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Common Benefits of Prayer and Yoga on Human Organism

Osman İMAMOĞLU¹, Ahmet Naci DİLEK²

¹OMU Yaşar Doğu Faculty of Sports Science, Samsun, TURKEY

²OMU Health Sciences Institute, Samsun, TURKEY

E-Posta: osmani@omu.edu.tr

Abstract

Purpose: Prayer and Yoga benefits study aimed to explore the mutual on the human organism.

Methods: A literature search was conducted. **Results:** Muslim prayers and yoga are as through them the same benefits, In terms of shape and utility of the movement. Even each prayer (namaz) positions-corresponding yoga position and the positions together “activate” all seven “chakras” (energy fields) in the body-as per yoga practices. Prayer is in the standing room section (Takbir and qiyam) qiyam and expected cut in standing yoga namaste (Mount position) called. Bowing is to the provision in yoga ardha Uttanasana. Prayer is like yoga varjāsana until the last sitting. Balāsana in Yoga are with Prostrate in Prayer until the movement very similar. It leaves the heart in a higher position than the brain, which increases flow of blood into upper regions of the body, especially the head and lungs. This allows mental toxins to be cleansed. This position allows stomach muscles to develop and prevents growth of flabbiness in the midsection. It maintains proper position of fetus in pregnant women, reduces high blood pressure, increases elasticity of joints and alleviates stress, anxiety, dizziness and fatigue.

Consultation: Islam as the Yoga and Salah have many similar movement of stretching and flexibility which may illuminate the lives of both the communities in positive manner.

Keywords: Prayer, human organism, yoga

Namaz ve Yoganın İnsan Organizmasındaki Ortak Faydaları

Osman İMAMOĞLU¹, Ahmet Naci DİLEK²

¹OMU Yaşar Doğu Spor Bilimleri Fakültesi, Samsun, TÜRKİYE

²OMU Sağlık Bilimleri Enstitüsü BES Anabilim Dalı, Samsun, TÜRKİYE

E-Posta: osmani@omu.edu.tr

Öz

Amaç: Çalışmada Namaz kılma ve yoga yapmanın insan organizması üzerindeki ortak faydalarının araştırılması amaçlanmıştır. **Yöntem:** Literatür taraması yapılmıştır. **Bulgular:** Namaz ile yoga arasında yapılan hareketlerin şekli ve faydası açısından büyük benzerlikler vardır. Namazdaki pozisyonların her biri benzer yoga pozisyonuna sahiptir ve pozisyonlar hep birlikte bedendeki yedi “Çakranın (Enerji alanlarının)” hepsini “aktif hale” getirirler. Namazda ayakta durulan bölüme (Tekbir ve kıyam) kıyam yoga da ise ayakta beklenen kısma namaste (Dağ pozisyonu) denir. Ruku'nun yogadaki karşılığı ise ardha uttanasanadır. Bu duruşlar kan pompalanmasını artırarak bel, gövde ve baldır kaslarını gerdirirler. Namazda son oturuş ile yogada varjasana benzerdir. Namazdaki secde ile Yogada ki balasana çok benzer hareketlerdir. Kanın baş ve akciğerlere doğru akışını arttırırlar, zihinsel toksinlerin de temizlenmesine imkan sağlar. Bu pozisyon, mide kaslarının gelişmesine imkan tanır ve orta bölümdeki sarkıklığı önler. Hamile kadınlarda ceninin düzgün pozisyonda kalmasını sağlar, kan basıncını düşürür, eklemlerin esnekliğini arttırır ve stresi, endişeyi, baş dönmesini, yorgunluğu ortadan kaldırır.

Sonuç: Namaz ve yoganın benzer hareketlerinin çoğunlukla gerdirme- esneklik üzerine kurulu olarak insan organizmasına ortak faydaları belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Namaz, insan organizması, yoga

