

# COMPARATIVE STUDY OF YOGA BADHAKA TATTVA AND CHITTA-VIKSHEPA

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## Abstract

*It has always been challenging and complicated to understand and implement the yoga in common mass. Being a part of society always makes one dwell upon various terms regarding responsibilities and priorities. Since the transition from common mass individual to sadhaka to yogi is difficult and requires a lot of efforts and discipline to succeed as a yogi, we see that there are many things to deal with in the path from beginning. Yoga is the final goal of the efforts we make and the process comes with (n) number of obstacles. All the available yoga text in current era be it Yoga Sutras, Hatha Yoga Pradipika or Samhitas or even Shrimad Bhagwad Geeta have talked about the obstacles and their solutions in details. Naturally different individual has different views about different situations, same is with Yoga texts. Each of the text has mention of different kind of obstacles and different solutions to that; which will help sadhaka avoid conflicts during sadhana. Thus it becomes important to compare the variations in the obstacles first and find similarities or relatable context of the same.*

**Keywords:** Badhaka tattva, Obstacles in yoga, Causes of failure in yoga, Fluctuations, Distractions in Yoga, Mind modifications, Hathapradipika, Patanjali Yoga Sutra

## PURPOSE

1. To understand similarities in Yoga badhaka tattva (HYP 1.15) and Obstacles in path of yoga (PYS 1.30, 31)
2. To find relatable interconnection between both the texts.
3. To understand practical approach considering the differences and similarities in given texts.

## TYPE OF RESEARCH

It is a comparative research. It is a comparison between two of the many original texts of Yoga. This research is done to find out the similarities and inner-connection between Hatha Yoga Pradipika and Patanjali Yoga Sutra and uses analytical approach to find its practical outputs.

## PREFACE

In this era, Yoga has gained more physical importance than spiritual. Traditionally there are a few divisions of Yoga Sadhana namely Bhakti yoga, Karma Yoga, Raj Yoga, Laya yoga etc. Hatha Yoga is one of the different types of yoga-sadhanas. Hatha Yoga is related to physical practice of yoga. Yoga in general is a process of purification which requires clarity in the ultimate goal and consistent practice. While goal setting for the practice is necessary, it is also necessary to recognize obstacles coming in the path of yoga. By recognition, it means that finding loop holes and reasons and causations behind the obstacles becoming able to create disturbance and distraction. The great Sage Patanjali in the Yoga Sutras and Sage Swatmarama in the Hath Yoga Pradipika have talked about the obstacles and factors behind obstacles as well as their solutions. Preferably in today's date the world needs the guidance to reach their spiritual goals as well as other goals in life, this study of Obstacles and Factors related to it in Yoga will help understand the obstacles of Yoga better to avoid in practice and daily life.

## CONTENT

Firstly Hatha Yoga Pradipika in its first chapter talks about Causes of failure in Yoga. They are six in numbers and listed as -

अत्याहारः प्रयासश्च, प्रजल्पो नियमाग्रहः। जनसङ्गश्च लौल्यञ्च षड्भिर्योगो विनश्यति॥(HP -1.15)

**Atyahaara (Over eating):** Over eating here can be understood as over consumption. Over eating brings lethargy as more food takes more time to digest. Same goes with over consumption, everything that's being consumed over capacity is going to take up appropriate amount of energy to digest or analyze. If not given

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proper time to digest food gets converted into undigested waste and becomes the cause of Vyadhi – Disease. Here, Quoting Sage Patanjali's take on obstacles is necessary as he mentioned that Disease, dullness, doubt, procrastination, laziness, craving for enjoyment, erroneous perception, inability to achieve finer state, instability as obstacles to the mind (1.30) Patanjali Yoga Sutra). To relate it, over eating brings disease due to its physiological process; this state brings lethargy and dullness. Dullness is a state where one is not willing or enthusiastic enough to work for the goal.

**Prayasa (Overexertion):** Over exertion or unnecessary efforts also take up extra energy from the body and mind making one lethargic and dull to proceed for the Practice.

**Prajalpa (Talkativeness):** Talking more consumes vital energy and also wastes time, which can be used for the practice if preserved.

