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Psychophysiological yogic effects of punishments

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Abstract

Ancient India is known to the world for its brilliant education system 'gurukul system'. In which, the students gain knowledge from the teachers or 'gurus' and also live with them as a family, to acquaint and to learn all the rituals and habits still they complete their education. As a reward of complete package for their futuristic life. The main motto of the gurukul system was to foster highly critical thinking, a versatile mindly activities with In-depth practical knowledge, as was experienced by the gurus. The total education system was oral and gurus transfer their knowledge and skill power to the capable students. Students have to follow certain rules and regulation of the gurukula's to become highly focused towards their teaching/learning. All extra co-curricular activities had to be done by them so that teaching become very practical. This discipline of gurukul can be understood as the steps of astangyog of maharshi Patanjali i.e yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharna, dhyana, samadhi. Focused mind and mindfull activities all come from these physical asanas which we call yoga and the concentration came from mindfull meditation. so in short we can say that yoga and meditation are the main stream of the gurukul. In gurukul students were trained through yoga and meditation and various other means. The students were also punished for not performing well in their studies. But the rationale behind the punishment is very interesting. This research aims to study the positive impact of punishments on the students, both mentally and physically, from the yogic perspective. Elizabeth Fry once said, "Punishment is not for revenge, but to lessen crime and reform the criminal".

Positive effects of punishments: According to kathopnishad- when maharshi vajashravasa, gave his son nachiketa to yamraj in a fit of anger, it ultimately changed the whole life of nachiketa. He learned self- knowledge, the knowledge of atma and brahma, from lord yama /dharma raj. So we can say that Punishment and reward go hand in hand and exist parallel in life. When someone is punished by their beloved, It's for their own good and betterment. Such punishments serves as life changing points and does the grooming for the future. These punishment reward the pupil multiple times in the future. There are various theories to support the fact that punishments played a vital role in the overall development of the students, it increases the academic achievements of the student and is of significant importance in both the teaching and learning process. One of them is discussed below: Thorndike's theory according to his theory, rewards are more liked or wanted by people than punishment, but in reality punishments serves to be more fruitful to a person as it reinforces balance of body and mind. A person when is punished for committing a mistake, makes sures that he does not repeat the same mistake and the punishment all over again. Whenever he steps into doing the same mistake his mind send alerts by reminding him about the punishment that lies ahead.

Now according to this theory, different punishment impacts differently on our neural pathways. When a subject learns by the punishments, the dendrites of neurons sends electric signals and makes a memory circuit. While repeating, the skill circuitry gets very strong, and learning becomes faster. So we can say punishments works on mental as well as physical level too. Rewards serves as a short term memory while punishments are long term memory.

- The particular posture given as a punishment increases the blood flow in the memory cells of the brain. it also synchronizes the left and right sides of the brain. It improves the overall functioning, promotes calmness, stimulates neural pathways via acupressure points in the earlobes, sharpens intelligence, and also helps those with autism, Asperger's syndrome, learning difficulties, and behavioral problems.
- It was used to create discipline in students. Maharshi Patanjali mentioned in his book ' Patanjali yoga sutra ' - 'atha yoga anushasanam' 1\1

That is yog is anushasanam i.e, discipline so the research aims to study the benefits of different types of punishments like

- Rooster punishments.
- Stand with hands up.
- Placing a pencil between the index and middle finger and pressing both fingers.
- Balancing book on the head for a long period.
- Standing under the direct sun.
- Squats, etc.

Keywords: Teacher, student, punishment, yogic benefit of punishments

Introduction

India is a land of wonder, it was and it will be. The education system of ancient times was regarded as a source of the knowledge, traditions, and practices that guided and encouraged humanity. In ancient India, both formal and informal ways of education existed. Indigenous education was imparted at home, in temples, pathshalas, and gurukuls.

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Teaching was largely oral and students remembered what was taught in the class. And for weak students or students who have been caught cheating or doing something wrong a strong system of punishment was developed so that students don't recommit their mistakes. These punishments helped them, made them mentally and physically powerful, and increased their academic achievements.

Different punishments and their benefits

1. Squats

[Uthak baithak]: - it is the most common punishment in school. Malasana and uttkatasana pose a yogi's squat. In it, you utilize the complete range of motion of the legs by bending the knees fully until the pelvis is resting at the back of the heels. It gives an equal gain of strength and muscle mass. This posture targets the glutes, hamstrings, calves, quadriceps core as well as the shoulders. As a yogic effect of this punishment all benefits of utkat asana like stamina, increase the heart rate, stimulating the circulatory and metabolic system, stimulates the abdominal organs and diaphragm. It benefitted students body and increase lungs efficiency.

