kośa* which is made up by *Anna* and when the physical body dies it merges with the earth element. It consists of seven *Dhātu* and is developed by food and earth elements (**Acharya, 2003, p. 16**). Process of purification at the outer level is related to this sheath only and the rest of the sheath is part of inner purification of consciousness.

Prāṇamaya Kośa

The second sheath of soul which is also a part of the *Sthūla Śarīra*, is known as *Prāṇamaya Kosa*, it consists of five *Prāṇa* and five *Karmendriya* (**Acharya, 2003, p. 16**). It is purified by the breathing practices of *Yoga*.

Manomaya Kośa

The third sheath of soul is known as *Manomaya Kośa*, which is the cover under *Sūkṣma Śarīra* and it consists of *mana* and five *Jñānendriya* (**Acharya, 2003, p. 16**). It is purified by the practices of senses withdrawal.

Vijñānamaya Kośa

The fourth sheath of soul is known as *Vijñānamaya Kośa* and it is the cover under *Sūkṣma Śarīra*. It consists of the mind with five *Jñānendriya* (Acharya, 2003, p. 16). It is purified by the practices of *Dhyāna*.

Ānandamaya Kośa

This is the fifth and final sheath of soul and it is the cover under *Kāraṇa śarīra*. It consists of wisdom and state of bliss, state of *Ānanda* (Acharya, 2003, p. 16). The practitioner reaches here after the practices of *Samādhi*.

Concept of Citta

Citta means ‘to see’. The concept of *Yoga* is based on *Citta*. When *Citta* becomes free from all the obstacles then it is able to see inside the inner world of the body and mind and may be able to reach the state of *Samādhi*. *Yoga* is the state of *Samādhi* (Arya and Rama 1986, p. 73). There are five states mentioned in the text of *Yoga* which affect the state of *Citta* and realise or delay the state of liberation.

Table 4: State of *Citta*

State of <i>Citta</i>	Related with <i>Guna</i>
<i>Kṣhipta</i> (disturbed)	<i>Rajasa</i>
<i>Mūḍha</i> (stupefied)	<i>Tamasa</i>
<i>Vikṣhipta</i> (distracted)	<i>Satva- Rajasa</i>
<i>Ekāgra</i> (one-pointed)	<i>Satva</i>
<i>Niruddha</i> (controlled)	<i>Gunatita</i>

***Kṣhipta* (disturbed)**

It is the state of *Rajasa*, where the mind behaves according to this *Guna*. This is the state of normal human beings which is not suitable for spiritual practices of *Yoga* because the person may not be able to concentrate on one task for long, his mind jumps from one goal to another in an erratic manner. *Citta* indulges in desires which are connected with *Rāga* and due to this situation *Citta* is involved in worldly aspects rather than spiritual aspects (Arya and Rama 1986, p. 82).

***Mūḍha* (stupefied)**

In this situation, *Tamasa Guna* is in active form and the rest of the two *Guna* remain dormant. This state is also not suitable for *Yoga* practices because illusion and ignorance occurs and due to this people ignore the path of *Dharma* and are also not involved much in activity (right actions) due to lethargy and dullness of body (Bhavanani, 2006, 181).

***Vikṣipta* (distracted)**

In this situation, *Satva Guna* is partially in active form or remains dormant as it gets influenced by *Rajasa Guna* and *Tamasaa Guna*. This state is suitable for beginners of the path of *Yoga*. It is a mixed state where *Citta* is involved in good deeds (spiritual practices, serves society, serves humanity), but due to *Rajasa Guna* attachment to fruits dissipates the best results of good deeds (Bhavanani, 2006, p. 181).

***Ekāgra* (one-pointed)**

In this situation, *Satva* is in active form. This state is better for a practitioner of *Yoga*. Focus remains on the spiritual path, and the practitioner strives for knowledge and wisdom, and may even attain the state of *Samādhi*. If he gets the *Samādhi*, still influenced by any of the *Guna*, he may get the *Samprajñāta Samādhi* and *Vivekaja jñāna* (Bhavanani, 2006, p. 181).

***Niruddha* (controlled)**

In this state, there is no influence of any *Guna*. It is the best state for practitioners of *Yoga*. In this state liberation may occur, knowledge with wisdom finally achieved with the *Viveka Khyāti* and *Asamprajñāta Samādhi* (Bhavanani, 2006, p. 181).

Types of Yogic Practices

Yoga practices begin with *Yama* and *Niyama* and follow *Śaṭakarma*, *Āsana*, *Praṇāyāma*, *Mudrā-bandha*, *Pratyāhāra*, *Dhāraṇā-Dhyāna*, *Yoga Nidrā* and *Samādhi*. Where *Śaṭakarma* is part of *Haṭha Yoga* and other parts are common in *Rāja Yoga* and *Haṭha Yoga* texts.

Table 5: Yama and Niyama

Practice name	Sub parts
Yama	<i>Ahiṃsā, Satya, Asteya, Brahamacarya, Dhruti, Kṣamā, Dayā, Ārjava, Mitāhāra, and Śauca (Digambarji, et al. 1984, p. 52)</i>
Niyama	<i>Tapa, Santoṣa, Āstikātā, Dāna, Īśvara Pūjā, Siddhānta, Śravaṇa, Lajjā, Mati, Japa, and Vrata (Digambarji, et al. 1984, p. 55)</i>

These main principles are initially use for purification of mind are need to perform and adopt on the prior basis after that practitioner may become eligible to do other practices of *Haṭha Yoga* or *Rāja Yoga*.

Ṣaṭakarma

Ṣaṭakarma means cleansing or purification process. (Saraswati, 2004, p. 15) There are six *Ṣaṭakarma* through which people make their body clean, pure and free from diseases. (Saraswati, 2004, p. 18) *Ṣaṭakarma* also help to balance the three *Doṣa* (Saraswati, 2004, p. 23).

Table 6: Cleansing Practices

Name of texts	Name of practices
HaṭhaYogapradīpikā: there are six cleansing practices.	<i>Ṣaṭakarma: Dhauti, Basti, Neti, Trāṭaka, Naulika and Kapāla–Bhāti.</i>
Gheraṇḍasaṃhitā: there are six cleansing practices of <i>Ṣaṭakarma</i> but also has sub parts.	<i>Dhauti (Antardhauti, Dantdhauti, Hraddhauti, and Mūlaśodhana), Basti (Jalavasti, and Śuśkavasti), Neti, Nauli (Vāma, Dakṣiṇa, Madhyama, and Bhramara), Trāṭaka (Bahirtrāṭaka, Antartrāṭaka, and Adhotrāṭaka), and Kapāla–Bhāti (Vātakrama, Vyutkrama, and Śītakarma).</i>
Haṭharatnāvalī: there are eight cleansing practices.	<i>Aṣṭakarma: Cakri, Nauli, Dhauti, Neti, Basti, Gajakariṇī, Trāṭaka and Mastakabhrānti (Gharote et al., 2019, p. 13).</i>

Āsana

Āsana means to sit or seat. In general terms it is also considered as a woollen carpet (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 2) which is used for spiritual practices or worship. But in *Yoga* philosophy, *Āsana* means firm, comfortable and pleasant (Vivekananda, 2019, p. 93) state where practitioners rise above worldly phenomena like pleasure or pain, light and darkness, heat and cold and are not distracted from these dualities. (Vivekananda, 2019, p. 93)

Characteristics of *Āsana*

Text of *Haṭha Yoga* mentioned the characteristics of *Āsana* are steadiness, stay in own form, (Shastri, 2017, p. 4) bring physical health and mental lightness, (Muktibodhanada, 2018, p. 4) state where practitioner sit for a long time to meditate. (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 4)

Types of *Āsana*

Yoga Sūtra does not use any name and technique of any *Āsana* whereas *Āsana* is described in details in many ancient Yogic texts such as *Vyāsabhāṣya*, *Tatvavaiśārādī*, *Yogavaśiṣṭha*, *Yogapradīpa*, *Yogavārtikā*, *Gorakṣaśatakam*, *Gheraṇḍasaṃhitā*, *HaṭhaYogapradīpikā*, *Yogatatvoupniṣada*, *Haṭharatnāvalī*, *Siddh-Siddhāntapaddhati*, and *Śivasamhitā*.

Table 7: *Āsana*

Name of texts	Name of practices
<i>Vyāsabhāṣya</i> : there are eleven <i>Āsana</i> mentioned.	<i>Padmāsana</i> , <i>Vīrāsana</i> , <i>Bhadrāsana</i> , <i>Svastikāsana</i> , <i>Daṇḍāsana</i> , <i>Sopāśrayaṃ</i> , <i>Paryāṅkāsana</i> , <i>Krauñcaniṣādanāsana</i> , <i>Hastiniṣādanāsana</i> , <i>Uṣṭraniṣādanāsana</i> and <i>Sama Samasthānāsana</i> . (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 5-9)
<i>Tatvavaiśārādī</i> : there are twelve <i>Āsana</i> mentioned.	<i>Mayūrāsana</i> , <i>Padmāsana</i> , <i>Vīrāsana</i> , <i>Bhadrāsana</i> , <i>Svastikāsana</i> , <i>Daṇḍāsana</i> , <i>Sopāśrayaṃ</i> , <i>Paryāṅkāsana</i> , <i>Krauñcaniṣādanāsana</i> , <i>Hastiniṣādanāsana</i> , <i>Uṣṭraniṣādanāsana</i> and <i>Sama Samasthānāsana</i> . (Basavaraddi, 2013, 5-9)

<i>Vaśiṣṭhasaṁhitā</i> : there are ten <i>Āsana</i> mentioned.	<i>Svastikāṣana</i> , <i>Mayūrāṣana</i> , <i>Padmāṣana</i> , <i>Vīrāṣana</i> , <i>Bhadrāṣana</i> , <i>Kukkutāṣana</i> , <i>Gomukhāṣana</i> , <i>Kūrmāṣana</i> , <i>Simhāṣana</i> , and <i>Muktāṣana</i> . (Digambarji, et al. 1984, p. 59)
<i>Yogavārtikā</i> : there are four <i>Āsana</i> mentioned.	<i>Svastikāṣana</i> , <i>Mayūrāṣana</i> , <i>Padmāṣana</i> , <i>Vīrāṣana</i> , and <i>Bhadrāṣana</i> . (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 5-9)
<i>Gheraṇḍasaṁhitā</i> : there are thirty two <i>Āsana</i> mentioned.	<i>Siddhāṣana</i> , <i>Utkatāṣana</i> , <i>Sankatāṣana</i> , <i>Mayūrāṣana</i> , <i>Kukkutāṣana</i> , <i>Padmāṣana</i> , <i>Bhadrāṣana</i> , <i>Muktāṣana</i> , <i>Vajrāṣana</i> , <i>Kūrmāṣana</i> , <i>Uttānakūrmāṣana</i> , <i>Uttānamandūkāṣana</i> , <i>Vrkṣāṣana</i> , <i>Mandūkāṣana</i> , <i>Garudāṣana</i> , <i>Swastikāṣana</i> , <i>Simhāṣana</i> , <i>Gomukhāṣana</i> , <i>Vīrāṣana</i> , <i>Dhanurāṣana</i> , <i>Śavāṣana</i> , <i>Guptāṣana</i> , <i>Matsyāṣana</i> , <i>Matsyendrāṣana</i> , <i>Gorakṣāṣana</i> , <i>Paścimottānāṣana</i> , <i>Vrsabhāṣana</i> , <i>Śalabhāṣana</i> , <i>Makarāṣana</i> , <i>Uṣṭrāṣana</i> , <i>Bhujangāṣana</i> and <i>Yogāṣana</i> . (Saraswati, 2004, p. 125)
<i>HaṭhaYogapradīpikā</i> : there are fifteen <i>Āsana</i> mentioned.	<i>Swastikāṣana</i> , <i>Paścimottānāṣana</i> , <i>Gomukhāṣana</i> , <i>Mayūrāṣana</i> , <i>Śavāṣana</i> , <i>Vīrāṣana</i> , <i>Kūrmāṣana</i> , <i>Siddhāṣana</i> , <i>Kukkutāṣana</i> , <i>Uttānakūrmāṣana</i> , <i>Padmāṣana</i> , <i>Simhāṣana</i> , <i>Dhanurāṣana</i> , <i>Bhadrāṣana</i> and <i>Matsyendrāṣana</i> . (Muktibodhanada 2018, p. 10-27)
<i>Yogatatvopniṣada</i> : there are four <i>Āsana</i> mentioned.	<i>Siddhāṣana</i> , <i>Padmāṣana</i> , <i>Simhāṣana</i> , and <i>Bhadrāṣana</i> . (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 5-9)
<i>Haṭharatnāvalī</i> : there are thirty seven <i>Āsana</i> mentioned.	<i>Siddhāṣana</i> , <i>Markaṭāṣana</i> , <i>Matsyendrāṣana</i> , <i>Pārśvamatsyendrāṣana</i> , <i>Baddhamatsyendrāṣana</i> , <i>Nirālambanāṣana</i> , <i>Saurāṣana</i> , <i>Bhadrāṣana</i> , <i>Simhāṣana</i> , <i>Padmāṣana</i> , <i>Karasampuṭitapanakajam</i> , <i>Mayūrāṣana</i> , <i>Dandamayūrāṣana</i> , <i>Pārśvamayūrāṣana</i> , <i>Baddhakekīāṣana</i> , <i>Ekpādāṣana</i> , <i>Phaṇīdrāṣana</i> , <i>Paścimottānāṣana</i> , <i>Sayitapaścimottānāṣana</i> , <i>Vicitrakaraṇīāṣana</i> ,

	<i>Yoganidrāsana</i> , <i>Piṇḍmayūrāsana</i> , <i>Ekpādamayūrāsana</i> , <i>Bhairavāsana</i> , <i>Kāmadahanāsana</i> , <i>Vidhūnāsana</i> , <i>Pādapīthāsana</i> , <i>Kukkutāsana</i> , <i>Uttānakūrmāsana</i> , <i>Pānipātrāsana</i> , <i>Dhanurāsana</i> , <i>Gomukhāsana</i> , <i>Vrścikāsana</i> , <i>Śavāsana</i> , <i>Swastikāsana</i> , <i>Vīrāsana</i> and <i>Mandūkāsana</i> . (Gharote et al., 2019, p. 64-65)
Siddh-siddhāntapaddhati: there are three <i>Āsana</i> mentioned.	<i>Padmāsana</i> , <i>Svastikāsana</i> , and <i>Siddhāsana</i> . (Shastri, 2017, p. 41)
Śivasamhitā: In there are four <i>Āsana</i> mentioned.	<i>Siddhāsana</i> , <i>Padmāsana</i> , <i>Svastikāsana</i> , and <i>Ugrāsana</i> . (Maheshananda et al., 1999, p. 130)

Best *Āsana* for a Yogi

Siddhāsana and *Padmāsana* (Tiwari, 2010, p. 21).

Category of *Āsana* as per Physical Position

Ancient texts talk about the *Āsana* for spiritual path and show us how to learn from everything that exists in the Universe. Mainly, practices of *Āsana* are focused to attain the higher state of mind and finally attain the state of bliss and liberation. But in contemporary times before the practitioners go to the path of liberation they need to learn the initial practices of *Yoga* and prepare themselves physically and mentally for liberation. Still in today's world liberation is far away because lifestyle and sleep patterns have been demolished and people forgot the main purpose of this human body. So the saints of contemporary era explore the new way to classify the *Āsana* according to the physical body (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 11) and try to recall the hidden seeds of spirituality, among the people by the practices of *Yoga*. Mentioned here are the different types of *Āsana*:

Table 8: Types of *Āsana*

Name of category	Name of practice
Standing	<i>Tadāsana, Katicakrāsana, Hastottānāsana, Trikoṇāsana, Cakrāsana, Virāsana, Sankaṭāsana, Vr̥kṣāsana, Utkaṭāsana, Konāsana, and Garudāsana.</i>
Sitting	<i>Siddhāsana, Padmāsana, Bhadrāsana, Swastikāsana, Simhāsana, Vajrāsana, Muktāsana, Gomukhāsana, Matsyendrāsana, Vakraśana, Paścimottānāsana, Kūrmāsana, Guptāsana, Uttānamandūkāsana, Yogāsana, Suptavajrāsana, and Ustrāsana.</i>
Prone position	<i>Bhujangāsana, Makarāsana, Śhalabhāsana, and Dhanurāsana.</i>
Supine position	<i>Pawanamuktāsana, Cakrāsana, Uttānapādāsana, Matsyāsana, Halāsana, and Śavāsana.</i>
Topsy Turvy	<i>Mayūrāsana, Kukutāsana, Bakāsana, And Śīrṣāsana. Sarvāṅgāsana, Viparītkaraṇī, and Śīrṣāsana.</i>
Meditative	<i>Siddhāsana, Padmāsana, Svastikāsana, Muktāsana, and Vajrāsana.</i>
Relaxation	<i>Bālasana, Savāsana, Markatāsna and Yoga Nidra.</i>

Praṇāyāma

Praṇāyāma means expansion of *Prāṇā* (subtle life force). *Prāṇā* is responsible for every activity of body and mind because it provides energy to every organ of the body and mind. It is well known if body feels low and weak then *Prāṇā* in that body is draining.

Main characteristics of *Praṇāyāma*

There is one important fact associated with theory of *Prāṇā* that is mind is correlated with *Prāṇā*, if one control his *Prāṇā* then mind controls itself. If *Prāṇā* does not move then mind also become stead (Jha, 2017, p. 35). *Praṇāyāma* increase oxygen intake (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 17) and nourish blood cells, and rejuvenate the cells; it also helps to improve the assimilation the digested food (Jha, 2017, p. 44) regulate body weight, heart rate, nervous system etcetera (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 53).

Types of *Prāṇā*

There are five types of *Prāṇā* in the body named as *Prāṇa*, *Apāna*, *Samāna*, *Udāna* and *Vyāna* (Maheshananda et al., 1999, p. 98). *Prāṇā* lives in thoracic cavity of the body and is mainly related with the function of breathing and activities of cardiac organs; although it is principle *Prāṇā* of the body and if it vacates the body then the body is considered as a dead body. *Prāṇā* nourishes the body and mind. It is the base of all the other *Prāṇā*; that is why it is the principle *Prāṇā* of the body and there is always a need to expand it by the Yogic practices. *Apāna* is present in the lower abdomen of the body and it helps the body to remove morbid matter of the body like urine, stool and menstrual bleeding and it also helps during the delivery of the baby. *Samāna* is located around the navel region of the body and helps in the assimilation of the required elements. *Udāna* is present in the throat cavity of the body and it helps to express feelings through communication and speech. *Vyāna* is found all over the body because it helps to transport energy from all parts inside the body such as cell to cell and organ to organ.

Practices of *Prāṇa* Expansion

Praṇāyāma are the ancient practices developed by sages of India and found in many ancient texts. It is found in *Paurāṇic* Literature such as *Vāyu purāṇa* and *Kūrma purāṇa*, *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*, *Advaitavedānta*, *Hatha Yoga* texts, etcetera.

Table 9: *Prāṇāyama*

Name of texts	Name of practices
<i>Haṭhayogapradīpikā</i>: there are eight <i>Prāṇāyāma</i> with three steps of <i>Pūraka-Kumbhaka-Recaka</i> .	<i>Sahita</i> (<i>Sagarbha</i> and <i>Nigrabha</i>), <i>Sūryabhedhana</i> , <i>Ujjāyī</i> , <i>Śītkārī</i> , <i>Śītalī</i> , <i>Bhastrikā</i> , <i>Bhrāmarī</i> , <i>Mūrcchā</i> , and <i>Plāvinī</i> . (Jha, 2017, p. 54)
<i>Gheraṇḍasaṃhitā</i>: there are eight <i>Praṇāyāma</i> with three steps of <i>Pūraka-Kumbhaka-Recaka</i> .	<i>Sahita</i> (<i>Sagarbha</i> And <i>Nigarbha</i>), <i>Sūryabhedhana</i> , <i>Ujjāyī</i> , <i>Śītalī</i> , <i>Bhastrikā</i> , <i>Bhrāmarī</i> , <i>Mūrcchā</i> , and <i>Kevali</i> . (Saraswati, 2004, p. 306)
<i>Haṭharatnāvalī</i>: there are nine <i>Praṇāyāma</i> .	<i>Bhastrikā</i> , <i>Bhrāmarī</i> , <i>Sūryabhedhana</i> , <i>Ujjāyī</i> , <i>Śītalī</i> , <i>Śītkārī</i> , <i>Kevali</i> , <i>Mūrcchā</i> , and <i>Bhujāṅgakarāṇī</i> . (Gharote et al., 2019, p. 26)

Best *Praṇāyāma* for a Yogi

Plāvinī and *Kevali*.

***Praṇāyāma* according to season and physical condition**

In summer *Sītkārī* and *Śītalī* are suggested to practitioners. Exception: heart patient, patients with cold, cough, asthmatic condition, bronchial condition, tonsillitis, chronic constipation (**Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 48**) surgery, hernia and in winter season this *Praṇāyāma* is not suggested to be done. If done, it will increase the effect of the cold in the body.

In winter *Sūryabhedhana* and *Bhastrikā* are suggested to the practitioner. Exception: heart patient (high blood pressure), hyper acidity, menstrual phase, pregnancy, surgery, hernia and in summer season this *Praṇāyāma* is not suggested to be done. If done, then it will increase the heat effect in the body.

In all seasons *Bhrāmarī* and *Ujjāyī* are suggested to practitioners. It can be done by any one if there is any medical condition or heart disease or high blood pressure then do not apply *Bandha* with these practices. If there is an ear infection then do not practice *Bhrāmarī*.

For Yogi only (practice for spiritual path) *Kevali*, *Mūrcchā*, *Plāvinī* and *Bhujāṅgakaraṇī*.

Bandha-mudrā

Bandha

Bandha means lock and in *Yoga* it is considered as a psychic lock which help to raise the level of *Praṇā* and consciousness. There are three *Bandha*; *Jālandharabandha* (chin lock or throat lock) *Uddiyānabandha* (abdominal lock) and *Mūlabandha* (anal lock) (**Saraswati, 2004, p. 208-217**).

Mudrā means lock or seal. In *Yoga*, it means specific state of mind where it indicates the state of *Praṇā* and affect the *Prāṇamaya Kośa* and *Manomaya Kośa* (**Saraswati, 2004, p. 203**). There are many *Mudrā* explained in *Haṭha Yoga* texts.

Table 10: *Mudrā*

Name of texts	Name of practices
<i>HaṭhaYogapradīpikā</i> : there are ten <i>Mudrā</i> .	<i>Mahāmudrā, Mahābandha, Mahāvedha, Khecarī, Uḍḍiyāna, Mūlabandha, Jālandharabandha, Viparītakaraṇī, Vajrolī and Śakticālana. (Jha, 2017, p. 56)</i>
<i>Gheraṇḍasaṃhitā</i> : there are twenty five <i>Mudrā</i> .	<i>Mahāmudrā, Mahābandha, Mahāvedha, Khecarī, Uḍḍiyāna, Mūlabandha, Jālandharabandha, Viparītakaraṇī, Vajrolī, Śakticālana, Nabhomudrā, Yonimudrā, Tāḍāgī, Māṇḍukī, Śāmbhavī, Pārthivī, Āmbhasī Dhāraṇā, Āgneyī Dhāraṇā, Vāyavīya Dhāraṇā, Ākāśī Dhāraṇā, Aśvinī, Pāśinī, Kākī, Matāḍgī and Bhujandginī. (Saraswati, 2004, p. 205)</i>

Pratyāhāra

Pratyāhāra means withdrawal of senses. Senses are always involved in its subject and distract the mind from its aim. When a practitioner forcefully withdraws his sense from its subject and starts to understand that there is only one soul around all of us and sees everyone as a one soul then practitioner reaches to the state of *Pratyāhāra* (Digambarji, et al. 1984, p. 95).

Pratyāhāra helps to demolish mental defilement (Gorakhnath, 2013, p. 56). One practice related with *Pratyāhāra* is *Ajapājapa*. (Saraswati, 2004, p. 156)

Yoga Nidra

Yoga Nidra is not mentioned in ancient texts but it is developed by one esteemed *Yoga* school, Bihar school of *Yoga*, Munger. In present time most of the *Yoga* practitioners use this technique to reach the state of unconsciousness and try to heal their psychic *Prāna* and relax their body deeply. Basically *Yoga Nidra* is a practice for deep relaxation. It is a systematic method which takes a practitioner to the state of dynamic sleep. (Saraswati, 2016) It helps the practitioner to relax himself physically, emotionally and mentally. This is not like an ordinary sleep where dream and suppressed emotion appear rather than it is

a practice of awakened sleep where practitioner gets all the benefits of sound sleep which helps them reap maximum benefit in minimum time.

Dhāraṇā-Dhyāna

When mind started to focus on one point but still the concentration is distracted by other objects and practitioner again and again train the mind to stay at one point then it is known as *Dhāraṇā* and after the perfection in *Dhāraṇā* when mind stops to get distracted by other objects and outer world and continue practice for a long time then it is considered as *Dhāraṇā* gets mature and it switches to *Dhyāna*. The moment a practitioner learns to concentrate properly, he enters the beginning stage of *Dhyāna*.

Dhāraṇā is holding the mind on one object (Vivekananda, 2019, p. 98) whereas *Dhyāna* is unbroken concentration on that object (Vivekananda, 2019, p. 98).

Samādhi

Samādhi is the final state of *Dhyāna*. When a practitioner starts *Dhāraṇā* on one object and after maturation of *Dhāraṇā* practitioner reach the state of *Dhyāna* and when *Dhyāna* reaches its full maturity, it converts into the state of *Samādhi*. In meditation when all forms are given up it is known as *Samādhi*. (Vivekananda, 2019, p. 99)

Other Yogic Practices

Apart from above practices there are some other practices of *Yoga* that are also available for common people. Like *Kriyā Yoga* (Vivekananda, 2019, 54) which includes *Tapa-Svadhyāya-Īśvarapraṇidhāna*, *Bhakti Yoga*, *Mantra Yoga*, *Laya Yoga*, *Gyān Yoga* and *Tantra Yoga*. Practitioners may choose any path to rediscover their inner self and reach a higher state of consciousness.

Yoga and its Practices Related to Śārīra and Kośa

Yoga and its practices related to *Sthūla Śārīra* which consists of *Annamaya Kośa* should be started from *Yama* and *Niyama* and continued till *Ṣaṭakarma*, and *Āsana*. *Sūkṣma Śārīra* consists of *Prāṇamaya Kośa* whose practices are *Praṇāyāma*; and, *Manomaya Kośa* and *Vijñānamaya Kośa* whose practices are *Mudrā-Bandha*, *Pratyāhāra*, and *Yoga Nidrā*. *Yoga* and its practices related to *Kāraṇa Śārīra* which includes *Ānandamaya Kośa* are *Dhāraṇā-Dhyāna* and *Samādhi*.

5.2 Role of Yogic Practices for GMP

This research work is dedicated to exploring yogic practices for menstruation related basic problems which affect the body and hormone system. Some basic practices that women should learn before the start of the menstrual phase. Here is the need to give some time for Yogic practices and maintain a routine of healthy lifestyle. Here is a list of some basic Yogic practices which can be practiced during the menstrual phase.

Yogic Practices during the Menstrual Phase

Yogic practices are available for everyone and for every type of practitioner. Similarly Yogic practices can be done for menstruation related general problems. To reduce those problems women need to know what kind of practices will support her and what kind of practices will harm her during the menstrual phase. So here are some sets of practices given below to perform before-after menstrual phase and some practices to be performed during menstrual phase.

Types of Yogic practices during the Menstrual Phase

If a woman is living a sedentary lifestyle, or not much working physically and started her practices by simple micro practices with *Yoga nidrā* then it becomes easy to do practices in the menstrual phase also because at that time the body needs some micro practices to relieve some muscular stress and pain.

Whereas women living under those circumstances where they do physical hard work then they may do *Yoga* practices on a daily basis. Still there is some precaution to always keep in mind that she has not performed inverted postures (avoid those postures which give extra pressure on the abdomen region), *Bandha*, and *Kumbhaka* (Saraswati, 2013, p. 224).

Practices which women can perform during the menstrual phase are as follows:

Table 11: Yoga Practices for Menstrual Phase

Practice's Type	Name of practices
Micro practices	<i>Uccārana-sthala tathā Viśuddha-cakra-śuddhi</i> (clearing the Pharynx), <i>Prārthanā</i> (prayer), <i>Buddhi-tathā-dhṛti-śakti-vikāsaka</i> (Developing the Mind and Will-power), <i>smaraṇa-śakti-vikāsaka</i> (developing the memory), <i>Medhā-śakti-vikāsaka</i> (developing the

	intellect), <i>Netra-śakti-vikāsaka</i> (improving the eye-sight), <i>Kapola-śakti-varḍhaka</i> (rejuvenating the cheeks), <i>Karṇa-śakti-varḍhaka</i> (improving the power of hearing) <i>Grīvā-śakti-vikāsaka</i> (strengthening the neck), <i>Grivā-śakti-vikāsaka</i> (strengthening the neck), <i>Skandha tatha Bahu-mūla-śakti-vikāsaka</i> (developing the strength of the shoulder-blades and joints), <i>Bhuja-bandha-śakti-vikāsaka</i> (strengthening the upper arms), <i>Kaphoṇi-śakti- vikāsaka</i> (strengthening the Elbow), <i>Bhuja-balli-śakti-vikāsaka</i> (strengthening the Fore-arms), <i>Pūrṇa-bhuja-śakti-vikāsaka</i> (developing the arms), <i>Maṇi-bandha-śakti-vikāsaka</i> (developing the Wrists), <i>Kara-prṣṭha-śakti-vikāsaka</i> (Developing the back of the Hand) <i>Kara-tala-śakti- vikāsaka</i> (Developing the Palms), <i>Anguli-mūla-śakti-vikāsaka</i> (Developing the Finger-joints), and <i>Anguli-śakti-vikāsaka</i> (Strengthening the Fingers). (Brhamchari, 1988, p. 1-32) <i>Prarambhik sthiti</i> (base position), <i>Padanguli naman</i> (toe bending), <i>Gulpha naman</i> (ankle bending), <i>Gulpha chakra</i> (ankle rotation), <i>Gulpha ghūrṇana</i> (ankle crank), <i>Mushtika bandhana</i> (hand clenching), <i>Manibandha naman</i> (wrist bending), <i>Manibandha chakra</i> (wrist joint rotation), <i>Kehuni naman</i> (elbow bending), <i>Kehuni chakra</i> (elbow rotation), and <i>Skandha chakra</i> (shoulder socket rotation). (Saraswati, 2009, p. 25-41)
<i>Āsana</i>	<i>Vajrāsana</i> , <i>Śaśāṃkāsana</i> , <i>Mārjārī Āsana</i> , <i>Vyāghrāsana</i> , and <i>Śvāsana</i> (Saraswati, 2013, p. 222) can be performed during the menstrual phase
<i>Praṇāyāma</i>	<i>Bhrāmarī</i> (Saraswati, 2013, p. 223) (without <i>Kumbhaka</i>).
<i>Mudrā-Bandha</i>	<i>Mūlabandha</i> (Muktanand, 2014, p. 37) when pain, bleeding and flow is not in normal condition then immediately stop the practice without any delay and it should also keep in mind not to pressurise genital organs and apply it just a simple and light pressure to relieve the stress.
<i>Pratyāhāra</i>	<i>Antarmauna</i> to balance the mental and emotional state of the body. (Muktanand, 2014, p. 37)

<i>Yoga Nidrā</i>	It helps women to understand the self and take advantage to glorify herself on the spiritual path because a woman's unconscious mind can be awakened by these practices during her menstrual phase. (Saraswati, 2013, p. 224)
<i>Dhāraṇā-Dhyāna</i>	<i>Ajapājapa</i> (Saraswati, 2013, p. 224) , and all meditation practices which are learned under the guidance of a guru can be performed during the menstrual phase.
Others	Keep <i>Maun</i> (Acharya, 2015, p. 25-27) and do relaxation, <i>Svādhyāya</i> , read spiritual books, read self, <i>mantra</i> chanting, (Saraswati, 2013, p. 224) <i>Īśvara Praṇidhāna</i> , try to maintain <i>Yama</i> and <i>Niyama</i> and most important avoid unnecessary physical and mental work avoid hard practices (Acharya, 2015, p. 25-27) of <i>Haṭha Yoga</i> .

5.3 Suggested Yoga Protocol for GMP

These practices can be done before or after the menstrual phase and it also helps to do practices during the menstrual phase. When a woman performs *Yogic* practices on a daily basis then she becomes aware about the postures and breathing process and simultaneously develops the knowledge about do's and don'ts related to the menstruation cycle. She would become able to do simple practices and understand the worth of her body and mind. Here are some practices that may provide women perfect health and try to reduce her General Menstrual Problems (GMP). The list of practices is given below:

Table 12: *Yoga* Protocol

Type of practices	Name of practices
<i>Śaṭakarma</i>	<i>Kapālabhāti</i> thirty strokes three rounds for one week then fifty strokes three rounds for the first second week and after that fifty strokes six rounds. Three rounds of <i>Agnisāra</i> as per capacity. During the menstrual phase, these practices are to be strictly avoided.
<i>Āsana</i>	Standing (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 11-12)

	<i>Tāḍāsana</i> first week three time three breaths, second week five breaths after that hold till capacity. <i>Kaṭi cakrāsana</i> first week eight rounds, second week three rounds and hold three breaths, after that hold ten-ten breaths both sides, this process should be done twice. During the menstrual phase these practices can be performed but gently and with precaution and enough break should be taken for rest. Sitting (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 11-12) <i>Vajrāsana</i>, <i>Maṇḍukāsana</i>, <i>Uṣṭrāsana</i>, <i>Śaśāṁkāsana</i>, and <i>Vakrāsana</i> should perform three times and for first week and hold each <i>Āsana</i> for three breaths, second week hold five breaths and after that try to hold each <i>Āsana</i> for long and increase holding capacity. During menstrual phase <i>Maṇḍukāsana</i>, and <i>Uṣṭrāsana</i> should be avoided. Prone position (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 11-12) <i>Makarāsana</i> and <i>dhanurāsana</i> should perform three times and for the first week hold each <i>Āsana</i> for three breaths, second week hold five breaths and after that try to hold each <i>Āsana</i> for a long and increase holding capacity. During the menstrual phase <i>Makarāsana</i> and <i>Dhanurāsana</i> should be avoided. Supine position (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 11-12) <i>Setubandhāsana</i>, <i>Pavanmuktāsana</i>, <i>Uttānapādāsana</i> and <i>Ardhalāsana</i> should perform three times and for first week hold each <i>Āsana</i> for three breaths, second week hold five breaths and after that try to hold each <i>Āsana</i> for long and increase the holding capacity. During the menstrual phase avoid these practices. Balancing <i>Vṛkṣāsana</i> (Basavaraddi, 2013, p. 11-12) always try to hold long. Avoid during the menstrual phase.
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	Meditative <i>Vajrāsana</i> and <i>Padmāsana</i> and <i>Yogāsana</i> (Basavaraddi, 2013, 11-12) try to increase the holding capacity for breathing practices and meditation.
<i>Praṇāyāma</i>	<i>Nāḍi Śodhana</i> (Saraswati, 2013, p. 223) first month inhale and exhale with alternate nostril after that add one is to two ratio in inhale and exhale (count while inhale and during exhalation keep speed slow and take twice time of during exhalation), next third month add <i>Bandha</i> with same practices and continue it for 6 months and more. During the first week five times <i>Bhrāmari</i>, (Saraswati, 2013, p. 223) after that seven to ten times should be practiced. During the menstrual phase, practices of <i>Bandha</i> should be avoided.
<i>Mudrā-Bandha</i>	<i>Yoga Mudrā</i> (Saraswati, 2013, p. 223) first week thirty seconds to one minute hold (hold in <i>Vajrāsana</i> and if needed take support of pillow), second week five minutes (partially in <i>Vajrāsana</i> and partially in <i>Padmāsana</i>), after that ten minutes hold (in any <i>āsana</i>). <i>Uḍḍiyāna Bandha</i> (Iyenger, 1995, p. 502) should practice for five times according to capacity. First and second week one should practice <i>Aśvinī Mudrā</i> (Saraswati, 2013, p. 223) and after that <i>Mūlabandha</i> (Saraswati, 2013, p. 223) should start and it continues five times according to holding capacity. During the menstrual phase these practices are to be avoided.
<i>Pratyāhāra and Dhāraṇā-Dhyāna</i>	Practitioners should stay in <i>Yogāsana</i> and try to see their breath for at least five minutes and after that <i>Auma</i> chanting or <i>Makāra</i> chanting for five minutes daily. (for beginner)
<i>Yoga nidrā</i> (Saraswati, 2013, p. 224)	Twenty minutes once a week.
Relaxation (Saraswati, 2013, p. 224)	Rest in <i>Śvāsana</i> at least for five minutes.

5.4 Role of Yogic Practices in Myths related to Menstruation Ethics

Menstruation ethics are those activities which women are advised to do or not to do during the menstrual phase. It includes the isolation, to not touch the things related to worship or God/Goddess, to not enter into the kitchen, to not cook, to not involve in household work, speak less, not laugh, to not apply accessories on the body, to not use the eye makeup, and not advised to take bath and so on.

***Prakṛti* and its Relation with Menstrual Phase**

Philosophy of *Sāṃkhya* explains the concept of *Puruṣa-Prakṛti* (nature and pure consciousness) (Acharya, 2000, p. 9). Where *Prakṛti* has twenty four elements and includes *Mūla Prakṛti* (balance state of *Satva-Raja-Tama*), mind, ego, five subtle elements (hear, touch, sight, taste and smell), five elements (space, air, fire, water, and earth), five sense organ (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin.), five action organ (mouth, hand, feet, excretion, and reproduction) and *Puruṣa* is alone the pure element of philosophy of *Sāṃkhya* (Acharya, 2000. P. 10).

Nature gave birth to this world and the world survives in the protection shield of nature. Each and every thing of the universe is made by nature, related with nature and affected by nature. Similarly the process of menstrual phase also has a connection with nature which can be seen in the cycle of the moon which completes in twenty eight days (Saraswati, 2013, p. 220). Similarly the menstrual phase in healthy women occurs every twenty eight days after the last cycle begins (the time gap between two cycles is twenty eight days).

Menstrual phase is a process related with nature where awareness, sensitivity and intuition arise (Saraswati, 2013, p. 220) and women should listen to her inner nature during these days and try to analyse herself because this is the time to take steps towards nature and rediscover the inner self. This body is just a small part of nature and one day nature will take it back. Before the process of degradation of body take place women need to understand the reality behind the menstruation ethics and utilise it at their best but it is possible in that condition only when women explore the reasons of these ethics and remove the barriers of the myths related to menstruation phase and accept the reality behind the menstruation ethics.