**Niyamagraha (Adhering to rules):** Being adherent to rules and regulations make one narrow minded. Yoga needs open minded approach and belief in guru's words. Adherence to strict rules and regulations will become hindrance for the sadhaka. Let's take up an example to understand this. There is a rule that practice must be done after bathing. So practitioner sticks to that rule no matter what. What if there's no water for one day? Practitioner becomes rigid with the mindset that he cannot practice without taking a bath, then he will not practice that day and he has this as an obstacle for the goal. If the practitioner is flexible with this rule, he will practice no matter what and overcomes the obstacle. But Swatmarama doesn't promote rigidly following the rules here.

**Janasanga (being around common people):** Being in the company of people with low morale or goal opposite to the practitioner's goal can distract him from his goal, their negative vibrations can influence practitioner and might direct him towards base consciousness and sensual or material pleasures instead of inner enlightenment.

**Laulyam (Wavering mind):** Distraction or Wavering mind is considered as an obstacle because one pointed focus is not there in the practitioner's mind. Practitioner looks for material pleasures, sensual pleasures, social goals to achieve as a priority and his ultimate goal of Yoga stays aback. We see this in usual crowd who wants to learn and understand yoga, but also wants to fulfill their other priorities first. Here, it should be noted that, it is possible for one to attain the ultimate goal while being in his social and moral duties, discrimination is important to understand and achieve it together.

Taking towards Sage Patanjali's Sutra,

व्याधिस्त्यानसंशयप्रमादालस्याविरति-भ्रान्तिदर्शनालब्धभूमिकत्वानवस्थितत्वानि चित्तविक्षेपास्तेऽन्तरायाः ॥ (PYS - 1.30)

दुःखदौर्मेनस्याङ्गमेजयत्वश्वासप्रश्वासा विक्षेपसहभुवः ॥ (PYS - 1.31)

**Vyadhi (State of disease):** there can be inevitable circumstances that bring ailments during practices. Physiological changes and metabolic changes are meant to happen as there are changes in diet and practice.

**Styan(Dullness):** Akarmanyata- Unwillingness to complete a certain task. Sleepiness or drowsiness is totally different thing from it. Here, yogi can't work on defined goal, although s/he has interest and strength to do so.

**Samshaya (Doubt):** Not believing in the words of Guru or questioning whether it is going to take sadhaka towards the goal or not is samshaya. There are various kinds of doubts like Is this practice going to take me towards liberation? Is my guru eligible to provide me with knowledge? Is it possible to be in society and attain the ultimate goal? It does nothing but helps sadhaka into procrastination and makes him lazy thinking about visible results.

**Pramada (Procrastination):** is an obstacle. Giving an example, One day practitioner wakes up in auspicious hour and practices for two hours in enthusiasm, the very next day he doesn't get up on time because of laziness and he doesn't practice thinking it isn't going to make much difference if I do not practice for a day, this procrastination brings lethargy and laziness in him and by the time he becomes ignorant to his goal.

**Aalasya (Laziness):** Inactivity in yoga due to heaviness in mind or body. That may be due to over eating or overthinking. There are many reasons to be demotivated and lazy towards the process and practice of yoga.

**Avirati(Craving for enjoyment):** Absance of Vairagya, Having attachments towards desires and enjoyments is Avirati.

**Bhranti Darshana(Erroneous Perception):** Viparyaya is the cause behind bhrantidarshana. Viparyaya is nothing but mistaking something for the other due to false knowledge. As an example: person mistaking rope for snake.

**Alabdhbhumikatva(Inability to achieve a finer state):** Because of all this distractions coming in the way of sadhaka, he faces them and becomes unable to progress. Hence, he faces with the inability to reach finer states in yoga.

**Anavasthitatva(Instability):** Even if the sadhaka achieves the finer state, due to doubts or any other obstacle he cannot stay steady in the state he reached.

There are accompanying symptoms mentioned in Patanjali Yoga Sutra under the title of upavikshepa. They are Pain, Depression, Shaking of the body and arrhythmic breathing. When one faces with these symptoms, he realizes there's disturbance in the sadhana.

