

EFFICACY OF A COPING STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING HUMAN QUALITIES

A STUDY

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INTRODUCTION

It is assumed that the society today has come to a state where calling its members “**human**” is something like an exaggeration or a lie. The *homo sapiens* has the complete form but it is lacking in ‘**human content**’. It is also seen that today a wide variety of systems are available which proclaim that by following these methods one may develop such qualities that may qualify the *homo-sapiens* to be called in the real sense of the term.

Hurlock in her famous book Child Development says, “Human qualities and traits are the specific behaviour or adjustive patterns, such as reactions to frustrations, ways of meeting problems, aggressive and defensive behaviour, and outgoing or withdrawing behaviour in the presence of others (Hurlock, 1972).”

Society is only an agglomeration of individuals. If one wishes to feed a hundred persons, or a thousand-what goes by the name of mass feeding-one has to feed each one individually. In the same way, **if society is to be transformed, the individuals must first be transformed individually** (Chandra, 1963).

Many other authors, have also cont this area e.g. Craske 1768, Gotterman 1978, Jersild 1969, Kelly 1955, Kerlinger 1981, Mayo 1952, Mischel 1969, Rajagopalachari 2001.

Methodology

With such a query the study aims at finding how such methods transform transmogrify and change people and how far their claims come true. The ex-post-facto design was used. The respondents that were following the coping strategy for developing human qualities were purposely selected. The study was done with a sample of two hundred respondents to find out how much does a method of meditation helps the human being to become a real human being. The sample consisted of a very vast geographical area i.e., all the respondents following the strategy come from a number of places in the districts of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh (Refer Table 1 and Illustration 1).

The data collection consisted of an exhaustive, focussed questionnaire, consisting of ten questions regarding human qualities was sent to the respondents either by post or by email, and their replies were received by mail. In order to study the change, the indirect questioning format was used. The responses of questions were analysed on a five point Likert’s scale, as the respondents were supposed to rate their responses on a five-option choice. There was a question where multiple choices were also given. These answers were computed; the pre-testing of the questionnaire was done with ten respondents in order to test its validity and reliability.

Distribution of the Respondents as per the Duration of Practice

The Table 2 depicts the distribution of respondents as per the duration of practice. How long the respondents have undergone the coping strategy, which shall affect their change and development of human qualities

Table 1: Area of Respondents

| S. No. | Name of the Place | No. of Respondents | % |
|--------|-------------------|--------------------|-------|
| 1. | Indore | 75 | 38.00 |
| 2. | Jabalpur | 54 | 27.00 |
| 3. | Bilaspur | 18 | 09.00 |
| 4. | Rewa | 16 | 08.00 |
| 5. | Mhow | 10 | 05.00 |
| 6. | Raipur | 8 | 04.00 |
| 7. | Shahdol | 5 | 02.50 |
| 8. | Korba | 4 | 02.00 |
| 9. | Khandwa | 3 | 01.50 |
| 10. | Bhopal | 3 | 01.50 |
| 11. | Sagar | 2 | 01.00 |
| 12. | Gwalior | 2 | 01.00 |
| | Total | 200 | |

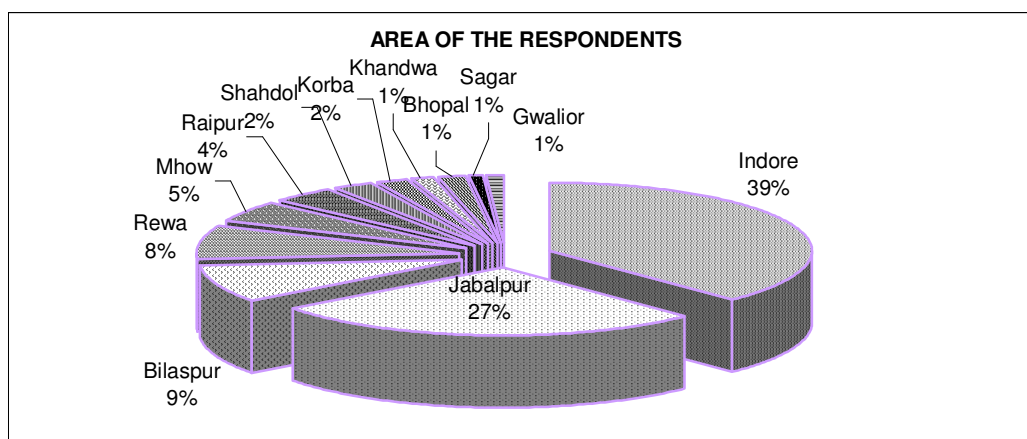


Illustration 1: Area of the Respondents

and traits in them. The range established is at four levels, i.e., those who have been doing the practice since the last one year, the second category was of those who were between one and five years, the third category being five years to ten years duration and the last category being from ten years and above. Out of the two hundred respondents 12% belonged to the first category, 37% belonged to the second category, 31% belonged to the third category and 21% belonged to the last category representing respondents practising for more than ten years of the coping strategy.

