CHAPTER-II

Review of Literature
CHAPTER-II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of literature in any field forms the foundation upon which all future work will be built. It implies locating, reading, and evaluating reports of research, as well as, reports of causal observation and opinion that are related to the researcher’s planned thesis. A systematic literature review has many benefits:

- It gives insight and information of the field under study.
- It projects and generates new ideas for future research.
- It also provides an opportunity to compare different aspects and characteristics of the research problem.
- It helps to conceptualize better different aspects of the study to be planned.
- It also gives an insight about the theoretical foundation of the study.

Fleischman (1999) conducted a number of studies which have been carried out to investigate the effects of vipassanā on health. Both clinical and traditional literature suggests that vipassanā “increases self-awareness, promotes integration of subjective experience, and facilitates acceptance and tolerance to sufficiently reduce physical and psychological distress”.

This study focuses on the person who practice vipassanā meditation and the person who do not practice vipassanā meditation. Numerous research studies helped to provide the necessary framework. Below, a brief review of the general researches on meditation is followed by the studies conducted on the various aspects of the effectiveness of vipassanā meditation on health:

- The effect of vipassanā meditation on physical health
- The effect of vipassanā meditation on psychological health
- The effect of vipassanā meditation on social health
I. The Effect of Vipassanā Meditation on Physical Health

It should be very clear that vipassanā is not for curing illness. Vipassanā meditation is a science to experience the reality about oneself, culminating in the realization of Absolute Truth, which is beyond mental-material phenomena. It is a process of purification of the mind. As the mind is cleansed of defilements, various somatic or bodily manifestations of disease, due to defilements in the psyche, disappear or are alleviated as a by-product. Below are the effects of vipassanā meditation on physical health as reflected in pertinent literature.

Some of the physiological and biochemical measurements on Vipassanā meditators support the obvious hypothesis of built-in relaxation. Udupa, Singh, Dwivedi, Pandey, and Rai, (1975) found an increase in the R.B.C. acetylcholine, R.B.C. cholinesterase, plasma catecholamines and plasma histamines, and a decrease in the plasma cortisol, urinary corticoids and urinary nitrogen, indicating that the meditators were physically stable and in a more restful state, while mentally, they were more active and in a state of increased awareness.

A study by Varandani (1978) on effects of Vipassana Meditation on health with observations as follows: There are 16 persons, one of them is female and 15 are males. Their age varied from 21 to 53 years: 9 persons are between 21-30 years; 2 between 31-40 years and 3 between 41 and 50 years and 2 between 51 to 53 years.

Before the course of vipassanā meditation, systolic blood pressure varied between: 120 to 162 mm Hg. (average 135), 3 persons being on the higher side. Diastolic blood pressure various between 70 to 90 mm Hg, 4 persons on their higher side.

After the course of vipassanā meditation, the systolic blood pressure was observed between 108 to 160 mm Hg - all of them showing a reduction except 2 who maintained the same levels. The reduction was from 0 to 26mm Hg. Diastolic pressure was brought down between 60 to 82 mm Hg except in two where it was raised from 76 to 90 mm Hg and 70 to 80 mm Hg respectively. Thus, one can conclude that it has a regulatory effect on blood pressure in most of the cases.
On pulse, varied between 64 to 83/min. before the course and it was brought down to 57-87; lowered in 13 out of 16 while raised in 3 persons. Thus 81% showed constant lowering of pulse rate - although one can not account for the raised level in 3 individuals as one cannot measure the factor of concentration and, sincerity of purpose, which may show variable results.

From these data it was concluded that vipassanā has a definite effect on these physiological parameters i.e. Pulse, Blood Pressure levels. It not only lowers the levels constantly, but rather has a regulatory effect that even brings the lowered levels to that of the normal range.

A study by Vyas (1978) on effects of vipassanā Meditation on the prisoners: The Weight, Blood Pressure etc, of each prisoner was examined before and after the camp so that the impact of meditation on their health and metal state may be ascertained. After the camp concluded, the prisoners were contacted to narrate their experiences and the impact of the camp. The important points mentioned by prisoners are as under:

- There was a remarkable improvement in the health of the prisoners. Those who suffered from various ailments like high blood-pressure, stomach disorder, headache etc. were normal.

- Prisoners, addicted to smoking, gave it up.

Piyadassi (1978) quoted that researches made at Harvard University, Cambridge, U.S.A. revealed hundreds of youth who took L.S.D and smoked Pot, abstained from using them after several months of meditation.

