

# A Study of Meditation and Other Self Development Techniques for Effective Management

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*“Management self development is an issue of prime importance from the effectiveness point of view of management. Meditation and other self-development techniques thus have become relevant needs in the field of management training. The international magazine TIME issue of August 4, 2003, carried cover story devoted to ‘the Science of Meditation’. Application of meditation in the field of management is still in its infancy and not much scientific work has been done in this respect. The paper is based on the doctoral work of the author and covers findings about meditation as a self development technique vis-à-vis other techniques.”*

## 1. Introduction

Self Development and management self development are issues which are fast gaining importance particularly from the effectiveness point of view of management. Meditation and other self-development techniques too, have thus become relevant issues and are becoming more and more popular. Recently, the international magazine TIME brought out an issue (August 4, 2003), which carried cover story and an informative article exclusively devoted to ‘the science of Meditation’. And, The article puts the number of people practicing meditation all over the world, in millions. Application of meditation in the field of management, however, is still in its infancy and not much scientific work has been done from this point of view.

Meditation and other self development techniques and their application for improving managerial effectiveness hence was considered an area ideally suited to carry out a research with specific focus on the self developmental issues. The issue of self-development has two main aspects viz.-

- a) Development of the self as a professional or a human being through some external stimuli
- b) Development by the self of the self as a self-help technique rather than by any external force or stimuli.

More and more corporates have realized that self development is more of an outcome of self motivation and self help rather than of an imposed training and developmental activity thus by the self and of the self.

## 2. The Raison-De-Etre of the Study

The main purpose of undertaking a study of meditation and other self-development techniques for effective management was to make a scientific and rational enquiry in to the subject in the following aspects,

a) What is the level of awareness of managers about meditation and other self-development techniques as also if there really exists a need for such techniques? In addition to assess the need of carrying out a study if such a need is evident thus justifying the why of the study hence defining the raison-de-etre of the same.

b) It was also felt that there was not sufficient material available about self development techniques in the field of management including meditation, hence a need existed for a study that would specifically study these systems from this point of view.

c) The aspects of meditation and its application within the context of improving the managerial effectiveness too, along with other self-development techniques needed to be studied in depth to create a better understanding of their effectiveness in this regard.

## 3. Outline of the Study

The study is divided into the following main parts--

**Meditation and Self-Development – The Management Context** - This is an introduction to the contextual framework of the study and deals with the following main aspects: -

- Historical perspective and background of management development.
- The present day context and requirements.
- Future Scenario and needs.
- The structural design of the study.

**Survey and Review of Literature** - This part describes the approach to secondary data collection, methodology of data collection and classification of the same. Salient features of the literature survey are the survey of contemporary as well as historic literature on the subjects of meditation and self development both in the

western as well as eastern countries, methodology for collection, collation and classification of secondary data and its application in the context of the present study.

### **Scope, Objectives, Hypotheses, Limitations and Research Design of the Study**

This part deals with the purpose, scope and objectives of the study as also giving the details of the context of development of a research model for the study. It also describes methodology and application of statistical techniques for evaluation of data and hypotheses testing. The scope of the present study has been restricted to the applied “management development” context with focus on application of meditation and other self-development techniques for effective management. Accordingly more specific objectives of generating, and collecting data as also to assess the needs were defined. Hypotheses of the study were formulated with these and are stated as below,

- a) Meditation as a self-development technique is the need of Managers at all levels of management and is useful in improving the effectiveness of management.
- b) Evaluation of various techniques of self-development is possible by identifying the need set of managers in this regard.
- c) A model meditation / self development method useful for managers in improving effectiveness is essential and possible to be recommended from the existing techniques or a combination of them.

