



HEARTFULNESS REDUCES VENGEFUL ATTITUDE IN STUDENTS

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 27th March, 2021

Received in revised form

15th April, 2021

Accepted 20th May, 2021

Published online 30th June, 2021

Key Words:

Cleaning, Meditation, Pranahuti,
Heartfulness, Revenge,
Motivation.

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Vengeance is a poison for society and for the individual who harbours it. Positive motivation (Benevolence) leads to rewards and negative motivation (Revenge & Avoidance) towards pain. When considering school students, revenge motivation leads to many serious crimes viz, harassment, genocide, etc. Recent studies show the need for students to develop "Socio-Emotional Learning" (SEL). For a health society, students need to shed off Revenge and develop Benevolence Motivation. Aim: This study aimed to understand if the HELP (Heartfulness Experience Life's Potential) program helps to reduce Revenge and Avoidance motivation along with developing Benevolence. Methodology: A prospective observational study was conducted on Junior College Students, willing to participate in the HELP program (n=3084). Participants were asked to fill up a questionnaire, comprising of socio-demographic details and transgression-related interpersonal motivations inventory (TRIM-18) scale. Data was conferred using inferential and descriptive statistics. SPSS version 21, paired "t" test was used to compare the mean between baseline and end-line data. Results: The Analysis depicts that altogether students' Revenge & Avoidance motivation levels have reduced significantly ($p < 0.05$) and their Benevolence motivation level has increased significantly ($p < 0.05$). Conclusion: There are several reasons that can be attributed to these effective results. The Cleaning practice helps remove the emotional baggage, and subsequently, the practice of Heartfulness meditation helps to stabilize one's thinking process. Pranahuti cultivates, positive thinking and reshapes the character and personality of an individual. Hence, we conclude that integrating the HELP program in the school's curriculum might help in the development of a strong and healthy society.

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Citation: Dr. Raja Amarnath, Dr. Jaya Prashanthi, Aiswarya Ravichandran et al. "Heartfulness reduces vengeful attitude in students", 2021. International Journal of Current Research, 13, (06), 17908-17913.

INTRODUCTION

"Before you embark on a journey of revenge, dig two graves" – Confucius

Vengeance is such a powerful negative emotion that can not only destroy the person who holds it but also its adversary counterpart who faces it.

The 'feelings of revenge' when harbored by an individual can cause a catastrophe in society which can adversely affect the Nation¹. Every action originates from a thought backed by intention, which can be called as the "motive". This is obviously connected with the cognitive thinking process of a person, and it influences his/her behavior in one or more ways. There is positive and negative motivation that sets direction towards deterministic action.

Positive motivation leads to rewards and negative motivation results in pain. For example, a “benevolent” attitude guides one to do good things which leads to positive action; whereas a “revengeful” attitude shows the way to destruction (harassment, genocide, atrocities); and likewise an “avoidance” attitude (ignoring / avoiding the situation/person) leads to loneliness, anxiety and depression. Having the right kind of positive attitudes and motivations is imperative for the holistic well-being of a student². Typically, schools play a vital role in developing the intellectual quotient of students by focusing on their academic skills. However, more and more research are showing the need for students to develop in the space of “Socio-Emotional Learning” (SEL)^{3, 4, 5}. Although SEL has been conceptualized in various ways, it can broadly be understood as the processes through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to manage their emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions⁶. More specifically, Roger Weissberg and colleagues have identified a set of five core clusters of social and emotional competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making⁵. HELP - Heartfulness Experience Life's Potential is a 16-session certificate course for students on life-skills and holistic well-being through Heartfulness practices for self-development and inner-excellence. These competencies are thought to facilitate students' academic performance, positive social behaviors, and social relationships during the school years; reduce behavior problems and psychological distress, and help to prepare young people to succeed in college, work, family, and society. Effective mental and emotional health promotion in schools has been linked to increase in academic achievement and competence; decrease in incidence of problem behaviors⁷. Schools are the place where the students are taught to handle life which in turn influences their thought process. Research shows that schools with mental and emotional health programs have considerable number of positive outcomes for students, including improved graduation rates, better academic performance and an increased connectedness to school⁸. It is evident that schools are having an important role to boost up students' motivation level in a positive way. Positive motivation can be enhanced in a student by setting a goal and pursuing for it, through rewards, motivational speech, etc.⁹. Studies have proved that meditation is one of the tools that can contribute towards the improvement of motivation¹⁰. While the current education system is giving enough focus towards the academic excellence of students, it is equally essential to address the socio-emotional well-being and physical and mental health of students for holistic development and to become well-rounded and balanced individuals. Such an inner development has to be nurtured in a gentle way with the right tools and techniques that allow students to absorb and imbibe essential life-skills through experience and direct perception. The HELP program provides the right combination of skills, tools and practices that are seamlessly integrated into its course content, allowing students to open up their minds and hearts towards a positive and balanced approach to life.