The studies of Kabat-Zinn and Burney (1981); Kabat-Zinn (1982); Kabat-Zinn, Lipworth, Sellers, Brew, and Burney (1984) that vipassanā has been proved to be of value in relieving pain, by reducing the experience of suffering via cognitive reappraisal in chronic pain patients, who had not improved with traditional medical care.

Studies by Hammersley and Cregan (1986), from the "Start Again" drug therapy center in Zurich, Switzerland and from "Cyrenian House" drug therapy
center in Perth, Australia demonstrate that Vipassana has been a useful companion to other drug related therapies. They report that Vipassana has assisted drug addicts to conquer their addiction to hard drugs, increase their 'life-practical autonomy', reduce and prevent relapses, and develop new perspectives and strategies towards a sober life. These two addiction therapy centers established in 1982 and 1992 respectively, have worked out an effective therapeutic programme incorporating Vipassana, wherein the addicts are counseled and taught anāpāna while they are with the programme (in-house). The addicts are prepared and motivated to pass through a regular ten-day vipassanā course (externally organized); they are supported and counseled after their vipassanā course to ensure that they keep working with the technique properly and regularly. Nearly all the staff members of these centers are meditators and many are ex-addicts too, who with their vipassanā experience and its applied practice in their daily life, serve as effective therapists and excellent role models. Individuals who incorporate this technique into their daily life are found to become highly resistant to threats to their sobriety.

Vipassana Research Institute (1990) found that a good response has been observed in rehabilitating alcohol and drug dependants with Vipassana as it tackles 'craving' which is the root cause of all addiction.

A studies by Fleischman (1991) that healing and helping professionals belonging to diverse disciplines like the Naturopaths, Yoga therapists, Homoeopaths, Allopaths and others, have readily accepted vipassanā as it is free from dogma, experientially based and focused on human suffering and relief.

Studies conducted at the Navjivan Nature Cure Center in Gujarat, India examined patients who suffered from asthma, ulcerative colitis, hyper-acidity, hypertension, peptic ulcer, diabetes, renal failure, muscular atrophy. Sanghvi (1994) reports that his patients who attended vipassanā courses demonstrated many positive signs:

- Meditation hastens the healing process,
- The patient’s capacity to endure suffering increases,
Increase in equanimity reduces the agony of incurable patients in the face of imminent death,

Meditation changes the total outlook towards life and illness,

In most cases, the role of mind in the genesis of disease becomes evident,

Patients suffering from many types of incurable diseases were relieved beyond their expectations.

Numerous cases were reported by Vipassana Research Institute (1995) are available of meditators who suffer from excruciating pain due to terminal cancer or other diseases, yet stay calm and peaceful, not permitting the physical pain to become a 'mental' pain.

Uehara, Miyazaki, Kanase, Sugano and Toyo-Oka (1996) reported that blood pressure (BP) is more likely to be determined by BMI in the individuals with a genetic predisposition to hypertension.

Suedsuang, Chentanez, and Veluvan (1991); Telles, Nagarathna, and Nagendra, (1998) conducted a study that various forms of meditation techniques have been reported to be effective in reducing blood pressure and associated cardiovascular indices of hypertension.

Pronk, Tand, and Connor (1999) reported that high body mass index (BMI), low physical fitness and great willingness to communicate were directly and significantly associated with higher health care costs.

Savla (2002) conducted a study on a man with a typical case of heart-attack started meditating. He was very restless and in severe agony, but kept on trying for about two days without giving up. After that, the symptoms started subsiding and the mind could remain with the breath, which was his object of concentration. Experts examined him on the fourth day, and an ECG showed an attack of coronary thrombosis, on physical examination, the Cardiologist said no medicine was necessary. Repeated check-ups were made by various cardiologists, and ECGs were done every three months. All gave the same result as the first. He fully recovered after a six-month rest and was advised to forget about the attack. He did not have to
take any medicines, and could lead a life as he had lived prior to the attack, doing his normal work.

Bovet, Ross and Gervasoni (2002) found that socioeconomic status was associated inversely with BP and directly with BMI. BMI was associated positively with BP and inversely with smoking.

Savla (2002) conducted a case of unknown aetiology, a middle-aged male, a good meditator, developed loss of muscle power. Experts diagnosed it as a progressive, crippling, paralysing disease. After two months of treatment and six months of rest, full recovery took place. He continued to meditate during the illness. Experts then said no medication was necessary and he could live a normal life.

Savla (2002) also conducted a study on a woman of about seventy, well established in vipassanā meditation and practising more than two hours daily, experienced severe pain in the chest and other symptoms. The clinical diagnosis was heart attack, and this was confirmed by ECG as myocardinal infarction. The pain was such that she felt that her life was threatened, that death was near. By practicing Vipassana meditation, the death-heralding pain of a heart attack, the unpleasant sensation was made a tool to come out of suffering successfully.