Yoga and Menstrual phase

Yoga believes in purification of mind and considers the body as a tool to purify the mind. Further *Yoga* practices are developed to reach the unconscious state of mind and explore the truth of life. Here, mind affected by the nature and disturb by the ups and downs in the three main elements *Satva-Raja-Tama* of nature. It is already briefly mentioned above that there are five states of consciousness. Which is affected by three elements of nature. The best states of consciousness are *Ekāgra* and *Niruddha* which are suitable for the path of *Yoga* and rest states of mind which need strict hard work for purification of mind. Like *Yoga* menstrual cycle also has a purification process which is well known as menstrual phase.

Similarities between Menstrual Ethics and Yogic Ethics

In ancient period, during menstrual phase women were asked to stay with nature and drop all worldly tasks for a while (generally three-seven days), along with advice to avoid accessories, make up, jewellery, heavy cloths, heavy-spicy food, and try to live a life as simple as possible (**Sridhar, 2019**). Women were also advised to stop to looking for people and not to indulge in worldly activities like talking, mingling, cooking and/or home related tasks. All these facts are related with menstrual phase and if people try to go inside these factors these things were also advised to a *Sanyāsī* that, surrender your jewellery, money, worldly objects, eat the food which you received from others in the form of *Bhikṣā* and live simple life on the path of *Yoga*. These are the similarities between a *Yoga* practitioner's ethics and menstruating woman's menstrual ethics. In texts of *Haṭha Yoga* it is also mentioned about the Hut for the practices of *Yoga* where practitioner need to follow such rules and it includes that the hut should be in length of half meters, free from hazards rocks, and also free from hazards of fire and water as well. Hut neither be too much far nor very close to the kingdom (**Muktibodhanada, 2018**). The door of the hut should be small and free from hole of mouse and snake, floor should be plain and free from slopes, and floor moped with cow dung. Hut should be kept clean and free from insects, there should be water arrangements near the hut or hut should not be far from pond or well. Four sides of the hut should cover with walls and the practitioner should live alone here for their practices (**Jha, 2017**). Further it is explained in the text that there are some more things to avoid for the practitioner, these include the following: avoid

heavy excess food, excess physical work, excess speech, and excess contact with people, excessive rules and regulations, and fickleness of mind (**Jha, 2017**).

Concept of *Śauca* is part of *Yoga*. Which clearly explained that purification includes both body and mind by the practices of internal and external limbs of *Yoga*. During the menstrual phase people used the word *Aśauca* for menstruating women. *Aśauca* means impure. By the law of nature, the body naturally emits the morbid matter from the body and makes it every month during reproductive age. Then this process works as a cleansing process of nature within the woman's body. This is a need of time to consider it as an important process and understand the depth of these words because purification is not just cleaning the outer body simultaneously it is necessary to clean the inner self as well.

Role of *Yoga* in Menstrual phase

When these two facts are seen together it opens a new scenario which shows that these two similarities are enough to see the correlation between the *Yoga* and menstrual phase. After studying these facts with each other it has become easy to understand why ancient people advised women to understand their mind and state of consciousness during her menstrual phase in the form of menstruation ethics and live in self-isolation and utilise this time for internal purification practices of *Yoga*.

Effect of Yogic Practices on Myths related to Menstruation Ethics

Yogic practices help the practitioner to reach the mind and read its behaviour and sit for a long time in isolation. When women start to read her mind and reach a higher state of consciousness, then she would be able to understand that menstruation is part of her life cycle. She is part of nature and is getting more pure during the menstrual phase. Objects of the physical world are not permanent so her impurity is also impermanent.

The first thing women may get is the rule of impermanence after the practices of *Yoga*, others she may get is her sensitivity, intuition, awareness which may increase during the menstrual phase. Inner peace and patience may increase and the most important thing is that she is not impure by her mind and thoughts not even by body if she takes care of herself with awareness.

Yoga teaches a woman that she has worth. Her body, soul and mind also needs rest in the form of menstruation ethics and she starts to respect her dignity with her body.

5.5 Summary

In this chapter it was tried to find out what the best practices of *Yoga* related to menstruation are and how it affects the life of women. Positive and negative facts both appear in the form of myths but both have their own existence in this era. In the present time it is needed to rectify the negative impact of myths by the help of Yogic Practices.

In the next chapter, Results are discussed.

Chapter 6

Results and Discussion

6.1. Result

6.2. Discussion

6.3. Summary

Chapter 6

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

6.1 Result

To find out the status of General Menstrual Problems (GMP), a set of 22 questions were asked to 30 participants (women with age ranging from 18 to 45 years). They were participated in the study voluntarily. The same questions were also asked to answer on their personal experience when they practiced *Yoga Āsana* for 45 days. Following is the graphical representation of those questions which were answered by women before and after the intervention:

Do you experience pain in lower abdomen?

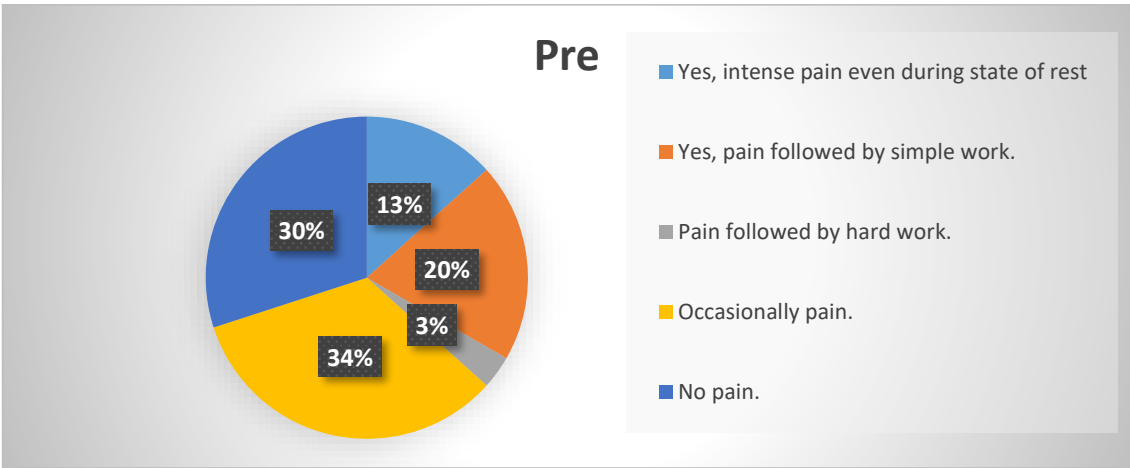


Figure 1: Pain in Lower Abdomen Pre score

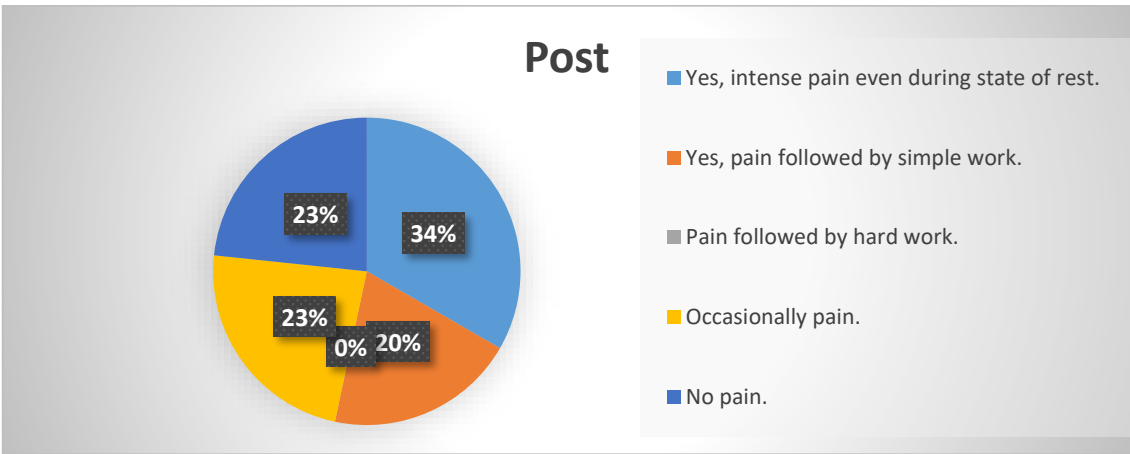


Figure 2: Pain in Lower Abdomen Post Score

Compared to pre data, the post data shows that there is less effect of Yogic Intervention in pain in Lower Abdomen. But there is reduction in post data at the level Pain followed by hard work which means Yogic practices increase the stamina of the Lower Abdomen and provide strength to the body.

Do you have pain in the back?

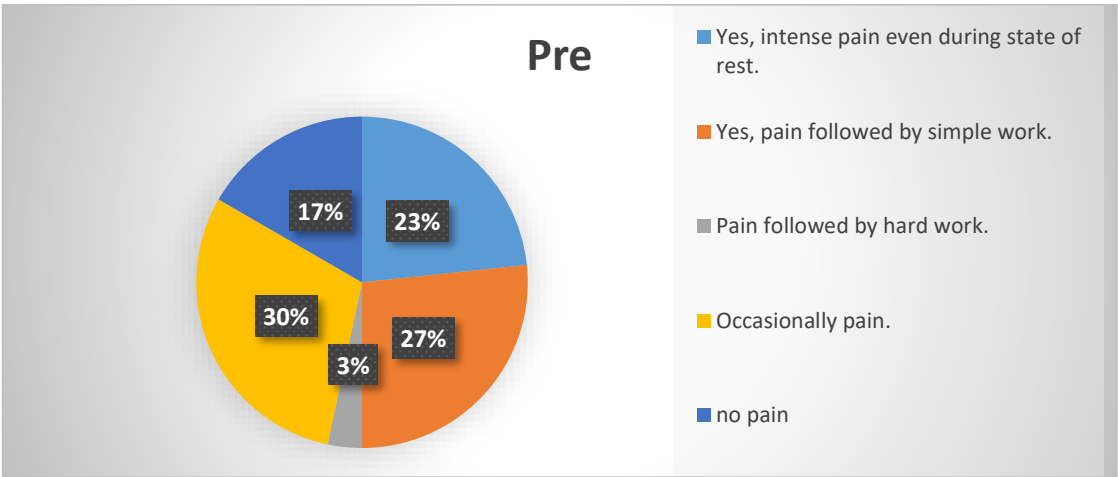


Figure 3: Pain in Back Pre Score

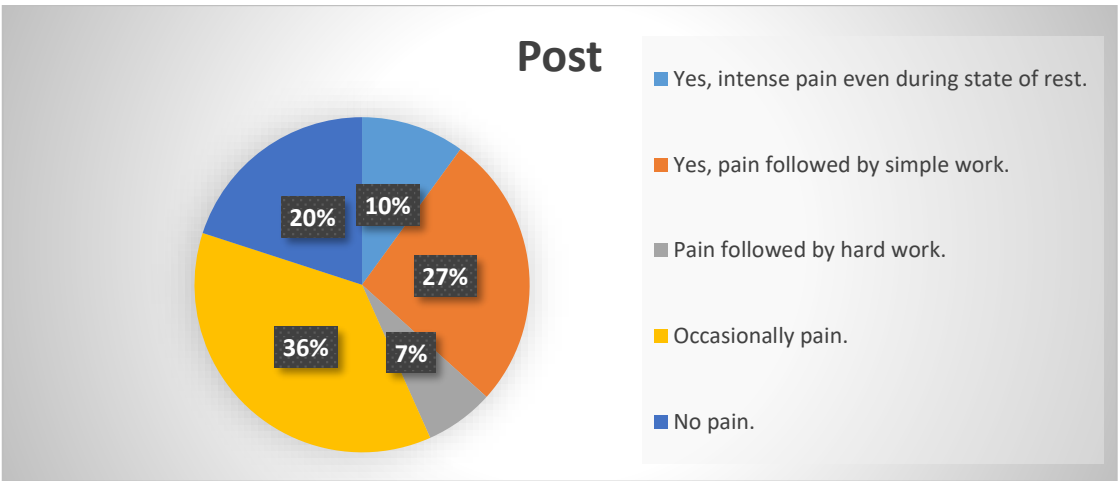


Figure 4: Pain in Back Post Test Score

After seeing the post data it was found that there is reduction in pain at all levels of pain and Yogic intervention provides a positive effect on back pain.

Do you have pain in the hands-legs?

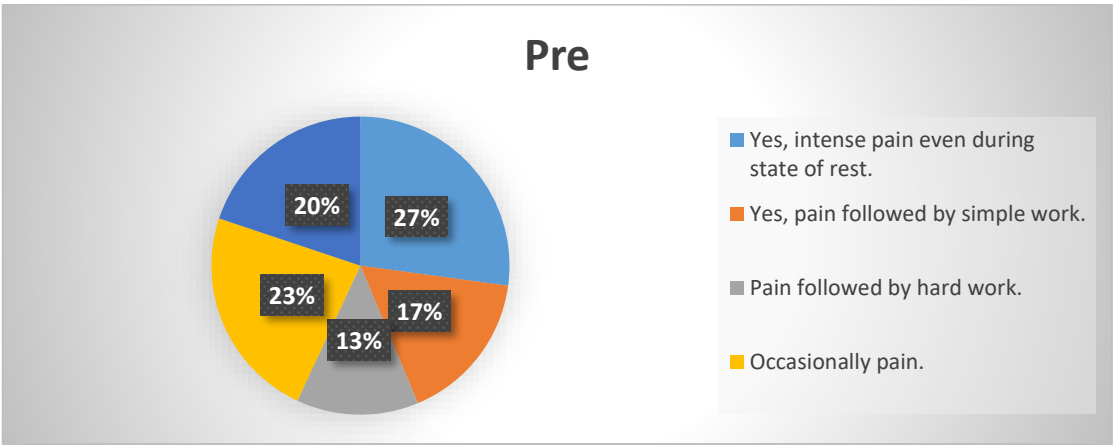


Figure 5: Pain In Hands-legs Pre Score

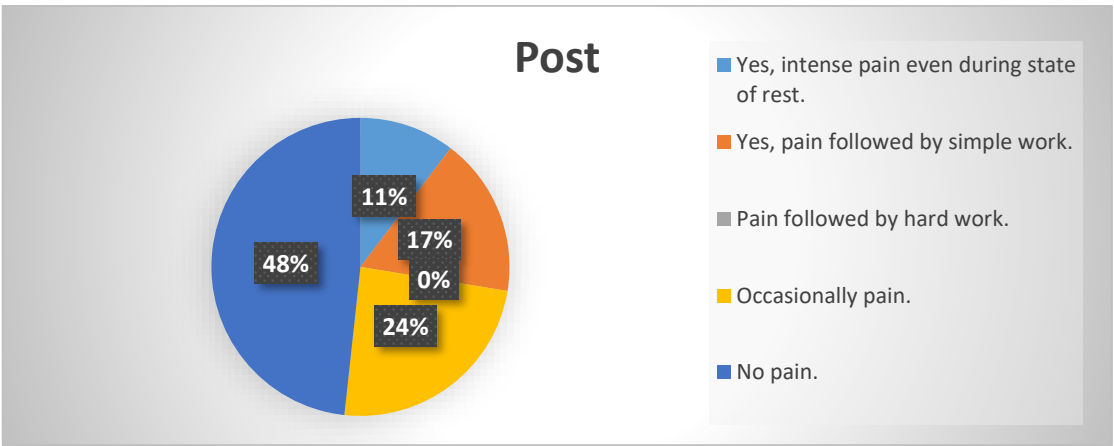


Figure 6: Pain In Hands-legs Post Score

After the Yogic intervention it appears in the result that the pain in legs and hands reduces at all levels of pain, before the Yogic Intervention it was found in 27 percent of participants and after the Intervention Provide it was found that only in 11 percent of participants face the problem of pain in Hands-Legs. After Post records it was also found that 48 percent participants felt no pain whether at the beginning it was just about 20 percent participants that had no pain.

Do you have problem of loss of Appetite during menstruation?

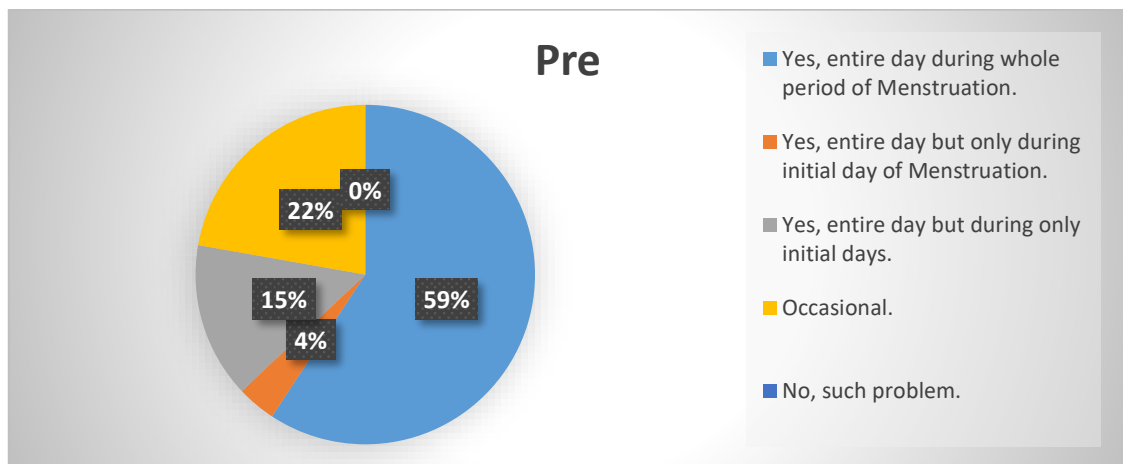


Figure 7: Loss of Appetite Pre Score

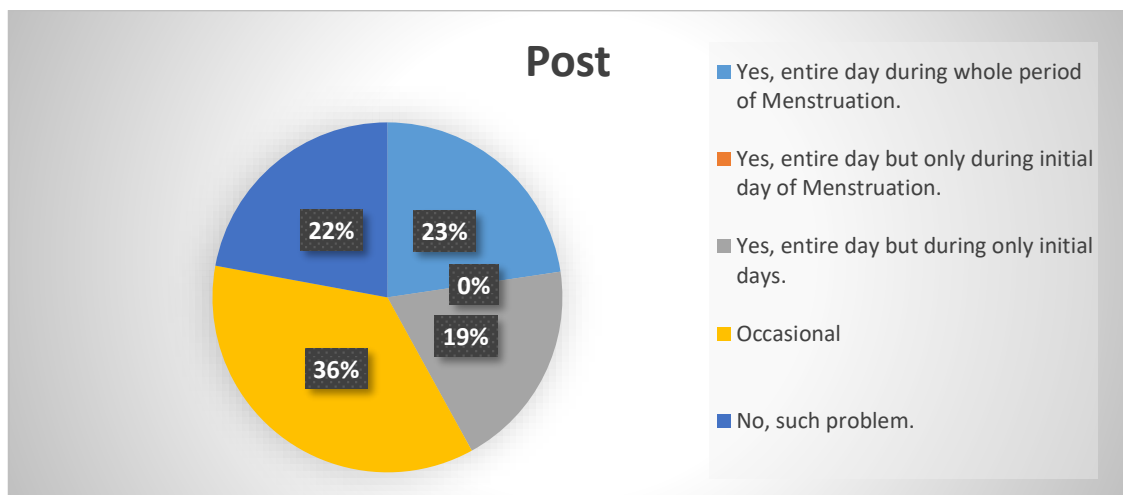


Figure 8: Loss of Appetite Post Score

There is not much effect shown after the Yogic intervention.

Do you have a problem of nausea?

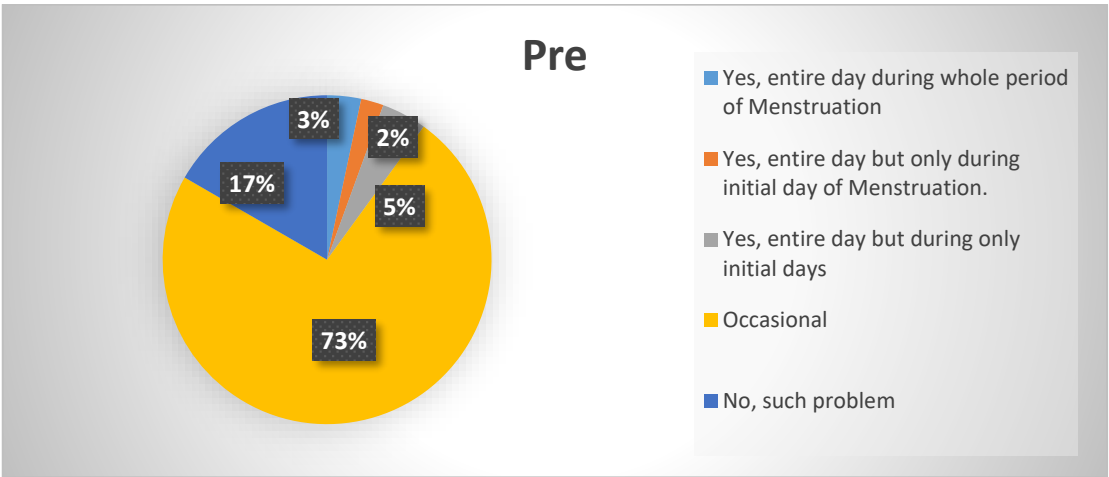


Figure 9: Problem of Nausea Pre Score

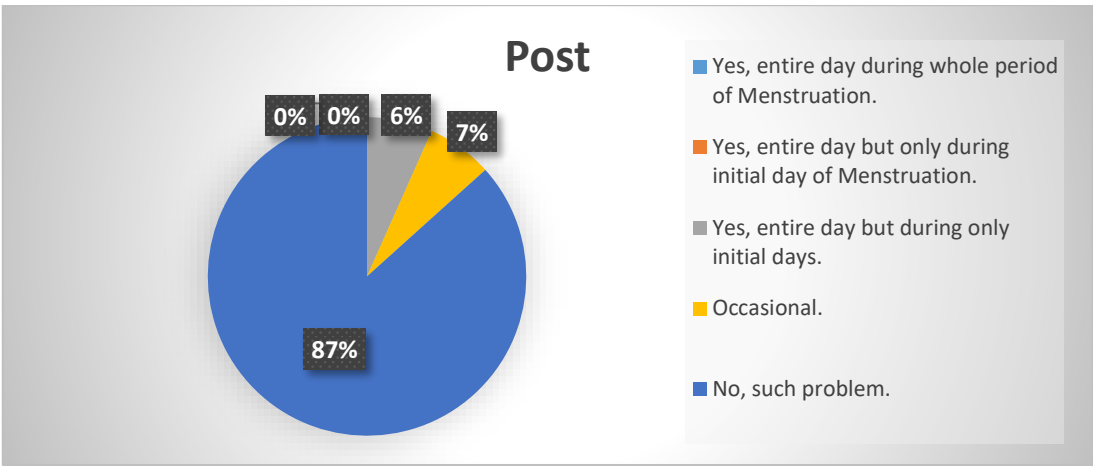


Figure 10: Problem of Nausea Post Score

The pre-data of Nausea represents that 73 percent participants occasionally feel it but after the Yogic Intervention 87 percent participants answered that they had no such feeling. Which means the intervention has a positive effect.

Do you feel vomiting sensation?

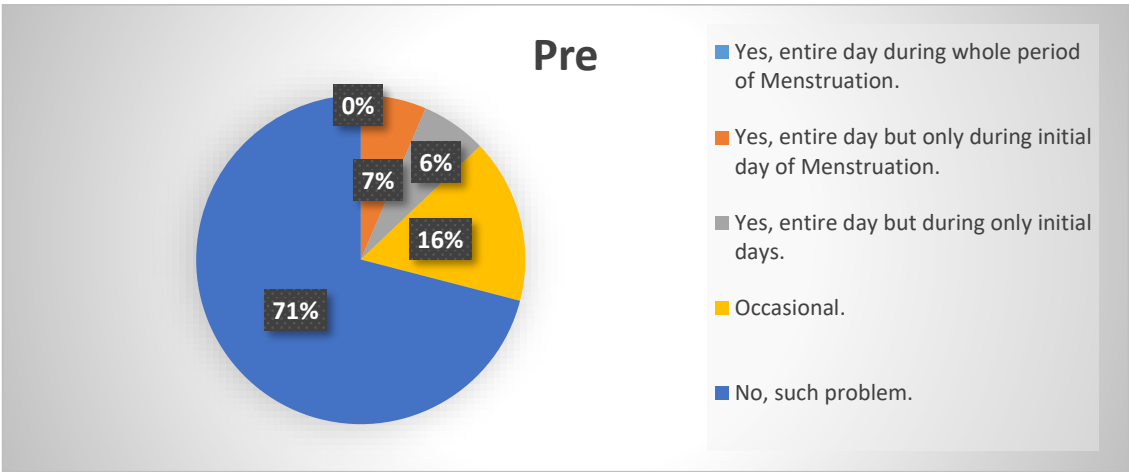


Figure 11: Vomiting Sensation Pre Score

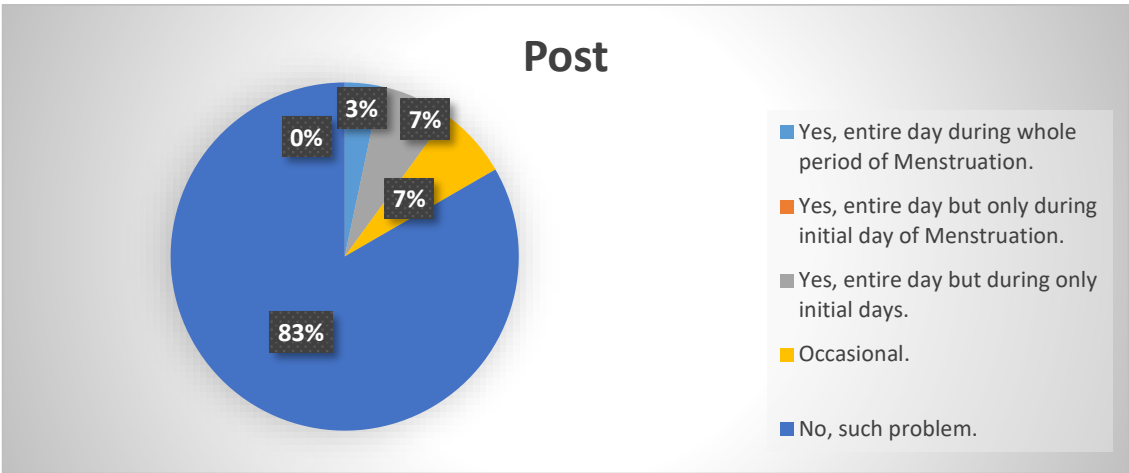


Figure 12: Vomiting Sensation Post Score

The pre data of Vomiting Sensation showed that 71 percent participants had no such problem but after the study of post data it was found that it increased the percentage to 83 percent. Positive effects show in the results.

Do you have a problem of constipation?

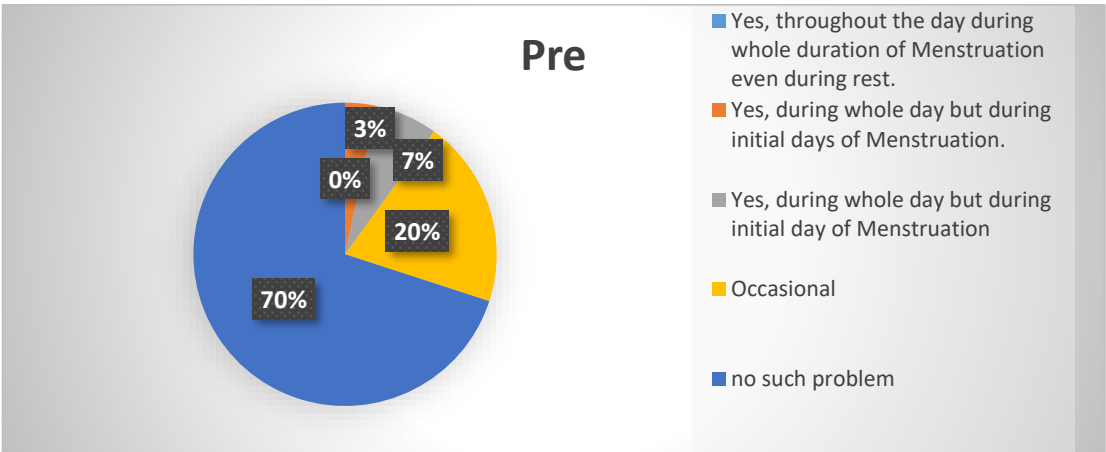


Figure 13: Problem of Constipation Pre Score

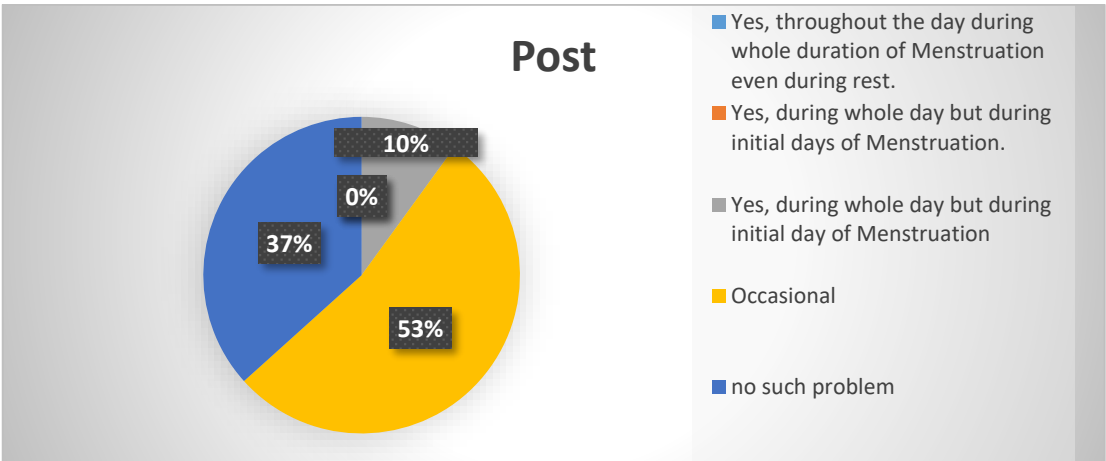


Figure 14: Problem of Constipation Post Score

Initially only 20 Percent of participants said they occasionally suffer from Constipation during menstruation after the Intervention this percentage increased 20 percent to 56 percent. Which resulted in the practices of *Yoga* reducing the problem.

Do you have problem of diarrhoea?

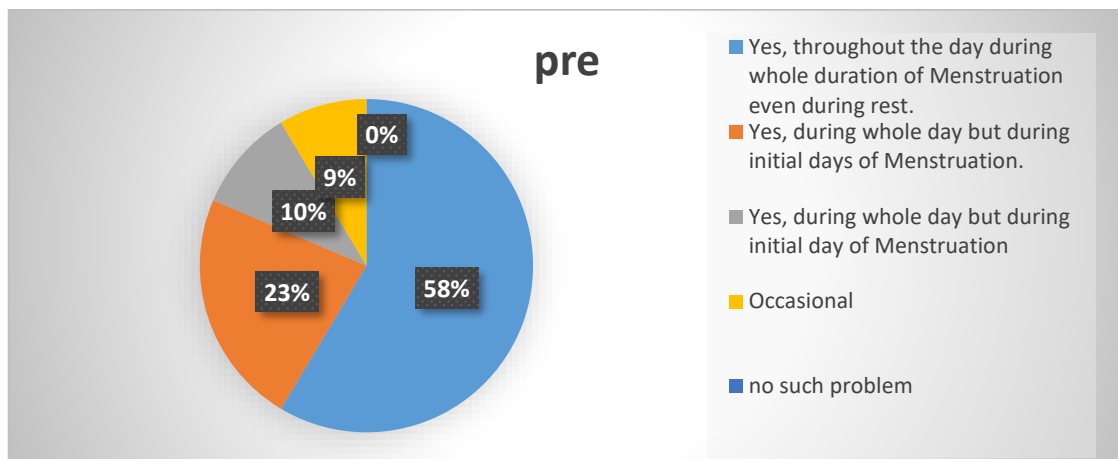


Figure 15: Problem of Diarrhoea Pre Score

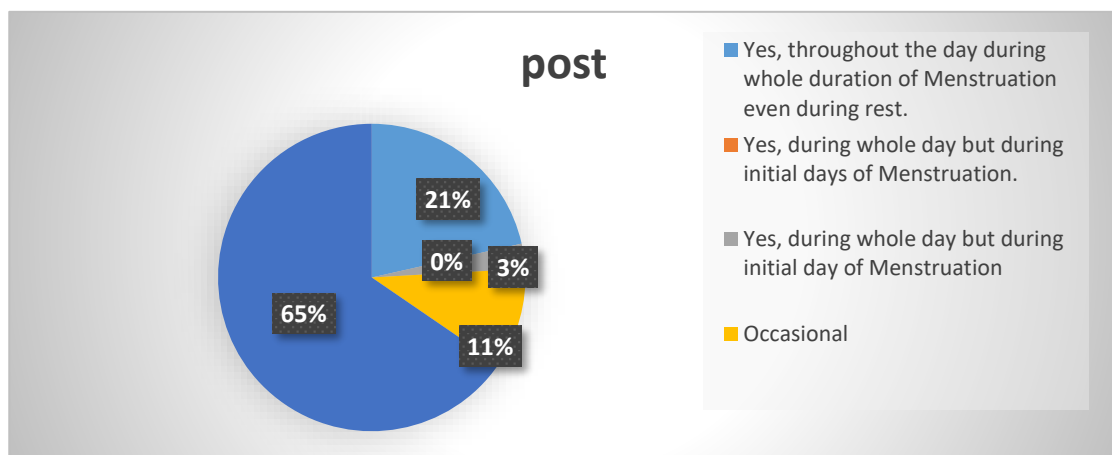


Figure 16: Problem of Diarrhoea Post data

Problem of Diarrhoea was found in 23 percent of participants and they said the initial day they face this problem but in post data it was found that it became zero percent and none of them felt this problem during their menstruation. Effect of Yogic practices is shown in the result.

Do you have a problem of headache?

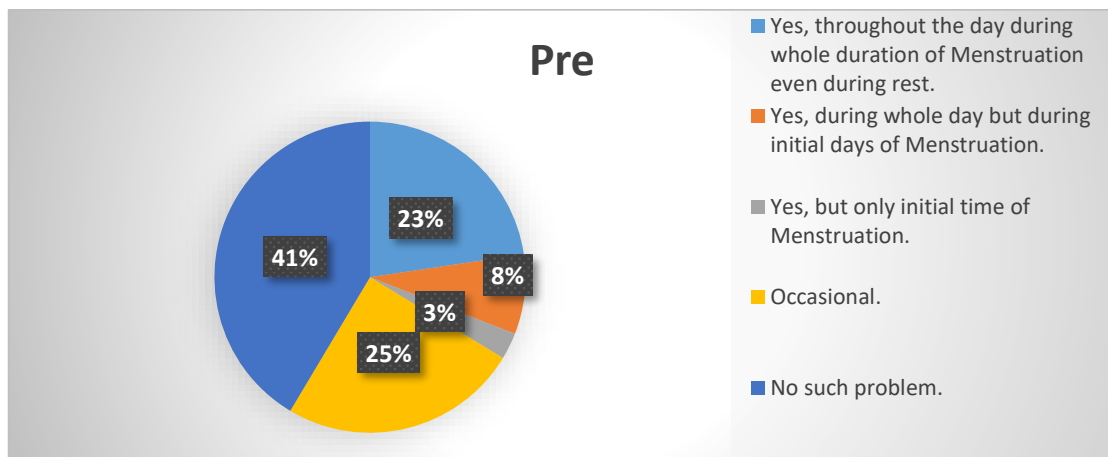


Figure 17: Problem of Headache Pre Score

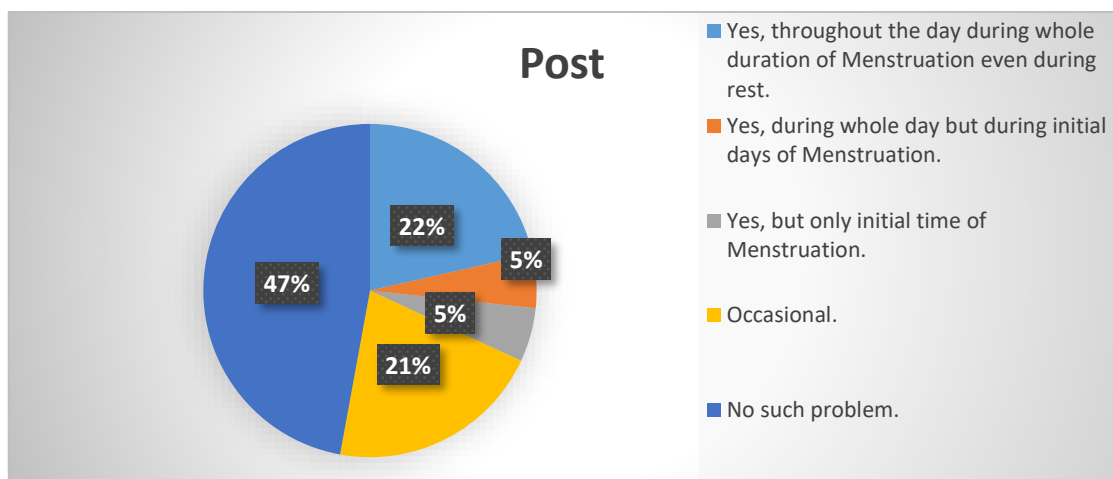


Figure 18: Problem of Headache Post Score

In pre data it appeared that 41 percent people did not suffer from headache during menstruation after post data record it was found that the percentage increased to 6 percent and 47 percent people did not suffer from headache. Although it was also found the practices of *Yoga* did not have much effect on the headache but it may be possible that if participants practice more months then they may get the positive result in this problem also.

Do you have problem of muscles spasm?