Introduction

Muslims (Namaz) can be called Islamic yoga as through them the same benefits can be availed that the yoga practitioners recommend through regular practice of yoga. Yoga consists of a number of 'asana' or body positions, which one retains for a desired length of time while either reciting 'mantras' or breathing in a rhythmic manner. Its benefits have been researched by many doctors who now recommend it to their patients. Namaz (Islamic yoga) helps such as stress reduction, emotional wellness, flexibility and coordination, enhancement of the immune system & improved balance & postural alignment. Islamic yoga releases them from this tension & enhances their memory. Even each (namaz) positions-corresponding yoga position and the positions together "activate" all seven "chakras" (energy fields) in the body-as per yoga practices. Each of the chakras correlates to major nerve ganglia that branch forth from the spinal column. Important to perfectly & precisely perform all the movements, rather haphazardly rushing through them which makes a sound mind and sound body (Roaf et al.,2014) . A number of attempts have been made to relate prayer to a popular ancient Hindu form of physical acts and meditation. Yoga has been known for its scientific basis as a healthy lifestyle practice for thousands of years (Prakash,2012). For example, yoga has become popular nowadays that could give both physiological and psychological benefits (Eliade,2009). Comparison study on the benefits of yoga and exercise has been conducted that show yoga provides same benefits (Fatimah and Siti,2012). The Islamic definition of Prayer is the name given to the formal of Islam. Prayer is a fundamental principle of religion Islam and is an important practice which must be performed at set times and conditions', following a sequence. Islam is the religion where physical movements of (Prayer) are combined with spiritual exercise. The analysis has been made in the light of present day medical knowledge that how Prayer can have positive effects on health. Prayer is not just a religious obligation but a sure path towards better health and fitness as proven by contemporary science. The sole aim of the Ashtanga-Yoga is to concentrate & connect with The God as prescribed in Dhyana & Samadhi. Traditionally Yoga is thought of as the inseparable part of Hinduism whereas the authors believe that the yogic teaching is the culminating enlightenment of every religion. Hence to think Yoga belongs to Hinduism only is a gross misconception. The only viable justification put forward by the scholars in recognizing Yoga as the inseparable part of Hinduism is the language of its scriptures and chanting i.e. Sanskrit, whereas authors found in the Qur'anic teachings where The Al-Mighty God has mentioned that "for every community, We have sent the Messengers and every Messenger had delivered our Message using the community's idioms, phrases and languages" (Al-Qur'an, Surah Ibraheem 14:4). Hence this Qur'anic injunction has ruled out every is conception related to the affiliation of Yoga with Hinduism. It might be possible that the Yogic teachings (as prescribed by the Ashtanga-Yoga) had been descended by The God Himself to the community whose mother-tongue was. Moreover, it is interesting to note that in-between Yoga & Islam, we find every religion with more or less the same teachings as have been propounded by the Ashtanga-Yoga (Roaf et al.,2014) .

Muslims (Prayer) can be called Islamic Yoga as through them the same benefits can be availed that the Yoga practitioners recommend through regular practice of Yoga, thus called Yoga as 'one of the oldest systems of personal development encompassing body, mind and spirit'.. Yoga nowadays has become one of the fastest growing health trend, renowned for centuries for its curative powers of movement. Yogic Asanas comprises of a number of body postures, which one retains for a length of time while reciting 'Mantras' or breathing in a

rhythmic manner. Medical schools like Harvard and by many foundations such as Menninger Foundation have researched the benefits of Yoga and now recommend it to their patients. In fact, Yoga has become so popular that it has got many versions, like secretaries have developed a simplified sitting version that they can do at their desks. Interestingly Prayer, the Islamic has provided Muslims for fourteen centuries with some of the Yoga's same benefits. This simple form of Yoga provides an individual physical, mental and spiritual benefits five times a day as Muslims assume certain positions while reciting Quran. Of course, not all the Yoga positions are found in the Islamic, however, hospital researchers have concluded that patients benefit from even a simplified version of Yoga i.e. Islamic (Karima Burns, 2012; Roaf et al.,2014). The Prayer (Namaz) positions have a corresponding Yoga position, and the positions together 'activate' all seven 'chakras' (energy fields) in the human body. The idea of activating a chakra may sound linguistically strange, but in layman's terms the idea of chakras can be understood by thinking about how the 'feeling' sense functions (Roaf et al.,2014). There're some fanatic people who oppose Yoga saying that it's against Islamic teachings. Most of them are opposed to Surya Namaskaram by which one means Worshipping Sun. Surya Namaskaram is not worshipping sun, it means "welcoming the sun" but Yoga is not haram or I've never heard about it. There're even some references about Yoga similar to Muslim s. Yoga is a spiritual dimension (<https://www.quora.com>). Yoga may be corrupted form of religion.