### **Profiles of the Various Meditation and Other Self Development Systems**

A total of 16 systems were identified as relevant for studies after secondary data survey and analysis. These are as given below: -

- a) Art of Living --- referred as S1
- b) Chinmaya Mission --- referred as S2
- c) Gurutatva Yog --- referred as S3
- d) The Landmark Forum --- referred as Miscellaneous, S12
- e) Iskcon --- referred as S4.
- f) Neuro Linguistic Programming --- not a part of the main survey.
- g) Osho Rajneesh --- not a part of the main survey.
- h) Sahaj Marg (Shree Ramchandra Mission) --- referred as S5.
- i) Sahaj Yog (Srimati Nirmala Devi) --- referred as S6.
- j) Siddha Samadhi Yog (SSY) --- referred as S7.
- k) Silva Mind Control --- not a part of the main survey.
- l) Stephen Covey’s 7 Habits method --- referred as S8.
- m) Vedanta philosophy and other miscellaneous techniques --- referred as S12.
- n) M. Vinod Research Foundation --- referred as S9.
- o) Vipassana --- referred as S10.
- p) Yogoda --- (Ranchi) --- referred as S11.

--Profile of each system has been given in a standard format for easy reference and comparison. Stress has been laid more on the aspects essential from the analysis and evaluation point of view.

## **4. An Integrated Model of Self Development for Effective Management**

This part is devoted to the study of various self-development models presently being offered for the training of managers. It describes and defines the process of self-development, and its application. The main models under study are,

- a) The Management Charter Initiation (U.K.) designed units of managerial competence and the model based on it.
- b) The Gower Model of Management Skills (U.S.A. and U.K.)

For the purpose of quantitative analysis and study the Gower Model was used for the before and after assessment of the sample population. The issue of what constitutes effectiveness and its meaning has been dealt with in detail. In an effort to develop a model of self development based on meditation, its references particularly in the Yogic approach have been studied and the concept of “Yogaha Karmasu Kaushalam”, (a yogi is equally adept at work too) as given in the Bhagavad-Gita propounded as the basis for integrating the western and the eastern concepts. Further, a model is developed with Spiritual and Material development as its two wings thus combining the two approaches of self-development to give an Integrated Model of Self Development. Some of the unique features of this model are integration of the material and the spiritual dimensions of the self development with equal importance to both, the Yogic approach, which demands the highest of the goals for human life and its usefulness both at personal as well as organizational levels. It is felt that spiritual context is the most essential need of all managerial endeavors.

## 5. Comparative Analysis and Findings of the Study

This part deals with the detailed analysis of various surveys and the findings based on these. It is divided in to, analysis of the Pilot survey and findings, analysis of the Need and Awareness survey and findings related to it and lastly the analysis of the main survey and findings thereof.

### Some of the Findings Related to the Pilot Survey are: -

- a) There exists a need for a study in meditation and other self-development techniques and their application in the field of management thus validation of the *raison-de-etre* of this study.
- b) It revealed a good awareness about meditation amongst managers (99.9%) as also their faith in it as a tool for improving managerial effectiveness. Most were willing too, to take up this activity i.e. meditation.

### Salient Findings of the Need and Awareness Survey: -

- a) There is quite high level of awareness of meditation as well as some other techniques (though not so well), of self-development (88%).
- b) Almost all (96%) believe that meditation is useful in improving effectiveness of managers though not clear as to how.
- c) Majority of them believe meditation's usefulness in more than 6 identified areas of managerial functions (62%), while 30% believe its usefulness in all functional areas.
- d) Majority of the randomly selected respondents were postgraduates (68%), followed by graduates (18%) with only 6% undergraduates and 8% doctorates.
- e) Majority of the sample population was from managerial cadre either self employed or in service (88%)
- f) Almost unanimously (99%) the sample managers advocate the training of all managers in meditation and are willing to take up this activity if offered.
- g) The most important finding of this survey is that "Meditation is considered to be the most preferred technique of self development of managers in improving effectiveness in various functional areas of management and are most willing to take it up", thus validating the hypotheses that there exists a need for meditation amongst managers.
- h) The profile of the preferred self-development technique: -

- It should be meditation based, with daily practice of ½ to 1 hour, should be spiritual in nature rather than religious and be scientific and simple involving very few rituals.