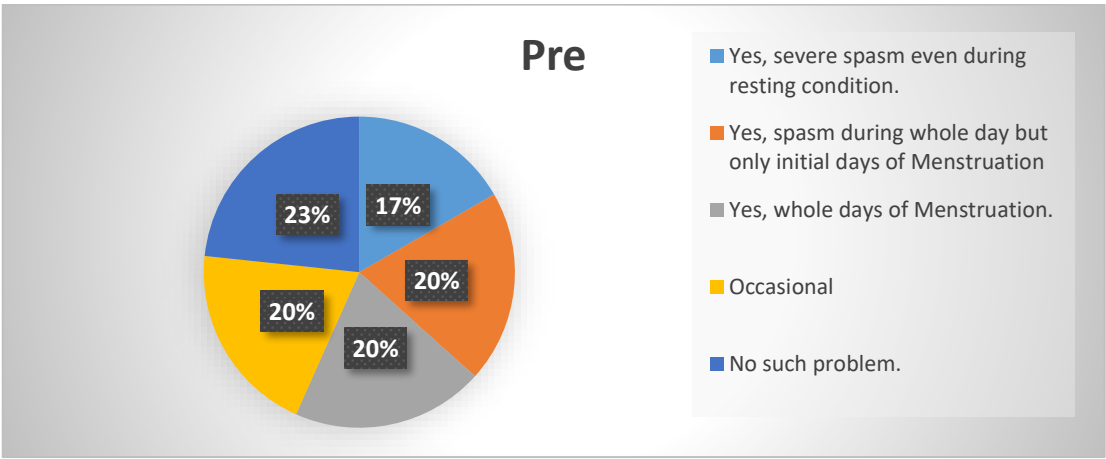


Figure 19: Problem of Muscles Spasm Pre Score

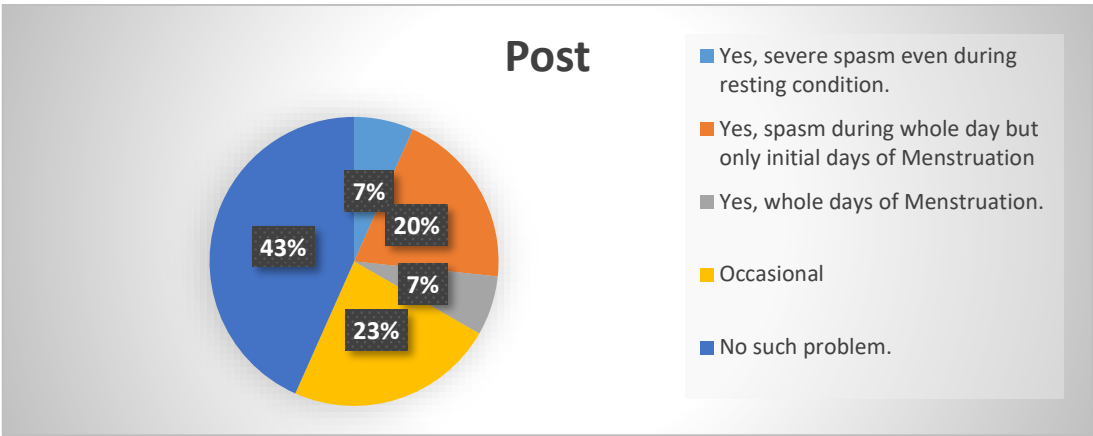


Figure 20: Problem of Muscles Spasm Post Score

Before the intervention it was found that the 17 percent participants suffered from Muscle Spasm during the whole time of menstruation and 20 percent participants suffered only on the initial day of menstruation. After providing the Yogic Intervention, it was shown in the results that 17 percent and 20 percent of affected participants were reduced to 7 percent. The practices of *Yoga* provide a positive effect on Muscle Spasm.

Do you have problem of breast tendering?

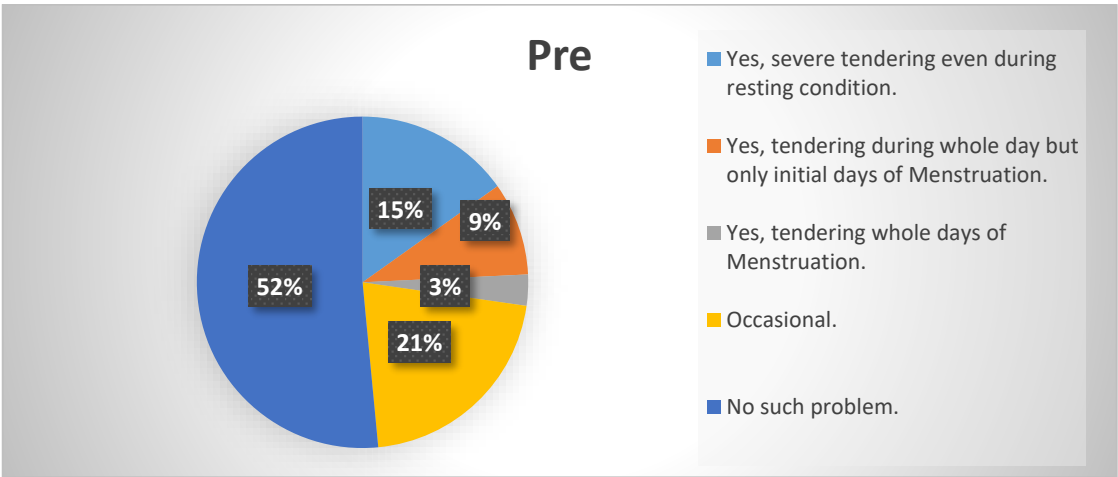


Figure 21: Problem of Breast tendering Pre Score

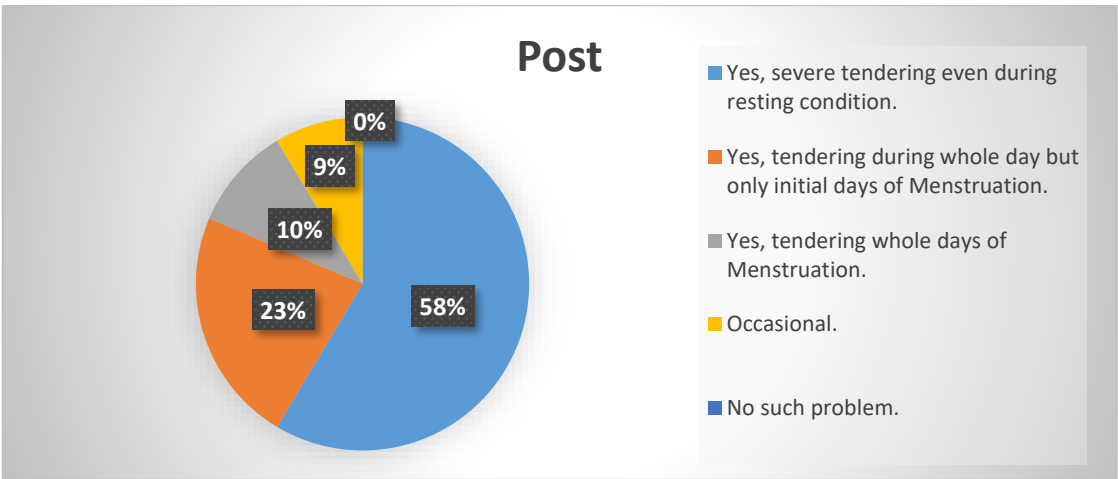


Figure 22: Problem of Breast tendering Post Score

The effect of Yogic practices is not shown on Breast Tendering.

Do you have a problem of swelling in hands-legs?

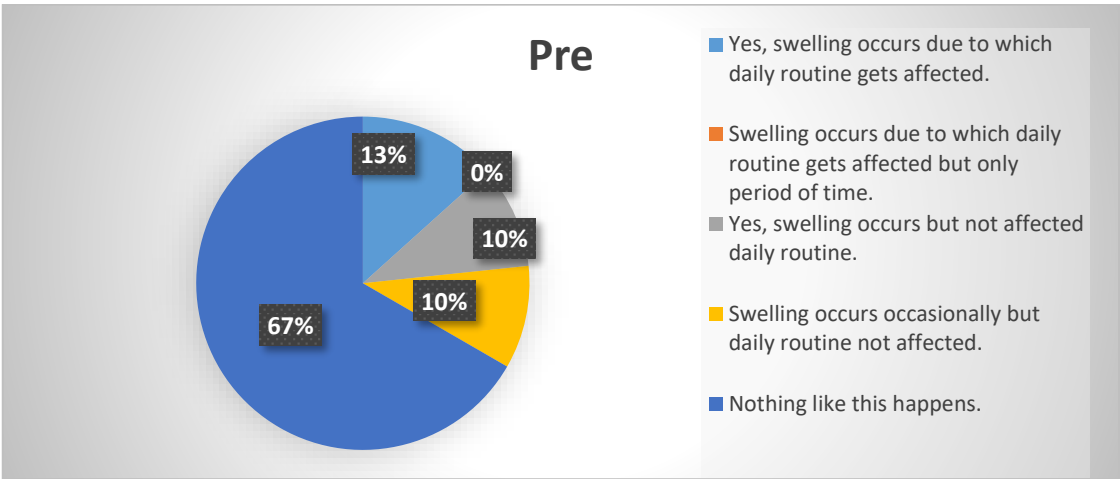


Figure 23: Swelling in Hand-Legs Pre Score

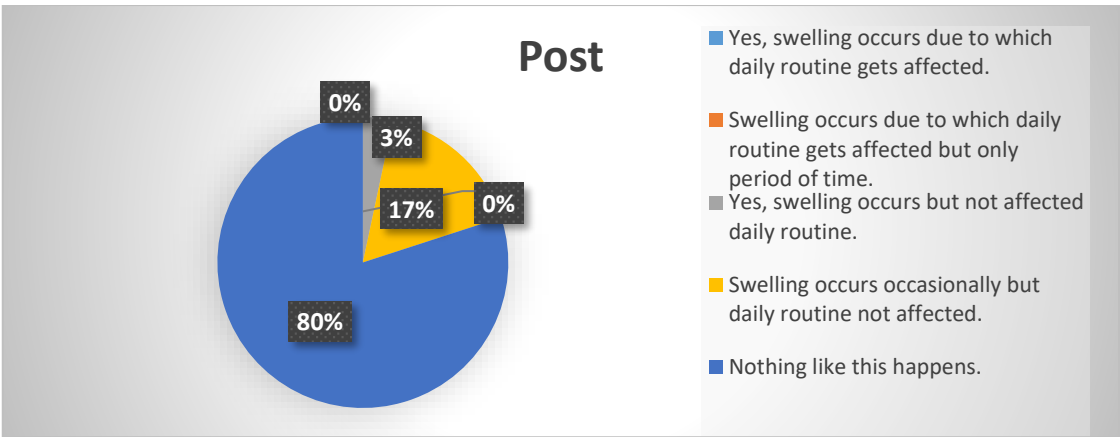


Figure 24: Swelling in Hand-Legs Post Score

The pre result of the swelling in Hands-Legs was 67 percent and after the intervention it increased to 80 percent. Practices of *Yoga* have a good effect on swelling in Hands and Legs.

Does your mood change into anger?

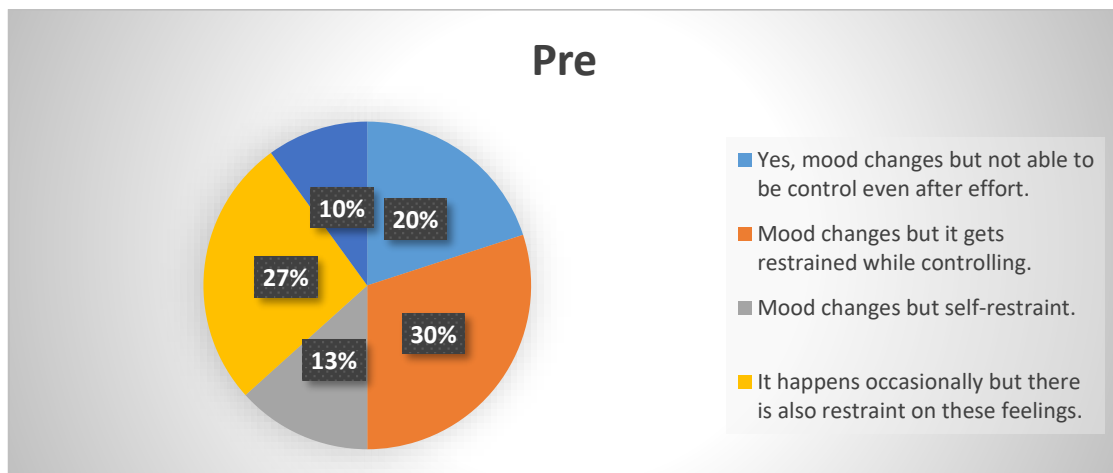


Figure 25: Mood Change into Anger Pre Score

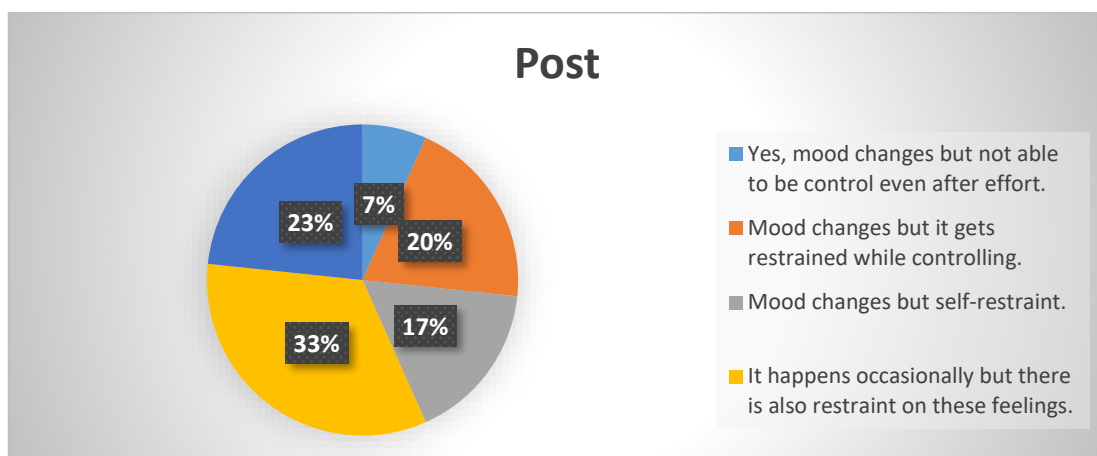


Figure 26: Mood Change into Anger Post Score

Initially only 10 percent participants did not feel changes in their mood in respect to anger but after the intervention this percentage increased to 23 percent. 30 percent of participants felt that during the initial days of menstruation they felt anger but they have to control their anger and after providing the *Yoga* class to them this percentage reduced to 20 percent. Hence *Yoga* has a positive effect on anger.

Does your mood change into irritation?

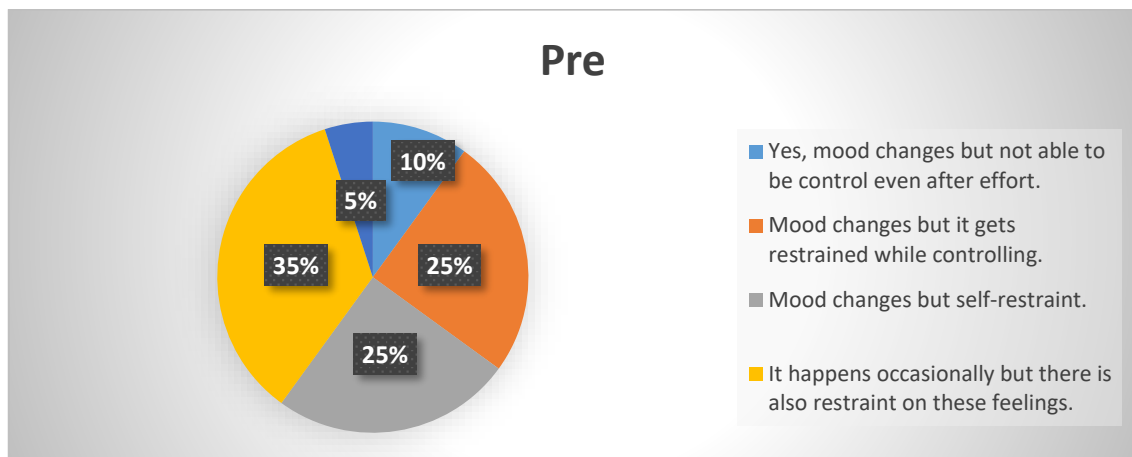


Figure 27: Mood Change into Irritation Pre Score

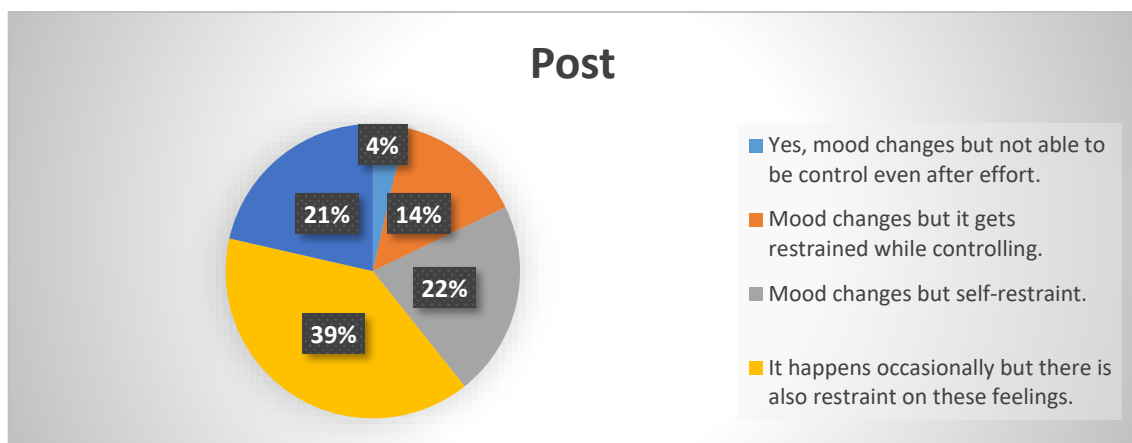


Figure 28: Mood Change into Irritation Post Score

Initially when it was asked to participants that their mood changed into Irritation then only 5 percent participants denied that they have no such experience but after the Intervention applied it appeared in the result in the post data that 21 percent participants felt that they do not get irritated during menstruation. Initially 10 percent of participants said that they get irritated and were able to control their Irritation but this percentage reduced to 4 percent after the *Yoga* class as an Intervention. It means that Yogic practices worked on the irritation at both levels.

Does your mood change into impulsiveness?

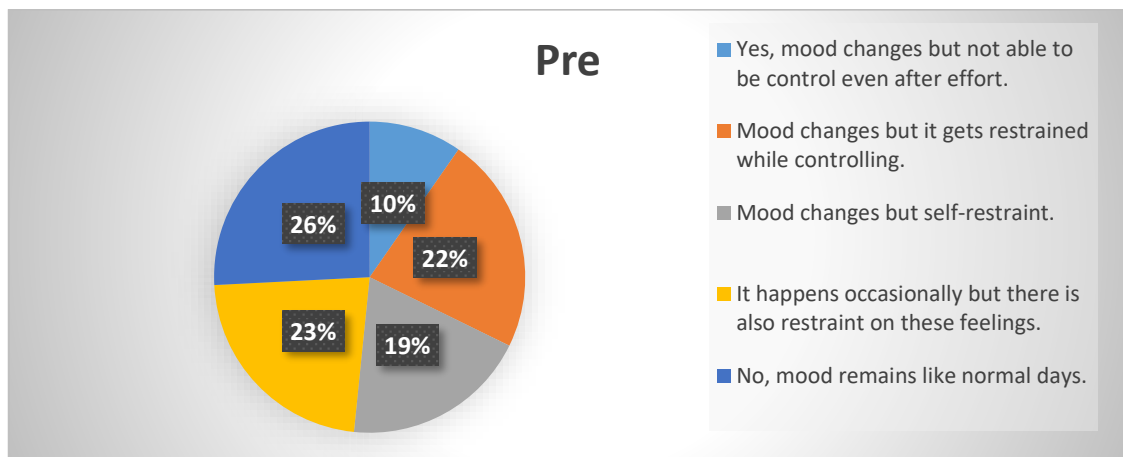


Figure 29: Mood Change into Impulsiveness Pre Score

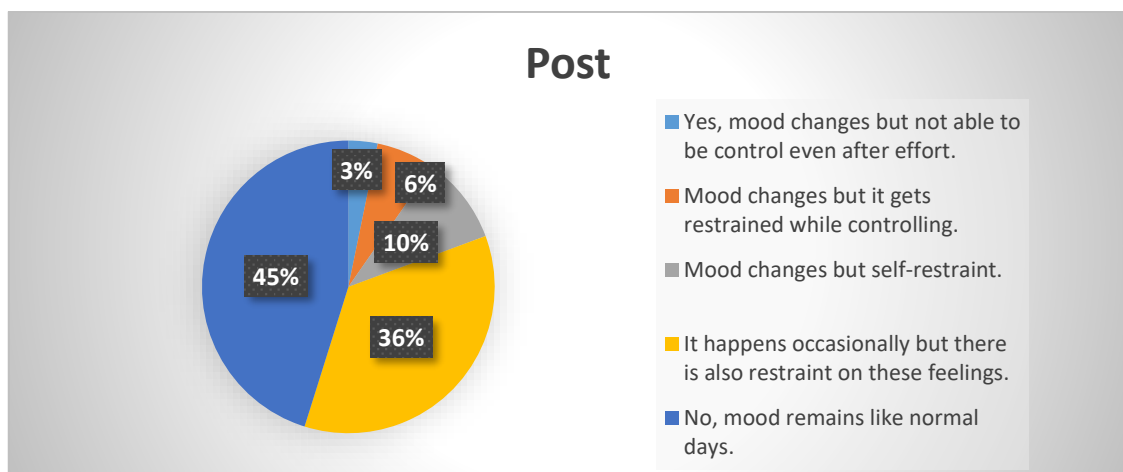


Figure 30: Mood Change into Impulsiveness Post Score

At the beginning of the study when participants were enquired about their Impulsiveness during menstruation then 22 percent participants replied that their mood changes and after an effort to control themselves they were able to retain their normal mood. After the post study it was found that this percentage reduced to 6 percent and 45 percent participants replied that their mood remains normal which was shown 26 percent at the beginning.

Does your mood change into less tolerance?

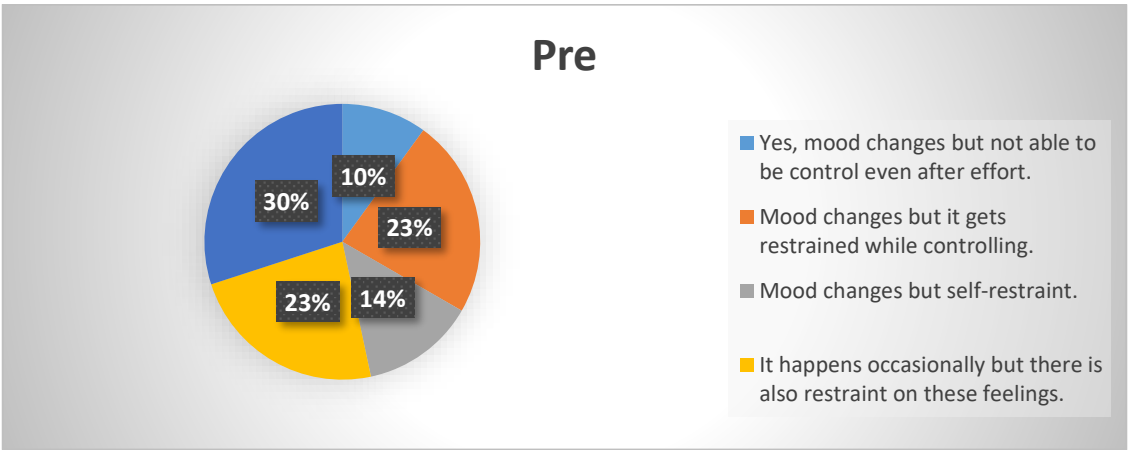


Figure 31: Mood Change into Less Tolerance Pre Score

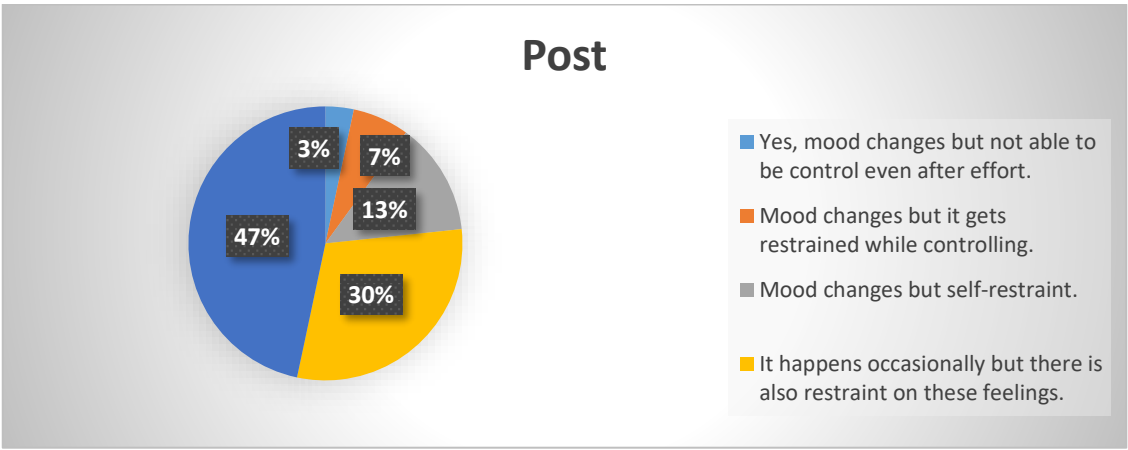


Figure 32: Mood Change into Less Tolerance Post Score

When it was asked to participants before the Intervention about their mood in respect of tolerance then 23 percent participants said that their mood not get restrained while controlling and after the Yogic practices this percent reduce to 7 percent and 30 percent participants before the Yogic intervention was provided said they do not have such feeling of impulsiveness and after the Intervention this percentage increase to 47 percent.

Do you feel fatigue?

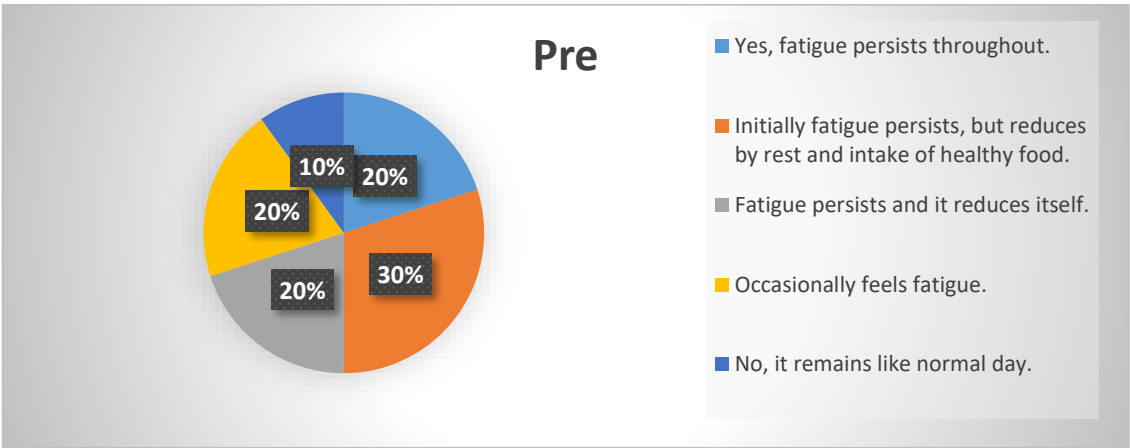


Figure 33: Fatigue Pre Score

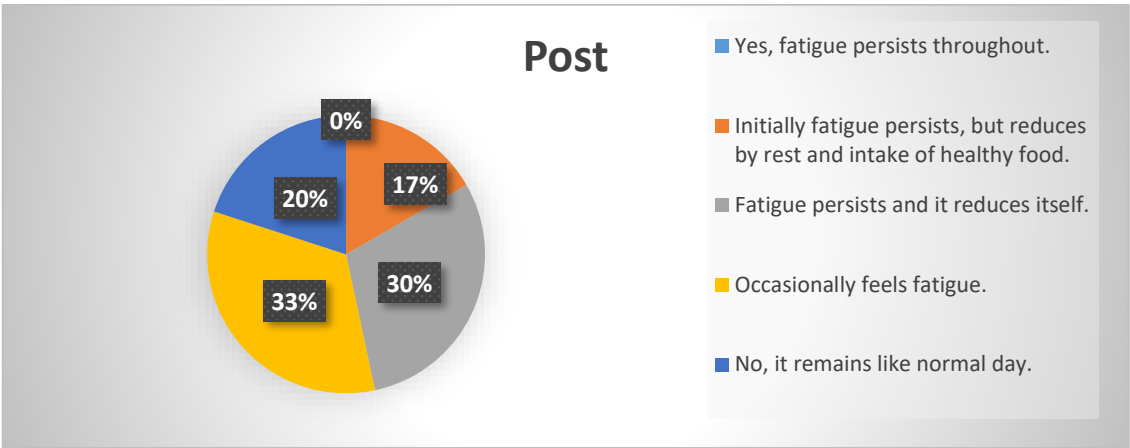


Figure 34: Fatigue Post Score

At the beginning of the study while collecting the Pre-Test data 20 percent of participants replied that they felt tired throughout the menstruation. At the end of the study when post data was collected from participants it appeared in the result that it got reduced to zero percent and no one felt fatigue throughout their menstruation and also it showed in the result that there are changes in a positive way at all levels.

Do you feel depressed?

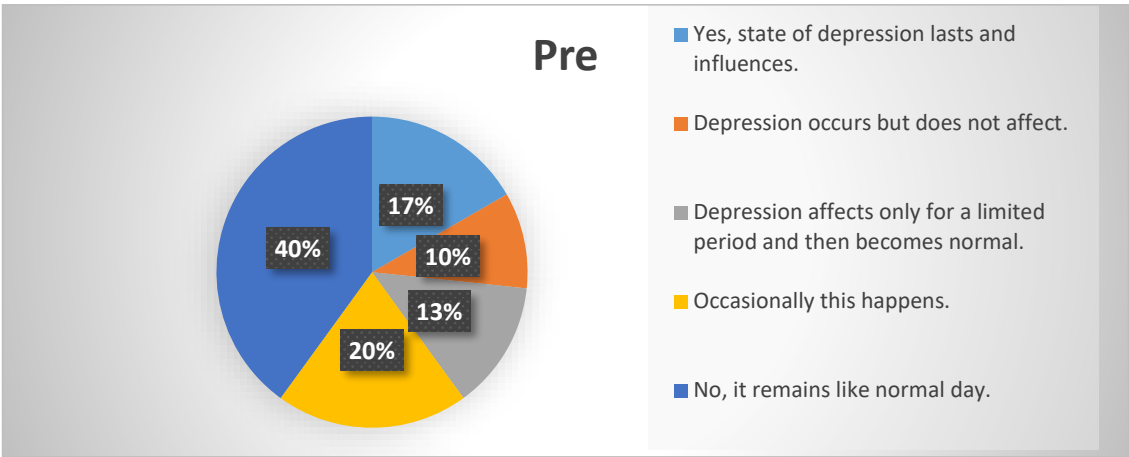


Figure 35: Depression Pre Score

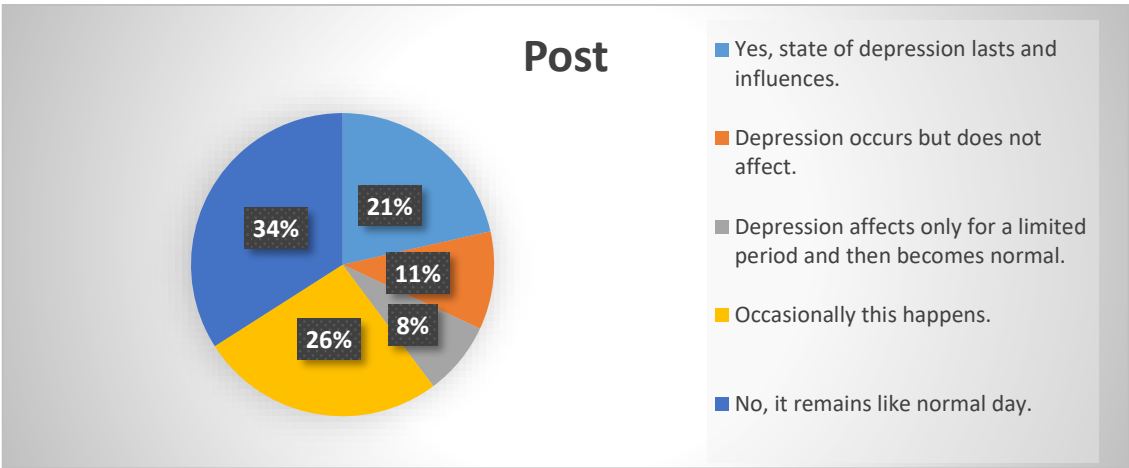


Figure 36: Depression Post Score

Compared to the pre data the post data showed that there is reduction in depression slightly. To show the proper effect of Yogic practices on Depression will take time and if the participants continue to follow Yogic practices for a long time, they may get rid of depression or be able to reduce it during menstruation or otherwise.

Do you feel anxiety?

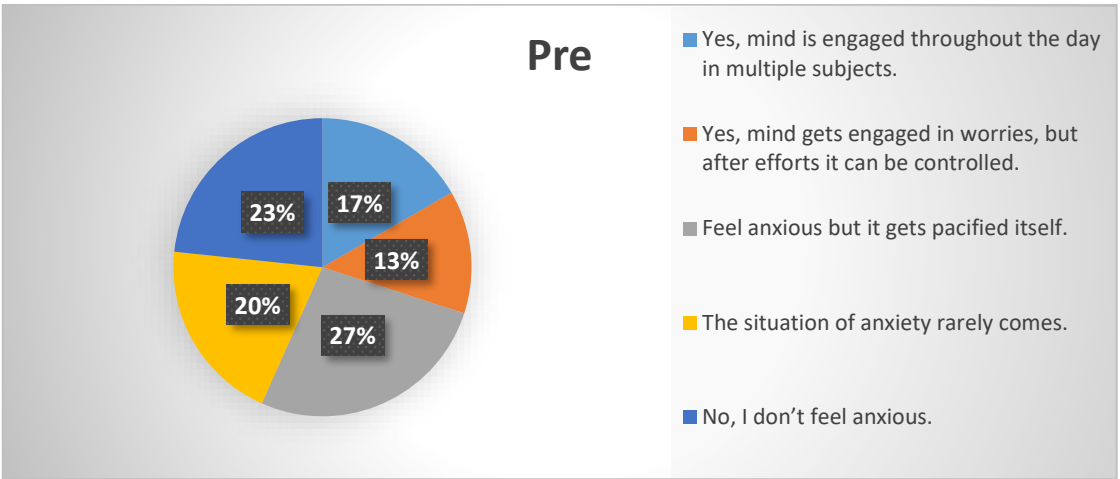


Figure 37: Anxiety Pre Score

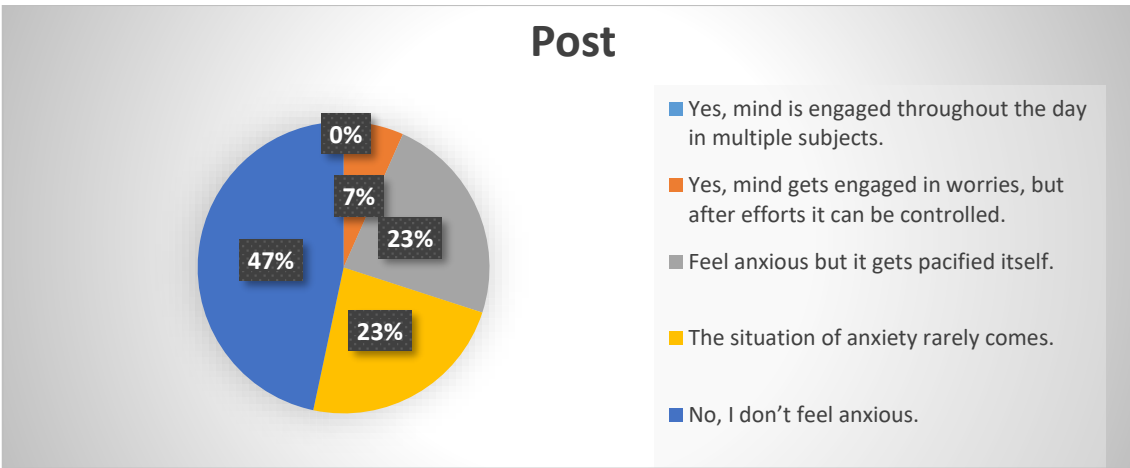


Figure 38: Anxiety Post Score

Pre-study data revealed that 23 percent of participants denied that they felt anxiety and in the post this percentage increased to 47 percent. Which showed the level of feeling of anxiety reduced after Yogic Intervention. 17 percent participants during Pre study said that their mind is engaged throughout the day with multiple subjects and after that this percentage reduces to 5 percent. It means that there is a positive effect of Yogic practices on anxiety and *Yoga* helps reduce it.

Do you feel low self-respect?

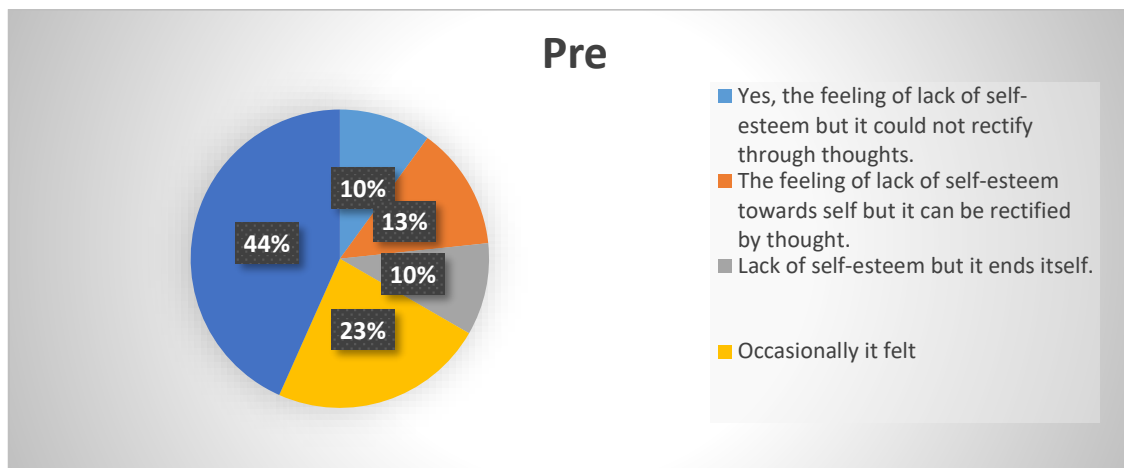


Figure 39: Low Self Respect Pre Score

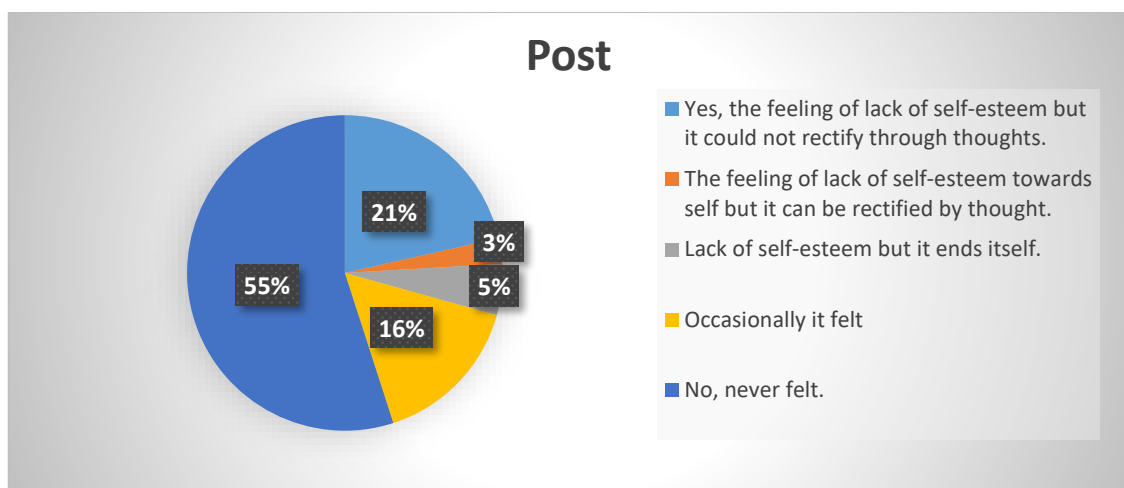


Figure 40: Low Self Respect Post Score

While recording the pre data it was found that 44 percent participants do not feel low Self-esteem and after the Yogic intervention this percent increased to 55 percent. However, in this question there was a mixed result. Still 13 percent of participants felt a lack of Self-esteem towards self which reduced in post data to 3 percent.

