

Psycho Physiological Effect of Vethathiri Maharishi's Simplified Kundalini Yoga (SKY) Among Prison Inmates

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Abstract:

The Modern Prison Manual states that reformation, rehabilitation and re-socialization are the prime objectives of prison management. Correctional team in Tamilnadu prisons has been implementing various counseling, psychotherapy and yoga programs to achieve the aim. The present study aims to investigate the effect of Simplified kundalini yoga among prison inmates. For the purpose 20 inmates belonging to remand, Tamilnadu Prevention of Dangers Activities (TPDA), and convicts were selected from central prison, Salem, Tamilnadu. The subjects aged ranges from 24 to 55. The simplified Kundalini Yoga training consisting of simplified exercises, meditation and Kayakalpa yoga, was imparted to all the selected subjects. After completion of 15 days of training, a feedback about the effectiveness of the program was collected from all the subjects. Qualitative techniques of content analysis were used to analyse the feedback. The result revealed that all prisoners have problems with psychological, cognitive, physical and negative attitude towards life before practicing SKY yoga. Stress, lack of sleep, anxiety, lack of concentration and hopelessness are predominant problems reported by the prisoners before practicing SKY yoga. Practicing SKY yoga enhanced the physical, psychological and cognitive wellness of prisoners. Sound sleep, reduced anxiety, positive outlook towards life are the major signs of wellness achieved through the practicing of SKY yoga.

Keywords: Sky, Effectiveness of yoga, prison Reformation,

I. BACKGROUND

Crime is the outcome of a diseased mind and jail must have an environment of hospital for treatment and care

-Mahatma Gandhi

People have different ideas about prison and its nature. Majority of us has some negative attitude towards prison such as a place for crucial punishment and that prisoners those who are in prison never change. The concept of crime and criminology have been changed from time to time. Accordingly, the concept of prisoner, prison and its administration also changes.

Prisons in our society existed since the Vedic period. Anti-social elements were kept in a place identified by the rulers to protect the society against crime. Prisoners were kept for retributory and deterrent punishments. Early prisons were dark, dirty and overcrowded. They locked all types of prisoners together, including men, women, dangerous criminals, debtors and the insane.

Today's prison and its administration have changed in several aspects such as infrastructure, prison industry, prison bazaar, classification offender, bar stool school, parole, open air jail. The Pennsylvania system was the first attempt to rehabilitate criminals by classification and separating them on the basis of their crimes.

National Institute of Mental Health And Neuro Science stated in prison reforms – a summary as “Various Committees, Commissions and Groups have been constituted by the State Governments as well as the Government of India (GoI), from time to time, such as the All India Prison Reforms Committee (1980) under the Chairmanship of Justice A.N. Mulla (Retd.), R.K. Kapoor Committee (1986) and Justice Krishna Iyer Committee (1987) to study and make suggestions for

improving the prison conditions and administration, inter alia, with a view to making them more conducive to the reformation and rehabilitation of prisoners. These committees made a number of recommendations to improve the conditions of prisons, prisoners and prison personnel all over the country. In its judgments on various aspects of prison administration, the Supreme Court of India has laid down three broad principles regarding imprisonment and custody. Firstly, a person in prison does not become a non-person; secondly, a person in prison is entitled to all human rights within the limitations of imprisonment; and, lastly there is no justification for aggravating the suffering already inherent in the process of incarceration.

The ultimate aim of the today's prison administration is reformation, rehabilitation and re-socialization of offenders. This is clearly stated under the headline of objectives of prison in model prison manual (MPM 2003 BPRD) As early as in the year 1920, the Indian Jails Committee had unequivocally declared that the reformation and rehabilitation of offenders was the ultimate objective of prison administration. This declaration subsequently found its echo in the proceedings of various Prison Reforms Committees appointed by the Central and State Governments of the international influences. The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, formulated in 1955, provides the basic framework for such a goal. The international Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, propounded by United Nations in 1977, to which India is a party, has clearly brought out that the penitentiary system shall comprise treatment of prisoners the essential aim of which shall be their reformation and social rehabilitation. It is, however, seen that whereas India is second to none in

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terms of an enlightened thinking with regard to the purpose and objective of imprisonment, the gap between proclaimed principles and actual practices appears to have been widening in recent years.