Today, Yoga, regardless of its religious affiliation, has become one of the most popular fitness practices all over the world. In India, it has been consistently applied for centuries for its curative powers of movement. Albeit, several 'asanas' (physical postures) of Yoga may not be possible to follow in healthcare practices in the absence of the professional supervision for desirable advantage, Muslims have had the blessing of Prayer that has since fourteen hundred years become an integral part of their daily activities with physical, psychological, social and spiritual benefits. Here, the authors would suggest that yoga be treated as a lifestyle, rather than just a group of 'asanas', which is completely related with health, happiness and longevity of individual. A careful and judicious combination of these two (i.e., prayer and yoga) therefore, could possibly double the advantages in enhancing mental health (Prakash,2012). Prayer has various main positions which are quite similar to certain Asanas in yoga. Both practices involve stretching the body and activating certain spots in the body (known as chakras in yoga). Surya Namaskar asana - is a physical-breathing exercise to align a human body with solar cycle. human beings are a part of this solar system and we are influenced by Sun and Moon. If our body's cycles are aligned with the moon and Sun's cycle we can reap a lot of spiritual, mental and Physical benefits. Instead of looking at 'suraya namaskar' asana as a 'salutation to sun': Look at it as an exercise. When you practice 'suraya namaskar' - Thank Almighty Allah for creating the sun which is the source of energy for all the living creatures. Then, Surya Namaskar: Again, because in Hindu religion Sun is worshipped as God and in Islam religion Moon is considered more auspicious. The arguments presented are 2: Yog and Surya Namaskar are un-islamic because; 1.were created by "Polytheists" and hence should not be followed. 2.Surya Namaskar means bowing to the sun, and in Quran, bowing to anyone accept Allah is not allowed. Namaskar means a greeting, something like Salam Alekum. In terms of Quran, it can be understood as one creation of God (Human) greeting another creation of God (Surya or Sun) (<https://www.quora.com>). Yoga consists of a number of "asanas," or body positions, which one retains for a desired length of time while either reciting "mantras" or breathing in a rhythmic manner. Its benefits have been researched by many

doctors who now recommend it to their patients, by many medical schools such as Harvard, and by many foundations such as the Menninger Foundation (<http://www.fuccha.in>).

Discussion

Prayer has special characteristics in that it is a short duration mild-to-moderate psychological, physical and brain activity. Scientific evidence also supports the notion that even moderate intensity activities, when performed daily, can have some long-term health benefits. Whereas Ashtanga-Yoga is a powerful stream of knowledge which enables the practitioners to achieve radiant physical health, serene mind, and spiritual upliftment and creates the ability for harmonious social living (Roaf et al.,2014).

Similarities between Namaz and Yoga: Both involve some sort of physical activity, Asanas in Yoga and Arkan in Namaz. However, Muslims hardly have a thought, while performing it, that Namaz is an exercise in itself. At the best Namaz can be taken as an active where words and actions of a performer come in sync on a focused point, God. The root meaning of ‘Yoga’ in Sanskrit and ‘Prayer’ in Arabic is the same, i.e. “to connect”. The word ‘Namaskar’ used in Yoga and the word used for Islamic s, i.e. ‘Namaz’, have the same meaning, i.e. “to bow down”. In fact, their root word is also the same, Namas. In Malayalam the word used for Namaz is just, Namaskaram! (<http://www.okhlaheadlines.com>). Both Yoga and Namaz require basic physical and moral cleanliness and purity (<http://yogaturkiye.org>).

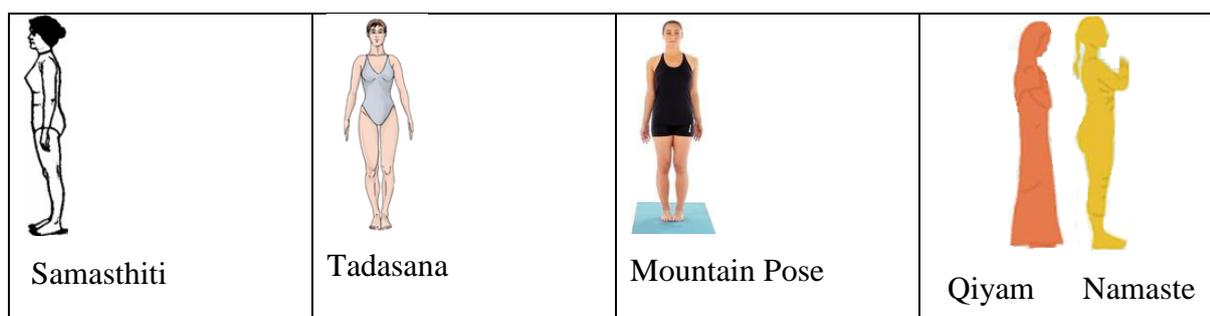
Dissimilarities between Namaz and Yoga: Their objects are different. Namaz is useful for connectivity with God whereas Yoga is recommended for self-realization, i.e. connectivity with the self. Namaz prepares a performer for an outwardly engagement whereas Yoga makes a man more and more inwardly engaged. Ablution, purity of place, sound intention, sober clothing and direction towards Ka‘abah are prerequisites of Namaz whereas there are no such terms for Yoga. There is no limit to the number of Asanas in Yoga and more can be added or subtracted anytime and by anyone without authority. Consider this statement, “There are thousands of asanas. So it doesn't matter if we drop one (Surya Namaskar). We told those (Muslims) they could take the name of Allah in place of Surya. There is no difference.” This is not the case with Namaz. It is a standard practice throughout the Muslim world with only a few superficial variations due to interpretative understanding and no one as the authority to alter it. Namaz is a coordinated and focused act to achieve one goal, to seek pleasure of the Almighty God, while implicitly availing physical and social benefits. People may perform Yoga with different motives, generally for material gains such as for good health, weight loss, controlling back pain, etc. Thus, the intended outcomes are different. Namaz is a core integer of Islam, whereas Yoga is one of the many doctrines in Hinduism. A Muslim is not allowed to give up Namaz whereas Yoga can be practiced at sweet will and according to motivational level of an aspirant. Thus, Namaz is obligatory on Muslims and can be forced upon them by a government but Yoga cannot be thrust upon them or on any other sections against their unwillingness. There are many complicated Asanas in Yoga that can harm anyone on not doing them well but Namaz has a simple system which can be followed easily, even by children of 5 years of age (<http://www.okhlaheadlines.com>). Attempts to draw from diverse sources such as alternative and complementary treatment modalities, use of spiritual healing processes, yoga, Reiki, etc., have yielded mixed results. Religion at large has always been at hand to lend useful guidance to approach both the physiological illnesses and psychological maladjustments (Al-Ghazal,2006). One of the most basic and mandatory acts in Islamic tenets