Do you feel guilty?

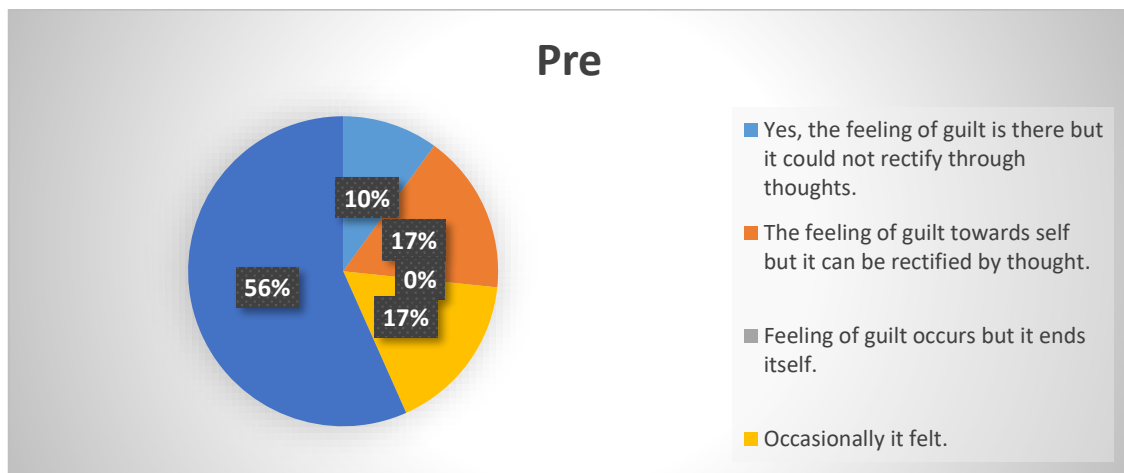


Figure 41: Guilt Pre Score

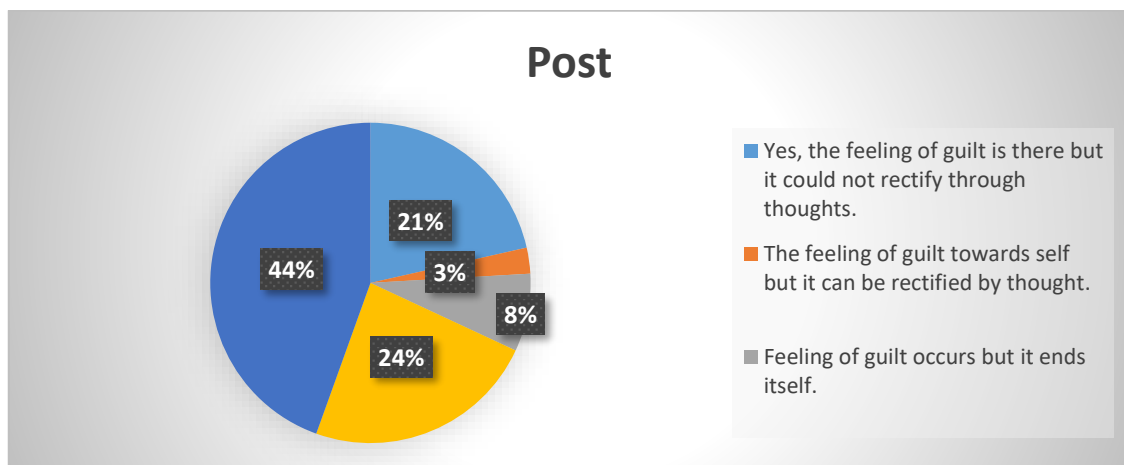


Figure 42: Guilt Post Score

Compared to pre data the post data showed that the 17 percent participants who were suffering from feelings of Guilt reduced to 3 percent. Although the practice of *Yoga has not* affected it much, it may appear in the result that long periods of practice may affect it in a positive way.

Do you feel the lack of attention while doing any work?

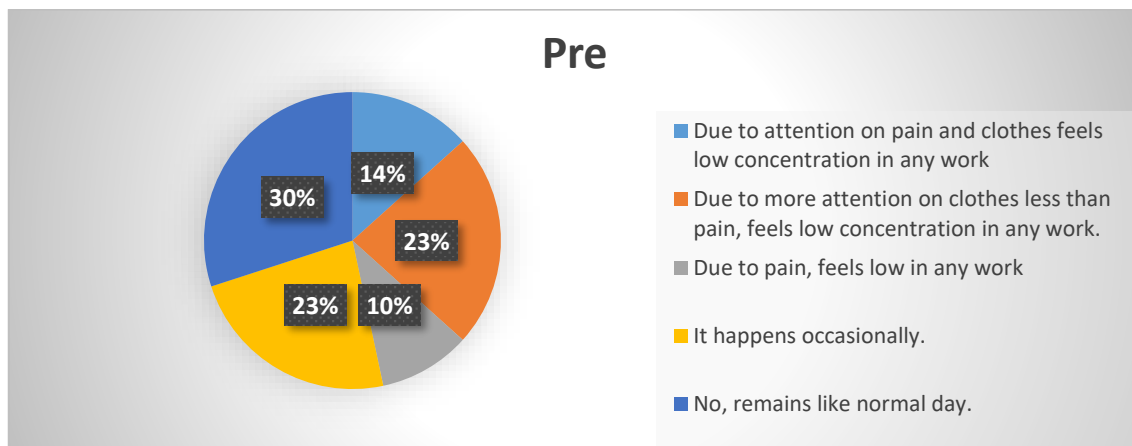


Figure 43: Lack of Attention Pre Score

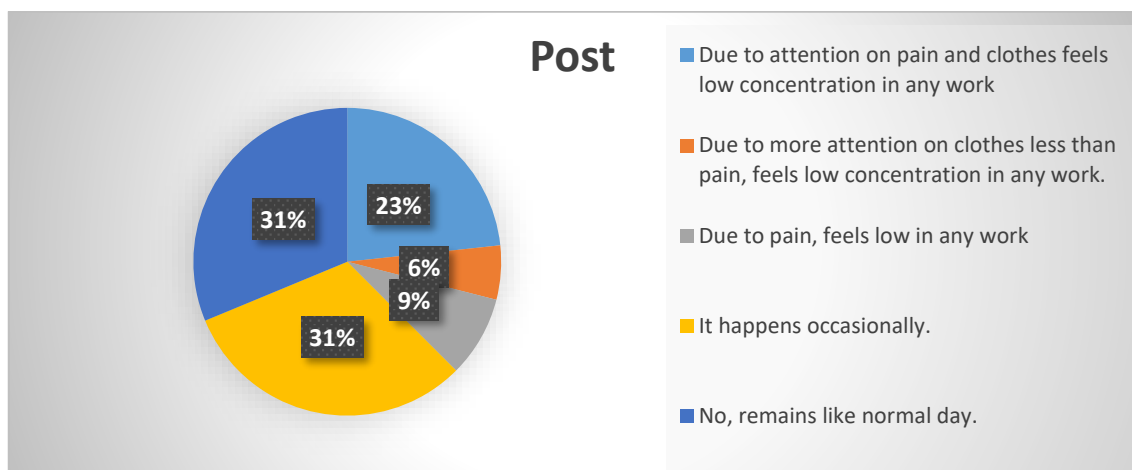


Figure 44: Lack of Attention Post Score

The post data does not show much effect of Yogic practices in Attention. Although 23 percent of participants replied during the recording of Pre data that they felt pain but their focus was more on the clothes not on the pain and after Yogic Intervention it reduces to 6 percent. 14 percent participant said during the Pre Test data cause of pain their attention was low and in post data this percentage increase 23 percent which means the participants shifted their awareness towards pain more than the clothes and it is good sign to see the pain and cause of the problem.

Overall Analytical Research findings Through Random Control Trial

Statistical Analysis Report Analytical Phase

Table 13: Mean and SD (Descriptive statistics)

	Group	N	Mean	SD
Pre	Control	30	91.200	12.990
	<i>Yoga</i>	30	77.533	14.431
Post	Control	30	86.900	14.549
	<i>Yoga</i>	30	88.867	10.201

Assumption tests

Table 14: Test of Normally Distribution (Shapiro-Wilk)

	Group	W	P
Pre	Control	0.959	0.292
	<i>Yoga</i>	0.963	0.379
Post	Control	0.955	0.236
	<i>Yoga</i>	0.924	0.034

Results suggest that the data are normally distributed

Table 15: Test of Equality Variance (Levene's)

	F	df	p
Pre	0.008	1	0.927
Post	3.753	1	0.058

The results suggest that the data have equal variance.

Hence both the assumptions are satisfied.

Between group analysis: Independent samples t-test**Table 16:** Independent Samples T-Test on Pre test score (Baseline assessment)

	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Pre	3.855	58	< .001	0.995

The significant difference at the Pre level suggests that the baseline is not matching, and the *Yoga* group is having significantly lower values than the control group.

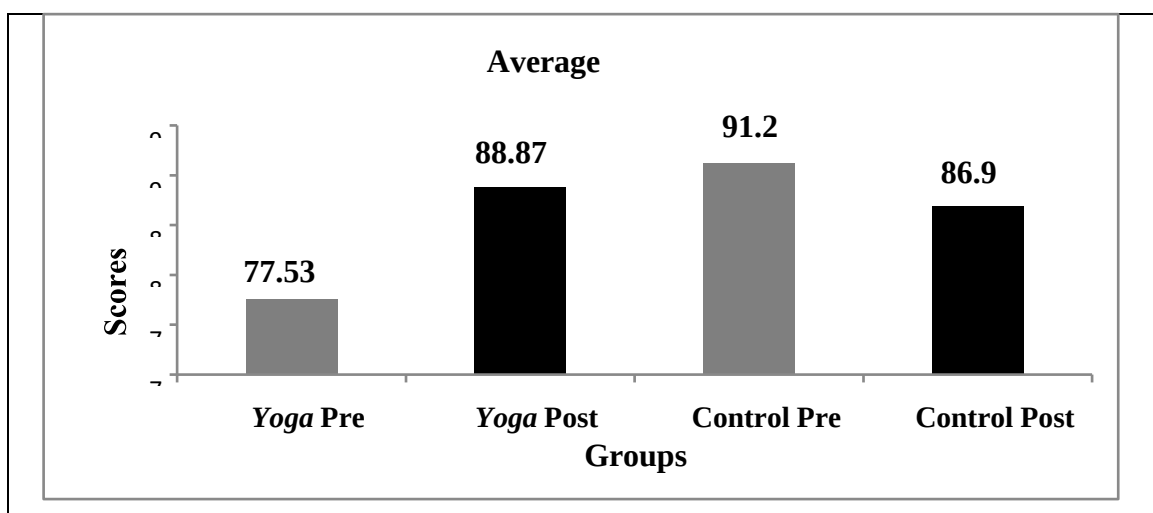
Hence, a different score was calculated and independent samples t-test was performed.

Table 17: Independent Sample T test

	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Difference Score (Post-Pre)	-6.006	58	< .001	-1.551

The result suggests there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups, and the change in the *Yoga* group has been significantly better than the control group, with the effect size of 1.551, which is considered a high effect size.

* $p < 0.001$ (Independent Samples T-Test), CMP_Q= General Menstrual Problems Questionnaire

**Figure 45:** Average of Scores

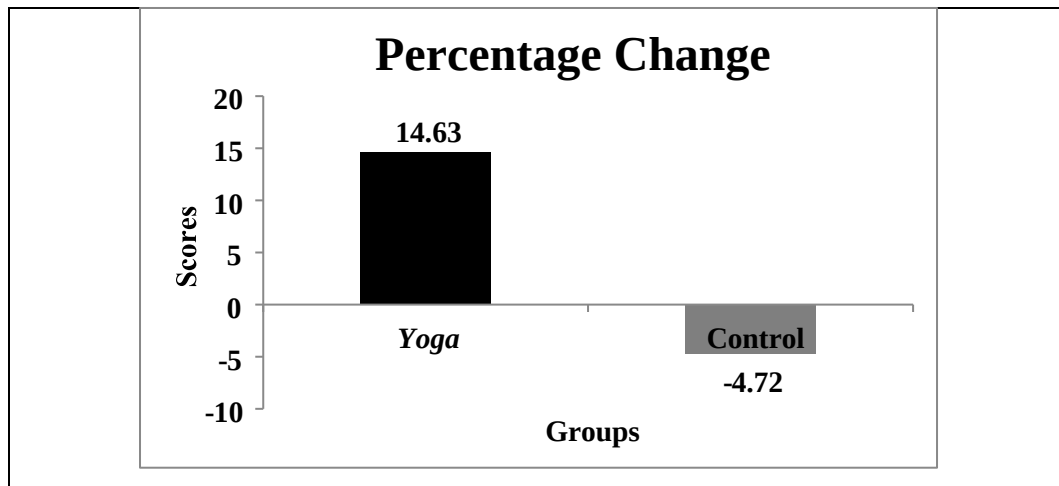


Figure 46: Percentage of mean changes in *Yoga* and Control Group

Table 18 Result Table

Test	Yoga Group		% increase	Control Group		% decrease	t	df	p*	Cohen's d
	Mean ± SD			Mean ± SD						
CMP_Q	Pre	Post	14.63	Pre	Post	4.72	-6.01	58	< .001	-1.551
	77.53	88.87		91.2	86.9					
	±14.43	±10.2		±12.99	±14.55					

Research Hypothesis

There is a Positive Effect of Yogic Practices on General Menstrual Problems.

Explanation: There are significant differences between the pre and post scores of Experimental Group where the pre and post mean values of Experimental Group are 77.53 and 88.87 and Standard Deviation are 14.43 and 10.20 respectively. This resulted in the practices of *Yoga* having a positive effect on GMP.

Null Hypothesis

There is No Significant Difference in Post test Scores on GMPAS of Control and Experimental Groups. **Rejected**

There are significant differences between the post scores of Experimental Group and Control Group where mean scores are **88.87** and **86.90** and standard deviations are **10.20** and **14.55** respectively. Value of **P** is **< 0.001** and value of **T (58)** is **-6.006**, and it is found that, there is a positive effect of Yogic practices on GMP on Experimental Group and the scores of Experimental Group are higher than the Control Group which means that the participants of Experiment Group get benefits by the practices of *Yoga* hence the Null Hypothesis got rejected and there is highly Significant Difference in Post test Scores on GMPAS of Control and Experimental Groups.

6.2 Discussion

Discussion on Research Findings on Random Control Trial

There were two groups that were finalised for this research and divided into a No Treatment Control Group and an Experimental Group. Both groups fill the same questionnaire at the same time gap of one week. After that, the experimental Group participated in the research directly and got intervention in the form of *Yoga* class.

The No Treatment Control Group did not get any intervention. The main thing is that both groups lie from similar situations and similar GMP. After the intervention, data was collected again from these two groups and compared the mean average of both group and statistical analysis. Which is already shown in the above tables.

It appears after the calculations that mean average of Experimental Group is higher than the No Treatment Control Group which means the Experiment was successful to provide positive effect on the GSMP and capable to reduce the sign and symptoms related to menstruation.

Research findings on Survey Based Work

To find out the status of mythological facts related to menstruation some questions were asked to women. One hundred and fifteen women participated voluntarily and gave answers on their personal experiences. The graphical representation of the answers are as follows:

Do you feel happiness within or around during menstruation time?

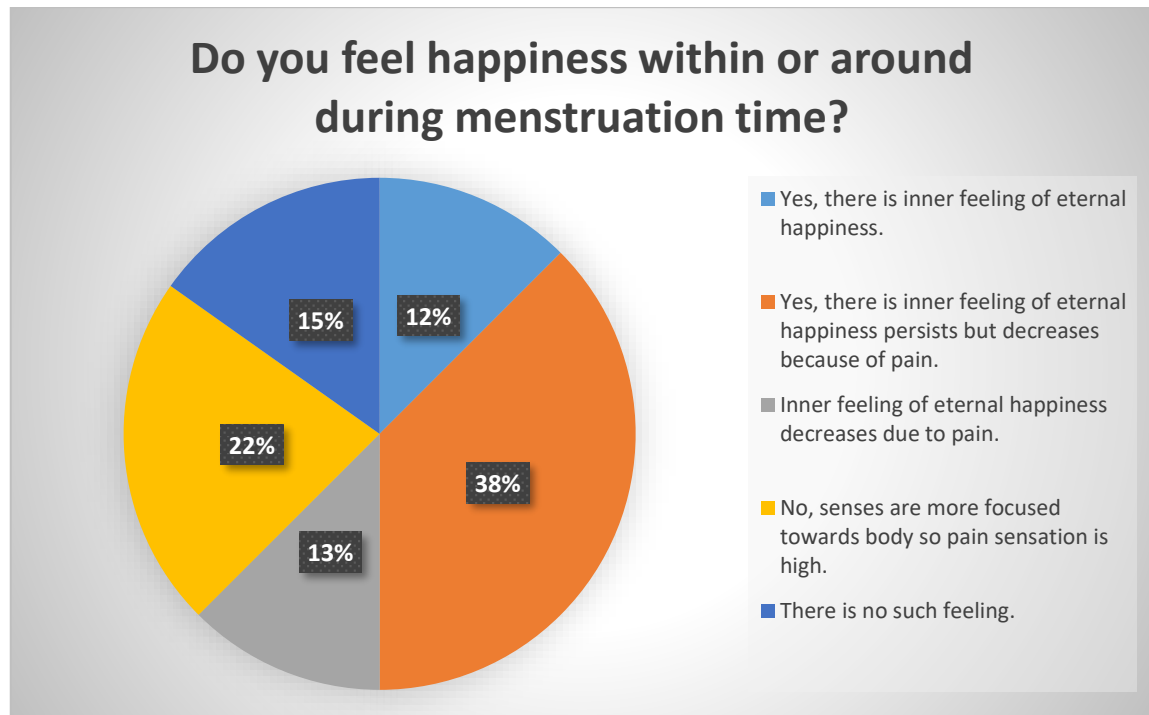


Figure 47: Happiness Score

Do you know the reason for this happiness? Mention reason.

Out of 115 women, 58 women responded to this question. 13 women said they don't know about this, 6 women said they bear the pain so they do not experience it, rest said due to hormonal changes, the natural environment provides peace and soothing music relaxes the mind.

Do you feel positivity within or around during menstruation time?

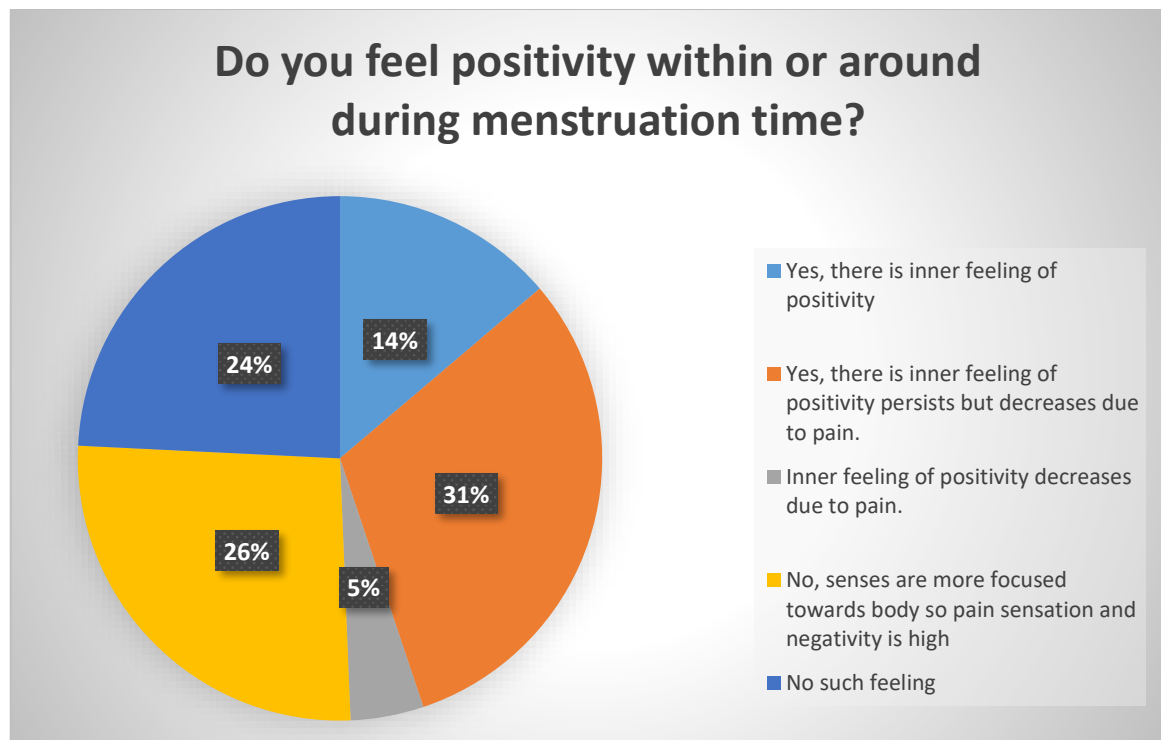


Figure 48: Score of Positivity

Do you know the reason of this positivity? You can mention the reason here.

Only 67 women respond here and among them 16 women said they do not know about this thing and some said due to household work and responsibilities, due to pain they did not feel it, and rest of the women said due to hormonal changes, detoxification of body, awareness towards body and diet, menstrual cup, periods are indicator of good health, *Yoga*, meditation and rest, mental self-positivity, due to *Gāyatrī Mantra* chanting, etcetera mixed answers provided.

Do you ever experienced disinterest?

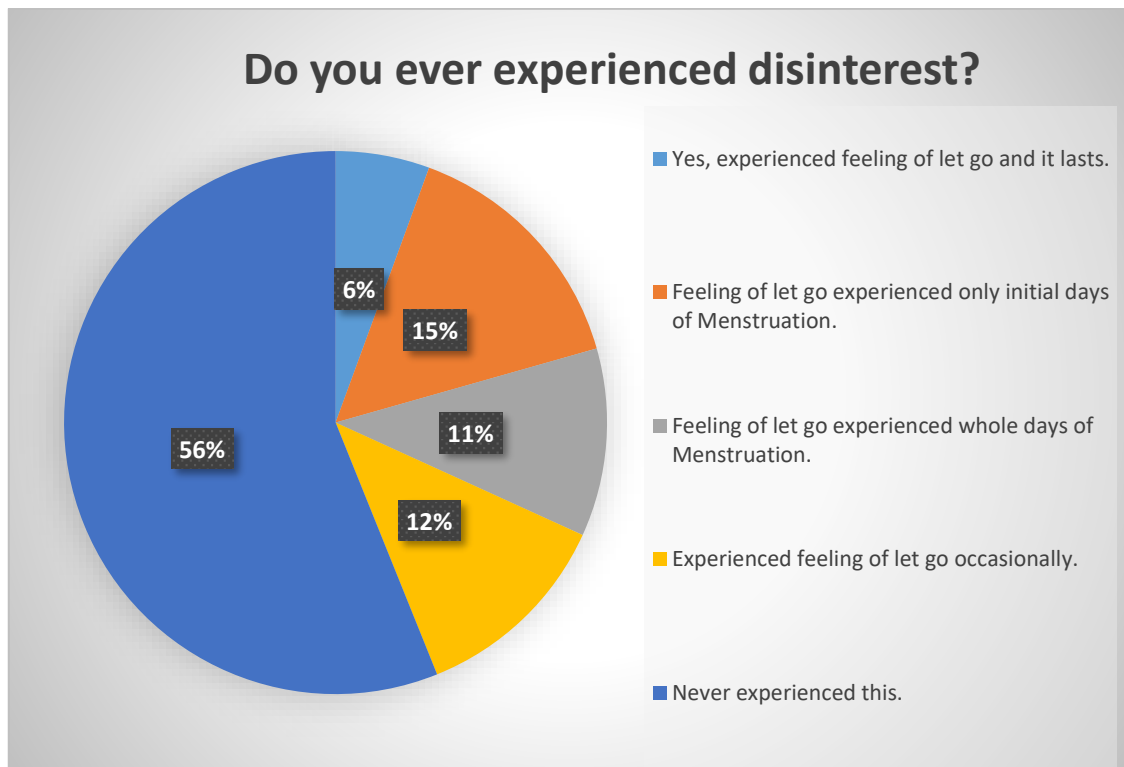


Figure 49: Score of Disinterest

If yes, please mention the reason below.

Among the participants only 46 women responded to this question and 15 women didn't have any idea so they declined. Some participants said that reading spiritual books, knowledge of self and soul, self-focused, *Yoga*, hormonal changes, knowledge of impermanence, due to pain and heavy bleeding, senses detached from outer world and focused on pain cause of disinterest.

Do you ever feel inner peace (self-concentration)?

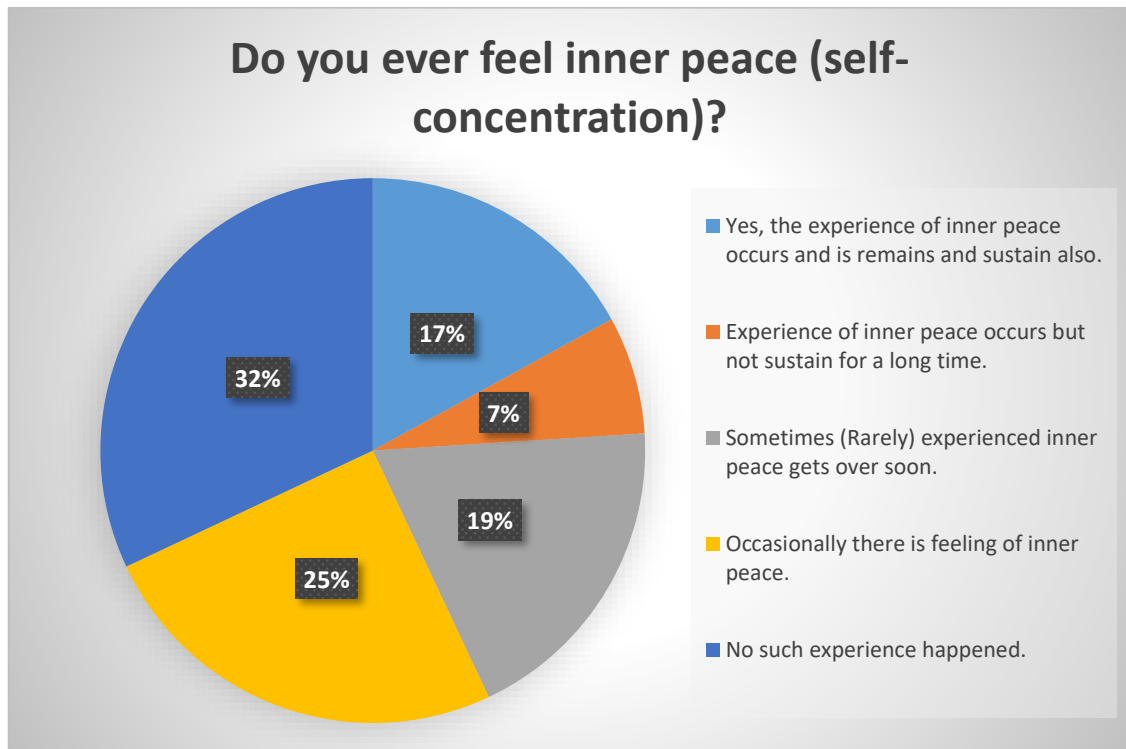


Figure 50: Lack of Inner Peace

Based on your experience please describe your reason of inner peace experienced.

Only 52 participants responded to this question, among them 12 participants said that they do not know the reason, some girls said yes, but did not explain the reason. Some said due to spirituality and due to *Yoga* and mantra chanting, due to special food and suitable conditions, positive attitude they felt peace. Some said due to pain and due to ignorance they do not focus on that feeling. Some said if pain was absent then they felt the peace and did not want to talk with anyone.

Are you treated with discrimination during your menstruation?

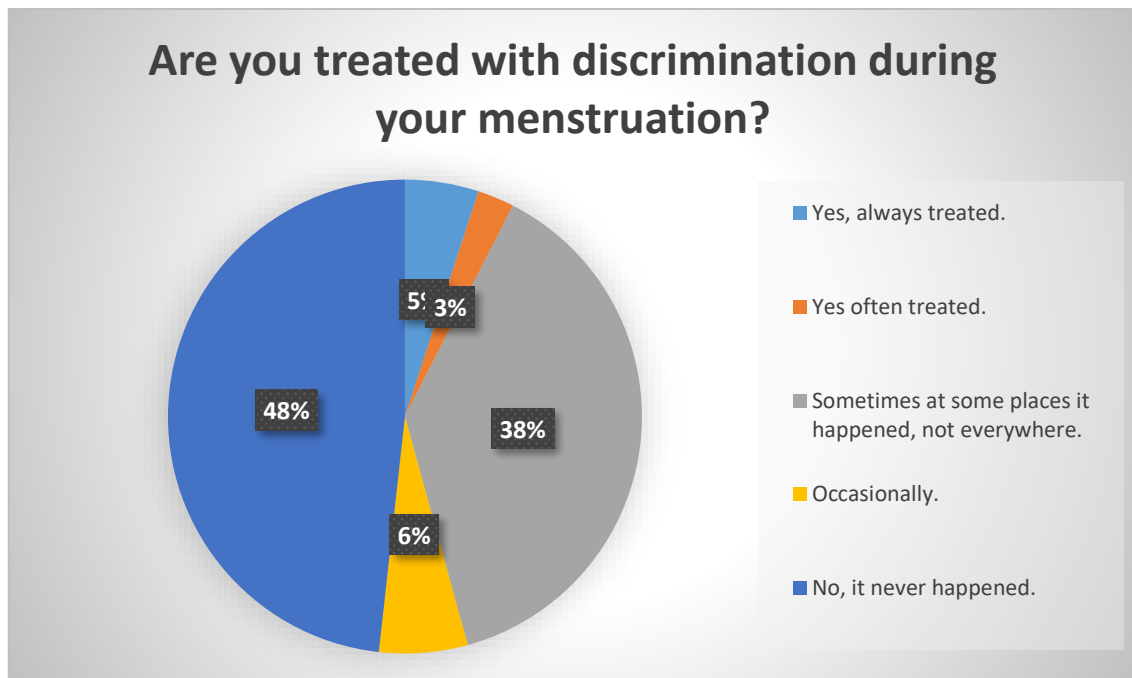


Figure 51: Score of Discrimination

Do you know the reason of this discrimination? If yes please mention here.

Here 52 participants respond to this question. Among them 5 participants said that they do not know the reason of discrimination. Rest women said that assumptions of different cultures, to touch the women is a sin, due to old myths, orthodox thinking, also assumed that four days women body excrete the negative energy. 7 participants said that no discrimination happened with them. Some said because in the past time, there was no sanitary pads therefore discrimination happened.

Have you ever worshiped during menstruation?

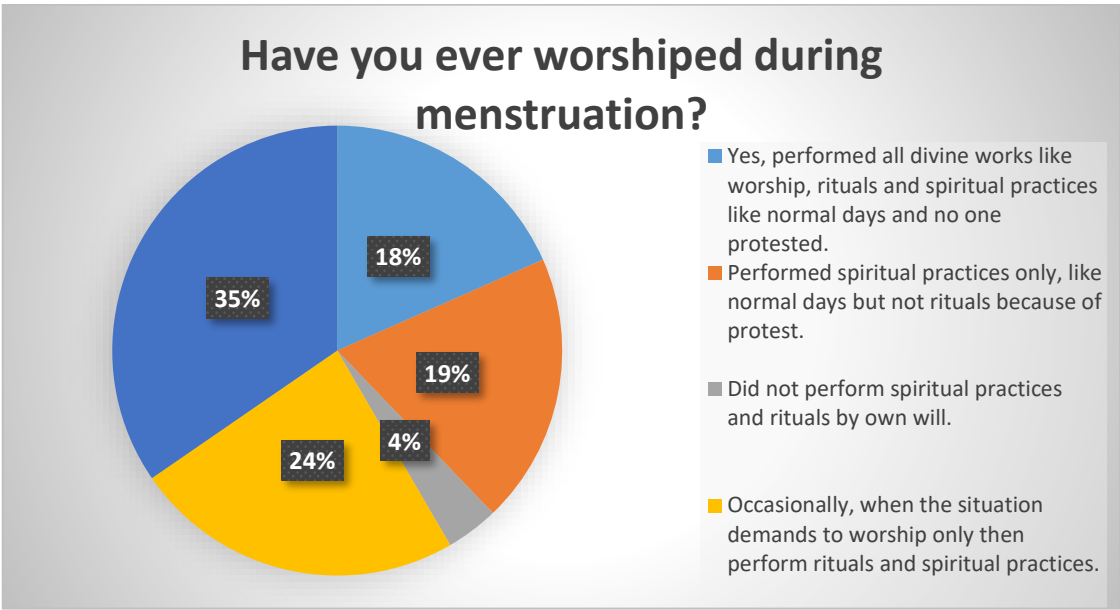


Figure 52: Score of Worshipped

Are you prohibited from going to temples?

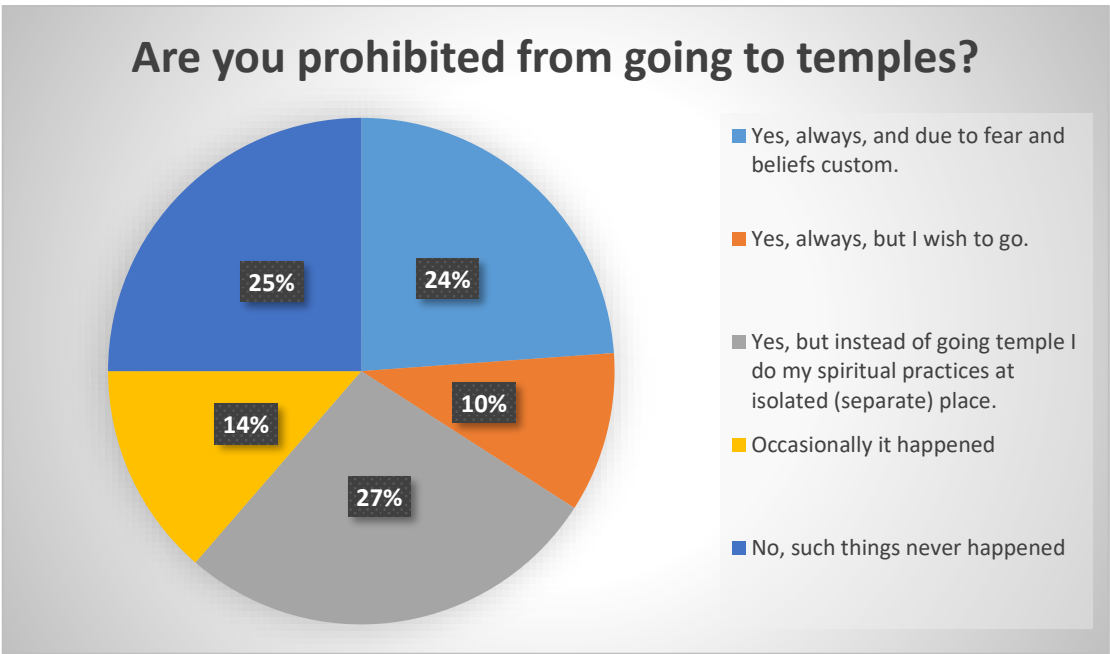


Figure 53: Score of Prohibition to go to Temple

If yes, what was the reason told please mention here.

Only 59 Participants answered this question and among them 12 participants said that they don't know the reason. Some women said due to impurity, due to old beliefs, god will become upset or angry with women, because old people said that they should not go to temples and should not do spiritual practices. Some said family women did not know the reason they were just forwarding the message and that is why they followed it and passed on to the next generation. Some said temples are a pure place and place of worship so women should not go although people did not give them the justified answer. One woman said if we go to a temple we remove our slippers or shoes and due to this our body will get harm from the direct contact with floor and disturb the natural flow that's why we are asked to live at one place and not go to any spiritual place.

Do you live in isolated room at your home during menses?

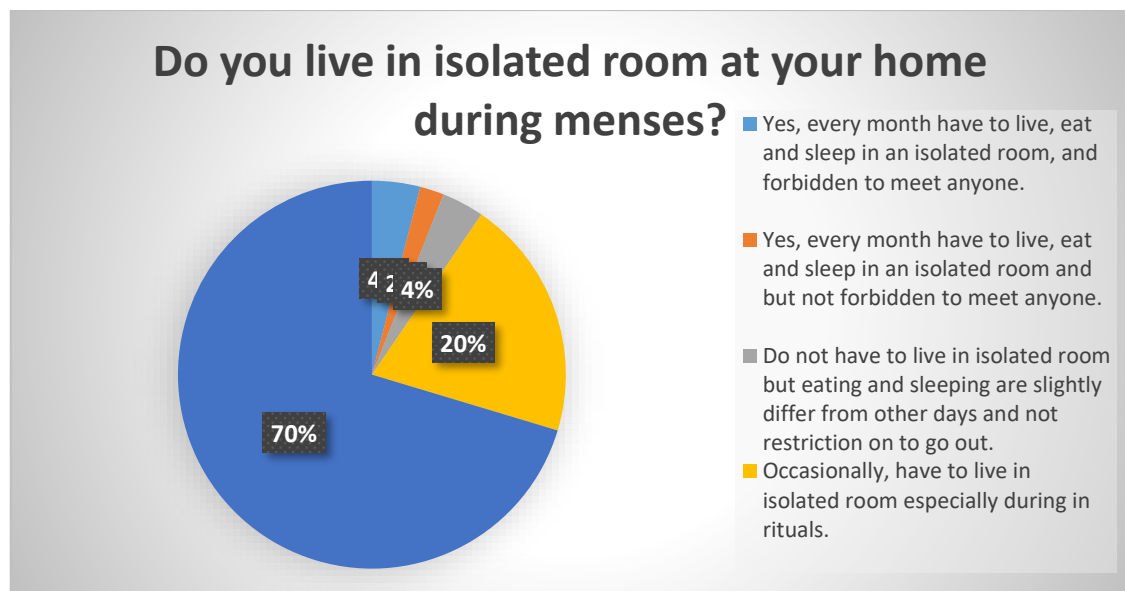


Figure 54: score of Isolation in Room

If yes, please mention the reason here.