### Findings Related to Main Survey and its Analysis.

It is not possible to list all the findings but the salient ones are as given below: -

- a) Meditation and self-development practices are not restricted to only the junior levels of management and there is equal representation of senior and middle level management too.
- b) Education is no bar to belief in meditation or other techniques of self-development and even postgraduates and doctorates are equally involved in their practice.
- c) The practice of self-development techniques is present in all age groups including the young lot (14.2%). The most active group is the middle aged (30-50 years) with 52% population.
- d) The qualitative analysis findings: -
  - i) Highest score (over-all) --- S5 system
  - ii) In commitment to practice 7 systems (S1, S2, S4, S5, S6, S10 and S11) all score 10/10, revealing in good measure the sincerity of the practioners.
  - iii) In Skills Effectiveness ---
    - Self Management --- S5 System
    - People Management --- S2 System
    - Business Management --- S8 System
  - iv) Co-efficient of variance ---
    - Lowest C.V. --- S5 System
    - Highest C.V. --- S12 System
  - v) Final grading of the systems ---
    - Average category --- S12 System
    - High Average - S1, S2, S3, S4, S6, S9, S10 Systems
    - Above Average - S5, S7, S8, S10 Systems
    - There is no system below average and majority of the systems are in the high average and above average categories.

**Before and After Scores Analysis and Comparison.**

Salient findings of this analysis are as given below: -

- a) Highest average before (with R.F.) --- S5 System
- b) Highest average after (with R.F.) --- S5 System
- c) Highest difference before and after --- S8 System
- d) Highest co-efficient of variance (before) --- S4 System
- e) Highest C.V. (After) --- S10 System
- f) Lowest C.V. (Before) --- S6 System
- g) Lowest C.V. (After) --- S6 System

**Hypotheses Testing and Validation.**

In addition to the conclusions, which were quite evident from the findings of the qualitative analysis, additional statistical tests of paired 't' test and 'A' test were carried out for the validation of the hypotheses. The results of the two are given below.

**Paired 't' testing of before and after scores.** This was done by taking a null hypothesis that "the systems have not been effective in improving the effectiveness of managers". However as given at the appendix M, in all the systems, the critical values of 't' were greater than the observed values hence rejecting the null- hypothesis and validating the hypothesis that "the systems had been successful in improving the effectiveness of the managers".

**'A' Test.** Similar to paired 't' test the critical values of 'A' were quite significant hence rejecting the null-hypothesis and validating the hypothesis that the systems were successful in improving the effectiveness of managers after the practice of the system

The hypothesis regarding a model meditation method for managers is also fully validated since an integrated model of self-development has been proposed and systems in above average category have been found to be suitable for practicing this.

**6. Conclusions, Recommendations and Scope for Further Studies.**

Conclusions drawn from the analysis and findings are grouped under three heads, pertaining to scope and objectives pertaining to primary and secondary data and pertaining to analysis.

**Some of the Important Ones are Given Below.**

- a) The objectives and the purpose of the study have been fully achieved in terms of generating quality data both in secondary and primary surveys.
- b) The pilot survey and need and awareness survey reveal a good awareness about meditation as a self-development technique it also reveals a need for the same. Secondary data reveals that most of the literature available on the aspects of self development is from the western countries.
- c) The role of educational institutes and also industrial houses in the field of self-development is not very encouraging.
- d) It can be concluded that meditation is considered as a scientific technique and its practice is present at all levels of management and even amongst educated managers.
- e) Most of the systems studied have shown their effectiveness in improving the managerial effectiveness and can be said to have been successful in this regard.

**Some Recommendations Based on the Study and Analysis.**

- a) It is strongly recommended that meditation be accorded a status of science and recognized as an important discipline of the Yogic sciences at all educational organizations.
- b) More research is warranted considering the importance of this science in the future and its applied role in management needs to be fully researched in depth.
- c) Meditation and Spirituality should become a part of training not only of managers but all academic and professional courses and people specifically trained in the same need to be developed.
- d) The management training needs to be re-structured to make it more value oriented and spirituality and self-development should become the basis of it rather than pure materialistic approach.
- e) The managers of future will have a multiplicity of roles to play, one of them being role models and leaders of humanity. This is a very serious responsibility placed on them. India has a vast spiritual and scientific wealth in the form of Yoga, which could provide the necessary tools for the training of these managers in their new roles.
- f) Many thinkers in the past as well as present have proclaimed India's capacity to become a role model of self as well as societal developmental activities, it is felt that time has come for India to assume

that role and responsibility.

- g) There is hence tremendous scope for further studies in the aspects of meditation as well as the entire yogic sciences and relate them to the modern sciences so as to derive maximum benefit out of them.

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