HELP Outcomes:

-) A relaxed and focused mind leading to clarity in thinking
-) A heart-centered approach to learning and understanding
-) Flexibility, resilience and an adaptive nature
-) Heartful communication and the ability to listen, pause and respond

-) Inspired living full of courage and confidence
-) Inner-excellence and self-development

So, we at CIPACA Institute of Research decided to assess the effect of HELP (Heartfulness Experience Life's Potential) program amongst Junior College Students.

METHODOLOGY

Participants: Students of Junior colleges in Andhra Pradesh who were 16-18 years old were taken into the study after taking their consent. This study purposed to observe the pre & post effect of Heartfulness “HELP” Program on the levels of various motivation levels such as Benevolence Motivation (BM), Revenge Motivation (RM) & Avoidance Motivation (AM).

Tools & Data Collection: Prospective observational method was used to conduct the study. Students were asked to fill up a questionnaire which comprised of Socio-demographic details and Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM-18) scale. Before and after the completion of the HELP program, the students were asked to record their response with respect to the questionnaire. Students were not given prior information about the questionnaires to be filled in both the cases.

Data Analysis: Out of 4038 students who participated in the study, 3084 students were taken into statistical analysis & the remaining were excluded from the study, for 437 students provided incomplete responses & 517 did not respond during end-line assessment. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS version 21. Data was conferred using inferential and description statistics in the pattern of counts, percentages and frequencies. Paired “t” test was used to compare the mean between baseline and end-line data of Benevolence, Avoidance & Revenge Motivation levels.

RESULTS

Table 1 depicts the frequencies and percentages that were computed for the students' demographic profiles. Among 3084 students, 48.4% were females and 51.6% were males. Most of them were from Rural areas (59.4%), followed by Urban (20.9%), Sub-urban (10.3%) and Metro (9.4%). More students reported from Nuclear family (81%) system than Joint family (19%). Most of the students were not having any form of physical or mental illnesses (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Students

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Overall	3084	100
Gender		
Female	1494	48.4
Male	1590	51.6
Place of Residency		
Metro	290	9.4
Urban	644	20.9
Sub urban	319	10.3
Rural	1831	59.4
Type of family		
Nuclear	2499	81.0
Joint	585	19.0
Physical illness		
Illness	219	7.1
Without illness	2865	92.9
Mental illness		
Illness	369	12.0
Without illness	2715	88.0

Motivation

Three kinds of motivation levels were assessed from the collected data. They are:

-) Benevolence motivation (BM) - People who are motivated to do good things including forgiving others and having goodwill for them.
-) Avoidance motivation (AM) - Those who stay away from people when they find fault with them.
-) Revenge motivation (RM), is the person who has vengeance in their hearts for others.

Analysis depicts that altogether students' Benevolence motivation level has increased significantly (Table 2) and their avoidance & revenge motivation levels have significantly reduced ($p < 0.05$) (Table 3 & 4). Within sub-group analysis, male students' benevolence motivation level has increased significantly ($m = 20.9 < 21.6$) & at the same time their Avoidance & Revenge motivation level has had significant reduction ($p < 0.05$) (Figure 1 & Table 2 & 3). The same being observed among female students whose Avoidance & Revenge motivation levels have also decreased significantly (Figure 2 & 3).

Table 2. Comparison of pre & post HELP program Benevolence Motivation scores of students