Here 50 participants responded to this question and 15 participants said that they do not live in isolation. Some said due to impurity and old belief, due to negative energy excretion and due to physical changes, due to mood swings women were asked to live in isolation. Whereas some replied that due to pain and rest it is advised to live in isolation and relax the mind and the body.

Are you deprived of food that you gets in normal days?

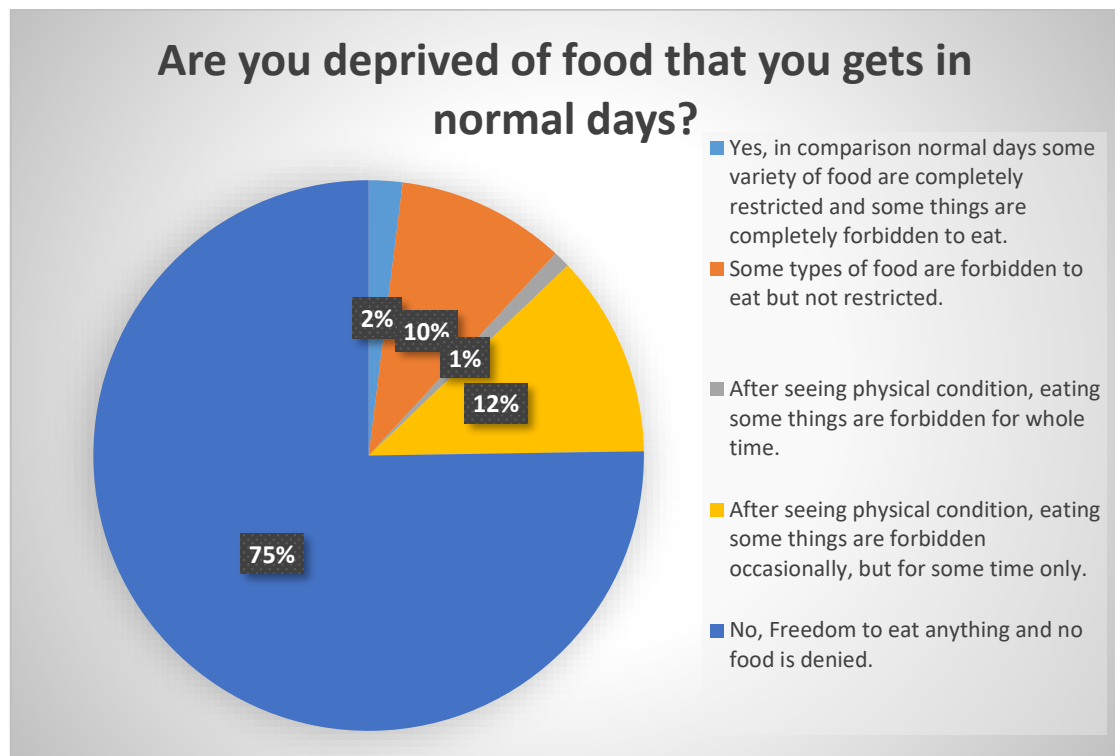


Figure 55: Score of Deprived Food

Do you know that which diet should be taken during menstruation?

Sixty one participants responded to this question. 9 participants were not aware about this. Some said *Sātvik*, some said fresh food, hot tea and hot coffee, Iron, vitamin A and Vitamin E rich diet, and diet recommended as per *Āyurveda*, simple homemade food, green leafy vegetables, sprouts and cheeses, should be taken. Foods avoided are coffee, tea, meat, garlic, onion, pickles, street junk food and ice creams or cold beverages. Curd, rice, stale food, and spicy food should be avoided.

Do you wish to live alone in isolated room for remain calm?

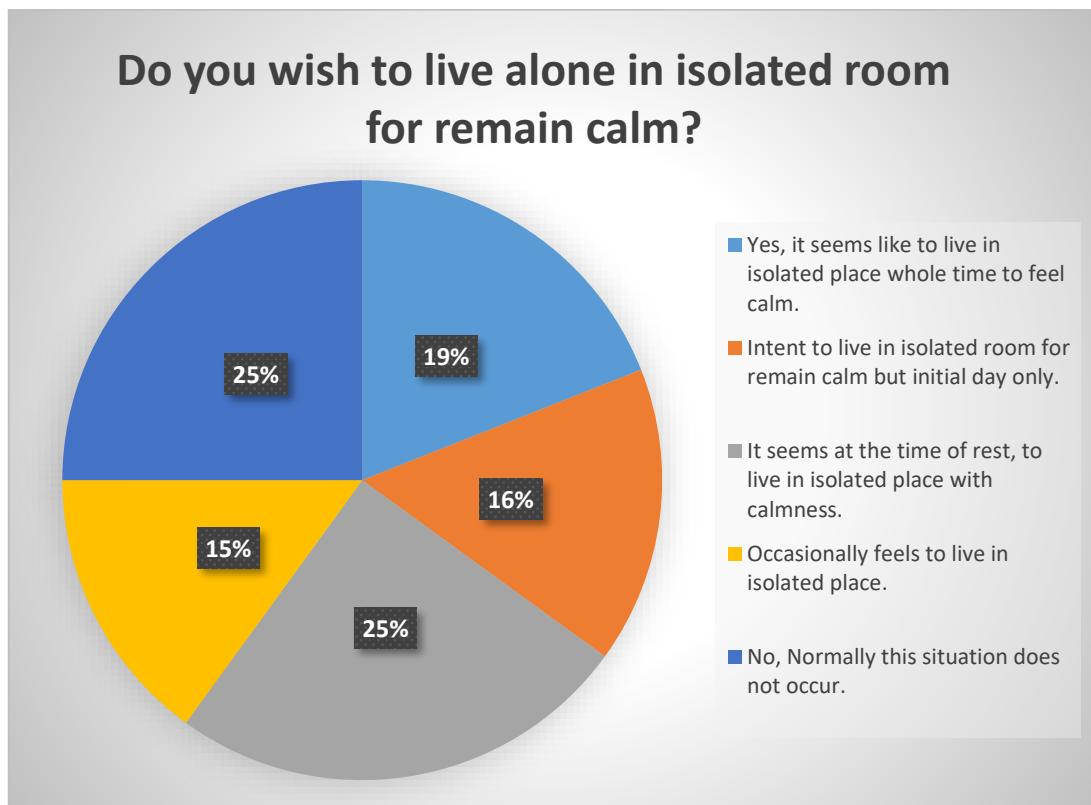


Figure 56: Isolated Room for Remain Calm

If yes then do you know the reason for this?

Only 55 participants responded to this question. 8 women said that they don't know. Rest women gave mixed answers such as, due to mood swings, pain, irritation, want some relaxation, for peace, for settle the mind, body needs rest, due to weakness, cause of disturbances, hormonal changes, to take rest from household work, to connect with self. That's why participants want to live in an isolated room for a while.

Have you ever spend your menstruation time on your interest area?

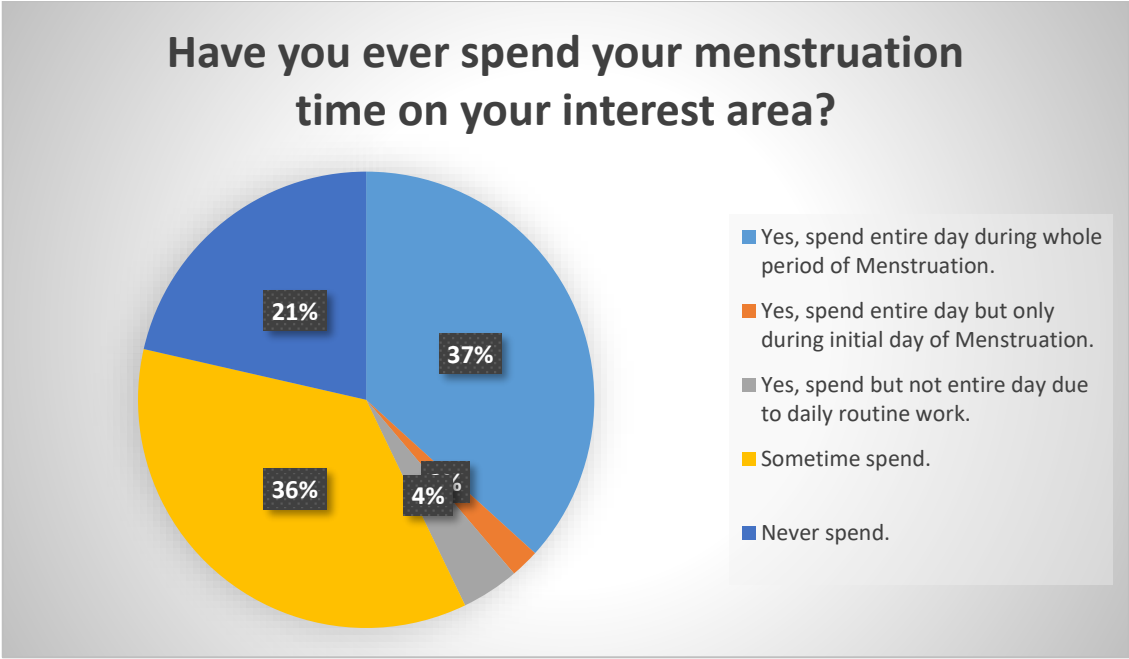


Figure 57: Score of Interest Area

Have you ever analyzed-self during menstruation?

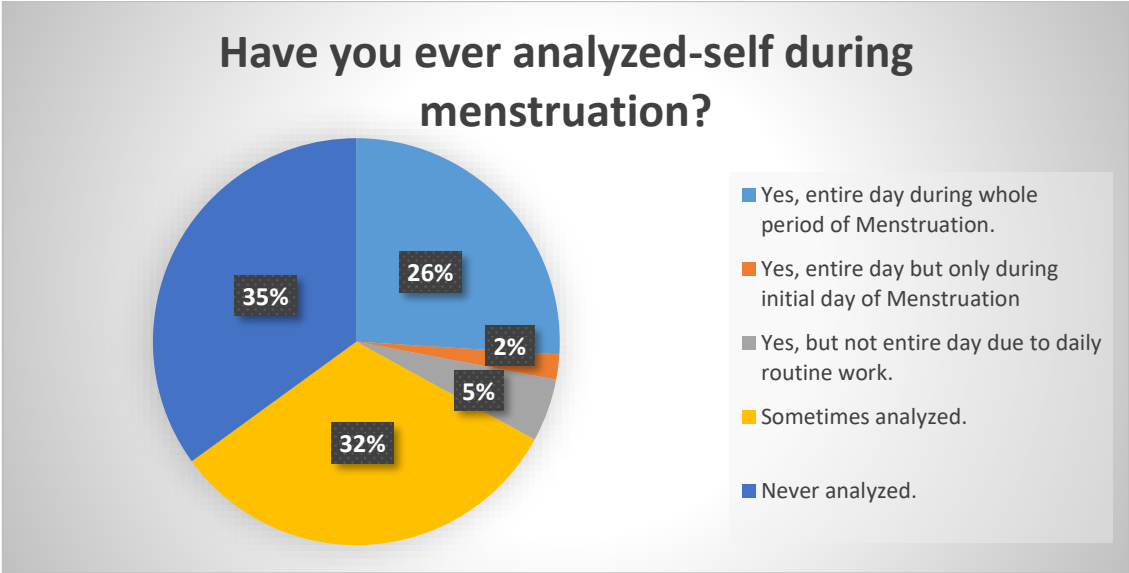


Figure 58: Score of Self Analyses

Discussion on Research Findings on Mythological Facts Survey

The questionnaire were sent to 117 women. The total 115 women gave their consent to fill the questionnaire. Among them, 39 percent women belong to the students group and 61 percent women belong to other than students group which includes home maker, professionals, married and unmarried women. 50 percent of women lie under the age group 18-25, 38 percent 25-35, 8 percent 35-45, 4 percent more than 45 years of age.

After conducting this survey, it was revealed that women do not exactly know about the ancient menstruation ethics and they just have an idea about these ethics. Women of the present era somehow try to find the reason and might want to be aware about these ethics in a scientific manner. Women also admit that people of past era follow such rules of discrimination cause of sanitization and safety purposes. But some women think these things are orthodox and not valued by the new generation and their elders also refuse to follow rules and not ask women to follow such rules.

Some women also reach to find the spiritual facts related to menstruation but they were not exactly aware what to do at that time and how to utilize this time for self-growth. After this survey, it was observed that women need some awareness in terms of ancient menstruation ethics and explore the mythological facts and spiritual facts to reach the exact meaning which cover under the mythological tales and facts which develop to provide rest and security to women from the outer world and inner world. Outer world includes the family members who totally depend on women and do not even provide some break and animals who may attack women when they go out for worship or household work. Inner world includes the mind-set of women, their hormonal changes, and mood swings. This is the time where the body of women slightly changes and needs some rest of mind and body. After the relaxation of the body the mind gets ready to feel some positive changes also and to read those changes she needs rest of mind by following menstruation ethics in a right manner.

Discussion on ancient texts, modern medicine and contemporary medical systems

Ancient texts

This research started with the thinking and approach that the ‘Role of *Yoga*’ able to reveal the reality behind the social ethics related to menstruation and simultaneously work on signs and symptoms during or before the start of menstrual phase.

Present research opens many dimensions for *Yoga* practitioners with new perspectives and approaches on how the special four (five) days women may utilize for their growth from physical to intellectual state and from social to spiritual state.

In the very beginning of the study, after review of literature it was found that ancient texts which are related with perfect health and long life, that is *Āyu* which divided into four parts, are '*Hita Āyu*, *Ahita Āyu*, *Sukha Āyu* and *Dhukha Āyu*. These *Āyu* seems like *Yama-Niyam*. *Yama* is available for society and *Niyama* is for self. Similarly *Hita Āyu* and *Ahita Āyu* are related with our behaviour and with people around us, if there is some wrong doings in our behaviour then it also affects our health, whether psychological or physical. If the behaviour patterns of the person are positive, polite and helpful towards others then it provides peace of mind, guilt free life and earns respect as a by-product.

If human being want to stay in real happiness, they have to maintain a healthy lifestyle and simultaneously serve the society with honest, pure and detached intention so that they are allowed to fulfil the social responsibilities towards nature which appear in the form of society and it includes trees, rivers, needy people, animals, etc.

These good habits result in the form of supreme health which is known as healthy body, healthy mind, satisfies all the worldly desires and attain the state of bliss by giving themselves and by giving others. All these factors may consider as part of *Yama* and *Hita Ayu* and *Niyama* and *Sukha Āyu*.

Modern Medicine and Medical Science of Contemporary Period

For this research work the menstrual cycle along with its each and every phase is described according to the ancient *Āyurveda* and modern perspective. Through the ancient texts it was tried to explore the things which were already developed in India 5000 years ago. Whereas modern medicine worked but did not reach the exact phenomenon of menstruation cycle. In the contemporary period, the researcher and doctors are still working and developing new theories on the women reproductive system which *Āyurveda* has already developed and mentioned. The saints of India understood it and have written it in Indian scriptures many years ago. Modern medicine was trying to find whether menstruation is a punishment by the God or not, or it is just natural phenomena whereas *Āyurveda* states that this is a phenomenon connected with the nature and sign of good health where women need to live with the nature and heal her body in a natural way.

Comparison between Ancient, Modern and Contemporary medicine

At the time of Aristotle and Hippocrates, modern medicine started to understand things according to a new scenario and give a new frame to an old picture. So it may be said that there are huge differences between ancient and modern time periods. The contemporary time period was dealt with an open approach and understood the whole anatomy and physiology of the women reproductive system and got that there is a cycle which occurs every month in women's bodies and has an age limit which starts from puberty and ends in the first stage of old age. Beginning of the menstrual cycle is known as menarche and the end of this cycle is known as menopause.

Ancient Indian texts explained things by different examples where modern texts were still finding the cause of bleeding and taking it as a curse. Ancient Indian culture treated the menstrual cycle as a gift of God because it was the reason women can create a child with the help of men and give to birth a life and she is treated as Goddess of life that is similar to the nature. Here, the contemporary time period developed and rejected old myths related to the menstruation cycle in the modern time period and explored many hidden things and after that ancient Indian texts already accepted and justified itself.

Ancient Indian texts have seen things thoroughly and also provided some do's and don'ts for *Rajahśravākāla* and also elaborated it. If women neglects the do's and don'ts, then she might have to face some kind of complications during her pregnancy or other upcoming cycles. There were many philosophers of modern era who were not exactly aware about this natural phenomenon whether women knew that they had some biological changes during the menstrual phase but the society did not accept it in a right way with right justifications. They assume menstrual cycle was a curse for women and because of this curse she might get punishment in form of bleeding.

The time has passed, era has changed, medical science has become successful in the field of anatomy and physiology of the body where researchers got a chance to see the human body as it is, and explore the parts of the body. Medical practitioners again show the interest to review the anatomy and physiology of the reproductive system.

Contemporary time period justified itself and developed many theories which are useful in these present days and now women are aware about their special days and take good care of themselves and on the other hand drawbacks of modernization also appeared. Although burden of household work reduces but stress of modernity increases, families

are nuclear and women are not getting proper guidance from their elders as well as not getting desired care which every women truly deserves and this is the cause of increase in the rate of problems related with menstrual phase. At this point of time it is assumed that there is again a need to revise the pattern of life style and understand the self by the practices of *Yoga*.

The days of menstruation are like four holidays, the days for rest, the days for self-analysis, the days to sit with self and discover inner power, improve own will and convert it into willpower. It is for understanding one's own hormonal changes, learn to read body and mind like a book, cherish one's own company, smile with inner peace and inner love, not feel the pain instead feel the joy, and happiness. This is possible if women work hard to forget her pain and realised her worth, and start to respect her dignity.

It is well known that during *Rajaḥsraṇkāla* female are not allow to do makeup, not even bath, she neither walk fast nor speak etc. In this situation if a normal human being live in normal days then suddenly take bath and be ready like normal days then definitely she will give a healthy and happy look.

Discussion on Myths Related to Menstruation

The mythological tale of *Indra* and some *Paurāṇic* concepts showed that these era has some lope holes and encoded logic with tales and rituals. Some are made to protect human beings and some are made to create fear among human beings. The Tale of *Indra* explores the two facts related to menstruation. First one is to live with menstruation with care, live in a hidden place which means live in an isolated place for self-care and self-protection. Another fact is *Indra* secretly worships *Vīṣṇu* (**Kashyap, 2014, p. 174-178**) in his mind to get rid of his sin therefore women should also work on their purification of mind during menstruation.

Moon and Menstruation

There is a deep relation of Moon and menstruation found in the texts where each and every day of Hindu calendar, months, weeks and day and night keeps its own importance and is directly related with menarche (**Ghosh, 1977, p. 37-49**). Here, it was disclosed about the fortune of the girl, health condition, and life during womanhood. The full Moon is the best time for menarche and the worst time for menarche is no Moon (**Ghosh, 1977, p. 37-40**).

Ancient Texts

The scriptures of *Saṁhita* and *Purāṇa* supports the narration of sin of *Indra* and classified the four days of menstruation as a days of *Cāṇḍālī*, *Brahmaghātini*, washerwomen, and fourth day after menstrual bath women become pure (**Goyanka, (1994, p. 729)**). These terms do not provide its actual meaning but are further adopted as myths and still people believe and continue without any awareness or knowledge. Avoid to touch, to look or gaze, (**Wood & Subrahmanyam, 1911, p. 142**) kitchen and worship work, (**Dutt, 1906, p. 272**) to talk, with menstruating women. Further menstruating women were not allow to sing, to laugh, to apply makeup and accessories for secure her health related facts but without knowing the actual reason people and specially old women of modern and contemporary era also agreed with traditional faith system and even not questioned on it. So the women carry forward these things to the next generation without any research to find out the deep meaning inside these tales.

The text of *Upaniṣada* said about the menstrual fluid i.e. *Rajasa* (**Ayyaṅgār and Śāstrī, 1938, p. 353**) which is considered as a Sun (**Ayyaṅgār and Śāstrī, 1938, p. 165**) and when it mingled with the *Retas* the state of *Rāja-Yoga* may achieve and it is time for complete celibacy.

The tradition of Jainism, Islamic, and Christian community treat women as impure beings and treat her as evil and advise her to not to see towards sky, clouds, foods, temples, other human beings. Otherwise these things will be negatively affected. The tradition of Buddhism, (**Bhartiya, 2013, p. 524**) Tantric (**Chawla, 1994, p. 2817**) and Sikhism (**Sridhar, 2019, p. 40**) are the only traditions which accepts the women with their menstruation and allow her to do the worship, chanting, meditation, serve to the humanity and nature in form of donation and spread the knowledge of *Dharma* all thirty days of the month.

The region of south and east part of India celebrates menstruation as a small marriage of the girl. At some places, it is known as the Half-Sari festival, *Nuwa Tuloni*, and *Kunikalyānam*. Here, people give a separate, neat, clean, comfortable space to the girl and her relatives come to meet her and congratulate her for reproductive age. Here some dishes are provided to the girl made by jaggery and sesame oil. After the fifth or seventh day in the ceremony of menstrual bath, people provide new clothes especially first Sari,

jewellery, fruits, and dry fruits to the girl. People bring gifts and accessories for girls and celebrate at a grand level.

Spiritual Leaders of Contemporary Era

The leaders of the contemporary era openly talk about the menstruation and treat it as a natural phenomenon in the female body. They tried to make people aware and provide enough respect, enough care for women's health during their menstruation. The spiritual leaders asked women to meditate more and more during this time and utilise this golden time for self-growth and sharpen the state of mind and make smart decisions.

Further it was found that women are exempted from all the activities and not discriminated against, ancient mythological facts were developed to secure women not to hurt them. Indian culture understands the worth of the women and respect her dignity and fulfil her requirements in the form of monthly rest.

Discussion on Role of Yoga

Practices of *Yoga* included a healthy lifestyle, healthy eating habit, some gestures, postures, *Prāṇyāma*, *Dhyāna* and teachings of *Yoga Nidrā* etc. But these areas are also affected by the age, body type, and maturity level of women and the nature of her body. In *Yoga* there were different practices developed for each and every type of person. *Yoga* keeps faith only in humanity and provides a state of bliss to every *Jīva* and treats everyone equally and as one.

Yoga believes that the world is made by one supreme power, everyone is a creation of that one, in the end they merge with one. The one supreme power is perfect, complete and whole. *Yoga* never discriminates on the basis of gender, caste, religion, status etc. *Yoga* talks about to take everyone together. Therefore, *Yoga* is also availing itself for women during her menstrual phase, her special days.

Before going to the practices of *Yoga* there is a need to understand the reproductive system of women because during menstrual phase there are many signs and symptoms that appear and due to hormonal changes women would not be able to understand her mood swings, not able to read the requirements of the body and mind. If women ignore rest and do not take proper nutrition and sleep, even do not sit with herself then her body reacts and does the same with her and rejects her voices and start to give her pain or stress

which is directly or indirectly related with her systems of body which get affected adversely.

Yoga believes in three types of bodies: *Sthūla*, *Sūkṣma* and *Kāraṇa Śarīra*. During the menstrual phase women also have the ability to touch the sky of spirituality but due to her ignorance towards her body, it leads her to pain and rigidity. *Yoga* has many options and practices to give women strength so that she may regain her inner wisdom and understand the chances of ascension in every menstrual phase. During menstrual phase she might be able to reach *Sūkṣm* and *Kāraṇa Śarīra* and read her own *Prāṇamaya Kośa* and other *Kōsa* where all secrets of life are assembled in form of psychic powers which may further helpful to her in next journey of spirituality.

Yoga is developed for the purification of *Citta* and to attain the state of liberation. Where the menstrual phase is related to purification of the body and creation. When the body purifies itself during menstrual phase by the help of nature then practices of *Yoga* help to purify the mind. After that, the creation which takes place and the upcoming soul which take birth will be full of qualities of spirituality and *Satva Guṇa*. It is necessary to educate women on the teachings of *Yoga* because she will be the first teacher to the upcoming generation and to teach the right knowledge she has to learn the right things.

The path of *Yoga* leads every being to the path of *Dharma* which helps to understand the self and differentiate between right and wrong in life and follow the right things. During the menstrual phase the practices of *Yoga* help a woman to take proper rest through *Yoga Nidra*, strengthen her emotions through practices of *Pratyāhāra*, purify the mind through meditation and increase awareness through the concentration on breathing.

6.3 Summary

The aim of the research was to see the ancient menstruation ethics from the perspective of *Yoga*. It showed many aspects of how *Yoga* helps to utilise these ethics in a different way and convert stress days into happy days. Provide women peace of mind and spiritual strength.

Objective of this research was to review the ancient menstruation ethics, which are known as myths in the present days. For compilation of the myths it became necessary to understand the anatomy and physiology of female reproductive system, study it over and explore the reality behind these discrimination with women during her special days. The

compilation of mythological facts is fulfilled with required knowledge from different subsets of era.

One objective was related to those Yogic practices which can be done during the menstrual phase and have been studied further and fulfilled the requirements of the research. Women may awaken their inner self by these Yogic practices.

Another objective of the research was fulfilled which was related to studying the Role of *Yogic* practices on GMP. It has been seen and justified. The set of *Yogic* practices on signs and symptoms which occur during the menstrual phase was successful and helpful to reduce the GMP.

And the last objective of the research was to do a Random Control Trial study between two groups to see the practical impact of *Yogic* practices on GMP on the target population. Through the online mode class it has been successfully conducted.

In the last chapter conclusion are discussed.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

- 7.1 Conclusion
- 7.2 Summary
- 7.3 Limitations
- 7.4 Suggestions

Chapter 7

CONCLUSION

7.1 Conclusions

The present study was an exploration of the ancient ways of understanding the physical body of the woman and tried to provide her knowledge of self-care and health. The study explored some mythological facts which simultaneously go with the menstrual phase.

The research begins with the aim to find out the facts related to menstruation, which includes physical, psychological, spiritual and social facts. Initially menstruation is explained from the point of view of *Āyurveda* and then briefly explained from the modern and contemporary perspective where physical and psychological perspectives are mentioned and analysed. In chapter two, the literature review summed up to develop a questionnaire and fulfil the further work and objectives. Chapter three described the methodology related to the research work. Then chapter four tried to compile the mythological facts related to menstruation, which include social and spiritual facts concerning menstruation. Chapter five attempts to describe the role of *Yoga* on General Menstrual Problems (GMP) and simultaneously search out the relation of *Yoga* with ancient menstrual ethics.

The main findings of this research are as follow:

Chapter One: Introduction

- *Āyurveda* clearly explains the menstrual phase and mentions which kind of lifestyle women should adopt; she should take care of herself with concern and precaution. She needs to educate herself to understand the phenomenon of the body.
- *Āyurveda* mentions that women should not apply *Kājal*, should not wear accessories, avoid luxury lifestyle and follow the *Sātvik* way of living during these four days. Not completely, but it is somehow similar to the lifestyle of a practitioner of *Yoga*. Where the practitioner learns to follow *Sātvik* food, *Sātvik* cloths, *Sātvik* thoughts and surrender to nature. Ancient saints of India knew that women had the heavy duties and responsibilities of the family and household works, by her biological creation the feeling of serving the family and the humanity of her heart does not allow her to take rest and break from her duties.

She would even actively take part in the worships and spiritual activities which included the heavy work which affect the body during menstrual phase that is why saints make some rules for menstruating women and asked her to live in isolated place and utilise these days as a vacation from all set of duties and responsibilities and provide some rest to body and mind. They never denied practicing the mental process or spiritual practices; only physical practices were prohibited.

- The culture from other countries were also unaware about the menstrual phase. Philosophers like Aristotle and Hippocrates were also confused about this natural phenomenon and consider menstruating women as giant. They assumed that the woman was a sinner and because of her sin she had menstruations. Further they also believed that if women suppress the bleeding then she starts to bleed from the nostrils.
- They also assumed that the size of the womb is liable for heavy or less bleeding, it means the womb has a wider mouth then bleeding will be heavy or similarly, if a womb has a narrow mouth then bleeding will be less. Hippocrates was unaware about the menstrual blood and he considered the menstrual blood as a flesh of the woman's body which rinsed from the womb.
- During the era of Hippocrates, it was also an acceptable fact that people believed that if women faced heavy bleeding then they applied a large size of cup on her breast so that her menstrual blood could convert into breast milk. It means there was an assumption that menstrual blood could convert into breast milk.
- Modern medicine in the present scenario clearly justify each and every phase of the menstruation cycle and explore the role of hormones in women's bodies. Menarche, ovulation, pregnancy, menstrual disorders and irregularities due to hormonal imbalance theories were developed by modern science but still there is need to work from the *Āyurvedic* perspective.

Chapter Two: Review on Literature

- During literature review it was found that the menstrual phase was an important part of women's life. Women are a very important part in every era however it was also found that there is a negative and positive side to walking together. One side showed the rudeness of the society and another part showed the hidden care. One side showed loneliness and another side showed peace.

- Menstrual phase is an important time where women are allowed to see only her husband after menstrual bath to get the blissful, healthy, lucky child as her husband.
- It was also found that men should go to their wife after her menstrual bath to make her happy and fulfil her desires otherwise he would fall into sin.
- Many texts and research papers showed that the menstrual phase is not an ordinary phase and should not be ignored at any cost.

Chapter Three: Research Method

- It is part of the research methodology.

Chapter Four: Menstruation Related Myths in Different Subsets of Era

- Myths are not the backward thoughts which are fictitious or imaginary tales, rather than hidden phenomena. If one understands the phenomenon with developed intellect and wide perspective then the person is able to decode the hidden truth behind the mythological tales.
- The Tale of *Indra* clearly indicates that women were innocent and agrees to bear the one-fourth sin of *Indra*. *Indra* hide himself in the flower with whole portion of sin and he mentally worshipped the lord *Viṣṇu*. Whereas women bear only one-fourth of the sin then it is contradictory to stop women for mental spiritual practices. Rather it is advisable that women may continue with her spiritual practices and mental worship during her menstrual phase as *Indra* did.
- *Purāṇa*, *Upṇisad* and *Śmṛti* consider menstrual phase as an impure process in women body and nobody is either allowed to see or talk to or thought about the menstruating women, if they do so, they will have committed the sin and fall into the hell. It shows that there is hidden aspect which may create a fear among the people to protect the women from the household works and sexual activities, or it may be free her to realise her spiritual worth or may be both.
- In ancient texts it is also mentioned that if people disturb the menstruating women and not provide her peace for four days and not behave according to the rules and regulations, they will become sinner and impure and to get the purity back they have to do some rituals to attain the purity like *Prajāpatya* rite, half bath, full bath, or fasting etc.

- It also clearly mentions that if people get involved physically with menstruating women they will become a sinner and the person who does not go near his wife after menstrual bath he will also become sinner and impure.
- Like men are not allowed to talk, to see, to think about the menstruating women; women are also not allowed to want for men, food, spiritual things, not allowed to go out, not allowed to talk and not allowed to eat heavy *Rājsik* food.
- There is one fact that explains during *Kṛtayuga* women menstruate once in a lifetime and even after intercourse not become pregnant, she menstruates once and in later age in her lifetime and gives birth to one boy and one girl. But after the *Kṛtayuga* due some greed and attachment of male her emotional status changed and she started to menstruate every month in her life which is now generally known as reproductive age.
- Some texts said if a girl reaches menarche at her father's home then her father, elder brother, and *Kula* will fall into hell because they become the killer of a *Bhruna*. This fact may be developed at the time of *Kṛtayuga* where women menstruate only once in her lifetime and if her father fails to search a good husband for her and before getting married she reached her menarche then in future she would not be able to give birth to child because she got her menarche and menopause altogether. But in *Satyuga* to *Kaliyuga* these conditions become unnecessary because women menstruate every month and get pregnant easily after the intercourse. So it has become just a tale and burden of giving birth and restrictions that came with it become unnecessary for women and her parents.
- When the era changed, women got menarche at the age of sixteen to nineteen so she would be ready for marriage and understand the worth of the creation of a child, and be able to settle the responsibilities. But in these days an eight year old girl if reach to menarche (as it is written in the *Devi Bhāgavatam* that in *Kaliyuga* eight year old girl will face the menstruation and get pregnant) then how a child understand the marriage, responsibilities, household work, where she even do not have idea about her body structure, she even not able to understand the people except her parents or family members. Childhood marriage is the main example of these myths. Here again some changes and accurate updates are required in the ancient texts to understand the worth of a girl child and secure her future.

Chapter Five: Yogic Practices for General Menstrual Problems

- *Śarīra* and *Kośa* are the wrapping cover of the soul. Only the physical body is visible by the naked eyes but it doesn't mean that unseen bodies and unseen sheaths do not exist and affect the whole life of a person. These hidden aspects make the existence of living beings possible. The huge population of the world may not even have any idea about these unseen layers of the body. They just focus on the physical body and do all things to beautify this body but are not aware about their own mind and soul which are bound by their own *Karma*. Even people talk about the mind and aura but still they do not work for *Śarīra* and *Kośa* of the body.
- State of the *Citta* clearly defines the personality of the person, and if people are aware about their state of *Citta* (mind) and get the route of their problems, they can easily choose the path and practices of *Yoga*. It will be helpful to the person to understand the self and understand their own perception and behaviour.
- It was found that the practitioners of *Yoga* are advised to follow the simple and *Satvik* lifestyle and live alone in one hut and menstruating women are also advised to lead a simple life as much as possible and live in isolation. During the menstrual phase, the women are advised not to look at any person. Similarly the *Yogi* is also not allowed to involve in social talks, unnecessary talk and focus on their practices. People who follow the path of *Yoga* live with celibacy by body, mind and thoughts. Similarly during the menstrual phase, women also follow celibacy by body, mind and thoughts.
- The ancient ethics for *Yogi* and menstruating women seem similar. Ancient sages of India developed these ethics to uplift the consciousness of the human being whether they are men or women. They also knew that women need some physical and mental relaxation to regain their energy. Therefore, four days of menstruation are to live by herself. If she denied, then some strictness applied on her which created fear among the whole society. These further converted into some mythological tales and tried to keep women at one place for her protection, and to pamper her with natural things.
- It is a well-known fact that nature itself is a healer. The menstrual phase of women seems like nature. If she ignores the natural lifestyle then she will fail to regain energy, fall sick and her menstrual phase will be captured by some diseases. So

the women are advised to take some mental rest during the menstrual phase and leave the household work if possible.

- It is also found in recent days that families are nuclear and women have various machines to help her in her household activities. So her physical activities are somehow forbidden. Many places where machine do many household work there is need some physical and mental practices in any form whether it is dance, walk, and gym are advised to women. If we talk about the best set of practices for mental and physical fitness then *Yoga* is the most accessible option. It helps women to stay calm and relaxed during her menstrual phase and learn to strengthen her reproductive system.
- After these findings it is also observed that, during the menstrual phase women are more sensitive and cautious about their energies. She easily feels the negative and positive things in nature. Although she is forbidden to meditate and sit with herself, she is not able to realise the worth of this sensitivity, which is very powerful and able to connect her with the inner divinity.

Chapter Six: Result and Discussion

- When the questionnaires were sent to the target population it was found that many of the women were not aware about the signs and symptoms of the menstruation and ethics related to menstruation. They only knew about three and four facts, after reading the questionnaire they became aware that the menstrual phase is not just a natural phenomenon rather it is a natural process which connects them to their inner nature.
- During research it was found that not all women face all the signs and symptoms. They face a selected type of sign and symptoms every month which indicates them about their monthly nature call of bleeding. Some of them did not felt anything because of their ignorance but after the practices of *Yoga* they realised that they had some general issues with their menstruation. After *Yoga* class they realised about their inner nature, their body and mind.
- Effect of the set of Yogic practices on the GMP was successful and women became aware of the practices related to their menstruation and learned how to perform, when to perform, when to ignore, and what are the benefits of these practices.

- Mythological facts related to a questionnaire sent to a target population where it was found that many women even do not know about their inner self. There are many reasons such as pain, fatigue, lack of awareness, environment of their home, discrimination, prohibition to perform spiritual practices, and lack of practices of *Yoga*.

7.2 Summary

Research begins with the aim to see the effect of Yogic Practices on GMP and also see the effect on mythological facts. It is concluded that *Yoga* gave a positive effect on signs and symptoms of menstruation and reduced the density of the sign and symptoms. It is revealed that *Yoga* made menstruation easy and realised women that they have some hidden aspect beyond this body which affects them deeply.

Yoga also provides a positive effect on mythological facts related to menstruation in the form of awareness towards self and inner peace because the density of pain has reduced and women felt the peace and happiness around her. Women learn to sit for some moments like ten minutes to twenty minutes during her menstrual phase and she finds that her pain was the reason who made her uncomfortable during menstruation more than the bleeding and after practices of *Yoga* they felt improvement in their level of concentration, reduction in their guilt and felt relaxed.

So it was found that *Yoga* works on both body and mind. *Yoga* can reduce any kind of stress during the menstrual phase. *Yoga* may lead the women to realize her inner potential.

7.3 Limitations

- This research is bound only by the menstrual phase and mythological facts where only compilation was done from different Indian ancient texts. It was limited to Indian origin only. After thorough study, it was found that the mythological facts spread all over the world and women from other countries were also faced with similar situations as Indian women.
- Due to Covid-19 pandemic situation, this research is limited to only one state of India.
- The research work is limited to *Āsana* and *Prāṇayāma* only.

- Due to Covid-19 pandemic, this research work was conducted through online mode classes where face to face conversation and physical instructions for posture correction was not possible. It was difficult to realise the effect of the *Āsana* by the practitioner.