is the 5 times daily obligatory. Perhaps this act of worship alone can provide solutions to most psychological and somatic problems in humans. Several reports on the application of in psychotherapy illustrate the positive outcome in the individuals exhibiting pathological symptoms such as tension, anxiety, depression and anti-social tendencies. The physical and physiological benefits of prayer are multiple to say the least. Most of the body muscles and joints are exercised during Prayer. In the most noteworthy movement of prostration besides the limb muscles, the back and perineum muscles as well are exercised repeatedly (Sayeed and Prakash,2013). Namaz postures are similar to yogic postures and therefore namaz, while being performed as a religious obligation, can simultaneously give the namaz all the benefits of yoga (<http://www.yogamag.net>). Namaz consists of rakaats, each rakaat being a series of 7 postures. For example, before sunrise, 2 rakaats or 14 postures must be performed. Thus each Muslim is under obligation to perform 119 postures per day that is 3750 postures per month and 42,840 postures per year. Suppose, if we live up to an average of 50 years, namaz being obligatory from the age of 10 years, we would have performed 1,713,600 postures compulsorily in this lifetime(<https://www.quora.com>). Yoga is the product of sadhana of learned men and women, which are beyond religion and pertain to one's physical and mental well-being. It is wrong to say that it is un-Islamic. Why, look at the postures of namaaz, there are eight yoga postures in it including vajrasana. Yoga is part of Islamic practice.

Standing (Qiyam) / Namaste and Mountain Position= Tadasana (Sanskrit Name):

Prayer usually starts in a standing position. The hands are raised to the shoulder level or to the level of top of the ears. Both arms are then placed over chest, with the right arm over the left. The feet of the worshippers should be straight and towards Quibble i.e. the direction towards Kaaba in Mecca city in Saudi Arabia. This posture is somewhat like Tadasana in Yoga, with the only difference that the saadhak (worshipper) doesn't raise hands straight over the head (Roaf et al.,2014). One stands erect after declaring his intension of namaz and raise the hands with open palms up to the ears saying "Allah -o-Akbar". This is the first posture called "Quayam".This position resembles "Tadasana" a yoga asan/posture. As verticality is the essence of religion and energy, this pose is essential for both practices (<http://yogaturkiye.org>). This pose is essential for both practices. The Mountain Pose is the foundation for all standing asanas. One always begins from this and returns to it at the completion of the standing sequence. In this it very closely resembles not only the standing posture of qiyam in prayer, but also the "Return to Mountain" of T'ai Chi Ch'uan. Standing in Mountain Pose or qiyam is a quiescent exercise for the whole body: feet, legs, and spine working together. During Qiyam and Namaste, there is an even distribution to both feet. This will ease the nervous system and balance the body. The body is charged with positive energy. This position straightens the back and improves posture. In this position, a verse of the Quran is recited: 'And guide us to the straight path.' Some have interpreted this to mean the alignment of our Chakras. While reciting more verses from the Quran, the sound vibrations of the long vowels ā, ī, and ū stimulate the heart, thyroid, pineal gland, pituitary, adrenal glands, and lungs, purifying and uplifting them all (<http://www.onislam.net>). Another part of the body that was not touched, but is along the same nerve pathway, may also respond The 'Takbir' and 'Qiyam' together are very similar to the mountain pose in Yoga, which has been found to improve posture, balance and self-awareness. Blood pressure and breathing remain normal in this position, thus providing many benefits to asthma and heart patients. The hands which are placed on the chest during the Qiyam position are said to activate the solar plexus

'chakra' or pathway. Which directs the awareness of self in the world and controls the health of the muscular system, skin, intestines, liver, gall bladder and eyes? When hands are held open for dua (supplication), they activate the heart 'chakra' said to be the centre of the feelings of love, harmony and peace and to control love and compassion. It also governs the health of the heart, lungs, thymus, immune system and circulatory system (Roaf et al.,2014, <http://www.fuccha.in>).