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents as per the Duration of Practice

| Duration of Practice | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------|------------|-------------|
| Less than 1 year | 23 | 12% |
| 1-5 Years | 73 | 37% |
| Above 5 years | 62 | 31% |
| Above 10 years | 42 | 21% |
| Total | 200 | 100% |

Distribution of Respondents as per their Human Qualities

Out of two hundred respondents, as per the Table 3, more than thirty eight percent respondents felt that their qualities as human beings, like sensitivity towards others, concern for others without expectation,

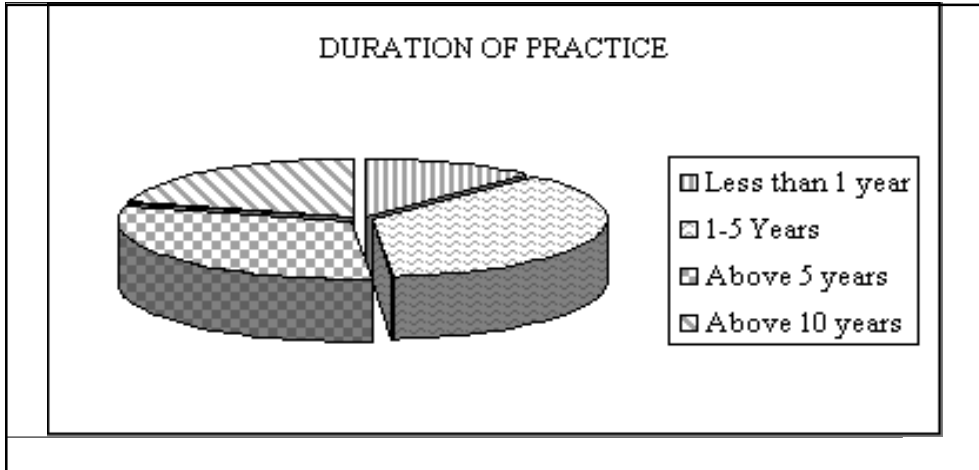


Illustration 2: Duration of Practice

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents as per their Human Qualities on Likert's Five point Continuum Human Qualities

| Labels | Value | Sum of Score | Percentage |
|-------------------|-------|--------------|------------|
| Stongly Agree | 5 | 609 | 38.60 |
| Agree | 4 | 745 | 46.56 |
| Indifferent | 3 | 195 | 12.18 |
| Disagree | 2 | 45 | 02.81 |
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 6 | 00.37 |

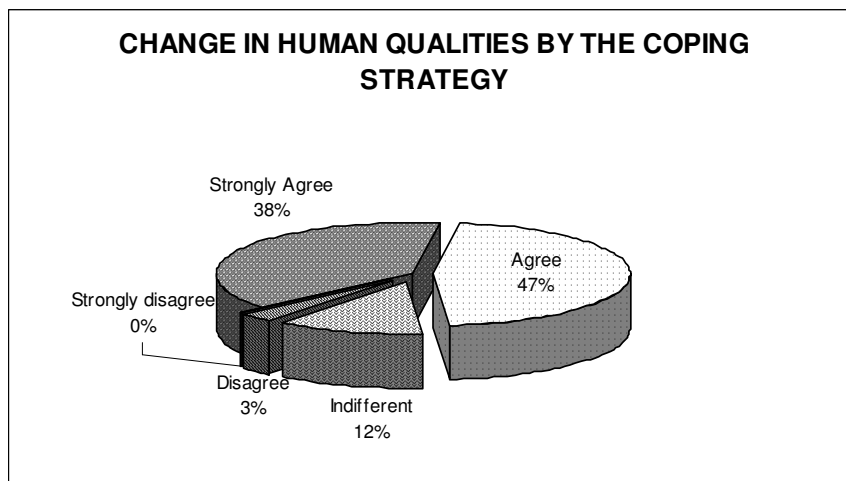


Illustration 3: Change in Human Qualities by the Coping Strategy

forgiveness, speaking the truth etc, has increased after they started the practice of the coping strategy by giving their preference to 'strongly agree' option. Around forty six percent had preferred to 'agree' whereas more than twelve percent preferred to remain 'indifferent'. Only less than three percent gave 'disagree' option. Finally, less than half percent had 'strongly disagreed'.