Williams (2003) conducted a case of Christa Wynn – Williams: Before her first course she suffered from frequent headaches, significantly high blood pressure and some menopausal symptoms. Since beginning to practise vipassanā meditation this has changed. She has not taken any analgesics, the headaches have decreased and blood pressure is normal. The menopausal symptoms which she experienced as troublesome before (insomnia and mood changes) have eased or trouble her less. She find the daily practice of meditation very helpful in coping with the changes she is going through at present, enabling her to maintain or regain a sense of balance more easily than before and to act with more decisiveness.

Falkner, Giding and Ramirez (2006) found that with increasing BMI status there was a significant increase in both systolic blood pressure and diastolic blood pressure.
In this way, it has been demonstrated that vipassanā meditation has significant role in creating relief in the varied kind of physical problem of different group of people.

II. The Effect of Vipassanā Meditation on Psychological Health

Vipassanā is a scientific method to purify the mind, by observation of the interaction between mind and matter by meditators within themselves. All the benefits seen in a Vipassanā meditator are the direct results of a pure mind and are proportionate to the degree of purity.

Many persons with mental disorders have undergone Vipassanā courses to date. Special considerations given to such persons include: prior preparation in certain cases, accompaniment by a family member during the course, relaxation of meditation timings, and extra supervision by the course guide. A ten-day vipassanā meditation course is only a beginning for the eradication of the mental defilements in the individual. It is absolutely essential for the meditator to continue his or her daily practice even after the course and to sit follow-up courses. If the person continues to do this, there is no doubt that sooner rather than later the mental defilements will get reduced, thereby causing the individual's mental disorder to show marked improvement.

Kocher (1972) reported a significant reduction in anxiety level and general hostility in group of forty meditation performers.

Schwartz (1973) on the basis of a comparison between 38 meditators, 50 about to begin meditation and 39 non meditators, found that the meditators reported a general increase in positive mood states, being less stress and leading a more regular life style that the typical American.

Goleman (1973) compared 30 meditators and 30 non meditators in an anxiety arousing situation and found that those who were experienced meditators, responded to threat with less subjective anxiety.

Sinha, Prasad and Sharma, (1976) have reported improved attention span, alertness and emotional stability in the subjects after attending Vipassanā courses.
The results were studied of the vipassana meditation camp by Vidyalankar (1978) at Jaipur Central jail held the first time as follows:

- All the prisoners felt considerably relieved of their mental tensions and felt more contentment and peace than even before.
- Feelings of hatred, envy, jealousy, vengefulness etc, diminished in the prisoners, and were replaced by a general feeling of friendship and goodwill for one another.
- After the end of the camp, when the prisoners resumed their routine of hard labour, productivity in the industries of the jail went up.
- A number of prisoners resolved to lead peaceful and pure lives in the future.

These expressions have been corroborated by the report of the study conducted in University of Rajasthan by Vyas (1978). The important findings of the study are as under:

- While commenting about the change in their attitude or values the report reveals that 42.9% had controlled anger, 46.4% had achieved mental peace and learnt concentration of mind; 28% had developed brotherhood feeling for others and learnt to be generous and kind to them; 16.6% had curbed their feeling of vengeance; 10.7% had developed faith in God; 5.2% had learnt speaking truth; 4.8% had repented for crime; 4.8% had stopped bothering about the past and were concerned only with the present and the future ; 3.6% had learnt adjusting themselves in all situations; and 2.4% thought they would review of mental frustrations.
- 92.8% inmates thought that attitude and behaviour of the people can be changed through meditation. 9.3% inmates described it as very useful in changing the values and attitudes.
- 98.8% inmates recommended these camps to others and all of them expressed their desire to continue this meditation through out their lives.

Two psychologists, Fiebert and Mead (1981), made a study on meditation. They used technique of meditation, concomitant with psychology that helped
students increase their capacity of comprehension following a simple method of observing respiration so that mind is comfortable. After that they started to study, effect on those students who got high marks in exams.

Kutz, Borysenko and Benson (1985) have drawn and advocated the use of a framework, wherein vipassanā and dynamic psychotherapy are integrated. They have discussed the synergistic advantages of the combination, considering the psychobiological nature of meditation, the relaxation response and its use as an effective cognitive technique for the development of self-awareness.

Udupa (1985) reported to have treated 1007 cases of various stress disorders with a combination of the practice of meditation.