## ANALYSIS

Difficulties in transition from a sadhaka to yogi require efforts and stability. So, both HYP and PYS have their take on the obstacles. If we inter-relate them, we find that there are similarities in Patanjali and Swatmarama's explanation. Let's have a look at the comparison.

In HYP, there is a mention of overeating which can be related to the vyadhi, styana, pramada and alasya of PYS. Over eating is nothing but eating more than body's demand. In terms of consumption, it is consuming more than the body or the mind's capacity. To digest all the consumed food or anything requires a certain period of time as per its nature and level of metabolism which is different in each person. Physiologically, it will take more time than usual to digest and delay other processes and more energy will be used to speed up the process. This will make person feel low in energy (lethargic). At this stage, lethargy or unwilling approach towards things will convert into pramada (procrastination). As there is already lack of energy, there will be heaviness in body and mind as well which will be understood as Alasya. Sometimes, the person consumes so enough that, s/he will not willing to get much at that time and feel contented for a while. So in that Styan period, anything that is supposed to be done to reach his/her goal, will be avoided. "No work to do" as there is feeling of contentment. Alasya is counted as obstacle in Yoga-Tattvaopanishad also. (YTU - 30)

The same way, Prayasa (over exertion) brings Dukha and daurmanasya with a thought that sadhaka has made very much effort than usual and it will bring progress faster; which in turn slows down the practice and delay the results. Prayasa generally means making an effort, but here it is taken in context of making extra or unnecessary efforts. Physically, when the sadhaka makes unnecessary or extra effort in hatha yoga sadhana, he will end up with soreness in the body and it will create Dukha (pain). If he continues the practice, he will face trembling and vibration in the body due to soreness that is known as Angmejayatvam (shaking of the body). With Angamejayatvam, body will not be able to stay steady in one asana for longer period. Thus, (Sthiram Sukham Asanam) will not be achieved; he will be slowed down automatically in the practice. In other words, Prayasa will bring Dukha also. Because the aspirant will expect faster result, which, in reality, is just a daydream and sadhana will progress at the natural speed only.

Prajalpa consumes so much of energy and leave sadhaka with shwas-prashwas (arrhythmic breathing). Prajalpa brings effect on breathing and makes it arrhythmic which is mentioned under Upavikshepa named as Shwas-prashwas. As we already know that talking involves breathing, too much of talking will disturb the controlled cycle of breathing. So it might be possible that the heart rate will be increased as the breath is disturbed. Also talking a lot uses up energy and body needs more energy, to compensate that inhalation will be more frequent and make the person feel the panting and heaviness in the process of inhaling and exhaling. Prajalpa also tends to bring Samshaya and Daurmanasya to some extent as the aspirant talks to other people with different views; that might create conflict in aspirant's mind and may be the reason of Samshaya and Daurmanasya. Boasting (Katthanam - कथनम्) is the obstacle, which was told by the lord Vishnu in Yoga-Tattvaopanishad. (YTU - 30)

Niyamagraha can be related with avirati and bhrantidarshana because rigidly sticking to a rule or regime will do nothing but become a distraction when the rule could not be followed it just becomes a reason of pramada and will lead the aspirant to crave for enjoyment. Niyamagraha is going to be the cause behind Avirati and Bhranti-Darshana both. Rigidly sticking to rules will make the aspirant narrow-minded. As the example we have previously seen, there are chances for the aspirant to be rigid towards his worldly responsibilities and that way he will chase behind worldly pleasures and crave to complete his duties beforehand. This also will make him see the impossible things about his goal. For example, aspirant starts thinking that once he will be done with his social responsibilities, it will be easier for him to achieve his goal that is yoga; this indeed is going to distract him and he will start perceiving the hardly achievable results as a piece of cake that is Bhrantidarshan and of course erroneous perception will make him crave for worldly desires (Avirati). Also if the aspirant is about to reach higher states, adhering to rules will make it difficult for the aspirant to progress towards finer state (Alabdhibhumikatva) and even if he reaches there somehow; it will be difficult for him to be steady in that state. Many times, when sadhaka starts the sadhana, Mantras and other important things are very important to stabilize the mind and reduce unwanted thoughts to zero. Though in that case, without deep realization if the aspirant continues with chanting of mantras, s/he will not get any extra ordinary results - as the essence of Mantra Sadhana is not there. But since the mantras are important part of sadhana, s/he follows only for routine, so that will become obstacle for the aspirant. (YTU - 30)