Analysis

The data was analysed by the SPSS Computer Software Package.

Comparison of Human Qualities of Subjects Belonging to Different Levels of Duration of Practice

The objective of the study was to compare mean scores of Human Qualities of the respondents belonging to different levels of Duration of practice of the coping strategy. The sample members were classified into four categories. Therefore, the data related to this objective were analysed with the help of ANOVA. The results are given in the Table 4.

From the Table 4, it is evident that the F value is 0.708 which is significant at 0.01 level with $df = 3/196$. It indicates that the mean scores of subjects as regards Human Qualities belonging to different levels of Duration of practice differ significantly. So, the Null Hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of **Human Qualities** belonging to various levels of duration of practice is rejected. It may therefore, be said that there was significant influence of duration of practice on the **Human Qualities** of the subjects.

Table 4: Summary of ANOVA for Human Qualities

| Human Qualities | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------|
| Between Groups | 22.202 | 3 | 7.401 | 0.708** | 0.549 |
| Within Groups | 2049.878 | 196 | 10.459 | | |
| Total | 2072.080 | 199 | | | |

**Significant at 0.01 levels

In order to find which groups' mean differ significantly, the data were analysed through Duncan's Multiple Range Test. The results are given in Table 5.

Table 5: Duncans Multiple Range Test Post Hoc Test

| Duration 4 | Human Qualities 5 Duncan N | Subset for alpha = 0.05 |
|---|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | 15 | 24.20 |
| 4 | 34 | 24.79 |
| 2 | 87 | 25.26 |
| 3 | 64 | 25.38 |
| Sig. | | 0.185 |
| Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed. | | |
| a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 32.468. | | |
| b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed. | | |

Duration of Practice -Wise Means and Significance of Difference

From the Table 5, it is evident that mean scores of Human Qualities of the first category of subjects with below one year of practice of the coping strategy is significantly lower than those of subjects in other groups. Further, the mean scores of third category subjects, i.e., five years to ten years, are significantly higher than the first category, fourth category and second category. It may, be stated therefore that both first category (below 1 year practice) subjects and third category subjects (five to ten years practice) are at two extremes.

Inculcation of Human Qualities by Coping Strategy – the Practice (Multiple Choice Option)

The Table 6 depicts various qualities that could be inculcated by the subjects with the help of the coping strategy, i.e., out of the two hundred subjects, sixty eight percent subjects felt that they could learn to accept their mistakes, the highest score in the list of only ten human qualities considered in this study. The second highest rated quality (Fifty four percent) - the expectations that the subjects have from others – was reduced largely by the help of this method. Forty three percent subjects felt that they could learn to speak the truth. The fourth quality that was next in line of the preferences for inculcation was that forty six percent subjects felt that their habit of vengeance was reduced irrespective of what the other person did to him. Ignoring the wrong done by others became the next in line scoring forty two percent. Forty one percent subjects felt that they could develop sensitivity towards other people's need. Forty and a half percent people felt that they could forgive others without keeping any grudge against them. Twenty two percent of the population felt that the help of this coping strategy reduced their self-bragging and egoistic ways. Seventeen- percent subjects felt that their habit of living in the past glories and good times got reduced due to the adoption of this method. Only two and a half percent felt that the options in the list were not applicable to them, as their duration of practice was not substantial enough to make such change possible.

Table 6: Inculcation of Human Qualities with the Help of Coping Strategy

| S. No. | Quality | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|--------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1 | Speaking Truth | 86 | 43 |
| 2 | Accepting mistakes | 136 | 68 |
| 3 | Reduced Expectations | 108 | 54 |
| 4 | Forgiveness | 81 | 50.5 |
| 5 | Reduction in Self bragging | 44 | 22 |
| 6 | Sensitivity to others, view | 82 | 41 |
| 7 | Not being revengeful | 92 | 46 |
| 8 | Ignoring wrongs done by others | 84 | 42 |
| 9 | Reducing living in past glory | 34 | 17 |
| 10 | Not applicable | 5 | 2.5 |