7.4 Suggestions

- Further research needs to explore the mythological tales from Indian villages especially from north east of India, south India, north India, *Shākta Tantra* tradition and *Shiv Tantra* tradition.
- Need to introduce the women to *Dhyāna* techniques for their spiritual growth.
- The work on the proper education about menarche and its relation with *Rati Shastra* needed to educate the young girls may be explore.
- Do's and don'ts as mentioned in ancient texts during the menstrual phase may still need rectification for upcoming teenage girls.
- Diet according to the ancient texts and its relation with the menstrual phase may be studied.
- *Dhyāna*, *Cakra* meditation, needs to be explored for menstruating women, where she may be able to heal herself and get rid of disorders related to menstruation.
- Study on concept of menstruation in *Kṛtayuga* needs further study.
- The concept of *Śarīra* and *Kośa* needs further investigation to understand the hidden phenomenon of mind and body.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Informed Consent Form

Appendix B: Questionnaire 1 General Menstrual Problems
Assessing Scale (GMPAS)

Appendix C: Questionnaire 2 Menstruation Ethics Scale (MES)

Appendix D: Permission letter for *Yoga* Classes from Chief
Medical Officer (CMO) of Raisen

Appendix E: Permission letter for *Yoga* Classes from Head of the
Department of Drawing and Painting of STRKM

Appendix F: Suggestion from Experts

Appendix G: Photographs of Online Classes

Appendix H: Data Sheet for GMPAS

Appendix I: Presentation and Publications

Appendix A

Informed Consent form

Role of Yogic Practices in General Menstrual Problems and Related Myths: A Study

Questionnaire for the assessment of the problems related to menstruation and impact of certain Yogic practices over it.

I am a Ph.D. Scholar in *Yoga*, conducting a research study on General Menstrual Problems. For asserting the role of *Yoga* in General Menstrual Problems and its assessment, a questionnaire has been prepared. You are expected to participate voluntarily in the study, so that an efficient remedy can be surfaced for special days of females and for the betterment of women hood. Your participation is completely voluntary and your name shall not be recorded in the questionnaire and your responses will be anonymous.

Name

Signature

Date

Appendix B

General Menstrual Problem Accessing Scale (GMPAS)

Introduction

Present questionnaire was developed to measure the general problems related with the menstrual phase. Here these general problems are just the signs and symptoms related to the menstrual phase which appear just before the menstruation begins or during the whole menstrual phase. This questionnaire excluded the abnormal conditions related to menstruation, so it became easy to know the general condition of the women in every monthly cycle. This questionnaire considers two dimensions of health: physical, and psychological. These terms are also the part of total health and are matters during this phase.

This questionnaire is the part of the thesis which is based on research which explored the effect of *Yoga* on General Menstrual Problems (GMP). The questionnaire represents those problems which are faced by women every month during menstruation. These problems include physical, and psychological problems.

Aims and Objectives

Aim: To know the status of awareness towards their body among women during their menstrual phase.

Objective to develop this questionnaire: To know about the total health of women during the menstrual phase where they face general problems related to menstruation in the form of appearing signs and symptoms.

Factors Which Considered for Scale

1. The Factors Influencing Menstrual Phase Physically.

1. Pain in lower abdomen
2. Pain in legs
3. Pain in back
4. Loss of appetite
5. Nausea
6. Vomiting
7. Headache
8. Constipation
9. Diarrhoea
10. Muscles spasm
11. Breast tenderness

12. Swelling in hands-legs

2. The Factors Influencing Menstrual Phase Psychologically.

1. Anger
2. Irritation
3. Impulsiveness
4. Less tolerance
5. Fatigue
6. Depressed
7. Anxiety
8. Self-respect
9. Guilt
10. Lack of concentration

Item Analysis

It has been done in three stages. In the first stage there were twenty questions related to physical, psychological, social and spiritual. After the first screening and distribution to one random group of women it was found that there is need to divide questions in four parts and prepare separate questionnaire for physical and psychological problems related to menstruation. After that the second stage screening of questionnaire begins and now prepared questionnaire send to the assistant or associate professors of esteemed field of field of *Yoga*, English, Psychology, and Gynaecologist. They advised some changes, and in the third stage those changes were applied to the questionnaire. After that the final questionnaire was prepared with an information sheet and consent form and distributed for reliability and validity.

Scale

Five Likert Scale used for close-ended questions.

Reliability and Validity of Questionnaire:

Reliability

Reliability is used to check the consistency of the result which is produced after use of the particular tool and its items. When it checks again and again on the target population and gets the similar result and it showed the consistency among the both results then the tool is considered as a reliable tool and able to use for further research work. For the present research test and retest method and internal consistency method are used.

In the very first stage, questionnaire construction and after review of literature items were finalized for the questionnaire. Time to time items were modified when internal experts

gave their valuable suggestions and then sent to the *Yoga*, English, and Psychology professors, and two Gynaecologists. They provided their valuable suggestions and comments. After review, the changes applied on the questionnaire. Further updated questionnaire was sent to the 250 women for reliability test, collecting the data twice at the interval of 30 days. For the reliability test, women of the Delhi and NCR were randomly selected and asked to fill the questionnaire, scores kept in the form of pre data and after 30 days again the same questionnaire was sent to the same group of women and received the post data. In between no yogic intervention and affirmations provided.

After collection of pre and post data, calculations were done, then applied the Guttman Split-Half Coefficient and Cronbach's Alpha method to check the reliability of the scale. These test was applied on 30 sample which was different from the control and experimental group and the result of reliability from the **Guttman Split-Half Coefficient 0.764** and from the **Cronbach's Alpha 0.741** and after see this result of reliability it was found that the questionnaire is able and ready for the further final research work and ready for distribution among the target population.

Validity

It is part of the research which showed that the tool fulfils the purpose of the research and is measurable. Validity is an important property of the measurable and reliable tool.

Content Validity

In this type of validity, it was checked that selected items were based and, after literature review, chosen for making the tool and scale. For content validity the questionnaire was sent to the expert panel of *Yoga*, English language, Psychology, and Gynaecology. After their suggestions and comments the content of the questionnaire was revised and sent to the target population for a reliability test. After confirming the reliability it becomes easy to give the conclusion and findings based upon the validity. And it also helps to explore that in which area, which depth tool can cover.

Face Validity

Present questionnaire prepared to evaluate the GMP among the 18-45 age group of women. Questionnaire intends to check the status of physical and psychological changes during menstrual phases. After receiving the data from the same group of women and it showed the consistency among the results and tool became reliable and after that work on the measurement of the tool. When it was found that the tool is capable of measuring the physical and psychological changes during menstrual phases, it fulfilled the aims of the tool.

Sample size

To conduct an experimental research there is a need for a particular area and then target a population to work with them and after that choose the sample from that population. For present research the sample size is calculated on the basis of the formula below.

T tests - Means: Difference between two independent means (two groups)

Analysis: A priori: Compute required sample size

Input:

Tail(s)	=	Two
Effect size d	=	0.5
α err prob	=	0.05
Power (1- β err prob)	=	0.47
Allocation ratio N2/N1	=	1

Output:

Noncentrality parameter δ	=	1.9364917
Critical t	=	2.0017175
Df	=	58
Sample size group 1	=	30
Sample size group 2	=	30
Total sample size	=	60
Actual power	=	0.4778965

Scale

Five Likert Scale used

Question/option	Score	A	b	c	d	e
Positive (1-22)		1	2	3	4	5
Scores (Density of General Menstrual Problems)						
<i>Maximum score</i>	110 22					
<i>Minimum score</i>						

Norms and Implications

Norms are standard points which are used for reference and they help to create comparative judgement after interpreting the scores of groups. Main characteristics of norms are average and range. With the help of norms raw data is available to interpret. Norms used as a representative of a large population.

For the Norms calculation the sample size is taken as 542 in number (women only). Norms are calculated by use of range formulas which provide the each and every question norms and overall question norms. Following tables are there:

Range= $H-L/H$

$R=5-1/5=4/5=0.8$

For each and every question:

Severe	1 - 1.8
Very high	1.9 - 2.6
High	2.7 - 3.4
Moderate	3.5 - 4.2
Low	4.3 - 5

For overall questions

Severe	22 - 39.6
Very high	39.6 - 57.2
High	57.2 - 74.8
Moderate	74.8 - 92.4
Low	92.4 - 110



Sanchi University of Buddhist-Indic Studies
Department of Yoga and Ayurveda

Neha Saini

Dr. Sham Ganpat Tikhe

Questionnaire for the Assessment of the General Problems Related to Menstruation.

This questionnaire respects your personal interests and assures you that the information provided by you will be kept **confidential**. Your cooperation is commendable for this research work because through this research work Women of the society get benefited and become aware. So, based on your personal menstrual experiences, answer without any hesitation and put a tick mark (√) on the relevant option. There are 22 factors and each has 5 options and choose only one option for each factor.

General Personal Information			
Participant's Code		Occupation	Student () Other ()
Age	18-25 () 26-35 () Above 35 ()	Education	Twelfth () Graduation () Above ()
Physical Activity	Active () Moderate active () Less active ()	General Facts Related with Menstruation	
Any disease related to Gynaecology (Menstrual cycle) or similar.	Pituitary carcinoma () Ovarian carcinoma () Carcinoma uterus () Congenital deformity () Abnormal conditions related to female reproductive organs () Other related complicated problems () None ()	Days	2-3 Day () 3-4 Day () 4-6 Day ()
		Gap	Normal () Abnormal () Both conditions ()
		Bleed	Normal () Heavy () Less ()
		Pain	Severe () Moderate () Less () No pain ()
Address.....District.....Mobile no.			

1. Do you experience pain in your lower abdomen during menstruation?

A	Yes, intense pain even during a state of rest.	
B	Yes, pain followed by simple work.	
C	Pain followed by hard work.	
D	Occasionally pain.	
E	No pain.	

2. Do you have pain in the back during menstruation?

A	Yes, intense pain even during a state of rest.	
B	Yes, pain followed by simple work.	
C	Pain followed by hard work.	
D	Occasionally pain.	
E	No pain.	

3. Do you have pain in your hands and legs during menstruation?

A	Yes, intense pain even during a state of rest.	
B	Yes, pain followed by simple work.	
C	Pain followed by hard work.	
D	Occasionally pain.	
E	No pain.	

4. Do you have problems of loss of appetite during menstruation ?

A	Yes, an entire day during the whole period of menstruation.	
B	Yes, entire day but only during initial day of menstruation.	
C	Yes, during the initial part of the day of menstruation.	
D	Occasional.	
E	No, such a problem.	

5. Do you have a problem of nausea during menstruation?

A	Yes, entire day during the whole period of menstruation.	
B	Yes, entire day but only during the initial day of menstruation.	
C	Yes, during the initial part of the day of menstruation.	
D	Occasional.	
E	No, such a problem.	

6. Do you feel vomiting sensation during menstruation?

A	Yes, entire day during the whole period of menstruation.	
B	Yes, entire day but only during the initial day of menstruation.	
C	Yes, during the initial part of the day of menstruation.	
D	Occasional.	
E	No, such a problem.	

7. Do you have a problem of constipation during menstruation?

A	Yes, throughout the day during the whole duration of menstruation even during rest.	
B	Yes, during the whole day but initial days of menstruation.	
C	Yes, during the initial part of the day of menstruation.	

D	Occasional.	
E	No such problem.	

8. Do you have diarrhoea during menstruation?

A	Yes, throughout the day during the whole duration of menstruation even during rest.	
B	Yes, during the whole day but during the initial days of menstruation.	
C	Yes, during the initial part of the day of menstruation.	
D	Occasional.	
E	No such problem.	

9. Do you have a problem of headache during menstruation?

A	Yes, throughout the day during the whole duration of menstruation even during rest.	
B	Yes, during the whole day but during the initial days of menstruation.	
C	Yes, but only at the initial time of menstruation.	
D	Occasional.	
E	No such problem.	

10. Do you have muscle spasm during menstruation?

A	Yes, severe spasms even during resting condition.	
B	Yes, spasms during whole day but only initial days of menstruation.	
C	Yes, whole days of menstruation.	
D	Occasional.	
E	No such problem.	

11. Do you have a problem of breast tendering during menstruation?

A	Yes, severe tendering even during resting conditions.	
B	Yes, tendering during the whole day but only initial days of menstruation.	
C	Yes, tendering whole days of menstruation.	
D	Occasional.	
E	No such problem.	

12. Do you have a problem of swelling in your hands-legs during menstruation?

A	Yes, swelling occurs due to which daily routine gets affected.	
B	Swelling occurs due to which daily routine gets affected but only for a period of time.	
C	Yes, swelling occurs but does not affect daily routine.	
D	Swelling occurs occasionally but daily routine is not affected.	
E	Nothing like this happens.	

13. Does your mood change into anger during menstruation?

A	Yes, mood changes but not able to be controlled even after effort.	
B	Mood changes but it gets restrained while controlling.	
C	Mood changes but self-restraint.	
D	It happens occasionally but there is also restraint on these feelings.	
E	No, the mood remains like normal days.	

14. Does your mood change into irritation during menstruation?

A	Yes, mood changes but not able to be controlled even after effort.	
B	Mood changes but it gets restrained while controlling.	
C	Mood changes but self-restraint.	
D	It happens occasionally but there is also restraint on these feelings.	
E	No, the mood remains like normal days.	

15. Does your mood change into impulsiveness during menstruation?

A	Yes, mood changes but not able to be controlled even after effort.	
B	Mood changes but it gets restrained while controlling.	
C	Mood changes but self-restraint.	
D	It happens occasionally but there is also restraint on these feelings.	
E	No, the mood remains like normal days.	

16. Does your mood change into less tolerance during menstruation?

A	Yes, mood changes but not able to be controlled even after effort.	
B	Mood changes but it gets restrained while controlling.	
C	Mood changes but self-restraint.	
D	It happens occasionally but there is also restraint on these feelings.	
E	No, the mood remains like normal days.	

17. Do you feel fatigue during menstruation?

A	Yes, fatigue persists throughout.	
B	Initially fatigue persists, but reduces by rest and intake of healthy food.	
C	Fatigue persists and it reduces itself.	
D	Occasionally I feel fatigued.	
E	No, it remains like a normal day.	

18. Do you feel depressed during menstruation?

A	Yes, a state of depression lasts and influences.	
B	Depression occurs but does not affect.	
C	Depression affects only for a limited period and then becomes normal.	
D	Occasionally this happens.	
E	No, it remains like a normal day.	

19. Do you feel anxiety during menstruation?

A	Yes, the mind is engaged throughout the day in multiple subjects.	
B	Yes, the mind gets engaged in worries, but after efforts it can be controlled.	
C	Feel anxious but it gets pacified.	
D	The situation of anxiety rarely comes.	
E	No, I don't feel anxious.	

20. Do you feel low self-respect during menstruation?

A	Yes, the feeling of lack of self-esteem but it could not be rectified through thoughts.	
B	The feeling of lack of self-esteem towards self but it can be rectified by thought.	

C	Lack of self-esteem but it ends itself.	
D	Occasionally it felt.	
E	No, never felt.	

21. Do you feel guilty during menstruation?

A	Yes, the feeling of guilt is there but it could not be rectified through thoughts.	
B	The feeling of guilt towards self but it can be rectified by thought.	
C	Feeling of guilt occurs but it ends itself.	
D	Occasionally it felt.	
E	No, never felt.	

22. Do you feel the lack of attention while doing any work during menstruation?

A	Due to attention to pain and clothes feels low concentration in any work.	
B	Due to more attention on clothes less than pain, I feel low concentration in any work.	
C	Due to pain, I feel low at work.	
D	It happens occasionally.	
E	No, it remains like a normal day.	

Appendix C

Menstruation Ethics Assessing Scale (MEAS)

Introduction

This questionnaire developed to measure the mythological facts associated with menstruation. This questionnaire considers four dimensions of the spiritual and social. These terms are also part of total health and are matters during this phase. There is a spiritual aspect related with menstruation where people and society somehow forbidden it and there was some mythological facts are also exist which are now needed to be update or needed to be accept for the sake of good health for the women who are an important entity of society and facing some general issues related to social problems in the society. This questionnaire is the part of the thesis which is based on research which explored menstruation ethics and its condition in the present time. The questionnaire represents those problems which are faced by women every month during menstruation. These problems include Social problems. This questionnaire also has the capability to touch some Spiritual aspects which women may feel during menstruation. Unconscious mind of women has the opportunity and ability to develop the inner self and merge it with a higher state of Consciousness during menstruation and whether women are aware about it or not, it was noticed by the survey.

Aim

The main aim to develop this questionnaire is to know about the mythological and spiritual facts related to menstruation.

A. The Factors Influencing Menstrual Phase Socially.

1. Discrimination
2. Worship
3. Temples
4. Separate room
5. Deprived of food

B. the factors influencing Menstruation Spiritually.

1. Happiness
2. Positivity
3. Disinterest
4. Inner peace
5. Isolate room to remain calm
6. Spend time for self-analyses
7. Spend time on interest area



Researcher
Neha Saini

Supervisor
Dr. Sham Ganpat Tikhe

Sanchi University of Buddhist-Indic Studies
Department of Yoga and Ayurveda
Questionnaire for the Assessment of the Menstruation Ethics
Related to Menstrual phase

This questionnaire respects your personal interests and assures you that the information provided by you will be kept **confidential**. Your cooperation is commendable for this research work because through this research work women of the society get benefited and become aware. So, based on your personal menstrual experiences, answer without any hesitation and put a tick mark (✓) on the relevant option. There are 21 factors and each has 5 options and choose only one option for each factor.

General Personal Information			
Participant's Code		Occupation	● Student ● Other
Age	● 18-25 ● 26-35 ● 36-45 ● Above 45	Education	● Tenth ● Twelfth ● Graduation ● Above
Address.....			
District.....			
Mobile no.			

1. Do you feel happiness within or around during menstruation time?

A	Yes, there is an inner feeling of eternal happiness.	
B	Yes, there is an inner feeling of eternal happiness persists but decreases because of pain.	
C	Inner feeling of eternal happiness decreases due to pain.	
D	No, senses are more focused towards the body so pain sensation is high.	
E	There is no such feeling.	

2. Do you know the reason for this happiness? Mention reason.

.....
.....

3. Do you feel positivity within or around during menstruation time?

A	Yes, there is an inner feeling of positivity.	
B	Yes, there is inner feeling of positivity that persists but decreases due to pain.	
C	Inner feeling of positivity decreases due to pain.	
D	No, senses are more focused towards the body so pain sensation and negativity is high.	
E	No such feeling	

4. Do You know the reason for this positivity? You can mention the reason here.

.....
.....

5. Have you ever experienced disinterest?

A	Yes, experienced disinterest and it lasts.	
B	Feeling of disinterest experienced only in the initial days of menstruation.	
C	Feeling of disinterest experienced whole days of menstruation.	
D	Experienced disinterest occasionally.	
E	Never experienced this.	

6. If yes, please mention the reason below.

.....
.....

7. Do you ever feel inner peace (self-concentration)?

A	Yes, the experience of eternal peace occurs and it remains and sustain also.	
B	Experience of eternal peace occurs but does not sustain for a long time.	
C	Sometimes (Rarely) experienced eternal peace gets over soon.	
D	Occasionally there is a feeling of eternal peace.	
E	No such experience happened.	

8. Based on your experience please describe your reason for inner peace.

.....
.....

9. Are you treated with discrimination during your menstruation?

A	Yes, always treated.	
B	Yes, often treated.	

C	Sometimes at some places it happened, not everywhere.	
D	Occasionally.	
E	No, it never happened.	

10. Do you know the reason of this discrimination? If yes please mention it here.

.....
.....

11. Have you ever worshiped during menstruation?

A	Yes, performed all divine works like worship, rituals and spiritual practices like normal days and no one protested.	
B	Performed spiritual practices only, like normal days but not rituals because of protest.	
C	Did not perform spiritual practices and rituals by own will.	
D	Occasionally, when the situation demands to worship only then perform rituals and spiritual practices.	
E	Never worshiped.	

12. Are you prohibited from going to temples?

A	Yes, always, and due to fear and beliefs.	
B	Yes, always, but I wish to go.	
C	Yes, but instead of going to a temple I do my spiritual practices at isolated (separate) place.	
D	Occasionally it happened.	
E	No, such things never happened.	

13. If yes, what was the reason? please mention here.

.....
.....

14. Do you live in an isolated room at your home during menses?

A	Yes, every month have to live, eat and sleep in an isolated room, and be forbidden to meet anyone.	
B	Yes, every month have to live, eat and sleep in an isolated room but not forbidden to meet anyone.	
C	Do not have to live in an isolated room but eating and sleeping are slightly differ from other days and not restriction on to go out.	
D	Occasionally, have to live in an isolated room especially during in rituals.	
E	No, such rules are not applied.	

15. If yes, please mention the reason here.

.....
.....

16. Are you deprived of food that you get on normal days?

A	Yes, in comparison normal days some varieties of food are completely restricted and some things are completely forbidden to eat.	
B	Some types of food are forbidden to eat but not restricted.	
C	After seeing physical condition, eating some things are forbidden for the whole time.	
D	After seeing the physical condition, eating some things are forbidden occasionally, but for some time only.	
E	No, Freedom to eat anything and no food is denied.	

17. Do you know which diet should be taken during menstruation?

.....
.....

18. Do you wish to live alone in an isolated room to remain calm?

A	Yes, it seems like to live in an isolated place whole time to feel calm.	
B	Intent to live in an isolated room for remain calm but initial day only.	
C	It seems at the time of rest, to live in an isolated place with calmness.	
D	Occasionally feels like live in isolated place.	
E	No, Normally this situation does not occur.	

19. If yes then do you know the reason for this?

.....
...

20. Have you ever spent your menstruation time in your area of interest?

A	Yes, spend entire day during the whole period of menstruation.	
B	Yes, spend the entire day but only during initial day of menstruation.	
C	Yes, spend but not entire day due to daily routine work.	
D	Some time spend.	
E	Never spend.	

21. Have you ever analyzed-self during menstruation?

A	Yes, entire day during the whole period of menstruation.	
B	Yes, entire day but only during the initial day of menstruation.	
C	Yes, but not the entire day due to daily routine work.	
D	Sometimes analyzed.	
E	Never analyzed.	

Appendix D Permission letter for Yoga Classes from CMO of Raisen

कार्यालय, मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी जिला रायसेन (म.प्र.)
क्र./विज्ञप्त/2019/ 7108 रायसेन दिनांक : 23/11/18
प्रति,

✓ सुश्री नेहा सैनी, पी.एच.डी. (योगा),
सांची बौद्ध भारतीय ज्ञान अध्ययन विश्वविद्यालय ग्राम बारला
जिला- रायसेन।

विषय :- एक सहयोगी को साथ लाने एवं 03 माह तक योग कक्षा कराने की अनुमति देने के संबंध में।।

—00—

उपरोक्त विषय में लेख है कि सुश्री नेहा सैनी, पी.एच.डी. (योगा) सांची बौद्ध भारतीय ज्ञान अध्ययन विश्वविद्यालय ग्राम बारला के द्वारा आवेदन दिनांक 11.11.2019 को प्रस्तुत कर निवेदन किया है, कि दिनांक 16 जनवरी 2020 से 16 अप्रैल 2020 तक योग कक्षाओं को नर्सिंग प्रशिक्षण केन्द्र रायसेन में लेने हेतु एवं सुश्री नेहा, एम.ए. योगा की छात्रा को अपने सहयोगी के रूप में साथ लाने की अनुमति तथा सुश्री नेहा सैनी, पी.एच.डी. (योगा) की अनुपस्थिति में योग कक्षा सुश्री नेहा, एम.ए. योगा को लेने हेतु अनुमति प्रदान की जाती है।

मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी,
जिला - रायसेन

प्रतिलिपि :-

1. कलेक्टर महोदय, जिला-रायसेन की ओर सूचनार्थ।
2. सांची बौद्ध भारतीय ज्ञान अध्ययन विश्वविद्यालय ग्राम बारला की ओर सूचनार्थ।
3. जनरल नर्सिंग प्रशिक्षण केन्द्र रायसेन की ओर सूचनार्थ।

मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी,
जिला - रायसेन

Appendix E Permission letter for Yoga Classes from Hod of Drawing and Painting of STRKM

Dr. Hemlata Agarwal

Associate Professor & Head

Department of Drawing & Painting

Shri Tika Ram Kanya Mahavidyalay; Aligarh (U.P.)



Ref.....

Date: 12/05/2021

Neha Saini

Ph.D. Yoga

Sanchi University of Buddhist-Indic Studies
Raisen, MP

Subject: Reply regarding the request for conduction of yoga classes in online mode with department students

Dear scholar,

This is to inform you that the **Department of Drawing and Painting, Sri T R K M, Aligarh** has granted you permission for conduction of yoga classes in online mode only as per your request. You are allowed to take yoga classes with the female students for the duration of forty-five (45) days, morning and evening (due to Covid situation batches divided into two parts). Morning batch from 15th May 2021 to 30th June 2021 at 6.30 Am to 7.30 AM and evening batch from 15th May to 30th June 2021 on 6 PM to 7 PM.

Best wishes for your research work.


Dr Hemlata Agrawal
Asso. Prof & Head
Dept. of Drg & Ptg
Sh. T R. K. M., Aligarh

Cont. No. +91-9412672066, +91-8218807068

E.mail : hemlataagarwal19@gmail.com

Address : 7 First Floor, Kaveri Royal Apartment, Swarnjayanti Nager, Ramghat Road; Aligarh, 202001

Appendix F Suggestion from Experts

Dr. Medha Sachdev : English language

Dr. Ananda Balyogi Bhavanani : Yoga

Dr. Praseed Menon : Yoga and Psychology

Dr. Raghvendra Bhat : Yoga

Dr. Neeraj D Shah : Gynaecologist

Dr. Raka Singh : Gynaecologist

Any comments:

It is hereby verified that the questionnaire prepared by Ms. Neha Saini is alright, except for a few grammatical correction here and there. I wish her all success in the task.

Signature (digital also applicable)

Name: Dr.Medha Sachdev

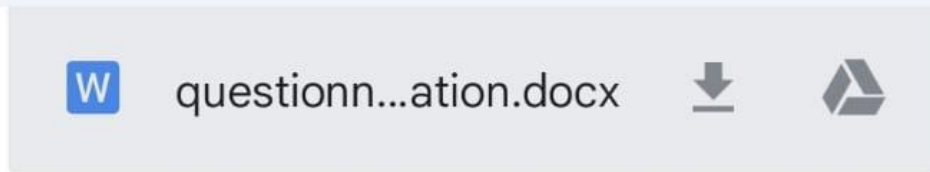
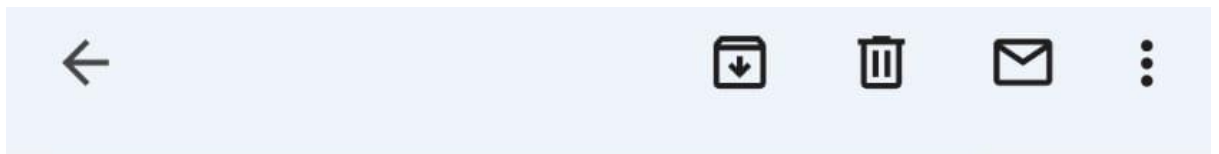
**Designation: Associate Professor, Department of English, Sri Tika Ram
Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Aligarh**

Verified Yes/No: Yes

Date and Place: 1 Oct.2021

Aligarh





Medha Sachdev 01/10/2021

to me ▾



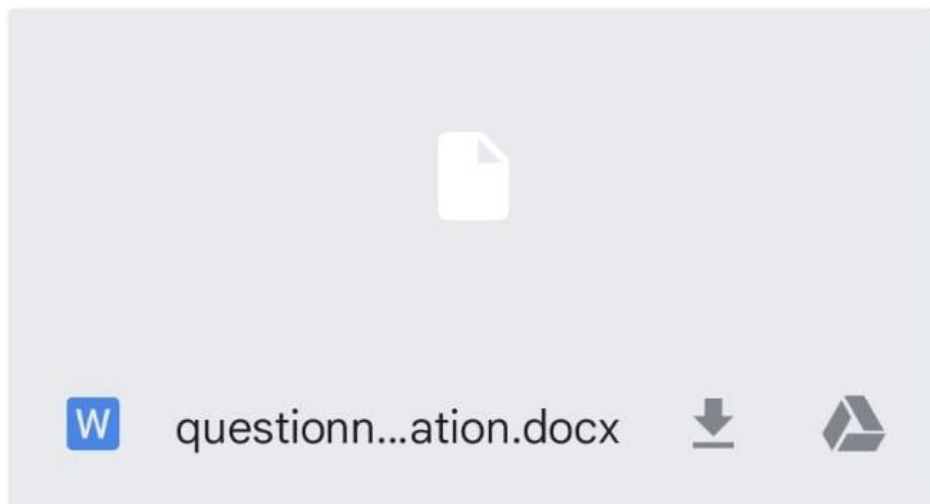
Neha, please find the attached file.

Medha Sachdev

On Mon, 27 Sep, 2021, 11:09 neha saini,

<nehha88@gmail.com> wrote:

| Password 112233



neha saini 01/10/2021

to Medha ▾



Thanks a lot. Mam

[Show quoted text](#)

1:06

VoLTE LTE1



neha saini 2 Jan

Respected Sir, Namaste
Scholar in Department of Yoga and Ayurveda.



neha saini 2 Jan

----- Forwarded message ----- From: neha
saini <nehha88@gmail.com> Date: Thu, 2 Jan



Yogacharya Dr. Anand... 11:33 am

to me



I think it is fine to keep the questions for data collection. However they may not reflect any changes and so when doing post study analysis you may have to take them out.

The other option is to keep them and add a second part to them where you ask how it has affected them personally.

For eg. Has your attitude towards such discrimination changed after the yoga practices?
with best wishes
ananda

[Hide quoted text](#)

On Thu, Jan 2, 2020 at 7:52 PM neha saini
<nehha88@gmail.com> wrote:

Respected Sir,
Namaste

Learn Ph.D. (Yoga) Scholar in Department of Yoga

10:12

Neha Saini 14 Jan
Sir password is here117799



Dr Raghavendra Bhat 2:57 pm

to me ▾



Dear Student

Everything is ok

- 1) You may prepare some Aims and Objectives before preparing questions it shall help you more.
- 2) PL re check questions sequence.
- 3) Answers in given options are required little Reformatations. Pl see if possible..

These very minor points and just it's my suggestions..

Rest all really good.

Wish all the best for your future endeavors.

Dr. Raghavendra Bhat
8956610988

[Show quoted text](#)



neha saini 3:48 pm

to Raghavendra ▾

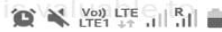


Thank you sir for valuable feedback



1:24

Thank you for your email mam .it is available
me. Parnaam mam



On Tue, 21 Jan 2020, 10:24 am Praseeda Menon,
<Praseeda@kdham.com> wrote:

Dear Neha,

My observations:

1. Title of the questionnaire needs to be bold to make it clear what it is that you are trying to find out. Right now, the title seems to get lost beneath your names.

2. This first page of the questionnaire has many medical terms. Common people may not understand. You need to make sure that you are very thorough about these terms when you explain it to people. For this, you will have to understand these terms properly from a gynecologist before test administration.

3. The first page is a bit confusing because of the way it is formatted. You need to put a very clear and visible dividing line in between to indicate that the left side and right side of the first page are different items or pieces of information.

4. Item 1: The correct English is "followed by" and "occasional pain". I would suggest you get the Q verified from a person good at English. I see grammatical mistakes. I won't be able to correct those here every time as I will be focusing on the guidelines related to psychological test preparation and administration.

5. Item 2: Better to avoid terms like anorexia or jargon words as they are not easily understandable to common people.

6. Item 4: I think this item and its options

1:24



psychological test preparation and administration.

5. Item 2: Better to avoid terms like anorexia or jargon words as they are not easily understandable to common people.

6. Item 4: I think this item and its options could be worded differently. In your initial survey while framing the items of the Q, did you find that women feel things like virtuousness or eternal happiness? If yes, then fine, you can keep it. If not, what is the basis of this item and its options?

7. Item 7: The difference between option b and c is not clear. To me, they mean the same thing.

8. Item 8: Detachment related to what? General or related to pain and discomfort? Not clear.

9. Item 9: Option c could be worded "reduces on its own" instead of "reduces itself."

10. Item 11: Option a seems not well correlated with the question.

11. I think the way your items are worded, they sound general, for example, do you feel anxiety or inner peace? I would suggest that to be very specific, before the start of Item 1, please put... During the period of your menstruation, please indicate the following... Something like this to be very specific and proper.

12. Item 13: Option c is contradictory. Lack of guilt is a good thing and not bad. Need to word the option properly. Also, guilt is not

2:57

VoLTE 26%



Garima Setia 12/04/2021

to me, Yogacharya ^



From Garima Setia • setia.garima@gmail.com
To nehha88@gmail.com
Yogacharya Dr.Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani •
yognat@gmail.com
Date 12 Apr 2021, 9:11 am
Standard encryption (TLS).
[See security details](#)

Dear Neha,
Namaste. You had mailed Dr. Ananda Sir regarding your questionnaire. I am his student and he has asked me to go through your questionnaire. I just felt 2 minor things that can be addressed in the questionnaire.

1) On Pg 2 - Question 5, Congenital deformity to be written in Hindi

2) On page 3, in the options, the 3rd option says श्रमयुक्त कार्य करने के बाद भी दर्द की अनुभूति, i just find the usage of भी slightly inappropriate in option 3 while it can be used in option 2.

Thanks & Regards
Garima



1. Do you have pain in the abdomen?

A	Yes, intense pain even during state of rest.	
B	Yes, pain followed by simple work.	
C	Pain followed by hard work.	
D	Occasionally pain.	
E	No pain.	

2. Do you have pain in the back?

A	Yes, intense pain even during state of rest.	
B	Yes, pain followed by simple work.	
C	Pain followed by hard work.	
D	Occasionally pain.	
E	No pain.	

3. Do you have pain in the legs?

A	Yes, intense pain even during state of rest.	
B	Yes, pain followed by simple work.	
C	Pain followed by hard work.	
D	Occasionally pain.	
E	No pain.	

4. Do you have problem of loss of appetite?

A	Yes, entire day during whole period of Menstruation.	
B	Yes, entire day but only during initial day of Menstruation.	
C	Yes, entire day but during only initial days.	
D	Occasional.	
E	No, such problem.	

5. Do you have problem of nausea?

A	Yes, entire day during whole period of Menstruation.	
---	--	--

Shot on OnePlus

By Dr.Pooja

all questions are right & appropriate

verified.

Dr. Nirdj D. Shah
M.D. (Gynec)
G - 9037
Laparoscopic Surgeon &
Infertility Specialist

D	Occasionally this happens.	
E	No, it remains like normal day.	

19. Do you feel anxiety?

A	Yes, mind is engaged throughout the day in multiple subjects.	
B	Yes, mind gets engaged in worries, but after efforts it can be controlled.	
C	Feel anxious but it gets pacified itself.	
D	The situation of anxiety rarely comes.	
E	No, I don't feel anxious.	

20. Do you feel low self-respect?

A	Yes, the feeling of lack of self-esteem but it could not rectify through thoughts.	
B	The feeling of lack of self-esteem towards self but it can be rectified by thought.	
C	Lack of self-esteem but it ends itself.	
D	Occasionally it felt.	
E	No, never felt.	

21. Do you feel guilty?

A	Yes, the feeling of guilt is there but it could not rectify through thoughts.	
B	The feeling of guilt towards self but it can be rectified by thought.	
C	Feeling of guilt occurs but it ends itself.	
D	Occasionally it felt.	
E	No, never felt.	

22. Do you feel the lack of concentration while doing any work?

A	Due to attention on pain and clothes feels low concentration in any work.	
B	Due to more attention on clothes less than pain, feels low concentration in any work.	
C	Due to pain, feels low in any work.	
D	It happens occasionally.	
E	No, remains like normal day.	