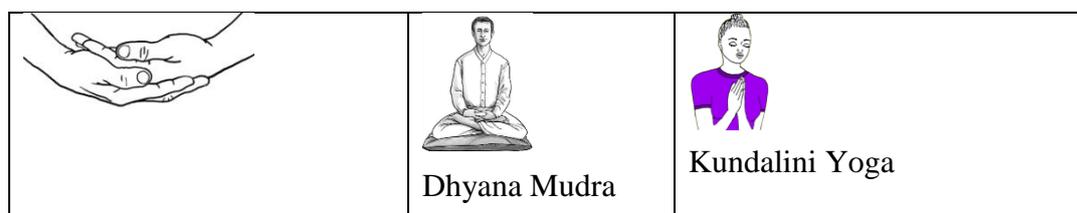


Quanta/Qauma (Straight standing)/ Stand up form the bowing position saying: Samasthiti:

Tadasana (samasthiti-asana)/ Mountain Pose/ Standing Upright Posture/ Samasthiti: In this posture you stand erect and steady, feet together, arms by sides, head, neck, spine, pelvis, legs, and feet forming a straight, but poised rather than rigid, vertical. Poised posture is the only posture that imparts a psycho-physical feeling tone that is in accord with Yoga: one of alertness, balance, integrated energies, and wholeness "Pose of Balance" (Samasthiti). Mountain Pose: Focus: Mobility, Balance. Body Parts Involved: Core, Legs. Benefits: Strengthens the thighs and core. Improves posture (<http://www.msn.com/en-us/health/yoga/exercis>).

Connecting Hands / Dhyana mudra- Kundalini yoga.

Kundalini yoga is the yoga that focuses upon activating energy that resides in the base of the spine. The kundalini yoga lifts that energy by various techniques from the lowest chakra (energy) center up to the highest chakra. There are many chakras in the body, but most kundalini teachers focus on 7 of them which are along the spinal column (<https://tr.scribd.com>, <http://the-kundalini.com>).



Ruk'u/ Bowing /Trikonasana/ Ardha Uttanasana(Sanskrit Name)/ Standing Forward Bend, Halfway Up Pose: While uttering some verses from the Quran in the standing position, Rukoo (Bowing) is done by leaning forward, especially at the lumbar joint supported by the palms placed on the knees, with fingers spaced out. After reciting some verses in this position, the worshipper returns to his previous state i.e. standing position. This position is like Trikonasana in Yoga. After a few seconds, the worshipper gradually reverts to the previous state until the vertebral column is vertical. This position is like the modified Paschim-Uttanasana (Standing Paschim-Uttanasana) & Trikonasana in Yoga (Roaf et al., 2014). Ruk'u and Ardha Uttanasana fully stretch the muscles of the lower back, front torso, thighs, and calves. Blood is pumped into the upper torso. This position tones muscles of the stomach, abdomen, and kidneys (6). The position of 'Rukoo' is very similar to the forward bend position in Yoga. Rukoo stretches the muscles of the thighs, lower back and allows blood to be pumped down into the upper torso, which tones the muscles of the stomach, abdomen and kidneys. The Sujud is said to activate the 'crown chakra' which is related to a person's spiritual connection with the universe around them and their enthusiasm for spiritual pursuits. This nerve pathway is also correlated to the health of the brain and pineal gland. Its healthy function balances one's interior and exterior energies (Roaf et al., 2014, <http://www.fuccha.in>).
Standing Forward Bend: Difficulty Level: Beginner, Focus: Flexibility, Mobility, Balance. Body Parts Involved: Core, Legs, and Back. Begin in a standing forward bend. Use a deep inhale to engage your navel to your spine and come to a flat back. Outwardly rotate your thighs. Your neck stays long and in line with the rest of your spine. Breathe here for at least three deep breaths. Outwardly rotate your thighs. Neck stays long, in-line with the rest of your spine. Breathe here for at least three deep breaths. Benefits: Strengthens the back. Lengthens the hamstrings. Helps alleviate stomach pains. Spinal stretching: Since all the nerves of the body are channeled from the spinal cord out between the vertebrae, a healthy spine is of central importance for the well-being of the whole human body and mind. It takes much patient, persistent practice to make and keep the spine ideally flexible, and only the most dedicated yogis succeed in this. Since Islam is a path for everyone, the Islamic spinal stretch is kept easy and within everyone's reach: the bowing position called ruku only requires that you bend forward enough to place your hands on your knees. Nonetheless, even this minimal stretch helps keep the spine in good condition (<http://www.msn.com/en-us/health/yoga/exercis>, <http://www.fuccha.in>).

