

## **Social Media Penetration in Transforming Unviable to Viable Business Models: A case study of Yoga Awareness and Practice**

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### **Abstract**

In recent years, we notice there are changes in the people lifestyle. Many people conscious about health care and nutritional diets. Growth of fitness centers and enrolments in Yoga, meditation classes signify the changes happening in the current generation people. Many old generation people still consider Yoga or fitness is activity as a preventive measure and keep oneself fit. Central to State Governments and non-governmental agencies made significant progress in promoting yoga. State and Central Universities introduced Yoga courses in the curriculum itself; few state governments appended the medical facilities with Yoga Therapy and Treatments. This paper summarizes various initiatives by various stakeholders and contributions and the role of social media vehicles in communicating geo-specific target markets.

**Keywords:** Yoga, social media, Sustainability, Fitness and Lifestyle

## I. INTRODUCTION

India expects to have close to 1-billion internet users by 2025 (Ministry of External Affairs, 2025). This internet penetration converted more than 50% of the users to make use of social media platforms to buy products and services. Social media commerce carved a market share and reached 27% from online customers' business and more than 50% of the students will expose and do some online education during 2025. This digital space grows continuously and plays significant role in country's business eco systems and created new rules for conducting business.

Social Media Communication have become more complex phenomenon to understand due to its aggregation of individuals exchanging their views and words. Lal (2017) study on determinants of social commerce website found that the information support is a key factor to use social commerce website. Informational support is the views, reviews, comments or advice provided by a set of individuals on recommending a product or service. This behaviour is strongly supported by Signaling theory (Connelly et al 2011). Social media activities may be viewed as a practical outcome of the Signaling theory, where one party decided to communicate (or viewed as signal) the information gathered from various sources or usage of products and services whereas the second party, the receivers use the information for their decision-making.

Within this context of social media, we have a set of people named as Social Media Influencers (SMI), who are all internet users with a substantial number of people following their activities on social media (Conde & Casais 2023). Iva Jurišić, et al (2024) research work further confirmed the role of social media influencer's role in marketing activities. In particular, their study work connected how the Generation Z is using the social media platform content from Instagram in their decision-making process. Putra et al (2025) study findings also support the significant role of user-generated content (UGC) use by the Generation Z and their loyalty to use in the decisions.

Despite its hard facts on humanity, COVID19 created remarkable awareness on physical health around the globe. Country like India, has to work very hard to maintain the current state of three beds per 1000 people; to remain in the state, an estimate by IBEF (2025) says nearly 1.54 million doctors and 2.4 million nurses to be added to the healthcare system. Unfortunately, there is drop in the public expenditure on healthcare by the government during 2024-25 (1.9% of GDP vs 2.5% during 2023-24), which is a small share for the eco-system.

Covid19, shortage of medical care system and limitation in accessing health care and social media influences, there is a changing pattern in life style of individuals. India's fitness economy is currently INR 16200 Crores and expects to reach INR 37700 Crores by 2030. The 18-62 age group, it is noticed that only 15% of them are active in participating paid fitness activities. Revenue for the fitness

industry is dominantly from top-10 cities such as Mumbai, Delhi or Bengaluru, which accounts 56% of the revenue.

This research work aims to bring out the role of social media platforms, in particular, YouTube in creating a vibrant communication medium, for small scale activities or geo-specific (local) services. In India, it is estimated that more than YouTube has 11000 channels with 50 crore users per month. This video sharing platform allows people to create their own channels thereby brought an opportunity for the content creator or businesses to webcast/stream videos of their products or services.

## **Review of Earlier Studies**

### **Theoretical Basis**

This social media communication, micro-blogging tools and recommendation of product use by individuals may be viewed as an extension of social network theory. Social Network Theory forms the reasons for exchange of information between the sender and receiver. By studying such information exchanges one can understand the attitude towards events or products or services. (Liu et al 2017). Further insights may be drawn from the Trust Transfer Theory, which suggests that an individual opinion about a product or service or object is getting shaped over-a-period of time by reference information with them or from various sources of information (Steward 2003).