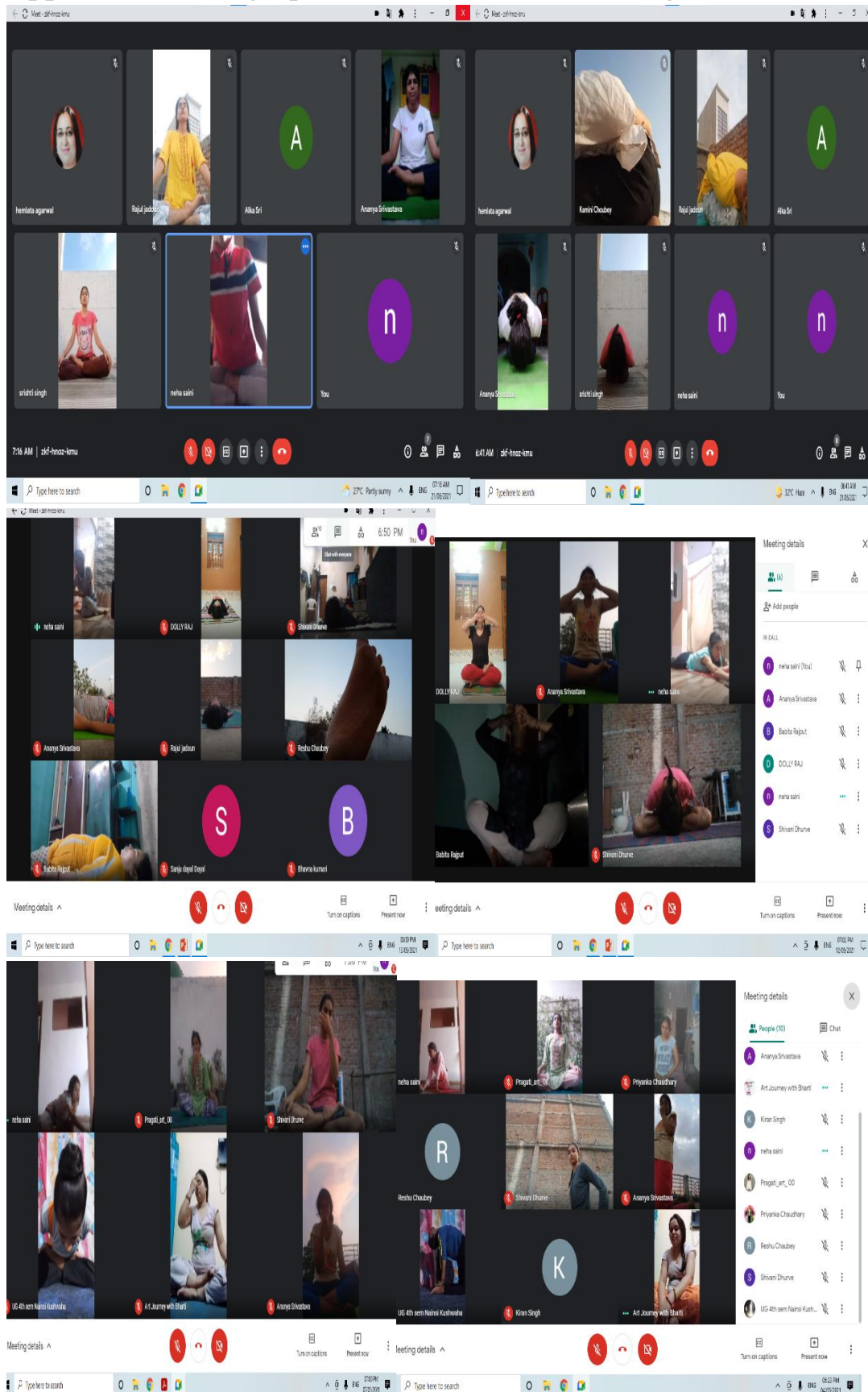
It is right

Verified

R. Singh
Dr. (Mrs.) Raka Singh
 MD (Gynae & Obs.)
 Gynaecologist & Obstetrician

1 of 1

Appendix G Photographs of Online Classes and Yoga Protocol

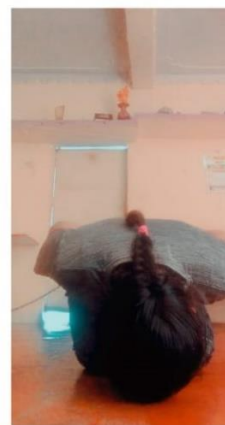
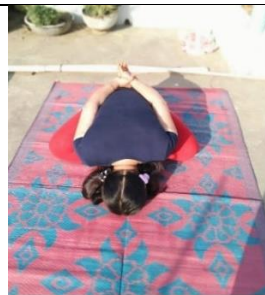




Opening prayer



Yoga Mudra



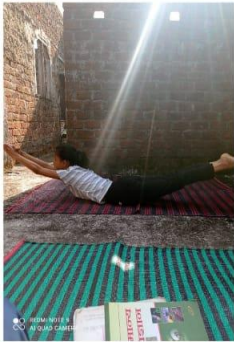
Tadasan, Triyak Tadasan



Kati chakrasan



Mandukasana	shashankasana
	
Ushtrasan	Vakrasan
   	   
Shavasana	Bhramri
	

Shalabhasana, uttanpadasana, naukasana	Dhanurasana, setubandhasana, pawanmuktasana
   	  
Mool bandha	Naadi shodhan
	

Surya namaskaar

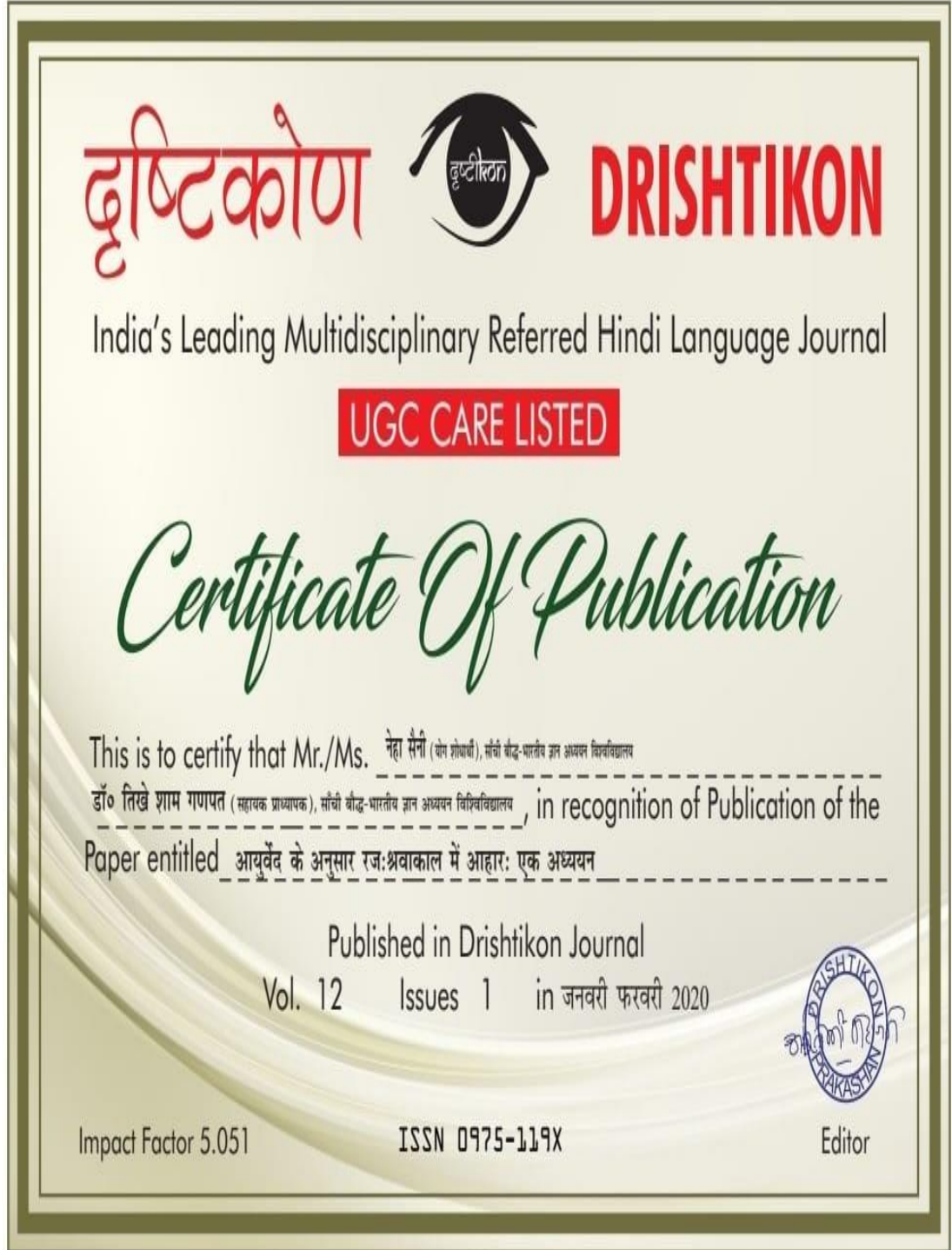


Data records : Random Control Trial

(Pre and Post Data Sheet)

Experimental Group (Intervention provide)			Control Group (Intervention not provide)		
Code	Pre Test	Post Test	Code	Pre Data	Post Data
YE1	82	88	YNE1	76	74
YE2	70	70	YNE2	91	90
YE3	83	100	YNE3	80	75
YE4	103	98	YNE4	106	108
YE5	63	98	YNE5	86	62
YE6	71	78	YNE6	63	61
YE7	69	88	YNE7	78	76
YE8	65	80	YNE8	104	102
YE9	69	90	YNE9	77	63
YE10	82	90	YNE10	108	104
YE11	84	100	YNE11	100	79
YE12	102	100	YNE12	106	108
YE13	86	90	YNE13	78	79
YE14	65	71	YNE14	109	95
YE15	79	91	YNE15	89	87
YE16	73	98	YNE16	107	102
YE17	74	88	YNE17	71	63
YE18	95	103	YNE18	69	69
YE19	79	93	YNE19	85	87
YE20	48	97	YNE20	93	94
YE21	81	90	YNE21	98	97
YE22	97	85	YNE22	88	87
YE23	89	102	YNE23	92	92
YE24	78	88	YNE24	99	100
YE25	79	88	YNE25	103	101
YE26	78	71	YNE26	110	110
YE27	43	72	YNE27	95	82
YE28	104	103	YNE28	90	87
YE29	69	78	YNE29	98	84
YE30	66	78	YNE30	87	89

Appendix I Presentation and Publication



दृष्टिकोण



DRISHTIKON

India's Leading Multidisciplinary Referred Hindi Language Journal

UGC CARE LISTED

Certificate Of Publication

This is to certify that Mr./Ms. नेहा सैनी ((योग शोधार्थी), साँची - बौद्ध भारतीय ज्ञान अध्ययन विश्वविद्यालय)

डॉ. शाम गनपत तीखे ((सहायक प्राध्यापक), साँची - बौद्ध भारतीय ज्ञान अध्ययन विश्वविद्यालय), in recognition of Publication of the

Paper entitled मासिक धर्म के पूर्व योगाभ्यास का महत्व: एक अध्ययन

Published in Drishtikon Journal

Vol. 13 Issues 1 in जनवरी फरवरी 2021



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Editor



Praxis International Journal of Social Science and Literature

ISSN: 2581-6675

CERTIFICATE OF PUBLICATION

This is to certify that

Dr. Tikhe Sham Ganpat and Neha Saini

for the research paper/article titled

Role of Yoga in Ancient Menstrual Ethics with special reference to concept of Citta śuddhi

published in **Praxis International Journal of Social Science and Literature**

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- Refereed Journal
- Peer Reviewed Journal
- Indexed Journal
- Online Journal

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Dr. Aasif R. Wani
Editor, PIJSSL

आयुर्वेद के अनुसार रजःश्रवाकाल में आहारः एक अध्ययन

नेहा सैनी

(योग शोधार्थी), साँची बौद्ध-भारतीय ज्ञान अध्ययन विश्वविद्यालय

डॉ० तिखे शाम गणपत

(सहायक प्राध्यापक), साँची बौद्ध-भारतीय ज्ञान अध्ययन विश्वविद्यालय

सारांश

मासिक धर्म नारी शरीर में होने वाली एक प्राकृतिक प्रक्रिया है, जिसमें नारी शरीर से प्रत्येक माह कुछ रक्त योनी मार्ग से निकलता है जिसे 'आर्तव' कहा जाता है एवं इस बहते हुए रक्त के साथ विमोचित अंड के अवशेष भी स्रावित होते हैं। इस प्रक्रिया में कुछ विशिष्ट हार्मोन सक्रिय रूप में क्रियाशील होते हैं। इस आर्तव अर्थात् रक्त के स्रावित होने से उस समय शरीर में रक्त की थोड़ी कमी सामान्यतः देखी जाती है तथा इस कमी को दूर करने के लिए व शरीर में पुनः संतुलन स्थापित करने के लिये उचित खान-पान, रहन-सहन व कुछ शारीरिक व मानसिक अभ्यास विशेष महत्व रखते हैं, जो कि नारी शरीर को रक्तहीनता की कमी के कारण होने वाली कठिनाई तथा उस काल विशेष में उसके शारीरिक व मानसिक कष्टों का निवारण कर सकें या कुछ कम कर सकें।

मासिक धर्म के समय एक नारी को आयुर्वेद के अनुसार किस प्रकार का आहार ग्रहण करना चाहिए जो उसकी प्रकृति के अनुकूल हो तथा जो विपरीत प्रभाव से उसकी रक्षा कर सके साथ ही शरीर में ऊर्जा व शक्ति को बनाए रखे, इन सब तथ्यों पर अध्ययन करने के लिए यह शोध पत्र प्रयासरत है।

मुख्य शब्द: मासिक धर्म, आहार, प्रकृति, प्राणार्तव।

परिचय

आयुर्वेद: आयुः एवं वेद, इन दो शब्दों से मिलकर बना है। आयुर्वेद, जिसमें आयु शब्द से तात्पर्य है जो दिन-रात बिना रुके चलती रहती है तथा वेद शब्द से तात्पर्य ऐसे ग्रन्थ या शास्त्र से है जो किसी विषय में ज्ञान कराये। अतः आयुर्वेद वह शास्त्र या ग्रन्थ है जो दिन-रात बिना रुकावट के चलने वाली जीवन प्रणाली जिसे आयु कहते हैं उसका बोध कराये। जीवन के चार पुरुषार्थ को पूर्ण करने के लिए आयु अत्यंत आवश्यक है। आयु चार भागों में विभाजित है- हित आयु, अहित आयु, सुख आयु एवं दुःख आयु। (श्रीमाल, २०१७)

आयुर्वेद के अनुसार जब व्यक्ति के सभी दोष (वात, पित्त, कफ), सभी अग्नियाँ (सात धातुओं की अग्नि, पंच तत्वों की अग्नि, जठराग्नि), सभी धातु (रस, रक्त, मेद, मांस, अस्थि, मज्जा, वीर्य), सभी मल (स्वेद, पुरीश, मूत्र) अपनी साम्यावस्था में हों तथा उसकी सभी इन्द्रियाँ (मन, पंच कर्मेन्द्रिय, पंच ज्ञानेन्द्रिय) संतुष्ट व आत्मा प्रसन्न हो तब वह व्यक्ति स्वस्थ कहलाता है। (श्रीमाल, २०१७)

आयुर्वेद इस प्रयोजन के साथ ही विकसित हुआ है कि किस प्रकार से स्वस्थ व्यक्ति के स्वास्थ्य की रक्षा की जाए एवं जिनके स्वास्थ्य के स्तर में गिरावट आई है, उनके स्वास्थ्य को कैसे पुनर्स्थापित किया जाये। आयुर्वेद शरीर के अस्वस्थ होने पर ही व्यक्ति को अस्वस्थ नहीं मानता अपितु मन के विकारों के उभरने पर भी वह व्यक्ति को समान रूप से अस्वस्थ ही मानता है, क्योंकि सामान्यतः ऐसा होता है कि शरीर तो हृष्ट-पुष्ट होता है, जिसके कारण बाह्य तौर पर व्यक्ति स्वस्थ व प्रसन्न नजर आता है, किन्तु यदि उसके मन को टटोला जाये तो वह व्यक्ति अधीर, अशांत तथा विकारों से ग्रसित पाया जाता है। इसका प्रभाव आने वाले समय में उसके शरीर पर भी दिखने लगता है। अतः आयुर्वेद सम्पूर्ण शरीर के साथ-साथ मन के भी सभी आयामों की चिकित्सा पर ध्यान देता है।

इसी प्रकार आयुर्वेद में नारी शरीर के लिए भी विशेष स्थान है, क्योंकि नारी समाज का वह अंग है जो सृष्टि निर्माण कार्य में सबसे बड़ा योगदान देती है। नारी शरीर की संरचना में पुरुष की अपेक्षा अतिरिक्त क्रियाएं भी संपन्न होती हैं। जिसमें मासिक चक्र, गर्भाधान, गर्भावस्था आदि शामिल हैं। साथ-साथ आयुर्वेद में एक विशेष स्थान आहार को भी दिया गया है, जिसमें ऋतु, स्थान, काल एवं प्रकृति के अनुसार लिये जाने वाले आहार (पथ्य- अपथ्य) का भी वर्णन है।

मासिक धर्म: प्रत्येक माह नारी शरीर एक प्रक्रिया से गुजरता है जिसे मासिक धर्म कहते हैं। आयुर्वेद में यही प्रक्रिया 'आर्तव चक्र' नाम से जानी जाती है। यह प्रक्रिया प्रत्येक माह में सामान्यतः अट्ठाईस दिन के अंतराल पर होती है, एवं ऐसा माना जाता है कि यह चंद्रमा की कला जो अट्ठाईस दिन की अवधि

के समान है तथा प्रकृति की गणना व विशेष कालचक्र के नियम को दर्शाता है उसके अनुसार भी आर्तव चक्र को 'चंद्रमास' कहा जाता है (तिवारी, २०१७)। इस आर्तवचक्र में तीन चरण हैं जिन्हें प्रायः रजःश्रवा काल, ऋतुकाल, ऋतुव्यतीतकाल (तिवारी, २०१७)।¹ आदि नाम से जाना जाता है।

रजःश्रवा कालः मासिक चक्र में रजःश्रवा काल प्रारंभ में तीन से पांच दिन तक चलता है तथा इस काल में आर्तव विमोचिनी से आर्तव स्रावित होता है जिसमें रक्त के साथ अण्डबीज व कुछ लसीका द्रव भी स्रावित होता है। क्योंकि इस काल में वात दोष की अधिकता होती है, इसलिए वातकारक आहार इस समय ग्रहण करने के लिए मनाही होती है इसका अनुसरण न करने से वात दोष कुपित होकर रोग होने की सम्भावना बढ़ जाती है।

ऋतुकालः मासिक चक्र में ऋतुकाल रजःश्रवा काल के बाद आता है जो बारह से सोलह दिन का होता है। यह समय गर्भाधान के लिए उत्तम माना जाता है, क्योंकि योनि इस समय अपने मुख के स्थान पर खुली रहती है तथा वीर्य इस काल में आसानी से इस मुख के द्वारा योनि में प्रवेश कर जाता है तथा उपयुक्त परिस्थिति मिलने पर गर्भधारण हो जाता है। इस काल में कफ दोष प्रबल होता है।

ऋतुव्यतीतकालः मासिक चक्र में ऋतुव्यतीत काल सबसे अंत में आता है तथा इसके पश्चात् फिर से रजःश्रवा काल प्रारंभ हो जाता है। यह काल नौ से तेरह दिन का होता है इस समय योनि का मुख बंद हो जाता है। पित्त दोष इस काल में प्रबल होता है।

रजःश्रवा काल से जुड़ी सामान्य समस्याएं: रजःश्रवा काल के समय कुछ सामान्य समस्याएँ अक्सर देखने में आती हैं। जैसे शारीरिक तौर पर पेट के निचले हिस्से में दर्द होना, हाथ-पैरों में सूजन आना, स्तन का कड़ा होना, पैरों में दर्द होना, कब्ज या दस्त, मितली-उल्टी, कमर व निचले हिस्से में दर्द होना, सिरदर्द की शिकायत का बने रहना, थकान आदि (अनुशिया, मुरुगन, २०१३)।² इसके साथ ही हार्मोन में बदलाव के कारण मन भी प्रभावित होता है जिसके फलस्वरूप व्यवहार में भी कुछ परिवर्तन दिखाई देने लगता है जैसे - अवसाद, तनाव, चिड़चिड़ापन, चिंता आदि (अनुशिया, मुरुगन, २०१३)।³ इन सभी को प्रागर्तव नाम से जाना जाता है जो मासिक धर्म प्रारंभ होने के समय या उससे कुछ समय पूर्व से दिखायी देने लगते हैं।

प्रकृति: आयुर्वेद में सामान्यतः तीन प्रकार की प्रकृति बतायी गयी है जिसके अनुसार एक व्यक्ति की शारीरिक संरचना, व्यक्तित्व का निर्माण होता है तथा साथ ही व्यक्ति के भाव व व्यवहार का पूर्वानुमान लगाया जा सकता है। प्रकृति के अनुकूल व्यवहार व जीवन शैली से व्यक्ति दीर्घजीवी हो सकता है। प्रकृति तीन प्रकार की है जो दोष नाम से जानी जाती है वात-पित्त-कफ। व्यक्ति का आहार भी उसकी प्रकृति के अनुकूल ही होना चाहिए जिससे वह स्वस्थ जीवन-यापन कर सके। आयुर्वेद में वर्णित आहार में भी कई प्रकार के गुण पाए जाते हैं जो दोष के अनुसार विभाजित भी हैं। जिनका वर्णन आगे किया गया है।

वात: वात अर्थात् वायु। जो अमूर्त है जिसका कोई रूप या आकृति नहीं है, किन्तु इसके अपने गुण हैं जो इसका भान कराते हैं। वात के गुण हैं रुक्षता, शीतता, लघुता, विशदता, गति और अमूर्तता। वात के कुछ कर्म होते हैं जिसमें उत्साह, श्वास-प्रश्वास, उच्छ्वास, धातु को समान गति प्रदान करना, मलों का विसर्जन करना, मन, इन्द्रिय, वाणी इत्यादि को गति प्रदान कर प्रभावित करना है। (श्रीमाल, २०१७)।⁴ आर्तव एवं गर्भ को भी योनि मार्ग से बाहर निकालने का काम वात का ही है।

पित्त: पित्त शरीर को धारण करने के कारण धातु एवं दोष दोनों माना गया है। उष्णता, तीक्ष्णता, लघुता, द्रवता, विस्त्र गंध, शुक्लरहित वर्ण, सर, अम्ल, कटु रस आदि ये पित्त के अपने गुण हैं जो उसे बाकी दोषों से अलग बनाते हैं। पित्त के कर्म में पाचन, लोचन, ताप, दाह, प्यास, भूख, प्रसन्नता, मृदुता, बुद्धि उत्पन्न करना आदि शामिल हैं (श्रीमाल, २०१७)।⁵

कफ: यह श्लेष्मा धातु है जो शरीर के पोषण के लिए आवश्यक है। गुरु, शीत, मृदु, स्निग्ध, मधुर, पिच्छिल आदि कफ के गुण हैं। कफ के कर्म में शामिल हैं स्नेह, बन्ध, दृढ़ता, गुरुता, वृषता, बल, क्षमा, धैर्य एवं अलोभ (श्रीमाल, २०१७)।⁶

आहार: आचार्य चरक के अनुसार जो भी मुख के द्वारा ग्रहण किया जा सके वह आहार है। इसमें स्थावर एवं जंगम दो प्रकार के आहार समूह हैं। स्थावर में वह आहार श्रेणी आती है जिसमें पादप जगत से प्राप्त आहार शामिल है जो एक स्थान से दूसरे स्थान पर स्वयं स्थानांतरित नहीं हो सकते हैं। इसके विपरीत जंगम में वह आहार श्रेणी आती है जो पशु जगत से प्राप्त आहार है जो एक स्थान से दूसरे स्थान पर स्वयं जा सकते हैं। ये आहार समूह दो प्रकार से प्रभाव डालते हैं हित एवं अहित। हित से तात्पर्य है कि वो आहार समूह जो भविष्य में शरीर को लाभ पहुँचाएंगे तथा जिनका अहित से तात्पर्य है वो आहार समूह जो भविष्य में रोग के रूप में शरीर को अनावश्यक हानि पहुँचाएंगे (त्रिपाठी, २०१९)।⁷

स्वाद के आधार पर भी भोजन को षट् भाग मधुर, अम्ल, लवण, कटु, तिक्त और कषाय में बाँट दिया गया है। इसके अलावा आहार को गुण के आधार पर भी बारह भागों में बाँटा गया है- गुरु, लघु, उष्ण, शीत, पिच्छिल, स्निग्ध, रुक्ष, विषद, तीक्ष्ण, मृदु, स्थूल, सूक्ष्म (त्रिपाठी, २०१९)।⁸ किन्तु किस प्रकार का आहार किस व्यक्ति के लिए लाभदायक है यह व्यक्ति की प्रकृति पर निर्भर करता है तथा प्रकृति के विपरीत आहार लेने से स्वास्थ्य पर प्रतिकूल असर पड़ता है जिसके कारण शरीर में विजातीय द्रव्य एकत्र होने लगते हैं और रोग का रूप ले लेते हैं। व्यक्ति की प्रकृति के अनुसार आहार निम्नलिखित है:

वात प्रकृति के लिए आहार: वात प्रकृति के व्यक्ति को ऐसा आहार लेना चाहिए जो गुणों में स्निग्ध, उष्ण, गुरु, स्थूल, मृदु, पिच्छिल और स्लक्ष्ण (त्रिपाठी, २०१९)।⁹ से परिपूर्ण हो। इसके विपरीत आहार लेने से वात दोष कुपित हो जाता है, जिसके कारण वात रोग के लक्षण शरीर में दिखने लगते हैं। वात दोष कुपित होने से व्यक्ति को जोड़ों की समस्या, श्वास लेने में दिक्कत, शरीर में रूखापन, चित्तभ्रम जैसी समस्याओं सहित अस्सी प्रकार के रोगों का सामना करना पड़ सकता है (मूर्थी, १९९३)।¹⁰

पित्त प्रकृति के लिए आहार: पित्त प्रकृति के व्यक्ति को अपने आहार समूह में पूर्ण स्निग्ध, शीत, मृदु, तिक्त, कषाय, मधुरादि (त्रिपाठी, २०१९)।¹¹ गुणों वाले पदार्थ शामिल रखने चाहिए, जिससे पित्त रोग कुपित होने से बच सके। पित्त दोष के कुपित होने से व्यक्ति को अम्लपित्त, अम्ल की अधिकता, उच्च रक्तचाप, हृदय व अमाशय में जलन, शरीर से गंध आना आदि स्वास्थ्य समस्याओं सहित चालीस प्रकार के रोगों से ग्रसित होने की संभावना रहती है (मूर्थी, १९९३)।¹²

कफ प्रकृति के लिए आहार: कफ प्रकृति के व्यक्ति को अपने आहार समूह में लघु, उष्ण, तीक्ष्ण, रुक्ष, कटु, स्थिर, एवं विषद गुणों वाले आहार को भोजन में शामिल रखना चाहिए जिससे कफ अपनी साम्य अवस्था में ही रहेगा, क्योंकि कफ के कुपित होने से शरीर में आलस्य, मोटापा, शरीर में भारीपन, एवं श्वसन तंत्र से जुड़े अन्य बीस प्रकार के रोग होने की संभावना बढ़ जाती है।

विमर्श

वर्तमान समय में नारी एक समय में ही कई जिम्मेदारियाँ एक साथ वहन करती है जिसके फलस्वरूप वह स्वयं की अनदेखी कर जाती है। ऐसे में मासिक धर्म के समय समाज की कुछ मान्यताओं के कारण वह अपनी मासिक धर्म से जुड़ी बातें न तो खुलकर कर पाती है तथा जिम्मेदारियों के चलते किसी को अपने मासिक धर्म की खबर भी नहीं होने देती। ऐसा करने पर वह जान भी नहीं पाती की कब सामान्य समस्या बड़ी बीमारी का रूप ले लेती है। इन सब कारणों के साथ-साथ एक मुख्य कारण और भी है जो मासिक धर्म से जुड़ी सामान्य समस्याओं को बढ़ा देता है और वह है विशेष आहार की समझ का अभाव, जिसके कारण शरीर में कुछ तत्वों की कमी और कुछ की अधिकता से शरीर के त्रिदोष में असंतुलन उत्पन्न हो जाता है। इस असंतुलन के कारण शरीर में पीड़ा का अनुभव व मन में अशांति का भाव उत्पन्न हो सकता है। अतः मासिक धर्म के समय एक नारी को किस प्रकार का आहार ग्रहण करना चाहिए और किस प्रकार के आहार का कुछ समय के लिए त्याग करना चाहिए जिससे वह सम्पूर्ण स्वस्थ हो सके इस बात का ज्ञान नारी को देना अत्यंत आवश्यक है।

रजःश्रवा काल के समय पथ्य: ऐसा आहार जो वात को कम करे जिसमें साली के चावल, घी, दूध को मिलाकर तैयार किया गया हविष्य, जौ व दूध को मिलाकर तैयार किया गया यवक, जिसे मिट्टी के बर्तन में या पत्तल में ग्रहण किया जा सके (गैकवाड़, २०१७)।¹³ इसके अलावा चावल, गेहूँ के आटे से बनी चपाती, रागी, दालों में तूर, सोया, मूंग, सब्जियों में गाजर, चुकंदर, शकरकंद, शिमला मिर्च, प्याज, हरी बीन्स, फलों में बेरी, पपीता, अंगूर, सूखे मेवों में बादाम, अखरोट, काजू, मसालों में कम मात्रा में धनिया, करी पत्ता, जीरा, अदरक, लहसुन, दालचीनी, सरसों, अजवाइन, हल्दी आदि, दूध, घी, मक्खन कम मात्रा में प्रयोग कर सकते हैं (सरकार, कुमार, धूमल, २०१५)।¹⁴

भोजन को उचित मात्रा में ग्रहण करना है तथा भरपेट भोजन न करके आधा पेट भोजन किया जाये। यह भोजन हल्का तथा आसानी से पचने वाला हो, एवं भोजन निश्चित समय पर ही किया जाये, न कि समय से आगे पीछे (गैकवाड़, २०१७)।¹⁵

रजःश्रवा काल के समय अपथ्य आहार: ऐसा आहार जो वात को कुपित करे या बढ़ा दे जैसे- की तीक्ष्ण, कटु व अधिक नमक-मसालेदार भोजन को मासिक धर्म के समय ग्रहण नहीं करना चाहिए (गैकवाड़, २०१७)।¹⁶ डिब्बा बंद, टिन बंद, सफेद ब्रेड, बेकरी उत्पाद, बासी भोजन, चना दाल, कच्ची दालें, तली-भुनी चीजें, अधिक मात्रा में कच्ची सब्जियों का सलाद या अंकुरित दाल, खट्टी चीजें या खट्टे फल, अनार, और कुछ सूखे मेवे आदि का त्याग करना चाहिए (सरकार, कुमार, धूमल, २०१५)।¹⁷

निष्कर्ष

प्रस्तुत शोध पत्र नारी जीवन के उस पहलु पर चर्चा करता है जो सभी के लिए एक आम विषय है किन्तु सृष्टि की निर्माण प्रक्रिया इसी विषय पर केन्द्रित है। जिसके तहत नारी को उचित मार्गदर्शन व देखरेख की आवश्यकता है जिससे वह अपने शरीर के प्रति सहज व सरल होकर अपने भीतर की क्षमता को विकसित कर सके। ऐसा करने पर वह अपने प्रजनन तंत्र को भलिभांति समझ कर उसको स्वस्थ बनाये रख सकती है।

इस शोध के माध्यम से यह पाया गया कि यदि आहार की समझ विकसित की जाये तो कई रोग व रोग के कारणों को जान कर उन से बचाव के उपाय किये जा सकते हैं। प्रकृति के अनुकूल व्यवहार व आहार सेवन से शरीर पुष्ट होता है तथा धातु पोषित होती है जिससे आर्तव भी संतुलित अवस्था में ही स्रावित होता है जिसके फलस्वरूप नारी प्रजनन तंत्र में आने वाली समस्या व हार्मोन का असंतुलन भी धीरे-धीरे समायोजित हो सकता है एवं शरीर की थकान व मन की अशांति में कमी आने लगती है और प्रागर्तव के लक्षण में भी कमी देखी जा सकती है।

अतः, परिणामस्वरूप कह सकते हैं कि मासिक धर्म के समय पथ्य-अपथ्य पर उचित ध्यान देने से नारी इस समय को सहज ही स्वीकार कर महत्व प्रदान करेगी और भावी पीढ़ी को भी यह ज्ञान विरासत स्वरूप प्रदान कर सकने में सक्षम होगी तथा साथ ही वास्तविकता व वैज्ञानिकता के तथ्यों को प्रमाणित भी कर पायेगी।

संदर्भ ग्रन्थ सूची

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मासिक धर्म के पूर्व योगाभ्यास का महत्व: एक अध्ययन

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सारांश

यह संसार एक विशेष नियम द्वारा संचालित है, जिसमें सर्जन व संहार अपने अविरोध प्रवाह में चलता रहता है। इस संसार के सृष्टि चक्र में एक प्रमुख काम नारी को दिया गया है। एक विशेष काल खंड में नारी के भीतर एक प्राकृतिक घटना जो सृजन के कर्म हेतु प्रत्येक मास घटित होती है जिसे सामान्यतः मासिक धर्म या मासिक चक्र, ऋतुस्राव, रजस्वला के नाम से जाना जाता है।

मासिक चक्र जीव की उत्पत्ति के लिए अत्यंत आवश्यक घटना है जिसके फलस्वरूप जीव को जन्म मिलता है व नारी जीव के शरीर कि उत्पत्ति में अपना मूलभूत योगदान देती है तब वह जीव जीवन के चार पुरुषार्थ को इस शरीर के माध्यम से पूरा करता है। मासिक चक्र एक सरल सी प्रतीत होने वाली जीवन देने वाली वह क्रिया है जिसको की यदि अनदेखा किया जाए तो भावी पीढ़ी की कल्पना भी सम्भव नहीं, यह मासिक चक्र जीव के भविष्य के स्वास्थ्य चरित्र व संस्कारों को प्रभावित करता है, अतः मासिक चक्र को महत्व देकर नारी शरीर को पुष्ट व स्वस्थ बनाये रखना नितांत आवश्यक है।

मासिक चक्र के दौरान नारी शरीर में वर्तमान समय में बहुत सी परेशानी देखी जाने लगी है जिसके रहते नारी जो सृष्टि की एक मजबूत ईकाई है निस्तेज एवं उर्जाहीन सी जान पड़ती है जब वह अपने मासिक धर्म के समय स्वयं के मन व शरीर के मध्य तालमेल बैठाने की कोशिश में लगी रहती है जब वह अनभिज्ञ होती है की वह अपने को अनजाने में ही स्वयं को कष्ट पहुँचा रही होती है वह कुछ शारीरिक अभ्यास, आराम व खान-पान से वह स्वयं को संभाल सकने में सक्षम हो सकती है किन्तु इन सबकी अनदेखी से वह स्वयं की ऊर्जा क्षीण कर निस्तेज सा जीवन व्यतीत कर रही है।

इन सभी तथ्यों को ध्यान में रखते हुए यह सैद्धांतिक शोध पत्र योग के कुछ चयनित अभ्यास की एक सरल श्रृंखला को प्रस्तुत करने के लिए प्रयासरत है। जिसके द्वारा समाज में नारी को जागरूक करना है तथा इस शोध का मुख्य उद्देश्य नारी को उसकी चेतना, मन व शरीर के मध्य संतुलन स्थापित कैसे करना इसका अभ्यास सिखने के लिए प्रेरित करना है।

मुख्य शब्द- सृष्टि चक्र, मासिक धर्म, योगाभ्यास।

परिचय

सृष्टि चक्र

सृष्टि कार्य ईश्वर इच्छा से होता है जिसमें प्रवृत्ति एवं पुरुष दो तत्व सम्मिलित होते हैं जिसके कारण संसार की व्युत्पत्ति होती है इनमें पुरुष प्रवृत्ति का कारण है। सृष्टि चक्र अव्यक्त से प्रारंभ होता है तथा उसके पश्चात बुद्धि, अहंकार, और इनसे पांच तन्मात्राएँ एवं पांच महाभूत आकाश, वायु, अग्नि, जल, पृथ्वी की उत्पत्ति होती है और फिर आगे ग्यारह इन्द्रियों की व्युत्पत्ति होती है।

सांख्य दर्शन में प्रकृति एवं पुरुष के संयोग से ही सृष्टि के विकास क्रम को माना है जबकि आयुर्वेद ने दोनों को एक ही तत्व माना है जिसे अव्यक्त नाम से बताया है। प्रकृति त्रिगुणात्मक है तथा जब तक सत, रज, तम की साम्यावस्था है वह मूल प्रकृति अव्यक्त ही है किन्तु जैसे ही इस पर पुरुष का प्रकाश पड़ता है वैसे ही उसके तीन गुण में असाम्यता आ जाती है और इस प्रकार प्रकृति के तीन गुणों में हलचल होने से आगे अनेको विकृति उत्पन्न होती है जो बुद्धि से लेकर पंच महाभूत एवं कर्मेन्द्रियों के रूप में प्रकट होती है और इस प्रकार सृष्टि क्रम चल पड़ता है एवं प्रकृति के चौबीस तत्वों पर भी साथ ही प्रकाश पड़ जाता है तथा पच्चीसवाँ तत्व पुरुष को माना जाता है।¹

अतः इस बात से स्पष्ट होता है की मूल प्रकृति ही जब अपनी विषमावस्था में आती है तब वह निरंतर सृष्टि में सृजन की प्रक्रिया करती रहती है जिसके फलस्वरूप आज हम इस संसार में जीवन यापन कर रहे हैं उसको देख पा रहे हैं तथा प्रकृति के सौन्दर्य एवं सानिध्य में हम अपने कर्मों का निर्वाह कर रहे हैं। प्रकृति इस मानव शरीर के माध्यम से हमें जीवन के चार पुरुषार्थ धर्म-अर्थ-काम-मोक्ष को इसी जीवन में प्राप्त करने के लिए प्रेरित करती रहती है

जिससे व्यक्ति पुरुष को प्राप्त कर सके जैसा की योगसूत्र में कहा भी गया है कि जब दृष्टा अपने स्वरूप में स्थापित हो जाता है वह ही योग है⁶ तथा यही योग का लक्ष्य भी है।

मासिक धर्म

सृष्टि क्रम की यदि बात करे तो मानव जीवन में कैसे सृष्टि क्रम घटित होता है इसका उल्लेख मासिक धर्म की अवधारणा के अंतर्गत आयुर्वेद के ग्रंथों में भली भाँति समझाया गया है जिसके द्वारा एक नारी की मुख्य भूमिका होती है एक सृष्टि से दूसरी सृष्टि का सृजन करने की जो दाम्पत्य जीवन के साथ-साथ स्वयं नारी के जीवन की भी सबसे सुखद घटना बन जाती है।

आयुर्वेद में मासिक धर्म को आर्तवचक्र, ऋतुचक्र, तथा 28 दिन का होने के कारण चन्द्रमास नाम से जाना जाता है। यह प्रत्येक मास होने वाली प्रक्रिया है जिसके अंतर्गत तीन चरण होते हैं रजश्रवा काल, ऋतुकाल एवं ऋतुव्यतीत काल⁷।

रजश्रवा काल 3 से 5 दिन का होता है जिसमें वात अधिक प्रबल होता है जिसके कारण आर्तव विमोचिनी काले गंध युक्त आर्तव को एकत्र कर योनी के माध्यम से बाहर निकलती है।⁸

ऋतुकाल 52 से 56 दिन का होता है इस समय कफ प्रबल होता है इस काल में गर्भाधान संस्कार किया जाता है इस समय योनी का मुँह खुला होता है जिससे शुक्र/बीज योनी के माध्यम से भीतर प्रवेश करता है तथा गर्भधारण होता है।⁹

ऋतुव्यतीतकाल 9 से 53 दिन का होता है इस काल में योनी में केवल संकुचन होता है तथा इस समय पित्त प्रबल होता है एवं योनी इस प्रकार बंद हो जाती है जैसे कोई फूल सूखने के बाद बंद होता है साथ ही अब शुक्र योनी के भीतर प्रवेश नहीं कर पाता।¹⁰

मासिक धर्म के लक्षण व सामान्य परेशानियाँ

मासिक धर्म के प्रक्रम को पुनः भारतीय दृष्टि से समझने की आज नितांत आवश्यकता है क्योंकि नारी जीवन में आज मासिक धर्म के समय बहुत सी परेशानियाँ प्रकट होने लगी हैं जो नारी को उसके जीवन में संतुलन स्थापित करने में बाधा बनती हैं जिसके कारण नारी अपने सामान्य क्रियाकलापों को भी करने में असहज हो जाती है।

मासिक धर्म के समय या रजश्रवा काल शुरू होने से पहले नारी के शरीर व मन में कुछ बदलाव दिखाई देने लगते हैं जिसके फलस्वरूप वह समझ पाती है की अब रक्त-प्राव का समय निकट है तथा सावधानी बरतने की आवश्यकता है। ये बदलाव कभी-कभी पीड़ादायक व दुरुखकारी होते हैं। ये बदलाव दो प्रकार से प्रभाव डालते हैं एक शारीरिक तथा दूसरा मानसिक।

