

Effects of Om Shanti meditation for Scholastic backward juvenile home girls. Study conducted by Dr. Vrunda J. P.

Introduction :

It is clear that scholastic backwardness is one of the major problems among children. Many child health care takers express their concern about early identification and prompt intervention of this condition. However there are no studies and clear guidelines about the therapeutic aspects on it.

We report here our experience with the Juvenile home girls with daily meditation as self healing measure for 90 girls from JH based at Bangalore.

Aims and objectives :

This activity was planned with the hypothesis that Meditation can be used as self healing for Behavioral disturbances and school performance.

Material and Methods :

All girls from the girls juvenile home were started with daily Om shanti meditation for 3 months from the Age group of 8 to 16 years mean age being 12.8years. Each girl was evaluated by the Healer, teacher and Aura photography on day one and day 90th. Every day at 9.15 am /6 days /week , all girls were assembled in the hall, were asked to stand in rows, a senior Healer would lead them with the specific set of physical exercises for 10 minutes, then they were asked to sit with closed eyes/back straight / without any support / crossed legs posture . girls were asked to listen to Om Shanti audio cassette recorded in Grand Master Choái s voice 5 minutes , to remain sited for next 5 minutes, then were made to do 10 minutes set of exercises again.

Results :

Girls liked this activity and cooperated very well, at any given day 95% girls used to present , enthusiastically waiting for the activity.

Most glaring changes were noticed in Behavior , discipline, obeying nature, flexibility of the physical body , cheerfulness on the face, alertness, tidiness and cleanliness of the hairs and cloths.

Girls expressed that they are calm, feel responsible for themselves, and hopeful to come up in life.

Caretakers and teachers observed many favorable changes in form of

Alertness, less fighting tendency, better attendance in school, not sleeping in day time, improvement in grasping the subjects. According to Healerís evaluation of the bioenergy field of the girls, most affected chakras were Solar plexus, Heart , Sex, Crown , Ajna and Basic. Solar plexus chakra improved last (emotional centre), all chakras improved remarkably by 90th day. Aura Photography changes were consistent with Healerís observations.

Discussion :

Scholastic backwardness is being increasingly recognized as one of the important problems in children. Scholastic backwardness could be viewed in

terms of poor academic achievement or repeated failure in grades. Several specific aspects of scholastic backwardness have been studied. E.g.: specific reading retardation.

Rutter et al. (1976) defined specific reading retardation or SSR as the attainment of a reading level which was at least 28 months below that predicted on the basis of age and IQ. They found that 4% of their Isle of Wight (IOW) sample had SSR and 6-7% had general reading backwardness. In another study comparing 10 year old children of IOW and an inner London Borough, (ILB), Berger, Yule and Rutter (1975) found that the prevalence of SSR in ILB was three times more (9.9%) than in the IOW sample (3.3%).

Certain significant associations have been found between scholastic backwardness and school absence and poor concentration {Rutter et al., 1976}, poor school functioning (Minde, 1975), large family size (Berger et al., 1975), father's occupational status (Shepherd et al., 1971) and adverse family conditions (Esser et al., 1990).

Significant associations have been obtained consistently between reading retardation and antisocial behavior, in the earlier studies {Kolvin et al., 1977; Minde, 1975; Rutter et al., 1970}, but not between reading retardation and neurotic disorder. Recently, Schachter, Pless and Bruck (1991) reported that 43% of the learning disabled children in their sample also had behavioural problems. McGee, Williams, Share, Anderson and Silva (1986) showed that in their sample, behavior problems predated reading disability, while reading failure further exacerbated existing problem behaviors.

Quay and LaGreca have suggested the association between poor academic performance and emotional problems such as anxiety, depression and social withdrawal (, 1986). Links, Offord and Boyle (1990) found that poor school performance contributed independently and significantly to the presence of emotional disorder.

Minde (1975) observed that scholastically backward children were primarily maladjusted. An emotionally disturbed individual on the other hand, tended to create a non-learning atmosphere around him. Another possibility considered by Minde is the lack of motivation to learn, caused by a variety of social or cognitive reasons.

Emotional factors supposed to play the major role in behavioral problems and scholastic performance. Specially in a set of Juvenile home girls it appears to be the major one. Meditation is used in many chronic disorders in adult population and is found to be playing a significant role. Many studies examining the psycho-neuro-cardio changes with meditation are being conducted (Vrunda 2001, Harper 1996)

However for children meditation has not been tried as a therapeutic measure. To our knowledge this study is unique as addressing the children with emotional disturbances.

Conclusion:

We conclude that the meditation with physical exercises may be useful for treating the psychological disturbances and improve scholastic performance.