### **Social Media and Marketing**

By invoking these theories, we draw more insights on social media use behaviour of consumers in the marketing contexts too. In the recent times, social media vehicles emerged as a strong source of communication and referral point for many individuals. Specifically, in a geo-specific information, these sources play significant role in supply side of information. A study on social media platforms connecting intensity of social media use, effects of readability, integrity and emotional intensity vis-à-vis social support by the help seekers revealed that there is a need to create tailored made signaling strategies to improve response system during public health emergencies (Yang et al 2025).

The quality of content and number of users following a social media site or a particular influencer is also playing significant role in evaluating the site and person. Users, who gather information from more number sources and followers of many social media influencers are keen to make assessments whether the content is closer to reality or not. Yang et al (2025) study classified the influencers as micro and macro; this classification plays a crucial role in creating a fit between the medium of communication/influencer and the brand. Identification of suitable influencers and maximizing the benefits studied by More and Lingam (2019). This study finding is

encouraging the role of social media influential users and strategies to develop business launches and marketing of new products/services.

A research work by Ezekiel (2022) revealed a strong role played by microblogging marketing and users shared different types of information which was found to be lengthy and frequent used aggressive medium of communication. Chen et al (2024) study showed that social media influencers significance in creating attractiveness and promotion of brands among the consumers. In the contexts of geo-specific contexts, the study findings are major fit as a practice. Many small and micro marketers of products and services use social media channels to reach out geo-specific target community as a cost-effective tool and efficient tool to reach out smaller geographical locations. Due to nature of their product/service, which is available only in a specific smaller towns or villages, social media tools and microblogging become a way of life these businesses and services.

## **Methodology**

This study uses exploratory research design. Due to the topical nature and try to connect various players, roles and media tools usage, the authors felt exploratory research is suitable for the study. Majority of the data were collected from websites of government, independent agencies, educational institutions and social media arms of various people who are undertaking Yoga as a profession.

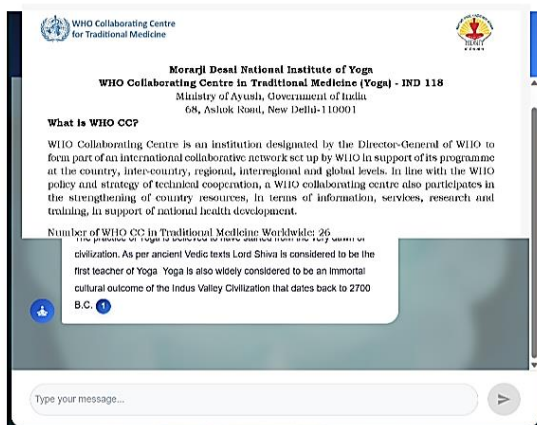
## **Results**

India is known for its invaluable ancient tradition and scientific advancements. One such tradition is Yoga. The word has its root from Sanskrit – “Yuj” which means “to join” or “to Yoke” or “to Unite”, synchronizing of mind and body. It will also align thoughts and actions of individuals thereby creating harmony between human and nature. Due to its preventive nature of health disorders, promoting health and life styles and recognizing its position of universal appeal, the United Nations General Assembly recognized June 21 as International Day of Yoga on 11/12/14. The Government of India took an initiative to create/rename the Ministry of Ayush on November 09, 2014.