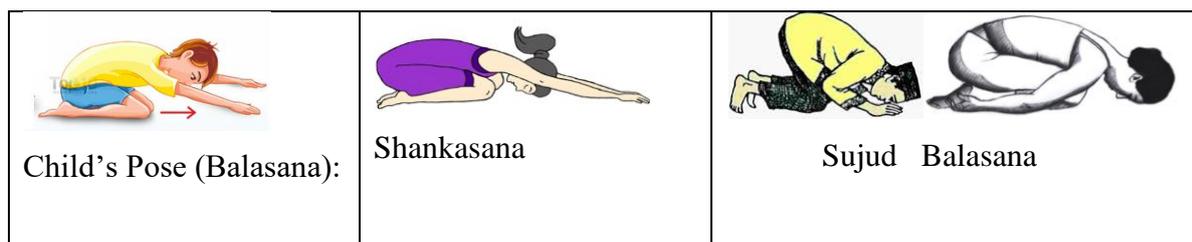


Go into the prostration position/ Sanskritçe Adı: Utkatasana/ Chair Pose: Go into the prostration position by bending your knees and going down slowly. Chair pose: Difficulty Level: Beginner. Focus: Strength, Power, Muscle Endurance, Balance. Body Parts Involved: Chest, Butt. Benefits: Builds strength, stability and stamina. Is alleged to be a fat-burning

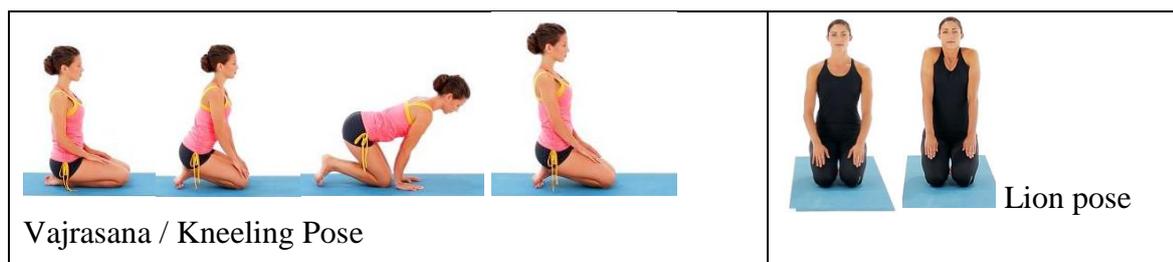
pose. Helpful in alleviating symptoms of arthritis and joint pain (<http://www.msn.com/en-us/health/yoga/exercis>)



Prostration (Sujood= Sujud)/ Balasana/ Shashtaangasana (Shashankasana): The act of prostration is done from the standing position to kneeling, the position involves having the forehead, nose, both hands, knees and all toes touching the ground together. This position is like Shashtaangasana in Yoga. The position of al-Qaaidah,(or Julus) is similar to the Vajrasana (thunderbolt) pose in Yoga, which firms the toes, knees, thighs and legs. It is said to be good for those prone to excessive sleep, and those who like to keep long hours. The 'throat chakra' is activated by turning the head towards first the right and then the left shoulder in the closing of the . This nerve path is linked to the throat, neck, arms, hands and hearing-effecting individual's creativity and communication (Roaf et al.,2014). Sujud is the most important position in . This position stimulates the brain's frontal cortex. It leaves the heart in a higher position than the brain, which increases flow of blood into upper regions of the body, especially the head and lungs. This allows mental toxins to be cleansed. This position allows stomach muscles to develop and prevents growth of flabbiness in the midsection. It maintains proper position of fetus in pregnant women, reduces high blood pressure, increases elasticity of joints and alleviates stress, anxiety, dizziness and fatigue. Easy Yoga for Elimination: The stimulate Abdominal and pelvic zone (Intestinal region), the eliminative energy of the body. Try this exercise: Sit on the heels. Bring your forehead to the ground in front of your knees. Place your hands in fists by your ears. Raise your buttocks as high as possible, keeping your forehead on the ground. Breathe long and deep through the nose. Continue for 1-3 minutes and then relax (<http://www.msn.com/en-us/health/yoga/exercis>). The neck muscles, in particular, are strengthened such that it is uncommon to find a person offering regular prayer prostrating at least 40 times a day to suffer from cervical spondylosis or myalgias. Sajdah is the only position in which the head is in a position lower than the heart and therefore, receives increased blood supply. This surge in blood supply has a positive effect on memory, concentration, psyche and other cognitive abilities. During Sajdah dissipation of the electromagnetic energy accumulated from the atmosphere takes place by the grounding effect at regular intervals resulting in a calming feeling. A recent study investigating the alpha brain activity during Muslim s has reported increased amplitude in the parietal and occipital regions suggestive of parasympathetic elevation, thus indicating a state of relaxation(Sayeed and Prakash,2013).

