



Effectiveness of the Buddhist Meditation Programme on the Concentration and Memory of VI std. students

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Abstract

Ānāpāna Meditation was taught by the Gautama Buddha, which was the first preparatory step for learning Vipassanā. It is a simple technique where one observes the natural breath-as it is. In the Pāli language, Āna means in-coming breath, Apāna means out-going breath. The people of Thailand are not aware about the educational implication and importance of this Ānāpāna meditation. In this research study the researcher wants to focus the brightness of light over educational implication of Ānāpāna meditation. This research study is classified into Quantitative data and Qualitative data, so such type of research study comes under mixed type of research Methodology. It was found that the Buddhist Ānāpāna Meditation Programme is effective in improving the concentration and memory of the students.

2. It was found that the Buddhist Ānāpāna Meditation Programme is effective in improving the academic achievement of the students.

3. Opinions of the Students, Teachers, Parents, Director, Children Course Teachers and Dhamma Workers towards the Buddhist Meditation programme are positive and in favour of the Buddhist Ānāpāna Meditation.

Key words: *Effectiveness, Buddhist Meditation Programme, Concentration, Memory*

Introduction

Ānāpāna Meditation was taught by the Gautama Buddha, which was the first preparatory step for learning Vipassanā. It is a simple technique where one observes the natural breath-as it is. In the Pāli language, Āna means in-coming breath, Apāna means out-going breath.

Ānāpānasati Meditation programme was revived through a renewed design in India in April 1986. The first was held in Igatpuri. It was conducted by great Vipassanā teacher Shri. S. N. Goenkaji himself. From April 1986 to 1993 there were around 100 courses held in various centers and schools in Dhammagiri, Pune, Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Jaipur and around 8,000 children took part in the programme.

The guideline for children in Ānāpāna course was issued for the first time in October 1993. Goenkaji had framed the guidelines for children's course. The Ānāpānasati Meditation started for the first time in Thailand in the year of 1998.

Need and Importance of the study

The people of Thailand are not aware about the educational implication and importance of this Ānāpāna meditation. In this research study the researcher wants to focus the brightness of light over educational implication of Ānāpāna meditation. After ascertaining all the facts about Ānāpāna meditation technique in India, the researcher was very much impressed by this Ānāpāna Meditation technique based on Sayagi U Ba Khin's traditions and developed by Vipassanā Acharya Shri. S. N. Goenkaji. Hence, after considering all these facts the researcher has decided to conduct the present research study on Ānāpāna meditation for the sixth standard students regarding the improvement of their concentration, memory and academic achievement.

By developing awareness of this natural function of breath, children increase their ability to concentrate. Ānāpāna eliminates nervousness, sharpens memory, and helps to develop academic achievement.

Statement of the Problem

A Study of the Effectiveness of the Buddhist Meditation Programme on the Concentration and Memory of VI std. students from Wat Bangpakok School in Ratburana District, Bangkok, Thailand with reference to Academic Achievement.

Objectives of the study

In order to give a definite direction to the research process, the present study aims at accomplishing the following objectives:

1. To design the Buddhist meditation programme in improving the concentration and memory of the students.
2. To find out the effectiveness of the Buddhist meditation programme in improving the concentration and memory of the students.
3. To find out the effectiveness of the Buddhist meditation programme in improving the academic achievement of the students.
4. To identify the opinions of the Students, Teachers, Parents, Director of the school, Children Course Teachers and Dhamma Workers about the impact of the Ānāpāna meditation.

Operational Definitions of the study

i) Buddhist Meditation: First step in meditation, which is Ānāpānasati, "Ānāpāna" refers to incoming and outgoing breath and "sati" means awareness about the breath.

ii) Memory: It means the ability to recall and recognize numbers and word spelling. (Test VI)

iii) **Concentration:** It refers to activities with awareness and attention which are included in test IV-A, IV-B, V-A, V-B, word identification two sets of Synonyms, Antonyms and pictures.)

iv) **Academic achievement:** It refers to the General Classroom Achievement Test (GCAT) in English, Science and Social Studies.

v) **Students:** This study is related to the primary school students in Wat Bangpakok School, Region 3, Bangkok, Thailand. The age group is of 11-12 years old students studying in VI standard.

vi) **Programme:** This programme refers to the method of meditation technique along with educational aids. It refers to the activities developed by the researcher based on S.N. Goyenkaji's Ānāpāna teaching techniques.

vii) **Effectiveness:** A significant difference between mean achievement scores of experimental and control group.