Safia, Hanon and Sumboo (1988) conducted a study to show that meditators would manifest a higher quality of life than those who do not meditate. He found that overall adjustment and personality organization was higher amongst those who practiced meditation.

In a long-term prospective study, (Khosla, 1989) reports that vipassanā meditation induced marked benefits in both “normal” and “mental disorder” groups, which were studied in terms of “personality based hardiness”, stress-related physiological symptoms”, and “ways of coping with stress”. By the end of six months of regular vipassanā practice, all the subjects indicated significant improvements in all the psychological parameters like depression, anxiety, coping with stress, personality functioning, etc. Khosla reports that their general complaints about life diminished and the ability to withstand stress increased. These measured improvements were even greater by the end of the follow up study after one year.

Chokhani (1986) and Ayyar (1990) have been using anāpāna meditation (focusing attention on the breath) in neurotic and psychosomatic disorders as a supplementary form of treatment with good clinical response.

Bhamagara (1990); Curry (1990); and Fleischman (1991) conducted a study to show that several therapists have reported using anāpāna (a preparatory step in the training of vipassanā) as a relaxation therapy in clinical practice.
Selvamurthy (1993) found in his study that a whole series of research projects have been conducted in India to determine the beneficial effects of meditation in a subject’s stress management, various cognitive processes, and overall mental health.

Deepak, Manchanda, and Maheswari (1994) reported that continuous meditation can substantially improve the ‘clinico-electroencephalographic’ measures in drug-resistant epileptics.

Chadiramani, Verma, Dhar, and Aggarwal (1994) found that since vipassanā meditation emphasizes both conscious lifestyle changes in the area of morality and deeper psychological analysis, it affects the contents and processes of the mind in fundamental ways. Mild to moderately severe neurotic cases of anxiety, depression, and adjustment problems show complete recover as a result of Vipassana.

Chokhani (1995) found and showed that the clinical utility of Vipassanā is considered to be more in providing a general psychological pattern of positive mental states rather than as a response to any particular presenting problem, which makes it perfect anti-stress remedy and an excellent human potential development method.

Miller, Fletcher and Kabat-Zinn (1995) reported long-term beneficial effects in the treatment of anxiety disorder patients following an intensive but time-limited group stress reduction intervention based on mindfulness meditation.


Abram (1996) also reported that another students attained good results in studying after they practiced meditation.

There are several research reports suggesting the therapeutic utility of vipassanā. Dwivedi (1977), Doshi (1990), Chandiramani (1991) and Fleischman (1986, 1991 and 1999) pointed out the similarities between the principles of vipassanā and psychiatric practice.
Khurana (1996 and 1999) conducted field experiments using ‘Before and After’ designs to find out the effect of vipassana on the Quality of life and Subjective Well Being of under trials in Tihar Jail. She found a slight improvements, but recommended that the study be repeated using a Control Group design.

Phap An (1999) found in his study that Mr. A.W, prisoner at Senegal, in Philippines, said, meditation made him change his attitude and behaviors to officials and other prisoners at this jail. Now, he feels more confident, peace, harmonious. Sincerely speaking, when meditation program, in jail, started, he did not agree. But nowadays, he feels very lucky, and he feels a great regret at his late beginning.

Chaudhary (1999) analyzed the efficiency of vipassana meditation to ameliorate stress and promote reformation among adolescent prisoners. In her study, she reported that both ‘State anxiety’ and ‘trait anxiety’ reduced significantly in vipassana meditators. She also observed that there was a decrease in aggression among the under trial prisoners who had taken the course, and an increase in positive emotions such as hopefulness, self-control, conformity, and compassion.

Chandiramani (2001) reported that a case has also been made to use vipassana as a Consciousness therapy since it helps in exploring the deeper reaches of one's mind and in developing better insight and self-understanding, known to facilitate health and lasting changes in one's life-style.

The effects of vipassana on physical and psychological health were also assessed on a multi-ethnic population in Muscat, Oman. Al-Hussaini, Dorvlo, Antony, Chavan, Dave, Purecha, Al-Rahbi, and Al-Adawi, (2001) examined the subjects’ “Before and After” their Vipassana course. Self-assessments of health-related parameters and physical and psychological symptomatology were collected from them before and immediately after the course. A control group was tested for a similar time interval. The researcher found that immediately after their ten-day training, the vipassana participants assessed themselves significantly higher compared to their levels prior to the course, suggesting that the ten-day course had significantly improved their physical and psychological well
being. The control group did not exhibit such changes. The investigators concluded vipassana meditation might help mitigate psychological and psychosomatic distress.