Janasanga, on the other hand, will become the cause behind avirati, dukha and daurmanasya; as different people have different goal in life. Sadhaka, being with common people, will not be able to avoid different thoughts that come from different minds and might be distracted from his own goal. Janasanga (company of common people) will primarily bring Samshaya as there are different minds and different opinions. Further, being with people who have different goals in life will not help the aspirant in his goal of yoga, instead it will become the reason behind aspirant's recurrent cravings for enjoyment and materialistic happiness. Janasanga also considered as bad company (धूर्तगोष्ठी) obstacle in Yoga-Tattvaopanishad. And bad company is main cause of aspirant's fall from Sadhana. (YTU - 30)

Laulyam will become the reason behind samshaya, alabdhabhumikatva and anavashitattva; to be able to find out the depth or truthfulness in texts or words of the master makes it difficult for sadhaka to stick to his own practice. He always has dwelling thoughts about his current state at sadhana which stops him from reaching finer state and also will not be steady if he reaches there. Laulyam (wavering mind) will bring Samshya, Anavasthitattva and Alabdhabhumikatva. Wavering tendencies of the mind usually bring the thoughts that are contradictory to what aspirant has been learning or doing; that definitely will make aspirant question the process, teachings of his guru, his own experiences throughout the sadhana or if the state he currently was at is real or just illusion. These Samshayas are just example and there might be many more like this. Thus the aspirant will try to find the satisfactory answers to the doubts. That will make it harder for him to reach finer state in practice (Alabdha-bhumikatva). By any chance if he will exceed the state of fineness, his Samshaya will bring him back to the former state and this will be known as Anavasthitattva. Most faced problem in sadhana is that the sadhaka wants to achieve worldly things and simultaneously desires liberation. This is because of wavering tendency of the mind. Thus may be in morning sadhaka wants to focus on sadhana whole day, but due to wavering mind, s/he desires materialistic things like gold, money, fame or sexual satisfaction. So Yoga-Tattvopaniṣad considers... Lust for Gold and women/men. (YTU - 31)

May this article help to understand different obstacles and how they are inter-connected. Actually, these texts are showing us path to Yoga, but there are obvious obstacles too. So aspirant should watch himself and try to protect Sadhana.

## RESULT

We may produce following results from the study:

- 1) Recognition about the obstacle in one's own practice.
- 2) Learning about the effects these obstacles may have on the progress of sadhana.
- 3) Applying solutions to void distractions and disturbances on the path of yoga.
- 4) All obstacles are caused by each other, so neglecting even one obstacle can invite many obstacles.

## EPILOGUE

There are different levels of Aspirants. Some are very clear with the goal and they work hard with extreme urge to achieve the goal no matter what it takes, some are moderate with the urge and some have very mild urge to reach the goal that is Yoga or Samadhi. It is natural that whatever the level of aspirant is, there will be obstacles in the path. Sage Swatmarama has given a small list and gross explanation regarding the obstacles or causes of failure in yoga whereas Sage Patanjali has given a deeper take on the obstacles. The inter connection plays important role for multiple reasons for aspirants. One, inter connection removes the possible conflicts in aspirants mind regarding consideration of any of the text. Two, it saves aspirants effort to find out the obstacles with gradual experience, that way aspirant will be aware of the obstacles in any form on the path or Samadhi. Third is aspirant will be able to find out the possible solution if any of the obstacles comes to him. This makes it easy for the aspirant to stay away from conflicts and turn his 100% focus on sadhana to reach what goal he has set. Yoga is indeed a slow sadhana, but again it depends on the level of urge the aspirant has to attain Samadhi. Thus, in conclusion we understand that there might be many factors affecting sadhana, but clarity, consistency and dedication is must.

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