Assumptions of the study

1. The Thai school students of VI standard have a problem with concentration and memory.
2. Lack of concentration and poor memory affect their academic achievement.

Hypotheses of the study

a) Research Hypothesis

- 1) A specially designed programme enhances the concentration of the student.
- 2) A specially designed programme enhances the memory of the student.
- 3) A specially designed programme enhances the academic achievement of the student.

b) Null Hypotheses

H0-1: There is no significant difference between the mean score of pre-test and post-test of concentration and memory test IV-A.

H0-2: There is no significant difference between the mean score of pre-test and post-test of concentration and memory test IV-B.

H0-3: There is no significant difference between the mean score of pre-test and post-test of concentration and memory test V-A.

H0-4: There is no significant difference between the mean score of pre-test and post-test of concentration and memory test V-B.

H0-5: There is no significant difference between the mean score of pre-test and post-test of concentration and memory test VI.

H0-6: There is no significant difference between the mean score of (GCAT) pre-test and post-test of control group and experimental group.

Scope, Delimitations and Limitations

a) Scope of the study

The nature of research problem determines the scope of the study:-

1. The Ānāpāna Meditation technique is applicable to VI standard students.
2. This study is applicable for children in age group between 8-16 years old.

b) Delimitations of the study

Delimitations determine the boundaries of the study.

1. This research is restricted to the Buddhist Meditation Programme (Ānāpānasati) developed by Shri. S.N. Goenkaji.
2. The place for conducting research is Wat Bangpakok School, Region 3, Bangkok, Thailand and there are 100 students in the age groups of 11-12 years old.

3. The study is restricted to improving the concentration and memory of the students.
4. The study is restricted to improving the academic achievement of the students.

c) Limitations of the study

The recognized limitations of this study are as below:-

- 1) The aspects like interest, motivation, and attitude of the students are factors beyond the control of the researcher.
- 2) Availability of Children Course Teacher (CCT), Dhamma workers, parents, teachers, and Director of school, hall, electricity, timing, are those factors which are beyond the control of the researcher.
- 3) Socio economic status, health (mental and physical) and related activities are those variables which are beyond control of the researcher.

Research Methodology of the study

This research study is classified into Quantitative data and Qualitative data, so such type of research study comes under *mixed type of research Methodology*.

Research Design of the Present study

For this research study the researcher selected the **Equivalent group design from Single-Variable design** because it provides a very high degree of control on sources of internal and external validity.

Variables of the study

- a) **Independent Variable:** “Buddhist Ānāpānasati Meditation”.
- b) **Dependent Variable:** Achievement score, Concentration, Memory score of the students.
- c) **Extraneous Variable of the study** a) **Age:** All the students are from VI standard, aged between 11-12 years old.
- d) **Two Equated Groups:** The experimental group and the control group in this school are based on Pre-test.
- e) **Test:** General Classroom Achievement Test: GCAT test which was modified by the researcher and concentration and memory test was used.
- f) **School Environment:** The environment of the school was the same for both groups.

Population and Sampling Technique

a) Population of the Study

There are 45,766 students in Bangkok region reported by the Thailand Ministry of Education 2007.

b) Sampling method of the study

For this research study researcher has used the *purposive sampling* method.

c) Sample of the present study

Gender	Experimental Group	Control Group	Total
Boys	25	25	50
Girls	25	25	50
Total	50	50	100

Buddhist Meditation Programme Informators for collecting Information

Teachers	Parents	Director of the School	Children Course Teacher (CCT)	Dhamma Workers
16	50	1	1	6

Tools and Techniques of Data Collection

I) Qualitative Tools:-

- 1. Questionnaire for: a) Students Regarding following subjects;** i) Drawing ii) Sport iii) Craft iv) Influence of Ānāpāna meditation.
- 2. Questionnaire for: b) Teachers regarding following subjects;** i) Drawing ii) Sport iii) Craft iv) Influence of Ānāpāna meditation.
- 3. Questionnaire for: c) Parents Regarding following subjects;** i) Drawing ii) Sport iii) Craft iv) Influence of Ānāpāna meditation.
- 4. Questionnaire for: Director of the School**
- 5. Questionnaire for: Children Course Teachers (CCT).**
- 6. Questionnaire for: Dhamma Workers.**
- 7. General Classroom Achievement Test (GCAT).**
- 8. Test IV-A, IV-B, V-A, V-B, and VI for Concentration and Memory.**

II) Statistical Tools Techniques for Data Analysis:-

- a) Arithmetic Tool:** To analyze the questionnaire.
- b) Mean:** To calculate the critical ratio.
- c) Standard Deviation:** To calculate the critical ratio of collected data.
- d) 't' Value:** To test the effectiveness.