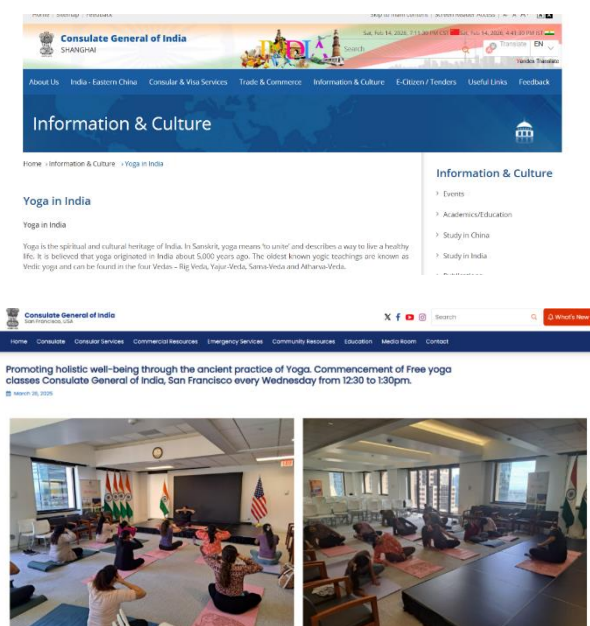


## Creating International Visibility

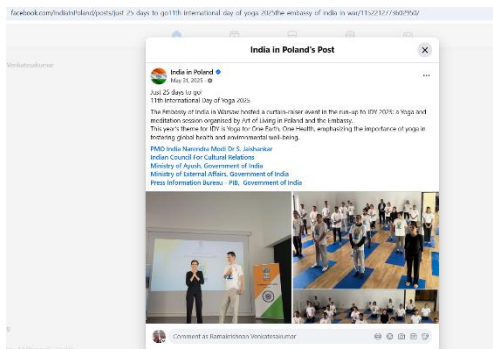
This ministry website contains even AI assistance and information about courses. To create International Sustainability and Promotion of Yoga initiatives, World Health Organization [WHO] created WHO Collaborating Centre, which is working on international collaborative network. To support this initiative and align with promotion of Yoga, Government of India created “Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga WHO Collaborating Centre in Traditional Medicine [Yoga].



Part of this initiatives, few Consulates Generals of India added Yoga initiatives in the country's official website, where they operate. Certain states of India, which are popular for yoga activities are also shortly briefed in the websites.



There are active initiatives by many Consulate Generals of India at various countries in promoting the Yoga.



These initiatives create vibrant international connection and motivation for promoting the Yoga not only India, but in various countries. This will create an opportunity to do collaborative researches and business exchanges.

### Sustainability Initiatives by Government of India

For example, with the support of Ministry of Ayush, a separate School is started functioning in the university from 2023.

A screenshot of the website for the University School of Ayush. The top navigation bar includes 'Home', 'We Channel', 'Contact Us', and 'Search Here'. Below the navigation bar, there are links for 'Programs / Institutes', 'Official/Staff', 'Academic Calendar', and 'Services'. The main heading is 'UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF AYUSH'. Below this, there is a red banner with a white circle containing the word 'Vision'. The text next to it states: 'School of Ayush was established in Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University per 2017 and 2023. The school aims to provide unparalleled education opportunity to students to understand the profound knowledge of our ancient systems of medicine. It will provide an ecosystem in which holistic education in the fields of Ayurveda, Yoga, and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy can be imparted.' Below the banner, there is a white box with a red border containing the following text: 'M.Sc.(Yoga)'. The course is designed to encourage the pupil to be a global citizen, serving human beings at large through the noble profession of Yoga. The course objectives are: 'To generate manpower to assist in Yoga Research Projects', 'To assist physicians/ consultants to give Yoga training and Therapy of hospital', 'To produce manpower to give Yoga Training and Yoga Therapy of all levels', 'To learn Yoga therapy to students for prevention and treatment of lifestyle-related diseases', 'To promote awareness for positive health and personality development in the students through Yoga', and 'Instilling and inculcating the general interest and inquisitive knowledge about Yoga for health, personality development, and spiritual evolution.' The course is affiliated with Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University (GGSIPU), Dwarka, New Delhi. Eligibility: 'B.Sc. (Yoga) Graduate with 50% marks from a recognized University or Institute of National repute OR A Science/Medical/Paramedical/Physiotherapy Graduation Level Degree with one year diploma in Yoga Science. The graduation level degree should be with 50% marks from a recognized University or Institute of National repute. A candidate should be medically fit. A Medical Fitness Certificate in this regard issued from the Medical Officer of the institute shall be produced. Candidates suffering from any chronic disease are advised not to seek admission to this course. Age Limit: Candidates should not be more than 35 years of age as on 01.09.2023. Reservation in age limit is as per University norms. Intake Capacity: 30 reservation of seats will be as per University norms (GGSIPU). Selection Procedure: Through Common Entrance Test (CET) of GGSIPU University. Duration: The duration of the program will be 2 years (4 semesters).'