Khurana, Dhar, and Bedi (2001) conducted a series of scientific studies on the impact of Vipassana on Police personnel at the Police Training College, New Delhi in October, 2001. In their final report submitted to VRI, the investigators reported that the statistical analysis revealed significant improvement in the Job Anxiety level of the police personnel. Majority of the participants felt, after doing the course that their job anxiety had reduced. The Subjective Well Being of the participants increased significantly after attending the vipassana course. The analysis of self-reports and self-assessment also revealed many positive changes experienced by the participants after they attended the vipassana course. The investigators concluded that the overall results of the study were positive and encouraging, suggesting that the adoption of vipassana as part of police training culture and regular practice of vipassana should be encouraged so that the change process initiated after attending a course can be further strengthened.

Khurana and Dhar (2002) conducted a series of five studies and investigated the effect of vipassana on the Quality of Life, Subjective Well Being and Criminal Propensity among inmates of Tihar Jail, Delhi. They conducted the studies using both “Control Group” and ‘Before and After’ experimental designs on the effect of vipassana. They found that vipassana meditation significantly improved Subjective Well Being and reduced Criminal Propensity of inmates of Tihar Jail.

Modak (2002) examined and observed that many students, who practise vipassana regularly, keep reporting that their concentration, memory and ability to grasp the material they read have improved tremendously. One student who had given up his college studies midway and was on tranquillizers is now free of pills. He went back to his studies and has now completed them.

Savla (2002) conducted a study on a middle aged woman was travelling by air, when suddenly the weather became stormy and the plane started wobbling. The passengers were afraid they would die, and started to panic, shouting and crying etc. This woman, a serious meditator, realized the gravity of the situation, but did not
generate feelings of insecurity and started silently meditating. After a while the storm passed away and no-one was hurt. In such an extremely perilous situation, she could maintain inner peace with experience of impermanence and equanimity.

Khosla (2002) showed the case of depression on Mrs. A, a married lady in her mid-40s, and an active member of a religious sect, had been feeling very sad for over three years. The onset was triggered by the accidental death of her father and brother. Initially she became markedly anxious, would weep and feel guilty, saying that she had wasted her life. Over the past two years, she had lost interest in most daily activities, was worried about her teenage children, and had pessimistic thinking and insomnia. After that she practices vipassanā meditation, she sat her first course over a year ago and benefited a lot. Regularly practising at home, after one year, she felt about 90% better, she has never felt so well in the past four years. Her life is totally changed with vipassanā.

Khosla (2002) also conducted the case of anxiety, panic disorder on Mr. B, a 19 year old student, above average academically, studying in first year medical school and staying in the hostel, spent most of the first year roaming with friends, bunking college and seeing movies. As a result, he failed his first year exams. This was a major blow to his self-confidence, as his friends had passed the exams. For over one year, B was anxious, worrying about how to tell his parents the news. He was not able to concentrate on anything or study. He had a heavy head and could not sleep well. He filled out his exam application form twice again, but did not appear. Thinking about the exam or how to tell his parents the truth would give him panic attacks. He consulted a private psychiatrist who gave him an anxiolytic medication which kept him dull and drowsy for most of the day so that he could not study. His friends and seniors also tried to counsel him but, none of their advice helped him become less tense. He realized that he was becoming dependent on the medicine and hence, he was looking for some natural way to solve this problem. B sat his first vipassanā course over one year ago and another one recently. Six months ago he passed his first year exam. He has been on no medicine since his first course. In his own words: His concentration in his studies has improved tremendously thanks to vipassanā. His tensions and sleep problem are back to normal. He is a much happier
person now than ever before. He recommends vipassana to all students who have concentration problems in their studies. The vicious cycle of accumulated mental reactions of aversion to the unpleasant sensations triggered off by the panic attacks was the central theme of this person's problem. As his equanimity increased due to daily practice of vipassana, the anxiety-related defilements automatically decreased to a significant extent.

Hodgson (2003) conducted a survey on New Zealand vipassana students undertaken in 1994. Students who had attended one or more ten-day courses were asked to answer a questionnaire. The completed questionnaires were analysed to examine the impact of the meditation practice over time on many aspects of people’s lives. All categories of personal well-being, including physical health, stress reduction, sense of integrity, motivation, relationships and overall happiness, showed significant improvements. Students’ ability to cope with adversity had markedly increased. Large decreases in the use of alcohol and drugs were recorded.

Vipassana is a technique of self-examination, a scientific method of self-observation that results in total purification of the mind and the highest happiness of full liberation.