Testing of hypothesis

H₀: *There is no significant difference between mean score of taught by Buddhist mediation method and traditional method for improving academic achievement method.* **Interpretation:** It is observe that, calculated 't' value of experimental group is significant for $df = 49$. It implies there is significant difference between mean score taught by the Buddhist mediation method for improving academic achievement.

Hence H₀: is rejected

H₀₋₁: *There is no significant difference between mean score of pre-test and post-test of concentration & memory test IV-A.* **Interpretation:** It is observe that, calculated 't' value of experimental group for concentration and memory is significant for $df = 49$. It implies there is significant difference between mean score of Concentration and Memory Test IV-A.

Hence H₀₋₁ is rejected

H₀₋₂: *There is no significant difference between mean score of pre-test and post-test of concentration & memory test IV-B.* **Interpretation:** It is observe that, calculated 't' value of experimental group for memory and concentration is significant for $df = 49$. It implies there is significant difference between mean score of Concentration and Memory Test IV-B.

Hence H-02 is rejected

H₀₋₃: *There is no significant difference between mean score of pre-test and post-test of concentration & memory test V-A.* **Interpretation:** It is observe that, calculated 't' value of experimental group for memory and concentration is significant for $df = 49$. It implies there is significant difference between mean score of Concentration and Memory Test V-A.

Hence H0-3 is rejected

H0-4: *There is no significant difference between mean score of pre-test and post-test of concentration & memory test V-B.* **Interpretation:** It is observe that, calculated 't' value of experimental group for memory and concentration is significant for $df = 49$. It implies there is significant difference between mean score of Concentration and Memory Test V-B.

Hence H0- 4 is rejected

H0-5: *There is no significant difference between mean score of pre-test and post-test of concentration & memory test VI.* **Interpretation:** It is observe that, calculated 't' value of experimental group for memory and concentration is significant for $df = 49$. It implies there is significant difference between mean score of Concentration and Memory Test VI.

Hence H0-5 is rejected

Major Findings of the study

1. It was found that the Buddhist Ānāpāna Meditation Programme is effective in improving the concentration and memory of the students.
2. It was found that the Buddhist Ānāpāna Meditation Programme is effective in improving the academic achievement of the students.
3. Opinions of the Students, Teachers, Parents, Director, Children Course Teachers and Dhamma Workers towards the Buddhist Meditation programme are positive and in favour of the Buddhist Ānāpāna Meditation.

Discussions of the findings

1. It was found that the Buddhist Ānāpāna Meditation Programme is effective in improving the concentration and memory of the students.
2. It was found that the Buddhist Ānāpāna Meditation Programme is effective in improving the academic achievement of the students.
3. Opinions of the Director, Teachers, students, parents, Children Course Teachers and Dhamma Workers towards the Buddhist Meditation programme are positive and in favour of the Buddhist Ānāpāna Meditation.

The results of this research study are supported by the following research findings.

1. **Radi Raja.** (2003). *A study of Vipassanā Meditation on Adolescent Behaviour.*

- 1) The Meditation could be effectively taught to adolescents and it had a great impact on the group under investigation.
- 2) The group changed significantly in terms of social isolation as the conditions progressed. Towards the end of the six months period, a group that was lonely and less comfortable with each other and less distant from one another experienced less isolation in social situations.

2. **Vo Van Ba.** (2006). *A Study of the Influence of Ānāpāna Meditation on Children's Moral Behaviour and Academic Achievement.*

Drastic improvement in children's academic performance due to Ānāpāna Meditation was also realized.

3. **Suhas Kamble.** (1996). *A Study of the effectiveness of Ānāpāna Meditation on Children's Concentration and Memory.*

- 1) It was observed that there was a significant improvement in the attentiveness of the children.
- 2) It was also noted that there was a significant improvement in short term and long term memory of the children.

Conclusions

After analyzing all the data, the researcher came to the following conclusions:-

1. The Buddhist Ānāpāna Meditation Programme has proved to be effective in improving the Concentration and Memory of the students.
2. The Buddhist Ānāpāna Meditation Programme is effective in improving the academic achievement score of the experimental group students.
3. The Head Master, Teachers, Students, Parents, Children Course Teachers and Dhamma Workers have a positive approach regarding the Buddhist Ānāpāna Meditation Programme.

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