2. Rooster punishment

It is similar to murgasan, in this posture the blood circulation increases in the face due to which the face becomes glowy and bright. This punishment increases memory power and is also good for the eyes. It helps migraine patients. The posture involves stretching in muscles of the buttocks, thighs, back, and spine, thereby increasing the blood circulation in these regions and removing the disorders.

In this posture Jalandhar bandh will be activate which awakens the inner energy centres especially the vishuddhi chakra. It improves the concentration power of student. It regulates thyroid glands function. Thyroid gland present at the front of the neck in butterfly shape. as we know thyroid gland known as vital hormone gland. It regulate metabolism of the body and also growth of the whole body depend on this gland. When we are doing more energetic work it releases more thyroxin hormone as per the requirement of the body. so by these all reasons this punishment is very good for health of students.

3. Stand with hands up

It is similar to ' tad asana in yoga. this helps to increase the

body balance, increases core strength, improves digestion, improves coordination, etc. it also strengthens the legs, back, hips, and tones the core muscles.

4. Standing under sun light

Sunlight is essential to every living kind on earth. it has various health benefits like an increase in the production of Vitamin D, stronger bones, lowering blood pressure, preventing various diseases, and promoting good mental health. the direct consumption of sunlight reduces the risk of type 2 diabetes, boosts immunity, reduces cancer risk, improves your mood, better periods of sleep, reduces stress, maintains strong and healthy bones, minimizes weight gaining, etc. it has proven to help a person with depression and anxiety. Sunlight is the key to a healthier and longer life. One should at least send sometimes daytime directly under the sun on a daily basis.

5. Balancing a book on head, pressure points

The balancing of a book on the head primarily improved the postural control when visual cues were available. the improvement consisted of a change into a more stable position and a reduction of the smooth corrective body movements in the overall stance.

6. Meeting points

Found in a slight hollow on the crown of the head between the cranial bones. It follows a line from the back of your ears to the top of your head. Pressure can help relieve headaches and improve memory and concentration. From the perspective of yoga putting a book on the head puts pressure on the shahastrar- chakra and activate it, which is very important for shodhak to achieve their goal 'samadhi'.

7. Twisting ears

Reflexology a system of massage used to relieve tension and treat illness, based on the theory that there are reflex points on the feet, hands, and head linked to every part of the body. When the earlobes are pressed as a part of the punishment, the ear reflex point connects with every body part, organ and gland and stimulates them. There are points for anti-aggression, anti-depression, lowering of stress. we can say each ear is a map of the entire body. Ears are very sensitive and full of nerve endings (over 500) making them an effective area to treat reflexology.

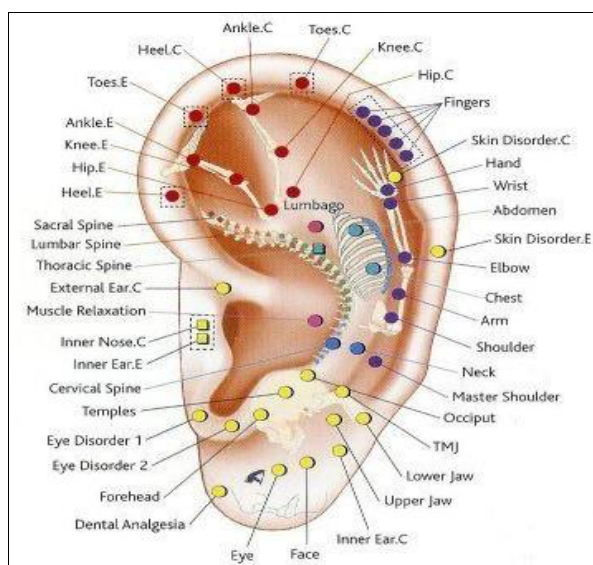


Fig 1: Musculoskeletal points

8. Pressing tip of finger

Pressing the fingertips might give physical pain for a few seconds but it is a lot more fruitful for the students. There are various pressure points that serve different purposes. For an example: pressing the thumb tip tames stomach ache, cures anxiety, depression, nervousness, and various other psychological dysfunction; pressing the tip of the index finger ensures proper functioning of bladder and kidney, induces calmness, stimulates excretion of happy hormones by endocrine glands; pressing middle finger maintains and improves cardiovascular health, subsides feeling of anger, improves vision and promotes healthy mental functioning; pressing tip of ring finger it lifts the feelings of sorrow and solves breathing issues; pressing tip of little finger lifts the feeling of loneliness, anxiety and tension. This technique of improving health through pressure points was introduced by Jin Shin Jyutsu. It is an ancient Japanese art form that helps keeping the body and mind in a state of complete harmony.