The government of India, through the support of various ministries offering Masters/Bachelors/ Certificate level courses.

**Foundation Course in Yoga Science For Wellness (FCYscw)**

Foundation Course in Yoga Science for Wellness (FCYscw) is a part-time course of 01 month duration (50 Hrs.). The classes are conducted for 5 days in a week for 02 hrs. duration in a day, in morning (7-9am, 9-11am through offline mode) (7-9am, 9-11am, 11am-02pm through online mode) and in evening (3-5pm, 5-7pm through offline mode) (3-5pm and 5-7pm through online mode). However, the timings may change as per the convenience of the institute.

**Eligibility:**

- 10th pass or its equivalent

**Intake capacity:** 30 seats per batch. Total Seats 300 (150 online and 150 offline) There may be as many as batches of 30 each depending upon demand and space availability.

**Selection Procedure:** First Come First Serve Basis

**Duration:** The duration of the programme will be One Month.

**B.Sc. (Yoga)**

- The course is designed to impart the knowledge, skills and techniques of Yoga to enable the students to become an institutionally qualified Yoga professional.
- It is a full-time regular course
- 2 years duration
- Comprising of 6 semesters.

This course is affiliated with Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University (GGSIPU), Dwarka, New Delhi.

**Eligibility:** Pass in 12th class of 10+2 pattern of CBSE or Equivalent in any Science Stream with a minimum aggregate of 50% marks in any four subjects including English (Core/elective/functional) provided that the candidate has passed in each subject separately.

**Age Limit:** Candidate should not be more than 21 years of age as of 01.08.2023. Relaxation in age limit is as per University norms (GGSIPU).

**Intake Capacity:** 30 Reservation of seats will be as per University norms, (GGSIPU)

**Selection Procedure:** Through Common Entrance Test (CET) of GGSIP University

**Duration:** The duration of the program will be 3 years (06 semesters)

Part of this central government effort, six of the central universities were identified to start yoga departments in the respective places. These universities have Post Graduate Diploma

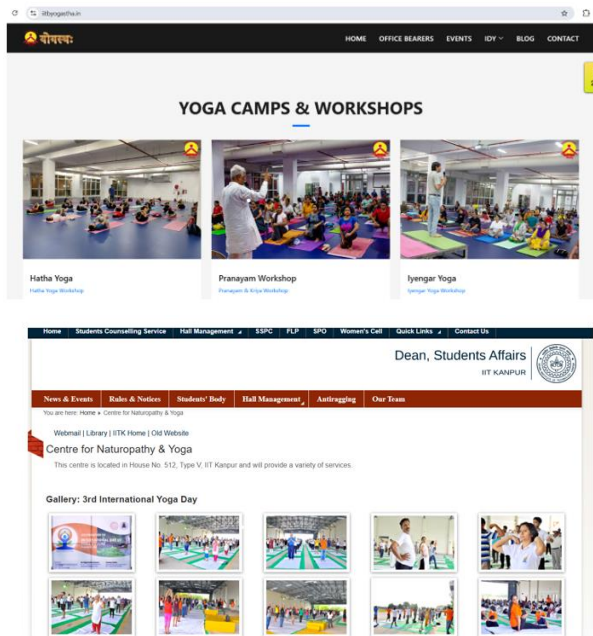
The screenshot shows the website for the Centre for Yoga Studies at the Central University of Tamil Nadu. At the top, there are logos for various organizations including the Ministry of Education, Government of India, and the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). The main navigation menu includes: GOVERNANCE, ACADEMICS, STUDENT CORNER, FACILITIES, R&D, IQAC, and NOTIFICATION. The page title is "Centre for Yoga Studies" with a breadcrumb trail: Home / Academics / School of Study / Humanities / Centre for Yoga Studies. Below the title, there is a section for "Programmes Offered" with a table:

DEGREE/CERTIFICATE COURSES	DURATION	INTAKE
MA Yoga Studies	2 Year	33 + 5
PG Diploma in Yoga Studies	1 Year	33
Certificate in Yoga Studies	6 months	33
PhD in Yoga Studies		

Below the table, there is a logo for the Central University of Tamil Nadu, established by an Act of Parliament in 2009. A secondary navigation menu includes: About, Administration, Academics, Admission, Exams, Research, Infra, IQAC, NAAC, and Incubation. At the bottom, there is a "Yoga Centre" section with two photographs showing students practicing yoga in a large hall.

Courses to Doctor of Philosophy level facilities. Such efforts will create better documentation of the Yoga, promotion of new education and employment streams in the fourth-coming days. Moreover, professionally trained-yoga masters will bring more laurels to the yoga as a profession in future.

Following the initiatives of the central governments, many central universities and centrally funded institutions started various initiatives towards promotion of Yoga in the curriculum.



### Sustainability Initiatives by Government of Tamil Nadu [States]

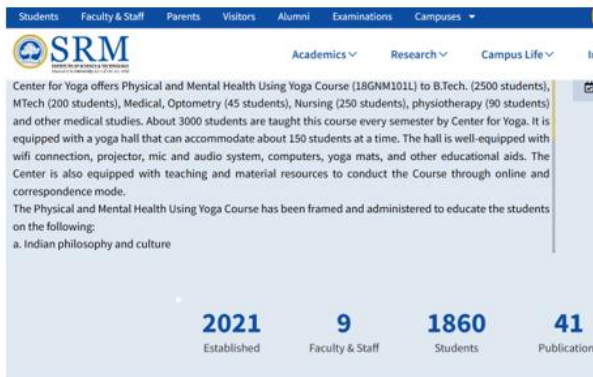
Tamil Nadu Government Multi Super Specialty Hospital established during 2014 has specialized section for Yoga and Naturopathy. This section attends patients on medical yoga, hydrotherapy, mud therapy and acupuncture and acupressure in addition to the life style disorders and diseases. A hospital predominantly Cardiology, Cardio Thoracic Surgery, Hand and Reconstructive Micro Surgery, Medical Oncology, Surgical Oncology, Neurology, Neuro- Surgery, Nephrology, Vascular Surgery and Post-Operative Care and ICU added with yoga section shows the recognition of the state government.



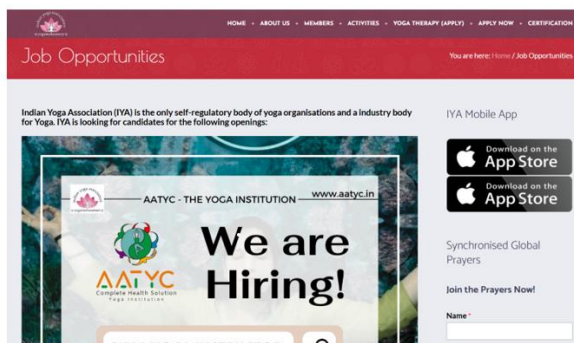
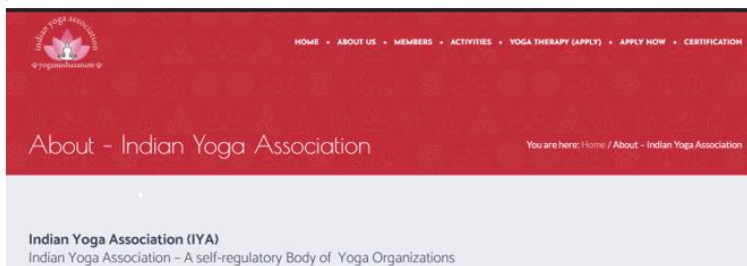
Another state government funded university, started yoga department.