In India, Tamilnadu government has appointed psychologists in Tamilnadu jail service to all central jails to carry out the correctional administration such as reformation, rehabilitation and resocialization of offenders. Psychologists in central prison provide counseling psychotherapy to reform the offenders. The present study aims to understand the effectiveness vedatri maharishi yoga on offenders' wellness

II. NEED FOR THE STUDY

Prison is a controlled environment and prisoners those who stayed in prison are deprived of freedom and personal contacts with family and friends. Some of the prisoners who are otherwise well behaved and are persons of respectable class of society, but they fall prey to criminality on account of momentary impulsiveness, provocation or due to situational circumstances. It is quite natural that all this makes a prisoner to become psychological stress and physical illness. Without correcting this kind of physical and psychological illness, the reformation and rehabilitation is not possible in prison settings. Research conducted in educational and clinical settings revealed that practicing maharishi yoga will regulate the endocrine glands, cure diabetes and improves overall health (Shanthi.S and Perumal.k.,2013.) Maharishi yoga program could potentially be a reduction option for hyperglycemia on type 2 diabetes patients (Ramakrishnan.2013).

(Chiramana Venkateswarlu) stated that it is a remarkably useful practice for those who get worried or agitated easily or those who suffer from insomnia and lack of self-confidence. (Sripriya Krishnan,2005.) Find that the practice of Simplified Kundalini yoga will enable them to unfold a greater and more powerful consciousness through simple physical exercises, meditation and introspection. But there was no such research conducted in prison. Improving physical and mental health is the prime objectives of prison administration. Hence the effectiveness of vethathirimaharishi yoga among prisoners is needed.

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Does the practice of vethathiri maharishi foundation course has an effect on offenders' physical health?
2. Does the practice of vethathirimaharishi foundation course has an effect on offenders' physical health?
3. Does the practice of vethathirimaharishi foundation course has an effect on offenders' cognitive function?
4. Does the practice of vethathirimaharishi foundation course has an effect on offenders' Attitude towards life?

IV. RESEARCH METHOD

Sample

The sample of the study consist of 20 inmates from central prison, Salem, Tamilnadu. Age ranges from 24 years to 55years. The sample consist of remand prisoners, TPDA prisoners and convict prisoners. The inmates those who were

interestingly participated in 15 days vethathiri maharishi foundation course of yoga were included in the sample.

Intervention

15 days basic foundation course of vethathirimaharishi yoga were given to all 20 subjects by trained master from consciounness temple, SKY, Ammapettai, Salem, Tamilnadu.

Brief Description of Foundation Course of Vedatri Maharishi Yoga (in Appendix A)

Measures

Self-report about the feedback of foundation course of vedatrimaharishi yoga were used as qualitative data for analysis

V. DATA ANALYSIS

The collected qualitative data were analyzed by using content analysis techniques

- A. Micro level: the collected self report (Feedback) were analyzed in micro level by each thought unit describe about changes before the practice. After the practice and influence on future were tabulated. Micro level analysis of feedback was given in table-1.
- B. Macro level: in macro level, all the tabulated thought in micro level grouped in to four groups such as Physical, Psychological, Cognitive and Future oriented
 1. Physical: Any description of thought unit related Physical health grouped under physical such as dieses, Disorder, pain and freshness
 2. Psychological: Any description of thought unit related Psychological, grouped under psychological such as stress, depression, worries, confusion, fear and sleep
 3. Cognitive: Any description of thought unit related Cognitive, grouped under cognitive such as stress, attention, concentration and planning.
 4. Influence on Future: Any description of thought unit related future plan or action grouped under influence on future. Macro level content analysis were given in tanle-2.

Table-1: Micro level content analysis of feed back

S. No.	Type of Prisoner	Age	Before Practicing SKY	Frequency	After Practicing SKY	Frequency	FUTURE oriented
1	CT	46	Piles (in and out) pain	1	Pain reduced	1	
			Sugar complaint	2	Normal (tested)	2	
					Concentrated thinking	3	
2	RP	32	Lack of sleep	3	Sound sleep	4	
			Bad thinking	4	Mind freshness	5	
					Body freshness	6	
					Degrees of bad thinking	7	