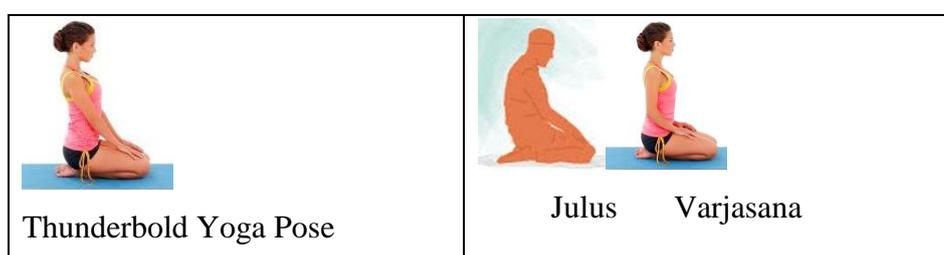


Come up the prostration position / Sitting in Kneeling Pose/Vajrasana/ Simhasana (Sanskrit Name)/Lion Pose: Sitting in Kneeling Pose: Kneeling, Toes Tucked Pose: Difficulty Level: Beginner. Focus: Balance. Body Parts Involved: Legs, Joints. Benefits: This pose opens the arches of your feet, which helps for balance. It is said to help with symptoms of plantar fasciitis. Lion Pose: Difficulty Level: Beginner. Focus: Breathing. Body Parts Involved: Total Body, Chest. Begin by kneeling with your knees slightly separated and your palms face down on your thighs. Your toes can be tucked or untucked. Benefits: This is great for relieving stress, as well as tension in your chest and face (<http://www.msn.com/en-us/health/yoga/exercis>).

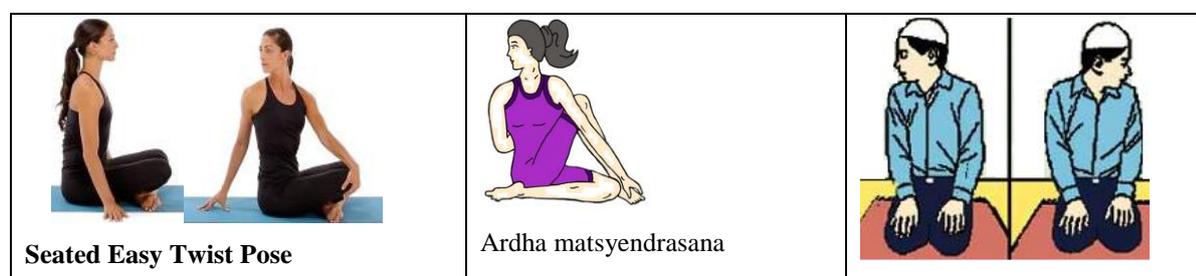


Sitting (Tahayat) and finishing Prayer/Julus / Thunderbolt Pose /Vajrasana: Sitting is an important step in Prayer. After standing, bowing and prostration, sitting is done on the left foot along the ground with the right foot upright. After reciting some verses from Quran in this position, the Prayer is concluded by reciting greetings of salaam by looking over one's right and then left side. This posture is more like **virasana** in Yoga (Roaf et al.,2014). This Asana resembles more or less the Namaz pose in which the Muslims sit for . Furthermore, both vajrâsana and jalsah are the same as the 'zazen' posture of Japan (<http://yogaturkiye.org>). Julus and Vajrasana aid the detoxification of the liver and stimulate peristaltic action of the large intestine. This position assists digestion by forcing the contents of the stomach downward. It helps in curing varicose veins and joint pains, increases flexibility, and strengthens the pelvic muscles (<http://www.fuccha.in>). Benefits of Vajrasana (syatik): Those having gas problems should perform this asana, immediately after a meal. It provides relief from sciatic pain. The benefit of Vajrasana done for 5-7 minutes is equivalent to a long walking exercise. Also, the Vajrasana is very beneficial in curing the problem of varicose veins. This pose give longevity and strengthens the spine. Thunderbolt Pose: Islamic religion suggests this pose for offerings (namaz). Begin by kneeling on your shins, with your hands pressed down on your thighs. Lengthen from your tailbone all the way through the crown of your head, then slightly tuck your chin. Difficulty Level: Beginner. Focus: Breathing. Body Parts Involved: Legs, Joints. Vajrasana (Thunderbolt pose) Benefits: In this posture, all seven