III. The Effect of Vipassana Meditation on Social Health

Most of living beings want to make a difference – in relationships, at work, to the well-being of the planet. They have energy, skills and experiences to contribute and there is special satisfaction when their effects bring about good. Often they had like to do more but somehow their actions do not match those fine intentions they have. Political, social and economic problems have always existed but with today’s almost instant communications, they can see just how widespread these are: the frightened refugees vowing revenge, another tainted food scare, the latest corruption scandal. Why even now, they may ask, do these same patterns keep recurring? Why have world organizations like the United Nation and individual governments not been able to deal effectively with problems such as communal tension, poverty, unemployment and abuse of power? Do they ever learn?
Vipassanā offers an alternative approach to solving these problems and the untold misery they cause. Know how and resources are certainly necessary but above all wisdom is required. By applying the benefits of meditation in a practical way, the problems can be tackled at two levels. Ultimately the solution has to be found at the individual level, each of them working on themselves in a sustained campaign to move negativity from their own minds, so that their personal input in different situations is as constructive as possible. Simultaneously they can also operate at the institutional level, encouraging the development of Dhamma principles and corporate, professional, bureaucratic and political organizations. By their own example, meditators sometimes inspire others to change themselves; they can also initiate or add momentum to positive changes, small or large, across the spectrum of society.

In a study at the Rajasthan Police Academy in Jaipur, Sinha, Prasad and Sharma (1976) found improved attention span, alertness and emotional stability in the subjects, who were police officials. There were measurable changes in their behavior and outlook; they attained a clearer perception of their roles and functions and a greater awareness of their duty towards society after practising vipassanā meditation.

Shah (1976); Unnithan and Ahuja (1977) found and showed that several experiments have been conducted in Indian prisons to assess the efficiency of vipassanā over there. In 1975, the master meditation Goenka conducted a course for 120 inmates at the Central Jail in Jaipur, the first such experiment in Indian penal history. This course was followed, in 1976, by a course for senior police officers at the Government Police Academy in Jaipur. In 1977, a second course was held at Jaipur Central Jail. These courses were the subject of several sociological studies conducted by the University of Rajasthan. In 1990, another course was organized in Jaipur Central Jail, in which forty life-term convicts and ten jail officials participated with positive results. In 1991, a course for life-sentence prisoners was held at the Sabarmati Central Jail in Ahmedabad, and was the subject of a research project by the Department of Education, Gujarat Vidyapeeth. The Rajasthan and Gujarat studies indicated definite, positive changes in the attitude and behavior of the participants,
and showed that vipassanā is a positive reform measure, enabling criminals to become wholesome members of society.

Another study by Vyas (1978) on effects of vipassanā meditation on the prisoners as follows.

- The mutual relationship among prisoners became more cordial.
- The working efficiency of the participants improved and there was more production in the Jail Industries.
- All the prisoners experienced that their mind is free from tensions and they have a feeling of peace and satisfaction.
- There was a marked change in the behaviour of the prisoners; prison offices were minimized and the numbers of quarrels among the prisoners were negligible.
- Some of the prisoners while writing their experiences about the camp have narrated the following important points:
  - Their feelings of jealousy have lessened. Mental tensions, ill-will and dreadful dreams are also reduced. They are more confident of themselves and they feel that they will not revert to crime.
  - Some prisoners said that before this camp they were constantly harbouring a feeling of revenge but now their mind is at rest and they are determined to lead good and peaceful life. They no longer feel dull and take more interest in work.
  - Prisoners demanded that they should be given such opportunities at frequent intervals. Prisoners, who were only allowed to hear the discourse, requested that they should also be provided an opportunity to participate in the camp in near future.

Hammersley and Cregan (1986) conducted many studies which have reported positive changes in the behaviour of jail inmates, due to vipassanā meditation.

Ahmad (1988) found and showed that those who engage in a meditation practice often show a higher quality of life than those who do not meditate. He also
found that overall adjustment and personality organization was higher amongst those who practiced meditation.

Master Meditation Goenka (1994) observed that individuals who are developed in Dhamma are bound to have an influence on others. As more and more such meditators come up in society, it will keep on improving. The interactions among people, for example between workers and owners, will be better; therefore the society will feel more peacefull and harmonious.

Dhar (1994) conducted two detailed investigations into the effects of vipassanā on Tihar Jail inmates were undertaken under the aegis of the Department of Psychiatry, AIIMS. In the first study, the dimensions studied were well being, hostility, hope, helplessness, personality, psychopathy, and in the case of psychiatric disorders, anxiety and depression. In another study, the dimensions studied were anomie, attitude towards the law, personality and psychiatric illnesses. Both studies revealed similar results. Immediately after the course, the subjects were found to be less hostile towards their environment and felt less helpless. The psychiatric patients, constituting about 23% of the total subjects, reported improvement in their anxiety and depressive symptoms. Subjects without any psychological symptoms also reported improvement in the form of enhanced well being and a sense of hope for the future.