3	RP	35	Stress	5			I never come to prison again
			Mental worries	6			
			Lack of awareness about body	7	Awareness of Mind	8	I try to help others
			Lack of awareness about mind	8	health awareness	9	
4	CT	54			Freshness in body	10	I never harm to others by mind or body
					Freshness in mind	11	
5	TPDA	36	Blame others	9	Overcome from all mental worries	12	I will teach the yoga to others
			Psychologically affected	10	Overcome from all physical illness	13	
					No anger	14	To help others
					Sound sleep	15	
					Eat well	16	
6	TPDA	34	Mentally affected (fit up case)	11	Over come from all mental illness	17	I will teach to others
			Lack of sleep	12	Over come from all physical illness	18	
					Sound sleep	19	I will help to others
					Mind clearness	20	
7	CT	52	I never participate in this type of yoga	13	I learn that this yoga will help physical health to all age people	21	
			I learn this yoga by compulsion	14	I learn that this yoga will help Mental health t o all age people	22	
8	RP	42	Neurological problem	15	Problem reduced step by step	23	
			Mind confusion	16	Mind relaxed	24	I will teach to other
9	RP	35	I already learn it I my college	17	Relief from body pain	25	
					Mind relaxed	26	I will teach to others
10	TPDA	35	Fit up case	18	Over come from bad habits	27	
					Reduced anger	28	
					Mind relaxed	29	
					Loveable to others	30	
					Fell happy	31	
11	RP	33	Lack of awareness about physical health	19	Awareness about mental health	32	
			Easily irritable	20	Awareness about physical health	33	
12	RP	55	I criticized this kind of program in outside the prison	21	Mind relaxed	34	
					Clarity in mind	35	
					Fully satisfied	36	
					I will bring some other to practice in this yoga	37	

13	TPDA	25	Emptiness about life	22	Bitter experience destroyed	38	I like to live in a new life
					Feel happy	39	
					Mind relaxed	40	
					World looks beautiful	41	
14	TPDA	38	Mental worries	23	Overcome from worries	42	
			Memories of family members	24	Adjust with prison	43	
			Lack of sleep	25	Sound sleep	44	
15	RP	31			Mind relaxed	45	After my release I Live in a good manner
16	RP	34	High stress	26	Reduced mind confusion	46	
			Emptiness	27	Sound sleep	47	
			Lack of sleep	28	Mind relaxed	48	
			Confused thinking	29	Physically healthy	49	
					Mentally healthy	50	
17	RP	33	Self blame	30	Mentally healthy	51	
			Blame others	31			
18	RP	24	Self blame	32	Mind relaxed	52	Never get angry
			Mental worries	33			I will a better life after release
			Stress	34			
19	CT	38	Bad friends	35	Relaxed mind	53	I never harm to others
			Curiosity	36	Wellness in thinking	54	
			Confused mind	37			
20	RP	24	Blame others	38	Calm in mind	55	
Total				38		55	14

RP: Remand Prisoners ,CT: Convict Prisoners, TPDA: Tamilnadu Prevention of Dangerous Activities, all the above thought units are direct translation of prisoners own verbatim and writings

Table.1. Shows the micro level content analysis of feedback from the subjects. It is observed that 38 thought unit in were observed, from before practicing SKY, 55 themes were identified in after practicing SKY and 14 future oriented thought unit were also identified. In total 107 thought units were identified in the micro level content analysis

Table -2:Macro level content analysis: Before and after practicing SKY

Macro level content analysis	Before Practicing SKY		After Practicing SKY	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Theme Related to Physical	5/37	13.52	13/67	19.40
Theme Related to Psychological	14/37	37.83	29/67	43.28
Theme related to Cognitive	12/37	32.43	8/67	11.94
Theme related to future Life	2/37	5.40	11/67	16.41
Theme related to Attitude towards SKY	4/37	10.81	5/67	7.46
others	0	0	1/67	1.49
Total	37/37	100	67/67	100

From table 2. It is observed that totally 37 problems were identified before practicing SKY. Among them, Majority of complaints was related psychological problems that is 37.83 % of (14) complaints related psychological problems such as *Lack of sleep, High stress, mental worries, Memories of family members, Easily irritable, Psychologically affected, Lack of awareness about the mind.* Among the psychological problems, **lack of sleep and mental worries** are the major psychological problems reported by the subjects before SKY practice. It was followed by 32.43% (12) complaints related to cognitive problems such as *Blame others, Mind confusion, bad thinking and self blame.* **Blame others and confusion in mind** is the predominantly expressed cognitive problems before practicing SKY. Followed by 13.52% (5) of complaints related to physiological such as *Piles, pain, Diabetics, Lack of awareness about the body and Neurological problem* was expressed before practicing SKY yoga. Followed by 10.81% (4) of content were expressed about the negative attitude towards yoga before practicing SKY yoga such as *I never participate in this type of yoga, I learn this yoga by compulsion, I have already learned it I my college and I criticized this kind of program in out- side the prison.* Remaining 5.40% (2) of the content expressed thoughts related to negative attitudes towards future life such as *emptiness, and hopelessness.*