Variables			Paired Differences				T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
			Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
						Lower				Upper
Overall	Pre & Post Benevolence Motivation	-.38846	7.41116	.13345	-.65012	-.12679	-2.911	3083	0.004*	
Gender	Female	Pre & Post	-.13788	7.50582	.19419	-.51880	.24303	-.710	1493	0.478
	Male	Pre & Post	-.62390	7.31564	.18347	-.98376	-.26404	-3.401	1589	0.001*
Place of residency	Metro	Pre & Post	-.35172	7.21593	.42373	-1.18572	.48227	-.830	289	0.407
	Rural	Pre & Post	-.22338	7.33908	.17151	-.55976	.11301	-1.302	1830	0.193
	Sub urban	Pre & Post	-1.8464	7.47900	.41874	-2.67025	-1.02254	-4.409	318	0.000*
	Urban	Pre & Post	-.15217	7.60280	.29959	-.74047	.43612	-.508	643	0.612
Type of family	Joint	Pre & Post	-.23590	7.00678	.28969	-.80487	.33307	-.814	584	0.416
	Nuclear	Pre & Post	-.42417	7.50357	.15010	-.71851	-.12983	-2.826	2498	0.005*
Physical illness	Illness	Pre & Post	.21918	7.45490	.50376	-.77368	1.21203	.435	218	0.664
	Without illness	Pre & Post	-.43490	7.40706	.13838	-.70624	-.16356	-3.143	2864	0.002*
Mental illness	Illness	Pre & Post	-.71274	7.69450	.40056	-1.50041	.07494	-1.779	368	0.076
	Without illness	Pre & Post	-.34438	7.37217	.14149	-.62181	-.06695	-2.434	2714	0.015*

*Significant p value (< 0.05).

Table 3. Comparison of pre & post HELP program Avoidance Motivation scores of students

Variables			Paired Differences				t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
			Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
						Lower				Upper
Overall	Pre & Post Avoidance Motivation	1.37776	7.19306	.12953	1.12379	1.63172	10.637	3083	0.000*	
Gender	Female	Pre & Post	1.24498	7.24762	.18751	.87717	1.61279	6.640	1493	0.000*
	Male	Pre & Post	1.50252	7.14145	.17910	1.15122	1.85381	8.389	1589	0.000*
Place of residency	Metro	Pre & Post	2.29655	7.50790	.44088	1.42881	3.16429	5.209	289	0.000*
	Rural	Pre & Post	1.50792	7.08055	.16547	1.18339	1.83245	9.113	1830	0.000*
	Sub urban	Pre & Post	.42633	7.25155	.40601	-.37247	1.22514	1.050	318	0.294
	Urban	Pre & Post	1.06522	7.28548	.28709	.50147	1.62896	3.710	643	0.000*
Type of family	Joint	Pre & Post	1.34017	7.43088	.30723	.73676	1.94358	4.362	584	0.000*
	Nuclear	Pre & Post	1.38655	7.13774	.14278	1.10657	1.66654	9.711	2498	0.000*
Physical illness	Illness	Pre & Post	2.25114	7.49226	.50628	1.25331	3.24897	4.446	218	0.000*
	Without illness	Pre & Post	1.31099	7.16666	.13389	1.04846	1.57353	9.791	2864	0.000*
Mental illness	Illness	Pre & Post	2.13008	7.54691	.39288	1.35752	2.90265	5.422	368	0.000*
	Without illness	Pre & Post	1.27551	7.13895	.13701	1.00685	1.54416	9.310	2714	0.000*

*Significant p value (< 0.05).

Table 4. Comparison of pre & post HELP program Revenge Motivation scores of students

Variables			Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
			Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
						Lower				Upper
Overall	Pre & Post Revenge Motivation	.85084	4.03019	.07257	.70855	.99314	11.724	3083	0.000*	
Gender	Female	Pre & Post	.66131	4.00424	.10360	.45810	.86452	6.384	1493	0.000*
	Male	Pre & Post	1.02893	4.04760	.10151	.82983	1.22803	10.136	1589	0.000*
Place of residency	Metro	Pre & Post	1.07931	4.05463	.23810	.61069	1.54793	4.533	289	0.000*
	Rural	Pre & Post	.91316	4.01998	.09395	.72891	1.09742	9.720	1830	0.000*
	Sub urban	Pre & Post	.59561	4.08357	.22864	.14578	1.04544	2.605	318	0.010*
	Urban	Pre & Post	.69720	4.01977	.15840	.38616	1.00825	4.402	643	0.000*
Type of family	Joint	Pre & Post	1.06838	4.02587	.16645	.74146	1.39529	6.419	584	0.000*
	Nuclear	Pre & Post	.79992	4.03031	.08062	.64183	.95801	9.922	2498	0.000*
Physical illness	Illness	Pre & Post	.96804	4.21377	.28474	.40684	1.52923	3.400	218	0.001*
	Without illness	Pre & Post	.84188	4.01644	.07504	.69475	.98902	11.220	2864	0.000*
Mental illness	Illness	Pre & Post	.69377	4.17367	.21727	.26651	1.12102	3.193	368	0.002*
	Without illness	Pre & Post	.87219	4.01061	.07697	.72126	1.02312	11.331	2714	0.000*

*Significant p value (< 0.05).