Private Universities and institutions too have similar programs.



### Sustainability Initiatives by Supporting Organizations/Agencies



Indian Yoga Association, a registered society doing various activities to promote Yoga, under the Chairmanship of Sri Sri Ravishankar. In addition to providing training, they facilitate placements and hiring services.



Another example, Tamil Nadu Yoga Sports Federation [TNYSF] is a Non-Profit Organization involves in promotion of Yoga. They do conduct certification program and campaign-based initiatives in rural level, district and state level.

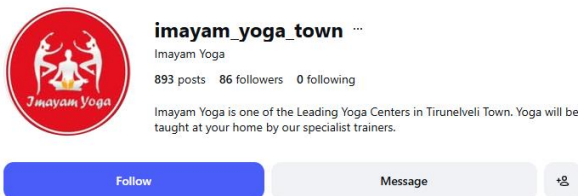
### Who will take steps for the last mile?

All these initiatives by central and state governments and non-governmental agencies created activities which will cater the requirements at the top of the funnel of the society. However, to take it to the last-leg, actual users, one need concerted efforts. Many users and needy people spread length and breadth of the country and reaching out them is a challenging task. Finding a cost-effective way, viability is the key issue for any volunteers and agencies to create an effective communication mode. This issue is partially addressed by the new generation social media vehicles and mobile technology.

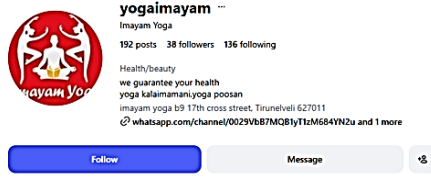
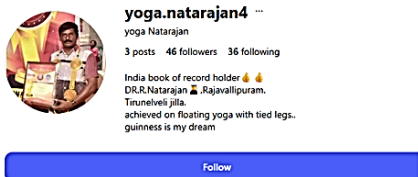


If a specific geographic location has a trained man-power to educate and promote yoga practices, these social media vehicles occupy major role in reaching target audiences at very lower prices or many times, zero cost. Let us consider a few cases/illustrations.

This is an on-going training program in Chennai, where there is a certifying the trainee to become a Yoga Teacher in various countries. This activity is getting promotion in Instagram pages of the training agency viz., Ms. Andiappan Yoga, Anna Nagar, Chennai [https://www.instagram.com/andiappan.yoga/]. This is serving a specific geographic audience with zero cost to the trainer agencies.



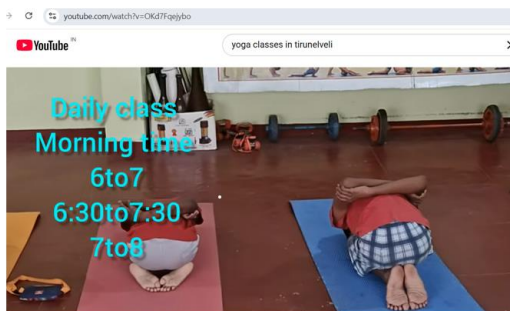
For example, these Yoga centers have very specific followers and create a vibrant network among themselves in propagating the information and new developments around.



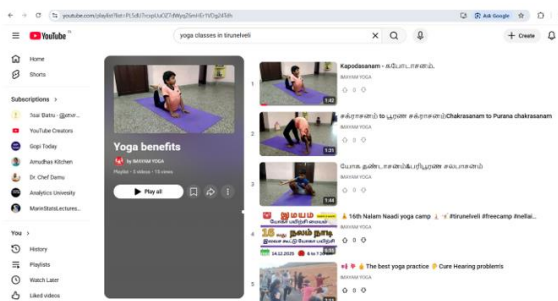
right from animated videos to real-time practices by students are getting posted in the Instagram Pages.



