



A Survey Study Of Following Yama And Niyama Principles By Sport Players

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Abstract: This study investigates the adherence of sport players to the principles of Yama and Niyama, as outlined in classical yoga philosophy. Yama (restraints) and Niyama (observances) form the ethical foundation of yoga and have implications for discipline, mental clarity, and overall well-being. A survey was conducted among 378 sport players across different disciplines to evaluate their awareness and application of these principles. This was a long-term study which consist of different sports tournament conducted at Shree Hanuman Vyayam Prasarak Mandal's Degree College of Physical Education, Amravati. Sports tournaments includes only team games as Basketball (56), Football (91), Kho-Kho (70), Kabaddi (49), Hockey (56) and Handball (56). Results indicate that while awareness of Yama and Niyama is relatively high, consistent practice is limited due to competitive schedules and lack of formal yoga education. The findings underscore the potential benefits of integrating these principles into sports training programs.

Index Terms – Yama, Niyama, Attitude, behavior, Consistency and Emotional stability.

I. INTRODUCTION

Yama and Niyama are the first two limbs of the eightfold path of Ashtanga Yoga, as described by Maharishi Patanjali in the Yoga Sutras. These principles emphasize ethical behavior and personal discipline, which are crucial for mental and physical harmony. The five Yamas — Ahimsa (non-violence), Satya (truthfulness), Asteya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (moderation), and Aparigraha (non-possessiveness) — serve as moral guidelines that regulate interactions with others and the environment. The five Niyamas — Shaucha (cleanliness), Santosha (contentment), Tapas (discipline), Swadhyaya (self-study), and Ishwarapranidhana (surrender to a higher power) — focus on personal discipline and self-improvement. Together, these principles form a comprehensive ethical framework that fosters inner balance and social harmony.

In the realm of sports, where discipline, teamwork, and mental resilience are critical, the application of Yama and Niyama can offer significant advantages. For instance, Ahimsa can promote fair play and respect among competitors, while Tapas can enhance perseverance and commitment to training. Despite their potential benefits, the extent to which sport players are aware of and adhere to these principles remains underexplored.

This paper aims to fill this gap by examining the awareness, adherence, and perceived impact of Yama and Niyama among sport players. The study also considers the role of cultural, educational, and coaching influences in shaping players' attitudes toward these principles. By doing so, it seeks to provide insights into how ethical and philosophical teachings from yoga can be integrated into modern sports training programs to support holistic development.

The relevance of Yama and Niyama in modern contexts has been explored in various disciplines:

- **Ethics in Sports:** Research by Gupta et al. (2020) highlights the importance of ethical behavior in fostering sportsmanship. Ethical behavior in sports is not just about following rules but also about demonstrating respect for opponents, officials, and the game itself. Gupta et al. emphasize that adherence to ethical principles like Satya (truthfulness) and Ahimsa (non-violence) can mitigate conflicts and promote a spirit of fairness. Their findings suggest that sportsmanship is deeply influenced by the ethical framework imparted by coaches and sports organizations.
- **Yoga and Athletic Performance:** Studies by Sharma and Rao (2018) demonstrate the positive effects of yoga on physical and mental performance. Their research shows that regular yoga practice, including adherence to Yama and Niyama principles, improves flexibility, strength, and focus. Tapas (discipline) and Santosha (contentment) were found to be particularly impactful in helping athletes cope with the pressures of competition. The authors argue that integrating yoga ethics into training regimens can enhance resilience and reduce the likelihood of burnout.
- **Behavioral Psychology:** Bandura's (1986) social learning theory underscores the role of modeling ethical behavior in shaping individual actions. According to Bandura, individuals learn behaviors by observing and imitating role models. In the context of sports, coaches and senior players who embody Yama and Niyama principles can influence younger athletes to adopt similar practices. This alignment between theory and practice highlights the importance of mentorship and the social environment in fostering ethical behavior.

II. METHODOLOGY

Participants The study involved 378 sport players (aged 18-25) from various disciplines, including team sports only i.e., Basketball (56), Football (91), Kho-Kho (70), Kabaddi (49), Hockey (56) and Handball (56).

Survey Design The survey was designed to comprehensively assess the awareness, adherence, and perceived impact of Yama and Niyama principles among sport players. The structured questionnaire consisted of 20 items grouped into two main categories: Yamas and Niyamas. Each principle was represented by two specific questions to evaluate both the understanding and practical application of the principle. The questions were developed using a combination of closed-ended and Likert-scale formats. Closed-ended questions aimed to gauge the binary understanding of principles (e.g., familiarity with the concept), while the Likert-scale questions (ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) assessed the degree of adherence and its perceived benefits in their sports practice. For instance:

- **Yamas:** Questions included, "Do you consciously avoid actions that could harm others during practice or competition?" (Ahimsa) and "How often do you strive to maintain honesty in your interactions with teammates and coaches?" (Satya).
- **Niyamas:** Questions included, "How often do you engage in self-reflection or self-study to improve your performance?" (Swadhyaya) and "Do you maintain a consistent and disciplined training routine?" (Tapas).

The survey was pretested with a small sample of 10 athletes to ensure clarity and relevance of the questions. Feedback from the pretest was used to refine the language and structure of the questionnaire.

Data Collection Data were collected through in-person methods over three months conducted at sports events, allowing for immediate clarification of questions when needed. Participation in this research study was voluntary and confidentiality of the data was assured.

Data Analysis Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data, providing insights into the levels of awareness and adherence among the participants. Correlation analyses were performed to explore relationships between adherence to Yama and Niyama principles and factors such as sport type, coaching philosophy, and cultural background. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was employed for all statistical analyses.