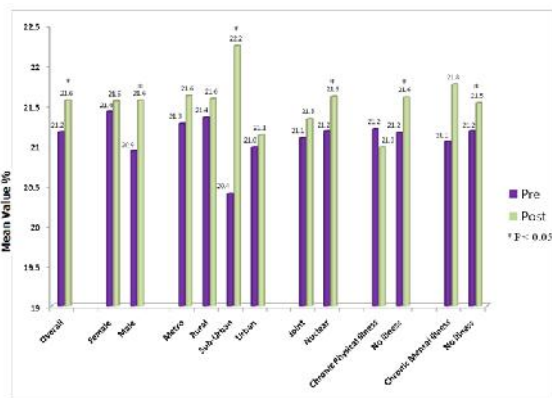


Figure 1. Pre & Post mean values of Benevolence Motivation levels of Students

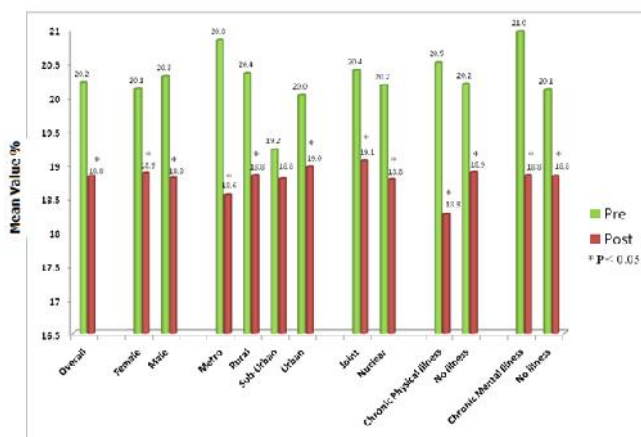


Figure 2. Pre & Post mean values of Avoidance Motivation levels of Students

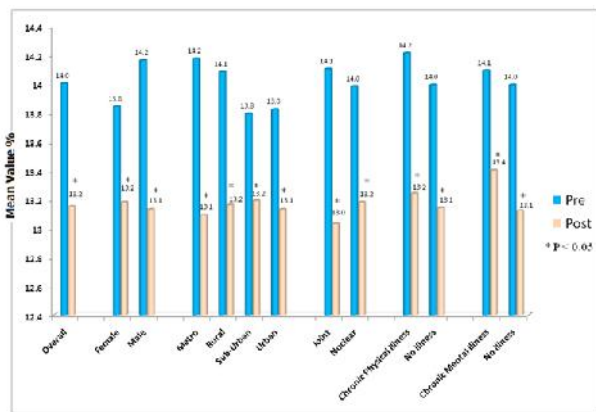


Figure 3. Pre & Post mean values of Revenge Motivation levels of Students

Results showed based on students’ residential placethat there has been a significant improvement in Benevolence Motivation for the students from Sub-urban areas (Figure 1, Table 2) whereas on the other hand, there has been improvement recorded in students hailing from other areas although it has been insignificant. The AM levels have significantly reduced for the students from metro, urban and rural areas (Table 3 & 4) while on other hand; the reduction remained insignificant for the students’ from sub-urbanareas. Irrespective of their residential place, RM levelsin students have reduced significantly (Figure 3 & Table 4).

Students from Nuclear family have displayed significant increase in their BM (Figure 1) & significant reduction in their Avoidance & Revenge Motivation (Figure 2 & 3). Joint family students have reported significant decline in their Avoidance & Revenge Motivation (Table 3 & 4) although the increase in their BM level remained statistically insignificant (Table 2). Students with Chronic Physical & mental illnesses have displayed significant diminution in their Avoidance & Revenge Motivation levels (Table 3 & 4). Similar results were observed in the students without illnesses.

DISCUSSION

Over the decade researchers have proved that meditation improves mental health and reduces stress¹¹. Many studies have also suggested that meditation can be helpful for the treatment of anxiety, addiction, aggression and depression¹⁰. Other studies addressing meditation’s impact on medical illnesses have indicated a possible role for the same to play in the treatment of chronic medical illnesses, including chronic pain, insomnia, and hypertension^{12, 13}. However, very few researchers have tried to explore the link between meditation and motivation¹⁴. So far, no study has explored the relationship between Revenge, Avoidance and Benevolence motivation and meditation in which aspect we have done for the first time. Many serious crimes are motivated by revenge¹⁵ which includes school shootings¹⁶, genocide¹⁷, civil war atrocities¹⁸, homicide-suicide, rape¹⁹ and harassment²⁰. Margolin has figured out that the most essential element of punishment during all stages of human history is the urge of vengeance on the part of the person or persons who suffered from the transgressor of the custom or of the law. Vengeance attitude leads to many serious crimes in society²¹. AM (Avoidance Motivation) has been associated with a wide range of negative psychological consequences, such as performance decrements, resource depletion, and reduced well-being²². Nicole and his team found out that AM has brought depressive behavior among girls²³.