In total 67 thought units, expressed about positive changes that occurred after practicing SKY yoga were identified. Among them, Majority of changes were related to psychological problems that is 43.28% (29). Signs of psychological wellness such as, *Relaxed mind, Sound sleep, Mentally healthy, Overcome from worries, Adjust with prison, Bitter experience destroyed, Feel happy, Reduced anger, Freshness in mind, Awareness of Mind* were noted. **Relaxed mind and sound sleep** are the two major psychological changes occurred with result of SKY yoga, expressed by the majority of the subjects. Followed by 19.40% (13) of thought units related to physiological wellness such as *Pails and Pain reduced, Blood sugar normal (tested), freshness in body, awareness about body and eat well* were identified after practicing SKY yoga. It is interesting from note down from table that one subject of the study stated that after practicing this yoga blood sugar comes to normal level. Researcher is not confident about the statement and considers it as placebo effects. But a earlier research (V.M. Rajasekaran, 2013) conducted among type 2 diabetes identifies significant decrease in FBS, PPBS, HbA1c values in both sex who underwent the 3 months yoga and kayakalpa practice. In addition to the above findings many patients of the same study reported a feeling of well-being, more relaxed and satisfied, and a sense of relief from anxiety were achieved through the practice of yoga. The findings of the study conducted by V. M. Rajesekaran(2013) has supported to the present study. Followed by 16.41% (11) Of thought units related to positive attitude toward life, such as *the World looks beautiful, Never get angry, After my release I Live in a good manner, I never come to prison again, I never harm to others by mind or body,* were identified after practicing SKY yoga. **After my release I Live in a good manner and I will do help to others** are the two predominant changes expressed by the majority of the

subjects after practicing the SKY yoga Followed by 11.94% (8) of thoughts unit which shows the signs of cognitive wellness such as *Concentrated thinking, Degreased of bad thinking, Clarity in mind, I learn that this yoga will help Mental health t o all age people, Reduced mind confusion and Wellness in thinking* were expressed after practicing the SKY yoga. Among them Clarity in mind is expressed by the majority of the subject. Followed by 7.46% (5) of content was expressed about positive attitude towards yoga. The majority of the subject were saying as “ will teach this yoga to others” after practicing SKY yoga. It's interesting to note that one prisoner says that the practicing SKY yoga help the prisoner to overcome from the smoking habit.

VI. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- 1 prisoners have problems in all areas. Among them psychological, cognitive and negative attitude towards life were identified as predominant. Stress and Lack of sleep is the challenging psychological problem for prisoners.
- 2 SKY yoga enhances the total wellness of prisoners such as physiological psychology and cognitive.
- 3 SKY yoga will help the prisoners to reform themselves by modifying positive attitude towards himself, life, and others.

VII. IMPLICATION

- 1 The findings of the study will be helpful to the prison officials such as superintendent, psychologist and counselor to easily identify the area and nature of prisoners' problems.
- 2 The findings of the study will be helpful to the correctional team to prepare and implement appropriate training model to reform, rehabilitate and re-socialize the prisoners.
3. The findings of the study will help the policy makers of prisons to implement SKY yoga programme in prison

VIII. SUGGESTIONS

As the design of the study has the limitation of not having a control group, a future study has to be conducted with control group with gender and different age group.

SKY yoga to be implemented to all central prison of Tamilnadu as trial base.

Based on findings, practicing SKY yoga in prison to be made as a routine practice irrespective of their case.

SKY yoga center to be opened in every central prison.

IX. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that all prisoners have problems in psychological, cognitive, physical and negative attitude towards life before practicing SKY yoga. Stress, lack of sleep, anxiety, lack of concentration and hopelessness are predominant problems reported by the prisoners before practicing SKY yoga. Practicing SKY yoga enhanced the physical, psychological and cognitive wellness of prisoners.

Sound sleep, reduced anxiety, positive outlook towards life are the major signs of wellness achieved through the practicing of SKY yoga.

X. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Author express grateful thanks to honorable Mr. Tiripathi ADGP& IG Prison, Tamilnadu for his permission and encouragement to conduct this study. Author also Thanks to Mr. Shanmugasundarm Superintendent of prison and Nikilanagenderan, Additional superintendent, central prison ,Salem, Tamilnadu for their advice, guidance and support throughout the course of study. Author also thanks to Mr. Vivekanandhan and Mr.Sentilnathan Simplified Kundalini Yoga Teachers of conscious temple, Ammapet, Salem, who helped in imparting the yoga training to the prison inmates. Heartfelt thanks are also due to Mr. C. Chinchu, UGC Senior Research Fellow, Department of psychology,Periyar University, Salem,Tamilnadu, Who helped in compiling the Research paper.

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