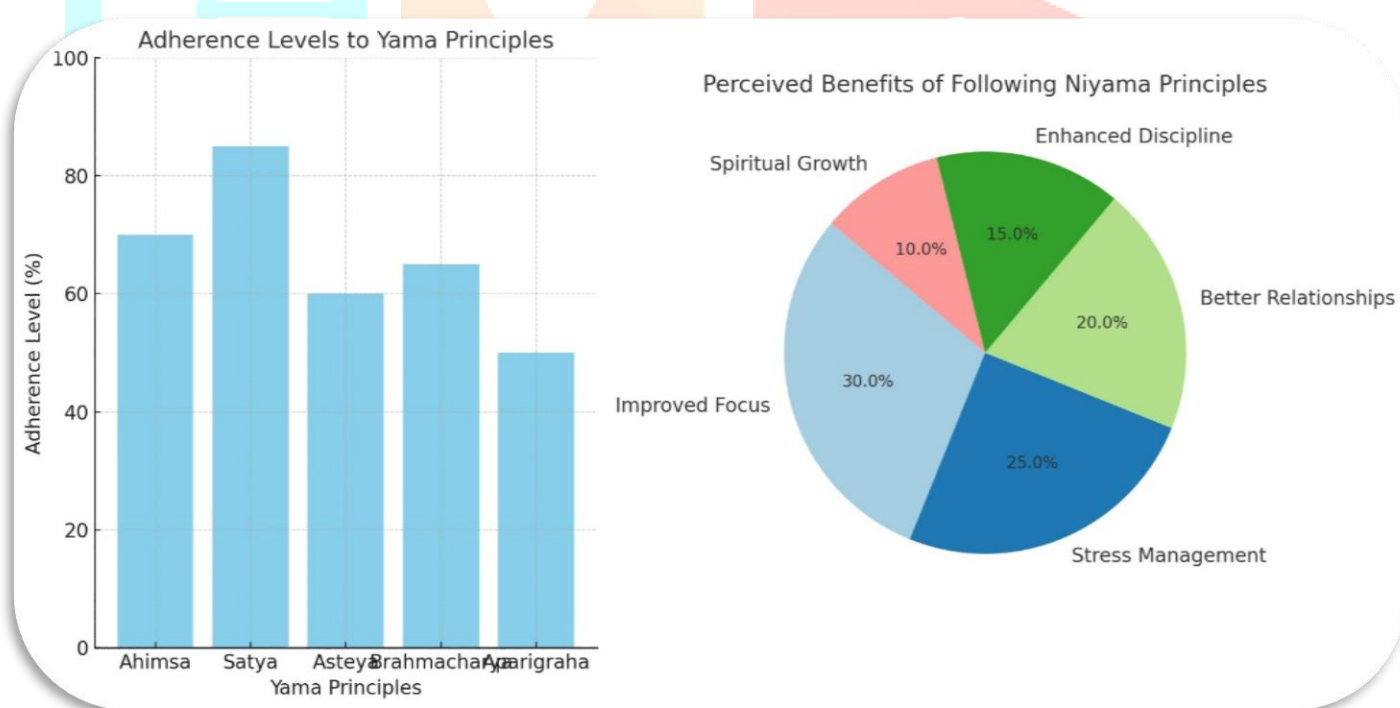
III. RESULTS

Adherence to Yama and Niyama

- **Yama:** Players showed high adherence to Satya (truthfulness) and moderate adherence to Ahimsa (non-violence). Aparigraha (non-possessiveness) had the lowest adherence.
- **Niyama:** Tapas (discipline) and Santosha (contentment) were widely practiced, while Ishwarapranidhana (surrender to higher power) was less common.

Influencing Factors

- **Sport Type:** Individual sport players demonstrated higher adherence to Niyama principles compared to team sport players.
- **Coaching Philosophy:** Coaches emphasizing ethical behavior positively influenced players' adherence.
- **Cultural Background:** Players from regions with a strong yoga tradition showed greater awareness and practice of these principles.



The chart displays the adherence levels to Yama principles, showing the percentage of sport players adhering to each principle and the distribution of perceived benefits from following Niyama principles, highlighting areas such as improved focus, stress management, and better relationships.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study underscores the significant potential of Yama and Niyama principles in enhancing athletic performance, mental well-being, and interpersonal relationships among sport players. By adhering to these ethical and personal disciplines, athletes can develop a balanced approach to competition, emphasizing both excellence and integrity. The findings suggest that incorporating these principles into sports training programs can offer holistic benefits, fostering not only physical performance but also emotional resilience and ethical conduct. Coaches and sports organizations are encouraged to integrate yoga philosophy into their training methodologies, promoting awareness and practical application of Yama and Niyama.

Future research should delve deeper into longitudinal studies to evaluate the sustained impact of these principles over time and explore tailored interventions for specific sports disciplines. Additionally, cross-cultural studies could provide further insights into how diverse backgrounds influence the adoption and effectiveness of Yama and Niyama in sports contexts. By bridging the gap between ancient wisdom and modern athletic practices, this study contributes to a growing body of knowledge advocating for a more ethical and mindful approach to sports. This integration has the potential to redefine success in sports, aligning it with values that promote both individual growth and collective harmony.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Introduce yoga workshops focused on Yama and Niyama in sports academies.
2. Develop tailored programs to align with athletes' schedules.
3. Conduct longitudinal studies to evaluate the long-term impact of these practices.

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