Their sense of alienation from the mainstream, though unchanged immediately after the course, was found to be lower after three months. The follow-up evaluations at three and six month intervals revealed further improvement in many of these dimensions.

Chandiramani, Verma, Dhar and Agarwal (1994) studied the psychological effects of vipassanā on Tihar Prison inmates and reported significant improvement in parameters like sense of hope and well being. They also observed considerable reduction in neurotic predisposition, hostility, and feelings of helplessness amongst the prisoners who had taken a vipassanā course.
Many private organizations like Surya Foundations, Mahindra and Mahindra, Speed Engineering, Toshniwal Instrumentations, Anand Engineers Pvt. Ltd., etc. are deputing their employees to attend Vipassanā courses.

In a case study of Anand Engineers Pvt. Ltd. (Mumbai), Shah (1994) reports that in the company, having a turnover of five crores (over one million U.S. dollars), it was found that all the directors, members of the senior staff and a majority of clerks and workmen attended vipassanā courses. First, the managing director went for a course, and then the other senior staff followed his example. Others noticed changes at the top, and they decided to attend a vipassanā course. Sixty percent of the employees have attended courses. About half of those have done more than one course. Resultant changes in the organization have been a shift from authority rule to consensus decisions taken at a lower level, from one-upmanship to team spirit and from indecisiveness and insecurity to self motivation in the workforce. The ultimate result was an increase in group efficiency and profits accompanied by improvement in mental health and interpersonal relations. Productivity was improved by 20%.

In another case study, "Productivity and Harmony through Vipassanā, Gupta (1997) reports enhanced industrial productivity and harmony through the practice of vipassanā meditation during the period 1986-1996 in Anand Engineers Pvt. Limited.

- The average increase in the output per employee was 21 percent.
- There were no strikes or any other form of labor unrest in the company.
- Individual employees reported reduction in anger, calmness of mind and greater tolerance as a result of vipassanā meditation.

These factors are bound to translate into higher productivity and harmony for the company.

Singh (1997) found that in the Home Department of the Government of Rajasthan, several key officials who attended vipassanā courses showed improvement in their decision-making capacity and interpersonal relationships

Phap An (1999) found and showed that Mr. Bill Mc.Cuistion, an official of San Quentin jail, in California, after practising meditation, he realized that there are changes in victims’ attitude and behaviour. At first, prisoners feel difficult to sit in
meditation in a group about 20 minutes. But generally, they are acquainted with sitting together, the mutual relationship among prisoners became more cordial, incompatibility is replaced by unity, and vengefulness is replaced by sympathy, loving-kindness.

Phap An (1999) conducted an examining at 48 big cities in America, scientists found that cities have more than 1% population who practise meditation, their number of crimes is lesser 16.6% to the places where there is less than 1% population who practise meditation. These effects proved that meditation helps in changing friendly atmosphere and to enhance their lives’ quality to others.

Phap An (1999) also found the effects of studying of practice in meditation at jails and camps that are mentioned as follows:

- Meditation has power to improve and change their wrong actions and behaviour and maintain good effects after releasing from the jail.
- An interview of 150 prisoners at Folsom in California bringing into effects is meditation diminishes worry, vengefulness, losing sleep, mental tensions and unwholesome actions.
- President Abdou Diouf of Senegal introduced meditation into 31 jails in the whole country. More than 11000 victims and 9000 officials studied technique of meditation. Proportion of reverting to crimes reduces from 905 to 8%.
- Meditation diminishes reverting to crimes. A study of more 100 victims at Massachusetts (MCI) discovered that victims practise meditation, violence and mental tensions reduce more than person waiting for keeping under surveillance and programs of release. Victims who practise meditation have proportion of reverting to crimes reduced from 30% to 35% to other methods
- It is easy to success in work when they come back again in society.

