

Role of integrated Yogic Psychological principles based on Indian thoughts on the behavioral management, particularly through healing by Sattvavajay Chikitsa in collaboration with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Dr. Partha Malakar¹

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, South Calcutta Girls' College, Kolkata, India

Abstract:

Thousands years ago Indian Psychology started to work on Positive Psychology where health was given more importance than the absence of diseases. Among many other healing techniques, the focus of the study was Sattvavajay Chikitsa and to assess what impact it may provide in applying this therapeutic technique in collaboration with the Cognitive Behavior Therapy. Charaka Samhita introduced Sattvavajay Chikitsa with an objective of bringing harmony in life with the society and environment, controlling mind not to get carried away by the objects of the indriya or senses and finally enabling individuals to win over their mind. In collaborating CBT with Sattvavajay Chikitsa, Negative Automatic Thoughts, Dysfunctional assumptions and Core beliefs may be encountered by Dhee, Dhriti and Smriti to enable individuals to uplift their intelligence for Viveka to intervene for controlling their mind not to get carried away towards Anitya and Ahita. Also through such combined technique individual may learn to develop memories that can work in harmony to lead them towards oneness for developing sthitaprajna and tranquility in mind.

Keywords: Indian Psychology, Positive Psychology, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Sattvavajay Chikitsa, Sthitaprajna

Introduction

Generally there are two paths in Psychology, one is Euro American which is actually known as main stream Psychology and another is Asian sub continental which consists of the concepts of their own for India, China and Japan and some other Asian Countries (Kapadia, 2022). Indian Psychology consists of the concepts and activities or practices which had been created thousands years back in the Indian subcontinent (Cornelissen, Misra, & Varma, 2014). Before the development of Positive Psychology, Western Psychological principles used to say about mental health from the perspectives of the mental illness or pathology. Indic Psychology started with what is now known as positive Psychology where health is given more importance rather than the absence of illness in terms of studying our interconnectedness in the nature with the cosmos (Kapadia, 2022). Indic Psychology deals with the Meta theory in which self awareness is the ultimate skills which leads us having the best use of the other skills because the Indian Psychology follows the knowledge of the self through consciousness and joy which is the basis of reality, is the fundamental science in Indian tradition (Cornelissen, Misra, & Varma, 2014). The art of evolving through self awareness is rooted into the consciousness or interconnectedness which is actually the driver of behavior that goes into the below iceberg area to search for the root cause of our suffering and therefore wellbeing can only be achieved holistically by developing the individual's ability to become conscious or interconnected in the nature (Kapadia, 2022). Psychological concepts of self awareness following Indic Psychology may be integrated following Sankhya School, the Philosophy of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Vedānta, Buddhists' view of consciousness, Jainism, Guna and Dosa theories, Yoga Psychology and also many other relevant perspectives (Rao & Paranjpe, 2016). Among all these perspectives Yoga was considered to be the leading one, though Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Vedānta, Buddhism and Jainism made significant contribution to understand human Psychology (Rao & Paranjpe, 2016). Chitta is the storehouse of samskara and therefore practicing Yoga following Patanjali Yoga Sutras may lead to control vṛttis or the fluctuating forms which are coming out of chitta, to control the desires of mind for its proper functioning (Rao & Paranjpe, 2016).

Collaboration of Sattvavajay Chikitsa with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy as a psychotherapeutic approach

Individuals develop schemas through Core beliefs and samskaras and therefore psychotherapy may be provided through some well developed techniques and one of these widely used techniques may be 3 steps Rhythmic Breathing and Sattvavajay Chikitsa in collaboration with CBT (Kapadia, 2022). 3 SRB is an old-