In simple terms, we can observe that Avoidance motivation affects the individual whereas Revenge Motivation harms society. HELP Program has significantly reduced Revenge and Avoidance motivation among students irrespective of gender disparities which will probably help society to have a crime-free generation. In-line with these findings Dr. Raja Amarnath and his team had figured out that meditation helps to reduce harassment which is also an outcome of RM²⁴. Leon has figured out that the place of residence appears to be linked with retaliation or revenge which could lead to the commitment of serious crimes like arson²⁵. In our study we figured out that irrespective of their residential places, (metro, urban, sub-urban and rural), students have decreased their revenge motivation significantly after the intervention of HELP program. Dr. Mustapha in his study has found out that families have positive or negative impact on student's motivation. The student’s self-desire, family support especially financial support and encouragement has positive impact on student²⁶. Researchers observed that students living in Nuclear family (with two parents) had higher motivation and academic achievement than the students from Joint family (with grandparents)²⁷. Similar observations were found in our study. Even though there was an increase of Benevolence motivation among students from Joint family, it has not reached statistical significance.

It could be because of the time which they spend for meditation. In nuclear family, students get ample free time and privacy to spend for themselves which doesn't happen in joint family²⁸. Chronic physical and mental illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension, asthma, depression, stress and anxiety often causes lack of positive motivation in students which leads to poor academic performance²⁹. There is no existing research to establish the connection between chronic diseases, revenge, avoidance and benevolence motivation. In our findings, the revenge and avoidance motivation had reduced significantly for those who were having chronic mental or physical illnesses. Similar results were observed for those who didn't have chronic illnesses. Benevolence motivation had increased significantly for those who are not having chronic illnesses. Even though there was an increased benevolence motivation among the students who had chronic physical or mental illnesses, it has not reached statistical significance. Practicing meditation for longer run might increase their benevolence motivation level significantly.

Conclusion

Motivation is an essential factor which should be sowed and nurtured at the right time for each one of us to have a successful life. Student hood is a very crucial period in everyone's life as this is the time when it is highly vulnerable for cultivating positive as well as negative motivation-influenced by teachers, family, peers & social media. Having a positive motivation such as benevolence motivation brings up a positive and healthy society. Negative motivation such as revenge and avoidance are like weeds among students which should be removed at the early stage of their life. Internal factors such as self-esteem and self-realization, external factors like family, society and schools exert an influence on student's motivation³⁰.

In line with these findings Heartfulness Meditation's HELP program has a positive impact on student's motivation also uprooting the negative motivation. It could be because, the Cleaning practice, an important component of Heartfulness, removes negative thoughts and emotions in a person, subsequently, Heartfulness meditation helps a person to stabilize his thinking process³¹, and consequently, Pranahuti cultivates the positive thinking of a person and reshapes the character and personality of an individual³². Most of the time, when a person gets hurt, it tends to lead him to take revenge or to avoid³³. Heartfulness meditation helps the person to get rid of the past and let go of it³¹ in the initial stage itself through its cleaning process, which helps him/her move away from taking revenge or indulging in avoidance motivation. It also improves the self-esteem of a person thereby contributing to positive motivation. To wind up/bring this article to a closure, it can be best said that HELP Program significantly decreases Revenge and Avoidance Motivation, and shows a greater improvement on the concept of Benevolence Motivation amongst students that can eventually raise a healthy & a positive generation. Integrating HELP program in school's curriculum might help in the holistic development of students and an overall well-being in the society at large.

Funding: There is no funding for this research work

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Key-points

- J Positive motivation (Benevolence) leads to rewards and negative motivation (Revenge & Avoidance) towards pain.
- J Students must develop Positive Motivation in order to cultivate a Healthy Society.
- J HELP Program significantly decreases Negative Motivations (Revenge and Avoidance), and shows a greater improvement on Positive Motivation (Benevolence) amongst students that can eventually raise a healthy & a positive generation.
- J Integrating HELP program in school's curriculum might help in the holistic development of students and an overall well-being in the society at large.

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