शारीरिक बदलाव में हाथ पैरों में सुजन आना, स्तन का कड़ा होना, पेट के निचले हिस्से में दर्द होना, हाथ-पैरों में दर्द होना, कब्ज, दस्त, उलटी, सिरदर्द की शिकायत का बने रहना, कमर व निचले हिस्से में दर्द होना, थकान होना आदि।¹¹ मानसिक बदलाव में भावों में निरन्तर परिवर्तन होते रहना जैसी कभी गुस्सा कभी उदासी तो कभी एक दम से खुश हो जाना, अवसाद, चिंता, शांत बैठने का मन करना, तनाव, बहुत अधिक बातें करना, अचानक से रोने का मन करना आदि।¹²

ऐसा भी नहीं है कि ये सभी लक्षण एक साथ आये या सभी नारियों में एक सामान दिखाई दे अपितु इनमें से कभी-कभी ही कुछ एक लक्षण सामने आते हैं क्योंकि यह भी शरीर की व्यक्तिगत बनावट व प्रकृति पर निर्भर करता है। ये लक्षण जीवनशैली, दिनचर्या, खान-पान एवं शारीरिक क्रियाकलाप व निद्रा इत्यादि से भी प्रभावित होते हैं।¹³ यदि इनमें से किसी में भी कोई कमी पाई जाती है तो यह निश्चित तौर पर ही मासिक धर्म से जुड़े सामान्य लक्षणों को प्रभावित करते हैं और यदि लापरवाही लंबे समय तक चलती रहे तो ये लक्षण धीरे-धीरे एक दर्दनाक पीड़ा में बदलने लगते हैं।

योगाभ्यास

सामान्यतः योग के अभ्यास साधारण मनुष्य से लेकर सभी आयु, वर्ग, लिंग, जाति के व्यक्ति कर सकते हैं क्योंकि स्वस्थ रहना तथा मन व इन्द्रियों पर नियंत्रण रखना योग के अभ्यासों के द्वारा संभव है। यदि जन साधारण की बात करे तो योग के अभ्यास यम-नियम से प्रारम्भ होते हैं आसन-प्रणायाम तक जाते हैं उसके पश्चात व्यक्ति समझ पाता है की योग केवल मन व शरीर के संतुलन के लिए ही नहीं अपितु चेतना के स्तर तक जाकर परतों को खोलना भी है जिससे व्यक्ति के समक्ष जीवन का वास्तविक उद्देश्य उजागर होता है।

शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य के लिए योगाभ्यास में शामिल है स्थूल व्यायाम, सूक्ष्म व्यायाम, सूर्य नमस्कार, एवं आसन।

मानसिक स्वास्थ्य के लिए आसन में जाकर जब लम्बा रुका जाए तथा साथ ही मन-वचन-कर्म से यम व नियम का पालन किया जाये तो मन की स्थिति बदलने में समय नहीं लगता। मन के भीतर सर्दी-गर्मी, राग-द्वेष, मान-अपमान के जो भाव अंतर्निहित होते हैं वह धीरे-धीरे क्षीण होने लगते हैं जिससे मन संतुष्टि व शांति की तरफ बढ़ने लगता है। इसके अलावा प्राणायाम-प्रत्याहार एवं धारणा-ध्यान का अभ्यास पूर्णतः मन की सजगता का ही अभ्यास है।

समाज के लिए भी योगाभ्यास का महत्व है क्योंकि यम के पालन से व्यक्ति स्वयं के प्रति सजग होकर अपने आसपास के व्यक्ति की पीड़ा को भी समझने लगता है। अहिंसा आदि का भाव मन में विकसित होने से व्यक्ति के मन में अथाह मैत्री-करुणा विकसित होने लगती है। इस प्रकार वह अपने विचारों तथा इन्द्रियों को परिष्कृत करते हुए आगे बढ़ता है।

आध्यात्मिक तौर पर भी योग निर्वाण-मोक्ष की बात करता है जो जीवन का अंतिम ध्येय भी है। यह जीवन का एकमात्र सत्य है जो आया है वह जायेगा भी किन्तु जाना किस प्रकार हुआ यह बहुत आवश्यक है। शरीर के रहते यदि मोक्ष को पा लिया गया तो समझना चाहिए की जीवन का अंतिम ध्येय भी पूरा हुआ और मानव शरीर मिला भी तो इसीलिए था। अतः योग जीवन के चार पुरुषार्थ के साथ समग्र स्वास्थ्य व मानसिक आयामों पर भी कार्य करता है जो जीवन में चरित्र के उत्कृष्ट आयाम तक पहुँचाने में भी सहायक है।

विमर्श

मासिक धर्म के पूर्व किये जाने वाले योगाभ्यास

मासिक धर्म के पूर्व यदि नारी योग के अभ्यास को करती रहती है तो वह पाएगी की मासिक धर्म के समय आने वाली सामान्य समस्याओं में भी कमी आने लगी है तथा वह चेतना के विभिन्न आयामों को अनुभव करने लगी है। योग के विभिन्न अभ्यासों की एक सरल श्रृंखला इस शोध पत्र के माध्यम से देने का एक प्रयास यहाँ किया जा रहा है जो की निम्नलिखित है।

1. सर्वप्रथम तीन बार ओंकार का जप, तत्पश्चात प्रार्थना जिसमें गायत्री मंत्र, महा मृत्युंजय मंत्र, या कोई ऐसी प्रार्थना जो स्वयं को प्रिय हो मधुर आवाज में गाना चाहिए जिससे आप अपने भावों को तथा मन को एक साथ पर एक समय पर ही केन्द्रित कर सके तथा स्वयं में सकारात्मक ऊर्जा का संचार करके उस का अनुभव कर सके।¹⁴
2. तत्पश्चात कुछ क्षण शशांकासन या योग मुद्रा में रुके जिससे अभ्यासी स्वयं को पूर्णतः शांत कर सके। इस अभ्यास में 5-10 मिनट रुका जा सकता है।
3. इसके पश्चात खड़े होकर आसन में ताड़ासन, त्रिक तड़ासन, कटि-चक्रासन का अभ्यास तत्पश्चात सूर्यनमस्कार (6-12 चक्र) एवं विश्राम करना है।¹⁵
4. फिर बैठकर मंडूक आसन, वक्रासन, उष्ट्रासन-शंशंकासन, इसके पश्चात मकर आसन में विश्राम करना है।
5. तत्पश्चात शलभासन, धनुर आसन एवं श्वासन में आकर सेतुबंध-पवनमुक्त आसन करना है तथा अंत में नौकासन एवं श्वासन में पूर्णतः विश्राम (5-7 मिनट नाभि पर ध्यान रखकर 50 से 1 तक उलटी गिनती) करके उठकर बैठना है।¹⁶
6. तत्पश्चात अनुलोम-विलोम के 6-12 चक्र, शीतली 6 चक्र, भ्रामरी 6 चक्र के उपरान्त 3-5 बार ओंकार का जप एवं शांति पाठ के साथ आभ्यास को समाप्त करना है।

मासिक धर्म के समय किये जाने वाले योगाभ्यास

मासिक धर्म के समय सामान्य कार्य करने वाली नारी के लिए पेट पर दबाव पड़ने वाले अभ्यास वर्जित होते हैं।¹⁷ अभ्यास जो मासिक धर्म के समय किये जा सकते हैं निम्नलिखित हैं:

1. सर्वप्रथम तीन बार ओंकार का जप, तत्पश्चात प्रार्थना जिसमें गायत्री मंत्र, महा मृत्युंजय मंत्र, या कोई ऐसी प्रार्थना जो स्वयं को प्रिय हो मधुर आवाज में गाना चाहिए जिससे आप अपने भावों को तथा मन को एक साथ पर एक समय पर ही केन्द्रित कर सके तथा स्वयं में सकारात्मक ऊर्जा का संचार करके लिए सकारात्मक ऊर्जा का अनुभव कर सके।
2. सूक्ष्म व्यायाम के अभ्यास इस दौरान सरलता से किये जा सकते हैं जिससे नारी अपने शरीर की अवस्था व सूक्ष्म परतों को भी अनुभव करना सीख सकती है।
3. इस समय नारी को अपनी चेतना के स्तर पर ध्यान केन्द्रित करने वाले अभ्यास करने चाहिए जिसमें योग निद्रा एक उत्तम अभ्यास है जो कम समय में नींद की पूर्ति व थकान को दूर कर अभ्यासी के भीतर एक सकारात्मक बदलाव लाता है जो चेतना की गहरी परतों पर भी प्रभाव डालता है।¹⁸
4. भ्रामरी प्राणायाम एवं ओंकार का उच्चारण लंबे समय तक किया जा सकता है।
5. अंत में 3-5 बार ओंकार का उच्चारण एवं शांति पाठ के साथ आभ्यास को समाप्त करना चाहिये।

मन व शरीर से योगाभ्यास का सम्बन्ध

यह स्थूल शरीर जिसको की खुली आँखों से देखा जा रहा है इसके अलावा भी शरीर की दो और परतें हैं जिसे योग की भाषा में तीन शरीर की अवधारणा के नाम से जाना जाता है जिसमें स्थूल-सूक्ष्म-कारण ये तीन शरीर माने जाते हैं।¹⁹ इन तीन शरीर का सम्बन्ध पंच कोशों से भी है जिन्हें क्रमशः अन्नमय कोष-प्राणमय कोष-मनोमयकोष-विज्ञानमय कोष-आनन्दमय कोष नाम से जाना जाता है। स्थूल शरीर का सम्बन्ध अन्नमय एवं प्राणमय कोष से है, सूक्ष्म शरीर का सम्बन्ध मनोमय एवं विज्ञानमय कोष से है तथा कारण शरीर का सम्बन्ध आनन्दमय कोष से है।²⁰

योग के अभ्यास इन तीन शरीरों को सजगता के अनुसार प्रभावित करते हैं तथा व्यक्ति को चेतना की सभी परतों से अवगत कराते हुए उसका उत्थान का कार्य भी करते हैं। इस प्रकार योग का पहला अंग यम जो कि समाज में रहकर समाज के प्रति हमारी क्या ज़िम्मेदारी है तथा हमें समाज में किस तरह का व्यवहार व अनुशासन बनाये रखना है ये सिखाते हैं। जिसके फलस्वरूप हम निष्काम कर्म की अवधारणा को समझने लगते हैं। ऐसा होने पर क्रिया और प्रतिक्रिया का खेल समझ आता है जिससे मन पर स्वतः ही नियंत्रण होने लगता है और इन्द्रियाँ अंतर्मुखी हो जाती हैं।

जब अभ्यासी आसन में स्थिर होकर प्राणायाम-प्रत्याहार, धारणा-ध्यान करता है तब वह चेतना की परतों को देखने लगता है जिससे जीवन का लक्ष्य स्पष्ट नजर आने लगता है।

जब अभ्यासी नियम, आसन का अभ्यास करता है तब शरीर को पुष्ट करता है और अच्छे स्वस्थ शरीर के भीतर ही ईश्वर का वास होता है और जब यह मान लिया जाता है कि शरीर ईश्वर का घर है तो अभ्यासी आसक्ति व भोग का जीवन त्यागकर उत्तम व श्रेष्ठ जीवन की ओर बढ़ता है।

इस प्रकार मन व शरीर को साधते हुए साधक योग का मंथन करता है जिससे आध्यात्म का अमृत पान करता है।

भावी पीढ़ी के लिए योगाभ्यास का योगदान

भावी पीढ़ी की जो जननी है उस को अब सजगता की ओर अग्रसर करने के लिए योग का आगमन उनके जीवन में कराना अनिवार्य हो गया है क्योंकि जननी जब स्वयं धर्म के मार्ग पर चलते हुए शिक्षित होगी तभी वह अपनी धर्म की शिक्षा को सफलता पूर्वक अपनी संतान के भीतर उतार पायेगी जिससे संसार उत्तम कोटि के व्यक्तित्वों का गढ़ बन जाए।

योगाभ्यास के द्वारा नारी अपने मासिक धर्म की घटना को भली भाँति समझ सकती है तथा इस बात से भी स्वयं को अवगत करा सकती है की मासिक स्राव के समय उसकी चेतना की अनुभूति सूक्ष्म स्तर पर संभव है जोकि बाकी के सामान्य दिन में मुश्किल है तथा इस अनुभूति तक बहुत अभ्यास के बाद ही पहुँचा जा सकता है।

नारी स्वयं स्वस्थ शरीर का निर्माण कर सकने में समर्थ है तथा जब वह ऐसा जान जाएगी तो वह अपनी संतान को भी ये गुण विरासत में देगी जिसमें एक स्वस्थ जीवन शैली, खान-पान की अच्छी आदतें, समय से सोना एवं समय से जागना, अच्छी संगत में रहना, अच्छे विचारों का मंथन करते रहना, सकारात्मक अभिव्यक्ति आदि गुण।

योगाभ्यास सीखने के उपरान्त यदि नारी संतान उत्पत्ति के बारे में सोचती है तो वह स्वयं भी मानसिक तौर पर तैयार हो जाती है तथा भावी संतान के भीतर भी प्रह्लाद की तरह भक्ति, ज्ञान, करुणा प्रेम आदि गुण विकसित होते हैं, अभिमन्यु की तरह एक अलौकिक बुद्धि से युक्त दिव्य चेतना को वह जन्म दे सकने में सामर्थ्यवान हो जाती है।

योग मन व शरीर के साथ सूक्ष्म चेतना पर भी काम करता है जिससे कर्म संस्कार-प्रारब्ध, पाप-पुण्य का यथार्थ ज्ञान होने लगता है साथ ही जीवन का ध्येय स्पष्ट हो जाता है जिससे राग-द्वेष की जड़ क्षीण होने लगती है तथा ऐसी चेतना की अवस्था होने पर एक जननी संभवतः ही एक तेजस्वी संतान को जन्म देती है।

भावी पीढ़ी के भीतर आध्यात्म के बीज यदि माता के गर्भ से ही विकसित होने लगे तो वह जीव अपने मन, कर्म, वचन से प्रारंभ से ही धर्म के मार्ग पर चलता है तथा धर्म की रक्षा करता जिससे संसार में उसकी साख बढ़ती है और वह अपने किसी भी कार्य में बाधा आने पर भी राग-द्वेष आदि से घिरता नहीं है अपितु विवेक व धैर्य का परिचय देकर उस परिस्थिति से स्वयं को सरलता से बाहर निकाल कर आगे बढ़ जाता है। ऐसे जीव के भीतर मैत्री-करुणा के भाव विकसित होते हैं तथा सभी जीवों के प्रति वह समान दृष्टि रखता है।

निष्कर्ष

इस शोध के माध्यम से यह निष्कर्ष निकलता है की यदि नारी के जीवन में योग के अभ्यासों को महत्वपूर्ण स्थान दिया जाए तो नारी अपनी अंतर्निहित शक्तियों का प्रयोग कर अपने आसपास के वातावरण से सही प्रकार से सामंजस्य स्थापित कर सकने में सक्षम हो सकती है तथा स्वयं के प्रति जागरूक होने पर वह स्वयं जब एक जीव की सृष्टि करेगी तो वह स्वयं में सकारात्मक विचारों को सरलता से अपना पाएगी तथा स्वयं को प्रकृति से नजदीकी बढ़ाकर इस संसार को मर्यादा की परकाष्ठा सीता-राम, गार्गी, अपाला, बुद्ध, नानक, विवेकानंद, निवेदिता आदि जैसी संतान उत्पन्न कर धर्म का संचार व विस्तार करने में अपना योगदान दे सकने में सक्षम हो सकेगी।

किन्तु ऐसा करने के लिए पहले उसको योगाभ्यास द्वारा अपने मन व शरीर की स्थिति, मासिक चक्र की वास्तविकता, स्वयं के प्रति भी एक निष्ठा, तथा योग में आस्था रखना अनिवार्य करना होगा और ऐसा करने पर वह शीघ्र ही चेतना के अगले शिखर पर पहुँचकर अपने जीवन को मासिक धर्म की पीड़ा से हटाकर स्वयं की चेतना को परिष्कृत करते हुए घर-समाज में कुछ उचित योगदान भी कर सकने में सक्षम हो सकती है साथ ही भावी पीढ़ी को स्वस्थ शरीर के साथ स्वस्थ मन का भी उपहार दे सकती है।

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दृष्टिकोण

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Role of Yoga in Ancient Menstrual Ethics with special reference to concept of Citta śuddhi

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Abstract

One of the objectives of Yoga is to achieve and maintain purity of Citta. The entire practices of Yoga are intended to achieve purity of Citta by any means and ways, and in all conditions. It keeps working on its objective so that human beings would be able to achieve the state of supreme bliss or the state of ānanda.

To attain the level of antaḥ śuddhi, covering various aspects of Citta, one has to adhere zealously to yama and niyama with Haṭh Yoga or āṣṭāṅga Yoga then they would be able to reach the avacetana mana and after that they try to attain the level of Citta śuddhi.

Fortunately women are granted a great opportunity or a golden chance by nature in the form of menstrual phase which is known as Rajasrāva kāla whereby she has to do nothing from the practices of Haṭh Yoga or Rāja Yoga and she can just sit by herself and may try to choose any way to open up her inner self and reach the avacetana mana very quickly by practicing the dhāraṇa, dhyāna, mantra chanting and various relaxation techniques. She may thus work to purify her Citta at a greater speed and able to attain peace and bliss sooner, because there are certain ancient ethics related to the menstrual phase, like; isolation, keeping away from cooking, avoids mingling with other people, etc. These can actually be conducive to thinking and taking action for awakening the inner self, the true and ultimate purpose of life.

This research work is an attempt to throw light on some hidden phenomenon behind the ancient ethics related to menstrual phase, with guidelines and suggestions for women intended towards realising their real potential and leading them towards ultimate aim of life.

Keywords: Citta, Ancient Menstrual Ethics, Cittaśuddhi.

Introduction

Yoga: The word Yoga is derived from the Sanskrit verb Yuj which further contains three meaning saṁyama, samādhi, to join. Maharṣi vyāsa said Yoga is samādhi and samādhi is a universal attribute of the Citta. There are five grounds of Citta are kṣipta (disturbed), mūḍha (somnolent), vikṣipta (distracted), ekāgra (one-pointed), niruddha (controlled) (Arya & Rama H.H., 1986). First three are not suitable for state of samādhi. However, the state of wisdom ekāgra is known as samādhi of wisdom. Samādhi is a state of equanimity wherein everything is clear in mind

and it works with wisdom and wisdom results in samādhi.

Yoga is a lifestyle through which people may learn to live life with the highest levels of understanding following the path of wisdom. To attain this wisdom, there are many ways and processes described in detail with great authenticity in Haṭh Yoga, Rāja Yoga, ancient scriptures like Upniṣada, Veda and philosophical texts. When knowledge is combined with wisdom, it results in the form of solution which covers all the aspects of the question or problem because knowledge which is received through the outer

world through senses and accept it in the way it is received through senses without exploring its other aspects, but a practitioner of *Yoga* gets an entirely different perspective from a heightened intellectual viewpoint through higher level of concentration. If people could utilise more of their intellectual potential, they would be able to find answers to the same question or solve problems they face much easily, because they would be able to reach the most appropriate solution on the basis of thorough analysis.

Practices of *Yoga* not work only for wisdom, but also cover fitness of body and mind at the same time and help the practitioner move towards the ultimate goal of life, i.e. *Mokṣa*. Practices of *Yoga* are available in many forms. Philosophy of *Yoga* begins from *Yama-yiyama* and followed by *byāsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhārṇa*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi*. *Mantra* chanting also a tool for *Yoga* which is known as *Mantra Yoga*. *Haṭh Yoga* includes the *ṣaṭkarma* and *mudrā*.

Citta: Philosophy of *Yoga* is based on *Citta* which said cessation of mental modification is *Yoga* (Arya & Rama H.H., 1986). It is elaborated in text of *Yoga* and *Upniṣada*. According to fifth verses of *Tri-śikhi-brāhmaṇopniṣada* *Citta* is part of *antaḥ karaṇa* and there are three parts of *antaḥ karaṇa* *Manas*, *buddhi* and *ahaṃkāra* along with *Citta*. According to fifth mandal verses one to three in *Maṇḍala- brāhmaṇopniṣad* *Citta* which is in state of functioning bound with outer world and *Citta* which is in state of non-functioning move towards the liberation. *Citta* in thinking process get stuck with illusion and when it reduce the thinking process and remain in the non-functioning state which is possible with practices of *Yoga*, and then it becomes easy to attain the purified state and move towards the *Unmani* state where *Nir-vikalpa-samādhi* happens and *Citta* is able to dissolve itself in supreme. According to *Yoga-cūḍāmany-upaniṣad* *Citta* is the seat of thought where time to time all thoughts come and go. Some stay and become cause of action, some are helpful in practice and some disturb the peace of mind.

According to the philosophy of *Buddha*, there are mainly four types of *Citta* which are further divided into sub parts, and there are 121 types of *Citta* in total, and it includes 54 *Kāmāvacaraṃ Citta* which further divided in 12 *akusala Citta* (it divides into sub parts: 8 *lobha mūla Citta*, 2 *dosa mūla Citta*, 2 *moha mūla Citta*, 15 *Rūpāvacara Citta*), 18 *ahetuka Citta* (which further divided into sub parts 15 *vipāka Citta* where it divided into sub parts: 7 *akusala vipāka Citta*, 8 *kusala vipāka Citta* and 3 *kiriya Citta*), 24 *kāma sobhaṇa Citta* (8, *maha kusala Citta*, 8 *maha vipāka Citta* and 8 *maha kiriya Citta*), 15 *Rūpavacaraṃ Citta* (further divided into sub parts 5 *rūpavacara kusala Citta*, 5 *rūpavacara vipāka Citta* and 5 *rūpavacara kiriya Citta*), 12 *Arūpavacaraṃ Citta* (4 *arūpavacara kusala Citta*, *arūpavacara vipāka Citta* and 4 *arūpavacara kiriya Citta*), 40 *Lokuttaraṃ Citta* (20 *magga Citta* and 20 *phala Citta*) (Narada, 1979).

Kāmāvacaraṃ: means that which mostly moves about in the sentient realm, or that which pertains to the senses and their corresponding objects (Narada, 1979).

Rūpavacaraṃ and *Arūpavacaraṃ*: respectively mean either that which pertains to *Rūpa* and *Arūpa* *Jhānas* (ecstasies) or that which mostly moves about in the *Rūpa* and *Arūpa* planes.

Lokuttaraṃ: It is the supra-mundane consciousness that enables one to transcend this world of mind-body (Narada, 1979).

According to texts of *Patanjali*, a practitioner of *Yoga* can divide one *Citta* in to many *Citta* to experience the fruits of all previous *karma* together. This process is known as *nirmāṇa Citta* which is possible through the *asmitā* (egoism). With the help of these *nirmāṇa Citta* practitioner work on different dimensions of consciousness (Vivekanand, 2019).

Grounds of *Citta* and solutions for *Cittaśuddhi*

There are three *gunasatva* (cause of lightness), *rajas* (cause of movement) and *tamas* (cause of inertia). *Satva* represents itself by those actions

which consist of divinity, piety, good deeds for others, devotion, detached and right deeds at the right time and right place. *Rajas* consists of those action or represents itself by those deeds which are done for egocentric consideration, seek name and fame. *Tamas* represent those actions which done in ignorance, without consciousness and awareness and which are not in nature of piety (Bhavanani, 2006). These three *guna* are well explained in philosophy in *Sāṃkhya* and in *bhāgavata gītā* by Kṛṣṇā. These *guna* influence and control our thought, events related with life, our action and reaction, and these are changeable. Imbalance in *guna* affects the state of mind and it appears in the behaviour of every creation of nature. Whichever *guna* is at its peak, it influence and controls other *guna* and then the mind and body simultaneously behave accordingly, under the influence of that very *guna*. There are some circumstances that are explained by *maharṣi Vyāsa* known as ‘grounds of *Citta*,’ which further provides insight into the state of human being, describe their characteristics of personality as per ancient aspects, and also explore their conditions to enter into the path of *Yoga* (they are eligible or going to be eligible or not eligible for *Yoga*).

kṣhipta (disturbed): In this situation, a person is in the state of *rajas* (Jha, 1935) wherein *satva* and *tamas* are not in active state, or it may be said that they are slowed down by the *rajas* as it dominates both the other *guna* (Arya & Rama H.H., 1986). Due to this, the person behaves under the influences cast by *rajas*, and it is in this state, a normal person remains wakeful (Arya & Rama H.H., 1986). As a quality which is related with desires and enthusiasm, it manifests as greed, attachment and actions with desires of fruit (Shrivastava, 2012). This ground is not suitable for *Yoga* because the person may not be able to concentrate on one task for long, but his mind jumps from one goal to another in an erratic manner. *Citta* is indulge in desires which connected with *rāga* and due to this situation *Citta* involved in worldly aspects rather than spiritual aspects.

mūḍha (somnolent): In this situation, *tamas guna* is in active form and the rest of two *guna* remain dormant, and *tamas* thendominate the other two *guna*. This ground is also not suitable for the practitioner of *Yoga*, because in this state, people prefer to live in dark (without knowledge and wisdom), and they do not even think about ethics because the *Citta* involved highly in state of *rāga*, and the cause of *rāga*, which consists of illusion and ignorance. In this state, people ignore the path of *dharma* and are also not involved much in activity (right actions) due to lethargy and dullness of body (Bhavanani, 2006).

vikṣhipta (distracted): In this situation, *satva guna* is not in active form or remains dormant as it gets influenced by *rajas guna* and *tamsa guna* from time to time. This ground is suitable for beginners of spiritual practices, for journey of *Yoga*. It may be said that it is mixed state for *Citta* where it is involved in both kinds of practices related with good deeds (spiritual practices, serves society, serves humanity), but due to *rajas guna* attachment to fruits dissipates the best results of good deeds. A person in such a situation remains involved in benevolent activities, but strives to achieve popularity out of those activities (Bhavanani, 2006).

ekāgra (one-pointed): In this situation, *satva* is in active mode while *rajas* and *tamas guna* are in dormant stage, but still present. This situation is better for a practitioner of *Yoga*. Focus remains on the spiritual path, and the practitioner strives for knowledge and wisdom, and may even attain the state of *samādhi*. In this state, the practitioner conducts his life absolutely in accordance with *satva guna*, and also indulges in the activities of *dharma* which relate to good deeds for the benefit of society at large. Dedication of their life for humanity and spreading *dharma* become the objectives of his life. Here *Yogi* has to again take birth for his liberation because in this situation, if he gets the *samādhi*, still influenced by any of the *guna*, he may get the *samprajñāta samādhi* and *vivekaja jñāna*.

niruddha (controlled): in this ground there is no influence of any *guna* and this is the best state for practitioner of *Yoga*. This is the ground where

liberation may occur, the state of knowledge with wisdom and finally achieves the *viveka khyāti* and *asamprajñāta samādhi*.

***Cittaśuddhi* according to the state of the practitioner** (Sarasvati, 2012)

grounds	<i>kṣhipta</i>	<i>mūḍha</i>	<i>vikṣhipta</i>	<i>ekāgra</i>	<i>niruddha</i>
practices	<i>bhakti Yoga, japa Yoga</i>	<i>haṭha Yoga,</i>	<i>kriya Yoga, satsaṅga, dhāraṇā</i>	<i>rāja yoga</i>	Practice of <i>samādhi</i>

Table 1

Apart from above practices, a practitioner should take care of the food intake, with a focus on *sātvika* food. Food which consists of life force energy and provide health, happiness, strength and satisfaction and also it should be fresh, juicy, pleasing to heart, wholesome and fatty (Bhavanani, 2006). follow the path which *Guru* showed and keep faith on him, read scriptures and practice it on regular basis till the wisdom and the knowledge deeply felt from out to inner self, practices of *mantra* should be try to maintain for long run and keep patience, have faith in celestial sounds of *mantra* it works on *Citta* and purify at a level however after one level practitioner has to move on and stay on the state of *dhyān* and *samādhi*. Then practitioner may be able to achieve

the state of *Yoga* and found himself in *niruddha* state where it is just some steps are far away from the state of liberation.

During menstrual phase the solution of *Cittaśuddhi*: If a woman practice and follow the path of *Yoga* before and after the menstrual phase then she is allow to do some soothing practices of *Yoga* during her menstrual phase. Here are some practices of *Yoga* listed for women to perform during menstrual phase and keep herself calm and relaxed and give a chance to find herself, her own values, her own views about her life and time to search new ideas for her upcoming life. The list of practices is as follows: brief description in below table two.

<i>Āsana</i>	<i>prāṇāyāma</i>	<i>Dhyāna</i>	<i>mantra</i>	Relaxation
<i>tāḍāsana</i> <i>kaṭicakrāsana</i> <i>vajrāsana</i> <i>mārjārī</i> <i>śaśāṅka</i> <i>kaṁdharāsana</i> <i>supta</i> <i>kaṭicakrāsana</i> <i>śvāsana</i>	<i>nāḍi śodhana,</i> <i>ujjāyī,</i> <i>bhrāmarī,</i>	<i>cidakāśa</i> <i>dhāraṇā,</i> <i>so'ma</i> <i>dhyāna,</i> <i>antarmauna</i>	<i>Ajapājapa, om</i> chanting, <i>gāyatrī mantra</i>	<i>yoga nidrā</i> mainly focus on abdomen and count the breathe

Table 2

Alongwith above practices before and after menstrual phase women should perform the practices of *śūrya namaskāra, jala neti, kunjala, vyāghrāsana, bhujāṅgāsana, śalabhāsana, dhanurāsana, cakrāsana, paścimotānāsana, matsyāsana, ardhamatsendrásana, pāda-hastāsana, hanumānāsana, viparītakaranī mudrā,*

Yoga-mudrā, pāśinimudrā, aśvini, sahajauli and *mūla bandha* (Saraswati, 2013) to spend a smooth time with herself and feel the eternal bliss during her precious days. It may be noted that inverted postures like *sarvāṅgāsana, śīrṣāsana* should not perform (Saraswati, 2013).

Ancient Menstrual Ethics

Menstruation ethics are topic for debate some group of people stands for the ethics and some group of people are rejects it by roots. When open the door of history which is related with the menstrual ethics then it may found that there are number of reasons lies behind these ethics. Time changed and now it is necessary to understand the reasons of menstrual ethics and according to the necessity of time adopt it or reject it.

According to ancient Indian texts Menstrual ethics and related facts are listed below:

Rituals: In *Andhra Pradesh* there is a temple named by *devīpūrama* followed the tradition of *śāktatantra*. *devīpūrama* Temple made in a form of *śrīcakra* and there women perform all rituals as a priest and this is the temple where people allow women enter in to the temple, stay in the temple during her menstrual phase. It is also believed that women become so pure during her menstruation and all the spiritual power enter into her which lie in the statue of the God/Goddess of the temple so she don't need to touch them because she already in form of deity of the temple or supreme spiritual energy. But in the present era or many years ago this things diverted in a wrong way and just opposite meaning understood by the society and people started discrimination in form of untouchability. Women become pure during her menstruation she just need is what. It is just a rest in form of time for self-awareness and personal spiritual growth.

Celebration of menarche: In Hindu tradition of India there are many states people celebrate the first menstruation of their daughter or female member of the family like a small marriage. The celebration occurs mainly region of South India and north east. In *Kerala* the celebration known as *Kaniyans*, in *Karnataka*, *Keral* and *Andhra Pradesh* there are similarities in celebration where *sumangalī* (married) women perform *ārati* and celebrate with songs and then give the *chigali unde* (a dish with the combination of jaggery and sesame seeds) to the menstruating girl. In

Tamilnadu celebration known as *manjal neerattu vizha* (bath with turmeric) (Sridhar, 2019).

Isolation: isolation is biggest part of these ethics which related to spiritual growth (Sarawati, 2013), emotional stability, rest (Sridhar, 2019) of body and mind and give some space to explore the hidden ideas within self. Isolated time is valuable and available for self-purification (Sridhar, 2019), self-justification, self-judgement, and self-protection. Growth of self in different ways and it happens with mind to body and body to mind.

It is necessary for every human being and women is also human being she can-not be taken granted, she made the biggest part of society then how could be she ignored by the ancient Indian culture that is the reason behind to provide her isolation (time for complete rest and holidays). Ancient Indian tradition enough aware about the menstruation process that it is phase of austerity and time for self-purification and women should live alone and follow her practices in solitude because austerity needs solitude (Sridhar, 2019) to mature itself and whether men or women follow it both needs isolation for their spiritual development so this is just for the sake of women and for their empowerment.

Era changed, thinking process demolished, care and respect replaced by doubts, myths, some mythological stories, fear of untouched, fear of impurity, even fear of death or illness (not the women but who spend time with the menstruated women). Somehow women forgot to respect herself and somewhere people forgot their personal and social responsibility to secure the precious dynamic moments of women's life.

Aśauca: People consider menstruation is an impure process and believe that women are not in a clean condition during this period, and even use the word *aśauca* for it, which means impurity. This is a taboo which was actually created to protect women from the burden of responsibilities of her household and family (Muktanand, 2014) and set

her free to take rest without having to work in the kitchen and otherwise mandatory religious practices and rituals. These, actually take away a lot of time and energy. In this condition never ending household work of large joint families of yore were totally depended on the toil of women. Moreover, the times gone by were not like the mechanical era of today, when numerous gadgets have replaced much of the rigorous manual work. In those days, all household work was done by hands and most of the household work was only done by women, while men worked outside the home, in the field. So, the intent behind this word *āśauca* was intended to keep away from work pressure and save women from her daily routines of working hard to maintain her family members. In this case, it was a good idea, except that it forced the women to keep away from their family members, in times when they badly needed emotional support. Family members of menstruating women used to stay away from them owing to the fear that *āśauca* may influence the family members due to which they may attract bad luck or may encounter mishappenings in their life. Hence they started treating women as 'untouchable' beings which was certainly unethical and cruel. The key facts behind the reasons why mingling with menstruating women was forbidden because during these awakened days, which enhanced *Cittaśuddhi*, and why was this thought spread in the society without any scientific justification, still needed to be resolved.

Kitchen: In India, most families allow women to take a break from kitchens and give complete rest to her body and mind, while availing the advantages of those days. But, in present scenario, the opposite is also being observed. Some women themselves totally ignore this age-old wisdom and forego rest, while in some families people ignore the pain of women and don't bother about providing her proper care and rest. In fact, many people tend to take this matter very lightly. Women who are dealing with small family are still in good condition, but in homes where women are working and looking after the family as well, or women who are living in joint

families, are often pushed by family members or circumstances to surrender themselves totally for the cause of the family and sacrifice their health while hiding or ignoring their pain. Such extreme sense of responsibility becomes a bane when it triggers stress, causing hormonal imbalance and even manifesting in the form of menstrual irregularities.

Food intake: Kitchen is associated with food and eating habits of women also, due to which they were also affected. Wrong food during menstruation is enough to trigger menstrual irregularities. Texts of *Āyurveda* describe the importance of proper diet pattern and ethics related with food which includes many a do's and don'ts. In present times, women are not conscious about following such rules on their own and even the ones who are aware tend to ignore the recommended way of life and diet pattern due to work pressure at home or in professional life.

So kitchen is not just a place in the home, it is also a place of elements of health. If kitchen and ethics related with kitchen are ignored, then health will be certainly affected. So, it is good to keep away from kitchen and take rest, and if it is not possible then at least take good diet and prescribed diet as per the *Āyurveda* so that the health of body and mind get at least some nutrition according to requirements of the body. It is not a good idea to do the entire kitchen work during this period. It should be taken as a time to share the work and give others a chance to become independent, so that they may also understand the value of the menstruating women. During this period, women still needs some sort of physical activity, but hard work should best be avoided.

Discussion

This paper is presented for ancient ethics related with practices of *Yoga* and menstrual phase. During menstrual phase/ *Rajaḥsrāva* *kālapractices* of some *Yogāsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *śaṭkarma*, *mudrā* are not allowed to do because of the health of reproductive organs. But still there

are some practices that are allowed for women to take part in. These should be part of her daily life, and during menstrual phase, it may become easy to practice it, and she should enjoy the bliss which she truly deserves during her precious days. It has been observed that pearl of wisdom and intellectual efforts come by easily during this phase, as compared to other days. Practices which are allowed during *Rajaḥsrāva kālāare dhāraṇa, dhyāna, prāṇā kriyā* without *kumbhaka, pratyāhāra*, chanting of *mantra* in form of *japa* or using the beads of *japa mala*. These are some tools to attain the state of wisdom where all doubts of life are removed one by one, and the realities of life, wisdom, and liberation appears before the practitioner.

The practices detailed above are helpful for purification of *Citta*, and support the women to enjoy the bliss which she may feel throughout her menstruation, and reach the destination of spiritual path by crossing the grounds of *Citta* to the higher ground and take advantage of these times to draw the best from life force with the help of greater awareness.

Menstruation ethics were developed smartly and carefully by our ancient saints so that the women may avail the opportunity to work on her physical health and mind set through rest, meditation, and increased awareness in a periodic manner. These are the periods when women can avail more time for self; starting from self-analysis to employ the time for self-care, self-acceptance, focus on future plans, practices of *Yoga* and focus on the growth in spiritual path, leading towards the ultimate goal of life, i.e. liberation.

In many parts of India it was the time of isolation, so female friends of a woman can meet her, serve her, care for her, while in some regions they even celebrate the menstruation in form of worshiping the girl, provide her gifts and jewellery and selected foodstuff to ease her flow and maintain her health. Utilising these special days for self-awareness is the key. Whether women working outside or being a homemaker,

there remains a need to look critically into the menstruation ethics, and make adjustments according to the changes times and the society. This is only possible in situations when the hidden truth about the menstruation will be explored, and the matter is freed from the concepts of shame and guilt.

Conclusion

When *Draupadi* invoked *Kṛṣṇā* during the *cīteraharana* she was in her menstrual phase. Her purity level of *Citta* was so high and *Kṛṣṇā* provided her protection in form of long piece of cloth because at that time she was in a single cloth. This fact clearly explain that during menstrual phase women become purer and her *Citta* can be more pure when she develops greater awareness of her inner self through the practices of *Yoga*.

There may be a reason behind the development of menstrual ethics is *Cittaśuddhi* which matters most. Because practices of *Yoga* are sacred and need isolation, follow a *satvik* lifestyle which includes raw diet, proper rest, staying away from worldly life and just mediate to connect with the inner self. Objectives of the physical and material world does not matter for *Citta śuddhi* or for that matter any serious practice of *Yoga*. Had it mattered, *Draupadi* could never had invoked *Kṛṣṇā* during her menstrual phase, if she was really impure due to bleeding in menstruation, and God incarnate himself present in astral form would have appeared to help her, and protect her from the negative attitudes and actions of thousands of people.

This research is dedicated to the feminine divinity and acknowledges the high worth of female energy which surrenders herself and never asks for anything as price. This is the social responsibility and demand of this era that we revisit the ancient Indian menstrual ethics and return the bouquet of due respect to the womankind, and provide her space and time for her spiritual growth and *Cittaśuddhi*.

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