fashioned breathing technique developed thousands years back by Sage Patanjali that helps to calm mind and in body-brain system it provides harmony in physical, mental and emotional health (3srb.org, 2012). With more practice of 3 SRB individuals may able to realize the subtle pause between inhalation and exhalation as well as two thoughts that may lead them to develop peace and control in their life (Kapadia, 2022). According to CBT, psychological distress results from the perception of the individual to an event whereas Sattvavajay Chikitsa in regard to this focuses on the cognition along with the psycho spiritual drivers of behavior (Kapadia, 2022). In Cognitive Behavior Therapy first individuals learn to identify their maladaptive pattern in thoughts and perceptions and also in behaviors and through working on CBT cycle such as Emotions, Thoughts and Behaviors they also learn to replace these with more effective and adaptive thoughts and behaviors by changing their perceptions. This model of CBT cycle is similar to the model Manasa Vacha Karmana as used in Indian Science (Kapadia, 2022). In this psychotherapy through the Guided discovery model individuals learn skills to dispute or challenge their negative automatic thoughts that lead to develop dysfunctional assumptions. Dysfunctional assumptions as well as Negative automatic thoughts results from our faulty samskaras (Core beliefs) which develop from pancha kleshas, inability in respect to tridosa balances, overemphasized with raja and tama gunas and many more issues in regard to the cognitive behavioral aspects of the individuals. Our Buddhi or discriminating intelligence is not able to work properly unless we keep patience to stop the chattering of manas and let our viveka and pragya to act through the intervention of buddhi for challenging the disputations result from self defeating thoughts and finally able to properly activate the functions of manas (Chintya, Vicharya, Uhya, Dhyeya and Sankalpa) for developing healthy lifestyle (Kapadia, 2022). Initial attempt to CBT was achieved through rational emotive therapy which was developed by Albert Ellis in the mid-1950s by developing A-B-C model. In this model A is the activating event, B is the belief about that event and C is the consequences as individuals' reaction to A due to B. Ellis believed that there are some typical irrational thoughts that lead to the dysfunctional ways of thinking and behaving. This model is continued to be used since late 20s to till today (Rice & Robert, 2015). Aron Beck developed cognitive therapy model in 1960 and introduced some changes in the model by Ellis as Beck used core beliefs and deep schemas lead to the dysfunctional ways of thinking and behaving and developing negative feelings (Ibid). Sattvavajay Chikitsa as psychotherapy from Ayurveda which is combination of Ayu means life and Veda means how to live our life and hence Ayurveda indicates that a healthy person needs to have balance in his/her physical, psychological and spiritual life. Sattvavajay was first indicated in Charaka Samhita and in Ayurveda 'Sattva' is one of the qualities of Triguna in individuals and 'Avajaya' means conquest and thus, Sattvavajay indicates the conquest or control of mind (Ch su 11/54). Sattvavajay as defined by Charaka includes Ahita, Artha, and Manonigraha (Ch su 11/54). Kapadia in 2022 stated that Ahita will happen when philosophy of life is not in line with Hitayu which happens when life is in harmony with society and environment and that leads to Sukhayu or life of happiness in which individuals consider wellbeing of the environment before personal happiness. Kapadia (2022) further stated that Artha means those objects which get attracted by the indriya or senses and Manonigraha means winning over the mind. In Sattvavajay Chikitsa individuals are guided by the therapist to gain the Bala or strength to turn his or her mind from going outward and bring it towards Hita instead of Ahita and also Nitya instead of Anitya by using reflective intelligence. Collaborating Cognitive Behavioral Therapy with Sattvavajay Chikitsa, first it is needed to understand the differences between these two disciplines. According to Belaguli and Savitha (2019) the various components of Sattvavajay Chikitsa are Gyan means self knowledge, Vigyan means psychoeducation, Dhairya means patience and will power, Smriti means memory and finally Samadhi means concentration and self-transcendence. Whereas Kapadia in 2022 states that CBT technique involves Assessment, Psychoeducation, Goal setting and planning, practice of strategies and homework and follow-up. In CBT the therapist mainly works on the Negative Automatic Thoughts, Assumptions and Core beliefs. Whereas in Sattvavajay Chikitsa according to Belaguli and Savitha (2019) the therapist mainly works on Dhee, Dhriti and Smriti, in which Dhee means Buddhi that differentiates between Nitya and Anitya as well as Hita and Ahita, Dhriti means sustain, hold and control of mind and senses to move towards Anitya and Ahita by using Dhee, Smriti means memory which is developed by knowledge and experience with the help of both Dhee and Dhriti. To collaborating these two disciplines, in Dhee stage the Negative Automatic Thoughts resulted from activating events may be encountered by discriminating intelligence with the help of Socratic questioning that may result to create viveka (Kapadia, 2022). In Dhriti stage the Dysfunctional assumptions may be encountered with the help of past positive memories that individual's mind and senses are controlled not to move towards Anitya and Ahita and to alter mind towards the present reality (Kapadia, 2022). In Smriti stage the Core or deeply rooted beliefs are being encountered by helping individuals to learn that memories work in harmony and the negatively created disharmony needs to be realized and may be overcome through deep breathing. This process may lead individuals towards oneness that may result in developing sthitaprajna and tranquility leading to replacing distressing memories with good memories (Kapadia, 2022). The belief may be identified by the Sattya and pause in breathing may help to get detached from the belief that may immediately help to replace the belief with more positive thoughts (Kapadia, 2022). Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in collaboration with Sattvavajay Chikitsa will help individuals not only in

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strengthening their coping strategies but also will guide them towards healing their problems through transforming their individual self that may further help to get rid of repetitive pattern of behaviors. This review study has been conducted as Indian Schools of psychotherapy consider healing instead of coping. Because according to them following one or the several psychotherapeutic techniques coping with the particular situation resulted in developing psychological distress does not lead individuals toward the ultimate solution rather again same or several other similar psychosocial issues may further result in developing psychological distress which individuals may again find difficult to deal with. Because following the great Bhagavad Gita sound mental health is achieved by those individuals who are considered to be sthitaprajna which had been elaborated in the second chapter as the Sankhya yoga (Yoga Blog, 2022). Such individuals are those who have complete self control through emotional stability, tranquility in mind, free from desires and with the knowledge of how to become one with the Brahman (Yoga Blog, 2022).

Conclusions

This study concludes that developing healthy life style based on Indic yogic principles such as developing more sattvic qualities, ability to balance characteristics result from one or more dosa/dosas, adhering to the yogic life style based on the principles of Patanjali Yoga sutras may help individuals to control their manas by turning it inward by the use of reflective intelligence so that pragya and viveka to act in guiding their overall function. Thus, practice of Yoga may lead individuals to reach to the 'niruddha' state in which with control they will be able to transcend the sensory processes to achieve self perfection and liberation in thought (Rao & Paranjpe, 2016). Such mechanisms which need to be adopted as a way of life possibly lead individuals towards healing through the process of self transcendence. In support a recent study may be highlighted as conducted by Malakar and Chowdhury (2025) on the college students where they showed that both hatayoga and psychological counseling should be included in higher study as this combined practice helps in reducing test anxiety of the students even though they belong to the lower socioeconomic group. Another recent Indian study conducted by Malakar and Biswas (2023) which in the similar line favored yoga and showed that in comparison to Gym, hatayoga results in more effective health and wellbeing.

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Declaration of Conflicts of interest

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