Multiple Choice Options

Interpretation

Human Qualities and the Coping Strategy- the Practice of Sahaj Marg

The study deals with the Human Qualities and how the practice of the coping strategy influences it and helps people develop it. There is a wide range of them and the list can go on and on, because there is no limit to the development of human qualities. As per the analysis of the study, the duration of practice plays a significant role in the development and inculcation of human qualities. Duncan's post *hoc* places the first category subjects at the lowest position but the second position is taken by the fourth category cases which suggests that by this stage due to advancement of the practice there goes on a churning of the elements and finally what should be, prevails. That every one tries to experiment with or the desire for new experience governs the behaviour and practice but later settles down to the most possible alternatives leaving behind unrealistic qualities that are difficult to inculcate. On the basis of Duncan's post hoc tests it can further be said that the subjects after a year of practice find a substantial boost of their resources and qualities which continue to increase after five years and optimise by the third category which is from five to ten years. One can deduce that the low score of qualities at the fourth category stage is in fact a stabilisation and assessment, from a realistic point, i.e., what could be, what ought to be and what is possible. It is a sort of coming in terms with the limitations, so the low score!

Inculcation of Human Qualities

On the rating of Inculcation of Human Qualities in the subjects with the help of practice, (multiple choice option) it is evident that the help of this coping strategy could develop the most difficult qualities of human being that is said to be rare in the present times. Such character traits as accepting ones' mistakes, decrease in ones expectations from others, forgiving and not being revengeful for the wrongs done by others, along with learning to speak the truth only speaks volumes about a coping strategy. If one can ignore what wrong the other persons are doing and can concentrate on what one has to do, must do then one can find a society full of duty-bound conscientious citizens working for the good of society and nation. If qualities like becoming sensitive to other people's needs could be inculcated then such methods could be propagated for the welfare of the people at large.

Human qualities and traits on Likert's five-point scale

As per the Likert's five-point scale, more than eighty five percent subjects out of the two hundred respondents were aligned towards the positive side of the continuum by agreeing, and strongly agreeing to the fact that the practice does have its impact on the development of humanness in cases. Around twelve percent were indifferent and couldn't decide and only three percent and a half percent were negatively aligned on the continuum. All this confirms the fact that Human Qualities can be inculcated in people and one must not limit himself by using phrases like 'By Birth', 'in the family' or 'like father like son' etc. Human qualities and traits can be developed and inculcated.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The coping strategy has been proved to be of immense help in reducing the negative tendencies of human behaviour and inculcating human qualities. Negativity is the evil that hampers progress and puts the individual in a viscous circle from which it is difficult to come out. A person of negative bend of mind keeps on and on falling into the mire of all evils that turn into mental problems, diseases and sickness and pollutes the environment. Mental/thought pollution is very powerful and can spoil the total structure of the globe. What one finds in the middle-eastern and western countries today, is the outcome of this negativity. The World Trade Centre had to meet this fate due to these negative tendencies of a handful of people!

The practice helps in curbing such mental states and enhancing the positive aspects of living making the Homo sapiens what they are supposed to be...Kind hearted, loving, compassionate souls with understanding, tolerance, forgiveness and sensitivity. It helps in not being revengeful and not expecting from others. This is what one wants the society should consist of. Thus, this coping strategy proves to help in this direction. It is therefore suggested that the youth needs to develop in this regard and the society does lack with these values, such a practice should be adopted and becomes a part of living.

Thus, it can be concluded and recommended that this coping skill, the SAHAJ MARG PRACTICE is an answer to the problem of life today and shall go a long way in making and shaping the lives of future generations if it can be adopted by the people at large.

With these conclusions, the study has brought together a revelation that the coping strategy for Life Management, '**Sahaj Marg System**', can be a solution to the problems the society is facing at present. Such methods based on Raja Yoga, could be a solution to the whole of humanity to take advantage of. These contemporary out of school methods may be taken up by an organization in its totality and let one see the outcome.

This study has a vast scope in application people from academic institutions, and the products of western education system who are in awe to the Indian systems and their increasing acceptability by the occidentals may find this coping skill quite equipped with the scientific temper and simplicity of practice. This study shall enable people to understand and appreciate the storehouse of problem solving ways to life. Methods that are simple, scientific and easy to adopt suiting to the modern complex living are explored. The study will be of immense value to the institutions involved in catering to the needs of young and promising future generations.

This also opens up avenues for future researches to be taken up for exploration and better understanding of the

systems that prevail and the functioning of the total gambit of human endeavour. It can be found out and established by a number of follow-up studies for this fact to be taken up seriously and considered for adoption by institutions and people at large.

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