chakras of body are aligned in straight line which makes it easy for the practitioner to raise his/her kundalini (serpent) sakthi and experience its movement along their spinal cord. If you breathe only into your stomach (not lungs) and allow that hot air from stomach to circulate throughout your body for a minute, it helps in reducing fat and removes all toxics from body. If somebody takes a close look to this asana, can see that it is closely related to the 'posture' of Muslims. It is also very efficient in curing leg pain due to arthritis, sexual disorders, urinary problems, etc. if you feel leg pain of any kind, practice vajrasana for at least 15 minutes, a great relief will be occurred, since it blocks blood to legs for some time, it enlarges and refreshes the blood vessels in legs and thus a great relief from leg pain is experienced. Good for grounding and posture. Is thought to improve digestion (<http://www.msn.com/en-us/health/yoga/exercis>).

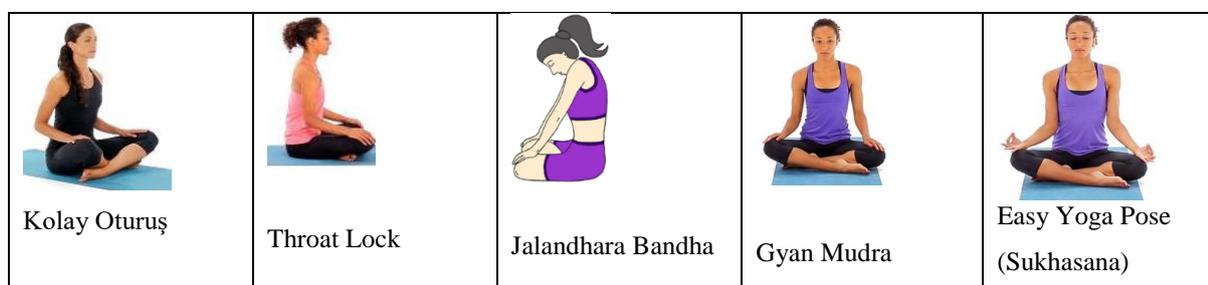


Peace to the right and left (sitting) / ardha matsyendrasana/ Spinal twists /Seated Easy Twist Pose: Finally, as we say the final salutation (tasleem) at the end of the, turning the head to the right and left massages the neck muscles and increases their flexibility (<http://the-kundalini.com>). A session of yoga practice normally concludes, just before final relaxation, with a thorough twist of the whole spine (ardha matsyendrasana) to the right and to the left. It helps to even out the spine from the other poses it has done and keep everything balanced. In much the same way, prayer concludes with the of peace (salam) said while turning the head to the right and then to the left. This works only the cervical and may be a few of the thoracic vertebrae, but it is useful for keeping the neck flexible and is consistent with the pattern in prayer of presenting reduced versions of the yoga asanas. Seated Easy Twist Pose: Difficulty Level: Beginner. Focus: Flexibility, Mobility. Body Parts Involved: Pelvis, Core, Joints. Benefits: Is believed to stimulate digestion. Improves hip and spine flexibility. Opens the shoulders (<http://www.msn.com/en-us/health/yoga/exercis>).



Easy Seat Pose (Sanskrit Name: Sukhasana)/ Throat Lock/ Jalandhara Bandha (Sanskrit Name): Difficulty Level: Beginner. Focus: Flexibility, Breathing. Body Parts Involved: Pelvis, Core, and Back. Benefits: Improves posture and improves hip flexibility. Promotes roundedness and calmness. Cross one shin in front of the other, knees wide, and heels underneath opposite knees. Allow your hands to relax on your thighs: palms face up for energy or facedown for grounding. Draw your shoulder blades down and together on your back (<http://www.yogicwayoflife.com>). Throat Lock: Protects the neck. This pose is thought to protect the inner ear, brain, and eyes from the pressure created by breath retention (<http://www.msn.com/en-us/health/yoga/exercis>).

Gyan Mudra: Begin in Easy Seat. Allow your hands to relax onto your thighs face up or down. Place the pads of your pointer fingers and thumbs together, keeping your middle, ring, and pinky fingers long. Breathe here for at least five deep breaths (<http://www.msn.com/en-us/health/yoga/exercis>).



Conclusion

Many researches have so far concentrated on the application of religious practices and their physical benefits. Within this frame, Turkmen (2004) underlined that western countries supported the applications of martial arts sports in formal education in order to contribute to spiritual, moral and physical development of the children.

Namaz, as a daily physical practice performed 5 times a day by the Muslims, has also various physical benefits. Namaz postures are similar to yogic postures and therefore namaz, while being performed as a religious obligation, can simultaneously give the namaz all the benefits of yoga. Prayer and Yoga can be regarded often as a type of stretching and flexibility exercise. Namaz and yoga both generates inner energy, vitality and flexibility.

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