Fig 2: Pressing tip of finger

Punishments constituted important part of the ancient education system and was very vital for the holistic development of students. It toned the personality of students. It continues to exist even today, no part of this world today is left untouched by this mechanism in one form or the other, because it is considered as a vital tool to reform the students and to make them future ready.

In the words of B. F. Skinner “a person who has been punished is not thereby simply less inclined to behave in a given way; at best, he learns how to avoid punishments”.

Objectives

The motive of my research is to explain the purity and truthfulness of the relationship between a mentor and their students. In this relationship mentors are like partners to their students, they are always there to empower students to become autonomous learners and agents of their change. Under this relationship, even when the mentor punishes his students for their own development only. To make them strong, physically, mentally, and emotionally. Therefore punishing is also to make their complete well-being.

When a mentor punishes his pupils they teach them discipline and the difference between right and wrong, in many ways. There are many benefits accordingly. According to yoga punishment postures have existed from 100's of centuries and are still followed by mentors to teach their students a lesson.

The yoga specialist says that the punishment postures cause many changes that are very beneficial hormonally, which increases blood circulation to the brain as well as the thyroid gland as these postures cause high activation of all the endocrine glands of the body.

Discussion

A true mentor is one who sees their students with equal vision and is impartial. Their only goal is to develop the students all round and make them rich in personality.

According to Shri Ramakrishna Param Hans, “only God is the guru of the whole world”. The student gets the vision of the first guru before actually having them. This is known as *ishta-darshan*. Then is the guru who gives the shishya the vision of the presiding deity and gradually merges himself into that '*ishta-dev*'.

Guru is like a mediator who mines the seeker (shishya) with the Ishwar. The gurus are like *vaidyas*, *acharyas*. They are also of three types - *uttam*, *madhyam* and *adhom*.

The *vaidya*, who leaves just after seeing the patient's pulse, tells the medicine and goes away saying 'take this medicine', does not take any information about whether the patient has taken the medicine or not, is an *adhamvaidya*. Similarly some *acharya* only preach, they do not keep any information about whether the students are following them or not. *Vaidyas* of second category does not go away by merely asking the patient to take the medicine, but if the patient is not willing to take the medicine then tries to explain him in different ways. He becomes a middle class doctor. Similarly, the *acharyas* who repeatedly explain to the disciplines with love for their benefit, so that they can understand his teachings and follow them accordingly, they become middle class *acharyas*.

The last category and the best doctor are those who if the patient does not take the medicines casually, are ready to come down to force him to take it. Similarly the best class teacher use force, if necessary, to bring the discipline to the right path.

Conclusion

The role of guru is of utmost importance in the life of students. He has the ability to alter the life of his discipline. He reforms them through various ways, with one of the most powerful and reformist tool being that of punishments. Tough punishments were sentenced so that students can avoid repeating the same mistake in the future and also to learn from their mistakes. The punishments were never meant to harm the students, even if it caused physical pain for a short span of time, it ultimately made them stronger and smarter. As Dr S. Radhakrishnan says “the end product of education should be a free creative man, who can battle against historical circumstances and adversities of nature”. The sole purpose of punishments remains to correct the wrongs of the student. If explained in scientific terms – the punishments affect the mental system. Our automatic nervous system comprises two parts- the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system. The sympathetic nervous system activates the fight or flight response during a threat or perceived danger, and the parasympathetic nervous system restores the body to a state of calm. Punishments work in a way that when a person is about to repeat a mistake that he has been punished for once, his sympathetic nervous system will get triggered and alert him from committing the mistake again. Also punishments were also given to improve the focus of the student as it stimulates various glands that we studied in detail in this research work.

Teachers and mentor play such crucial role in one's life that they are compared with the divinity and the relationship between student and teacher is seen as sacred, truthful and pure. This can be connoted by the famous saying 'gurur brahma, gurur Vishnu, gurudevo maheshwaraha, guru saakshaat parabrahma, tasmai Sri Guru Venamaha.

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