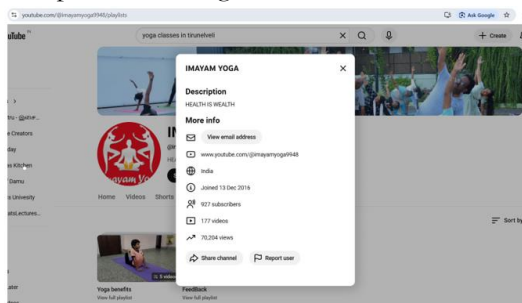
Some of these programs/trainers conduct online classes, where the trainees need not visit any coaching centers. They can stay at their houses and trainers join online through 'live chat' or video calls or WhatsApp calls. In the present day contexts, there are instances where some of the trainers conduct online coaching classes for trainees who live foreign countries. Many working women consider such options are more convenient, where they can choose a convenient time and the coach may join online through WhatsApp or Video Calls.



YouTube is another handy media vehicle for many such trainers to do geo-specific marketing activities. For example, in a specific location- Tirunelveli – Palayamkottai, where daily morning classes are happening for kids and such real time practices are made available through YouTube channel. This channel has active local subscription and followers who pass the information to the required people.



There is scope to promote benefits of Yoga in short videos with local boys/trainees; such videos create good connect with viewers, where the ‘models’ appear are known or they would have come across on their day-today life. For example, one such channel posted nearly 175 videos and more than 75000 views for those videos. This is a prime advantage of social media vehicle such as YouTube.



## Discussion

From the content analysis carried out on Yoga, we notice that there is a funnel approach adopted by the government in promotion of this ancient art. Right from ministries to consulate generals to higher education system, there is a clear path for promoting Yoga in the country. In addition to government and private

universities, various state governments also bring amendments to accommodate Yoga in the system; for instance, Government of Tamil Nadu made initiative to treat people through Yoga even super specialty-multi specialty hospitals. Many private institutions, non-governmental agencies and individuals provide Yoga training; many places, Yoga training has become a profession and many such trainers and centers actively involved train the people.

However, one missing link in the entire spectrum of promotion of Yoga to the last-mile reach, one need cost effective media reach; many such institutions and professionals teach Yoga in specific smaller geographical territories. To reach out and promote Yoga, they need very effective as well low-cost media vehicles. Conventional tools like newspaper ads or radio/television ads are not suitable to address this issue due to its cost factor.

For those community who seek cost effective media to reach out people, social media has become an integral part of communication; today, social media has become a major communication source for many corporate houses around the globe. Indian company or a multinational corporation or MSME to independent service providers start accepting the social media as an effective method to reach target markets. The trainers and smaller organizations who are involved Yoga teaching, use sources like YouTube, Instagram or Facebook effectively to reach the target audiences. There is no need for any professional media editing tool or theme or models; all that they need some videos of Yoga practices by their own trainees and few short vides of local guys and posting them in social media has become a way of reaching the local target markets with content.

Such geo-specific videos have more impact and connect with audience. Moreover, many Yoga trainers also periodically release videos on health tips to general audiences which created good list of followers who use to share such video links to others. Thus, social media tools serve a major role in reaching out the target market with zero or smaller budgets.

In few cases, we notice that the master trainers also conduct coaching sessions through WhatsApp video calls, irrespective of trainee locations. There are instances, where trainee lives in another country to attend coaching classes through WhatsApp video calls.

## **II. CONCLUSION**

In recent years, especially post-Covid time zone, many individuals recognize need for changes in the life style. Fitness centers, Yoga practices and martial arts are getting good amount recognition by the current generation. Companies like Decathlon created fitness centers and Apps related to fitness; and many cities to small towns, we notice growth of professional gyms. Such changes in people life style paved way for adoption of Yoga as a practice in the life. This has created new

profession for many individuals and created coaching centers to promote Yoga. However, to popularize, one need cost effective but still an efficient media to reach target markets. We notice many social media tools are playing significant role in promotion of this ancient art.

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