Chandiramani (2000) conducted a multi-method qualitative research, “A Study of the Attitudes of Prison Staff towards Use of Vipassanā Meditation for Behavioral Change within Prison”. This study explored the feelings, interpretations
and the opinions of the prison staff regarding the use of vipassanā meditation in prisons. The investigator visited some prison in India where vipassanā was already being practiced by jail inmates and found that vipassanā was seen by the prison staff as a scientific method, which could be employed without much difficulty and extra cost for bringing about a positive change in prisoners' behavior in different cultural settings. The investigator found that it would be desirable to use vipassanā meditation for behaviour change among prisoners, particularly in treating minor psychiatric problems such as anxiety, depression, adjustment problems, social isolation and other stresses of imprisonment. The investigator also found that about one-third to a half prison population suffered from significant psychiatric problems. The existing mental health resources will continue to be insufficient in the foreseeable future. The option of drug treatment has a major limitation of dependence liability, as many of the prisoners are a high-risk group for addiction. The conventional non-drug treatments (psychosocial therapies) are labour-intensive and would require a large number of mental health professionals. Spiritual practices like vipassanā could fill this gap and has the following advantages:

- The ethico-moral aspects appear quite appropriate for the needs of prisoners.
- It is cheap and practicable because it can be administered to a large number of individuals at one time (a few hundred).
- Vipassanā can have a preventive role as it reduces distress of even normal individuals and sub-clinical population.
- It is a scientific technique free from rituals and dogma.

Khosla (2002) conducted a case of Mr. P, a 22 year-old unmarried well-educated man. He had a problem of showing extremes of emotion, especially angry outbursts which consequently strained all his relationships. He tried to keep himself busy, but whenever he was alone he felt lonely and had to take a drink. This has been his nature since many years. He has tried specially to reduce his anger but in vain. He sometimes felt like ending his life but could not gather courage enough. He was much better for a year when on, combination of lithium and carbamazepine but, when he started to reduce it and stop it, the same complaints started coming again.
His psychiatrist told him he may have to take medicines lifelong and this shook him up. P took two vipassanā courses in the span of five months and has hardly missed a day of practice in the past year, his blaming others stopped. He realized that the cause of his own misery was the constant craving and aversion which made him continuously judge others or himself as all good or all bad. His expectations of others when not fulfilled would cause him to fight with them, break up and then suffer even more. Now his anger and sadness are reduced considerably. Most importantly, he is off medicines. This is just the beginning for him. As their teacher puts it, it is a long journey within, and he is experiencing its benefits.

Craving and aversion to sensations resulting from labelling people and objects as good or bad was the crux of his problem. Alcohol helped in reducing the unpleasant sensations accompanying the feelings of sadness by reducing the level of awareness towards them. Verbal and physical outbursts were merely external manifestations of these mental defilements of frustration, anger, and restlessness. Learning to deal with unpleasant sensations with equanimity has been the major gain so far in this person which has started to change his personality.

A study by Dhar (2002) about the effects of vipassanā meditation showed that all the respondents felt that they had gained something from the camp, with 42% indicating that it had given a new direction to their lives. Nearly all said that they would advise their family members to participate in similar camps at regular centres, and that they were themselves also willing to participate and help in organization of such camps in future. About 90% of them indicated that they would maintain the regularity of their practice and would like to participate in group sittings and one day camps on holidays. More than 90% of the prisoners felt it was very inspiring to see the jail staff and officials – especially their deputy superintendent – meditating along with them and felt that it increased fraternal feelings. This appears quite remarkable in view of the fact that most jail staff did not take the camp seriously. Another remarkable conclusion which emerges from the responses is that after the camp, 48% of the prisoners conceded that they had committed a crime while before the camp only 24% had conceded it.
A report submitted to Vipassana Research Institute (2003) showed that Souhami, a professional woman trying to have an independent life outside of work, is in very high pressure. Before the course, she found it impossible to prioritize, could not judge for herself what was important, did not really know who she was or how stressed out she got until she was actually near the falling point. In vipassanā she found a bridge, the connection between mind and body, intangible emotions with tangible sensations. The connection between who she is and who she want to be. It is just beginning, a small step towards balance.

Social support has been proved to be an important factor in protecting good health and long life. And if one belongs to a strong, healthy family, he has got “an unconditional charter membership in an emotional support group wherever he roam” (Faelten, Diamond, and the Editors of Prevention Magazine, 1988). No one is in a better position to help than his family; no one knows him better. Members of his family can be counted on to provide practical and concrete aid in times of crisis. One family counselor summed it up this way: “The person from a really supportive family does not have to go it alone. That person is part of something bigger – a family that cares enough to let him or her know he or she is okay” (Faelten, Diamond, and the Editors of Prevention Magazine 1988).

Vipassanā meditation is the art of living that helps him to have integration toward others and vice versa.

Having good relationships with other people seems to help his/her resist infection. It seems to protect him/her against disease. It helps protect him against stress, and it makes him healthier physically and mentally. It can even help him live longer.

Truly, no man is an island. Only by surrounding themselves and becoming involved with others can he live the longest, healthiest, happiest life possible.

With this background we may pass on to next chapter dealing with problem and hypotheses of the study.