

Siddha perspective of lunar cycle influence on psychiatric illness: A hospital based cross sectional study.

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Abstract:

Traditional *Siddha* diagnostic methods and treatment has been followed based on 96 *Thathhuvam* (96 Basic principles). These basic principles cannot be explained by modern scientific tools. So, for the better understanding of the principle through scientific methods, a study was conducted to observe the aggravation of symptoms with respect to phases of lunar cycle as explained by traditional *Siddha* literatures. The *Siddha* text, *Thirumoolar gunavakadam*^[1] has a reference that Psychiatric illness is caused by dryness in *Moolatharam*, which in turn is caused by derangement of *Pitham*. *Amirtha nilai* is bio energy of the body which circulates through the six *Aatharangal*. As the *Amirtha nilai* (Bio energy) of the body is influenced by position of moon, the symptoms of psychiatric illness aggravates on full moon and new moon day. This study was conducted to observe this pattern of aggravation of symptoms during full moon and new moon day. The results of the study proved that some symptoms were observed to be aggravated more on Full moon and New moon days in the selected sample of psychiatric patients.

Key words: Siddha, Psychiatry, Kirigai, Lunar cycle

Introduction:

Siddha system of medicine defines health as wellbeing of both body and mind. This was explained by *Siddhar*, *Thirumoolar* in his *Thirumanthiram*. Treatment of mental illness by *Siddha* system of medicine requires in depth knowledge in basic principles of *Siddha*. Physical or mental illness has been diagnosed and treated by *Siddha* physicians on the basis of identification and correction of any derangement in three *Thodams-Vazhi*, *Azhal*, *Aiyam*. The *Thodams* are formed by proportional constitution of Ten *Naadi* and Ten *Vaayu* which in turn relies on the circulation of bio energy of human body called *Amirtha nilai* in accordance to the lunar cycle through six *Aatharangal* of body. Traditional physicians had explained this theory based on aggravation of symptoms in psychiatric illness on full moon and new moon days. This has to be rechecked following scientific methodologies for better exploration and understanding of *Siddha* basic principles. Observations made in this hospital based cross sectional study explains the *Siddha* perspective of lunar cycle influence on psychiatric illness.

Psychiatry in *Siddha*:

Siddha text by sage *Agathiyar* called, ‘*Maanidar kirukkugal pathinettukkum kirikai nool 64*’^[2] explains in detail about the classification and treatment of Psychiatry in *Siddha*. It classifies psychiatric illness into 18 types. The classification is based on the symptoms of the psychiatric illness.

‘*Aamada Kirigaiathu pathinettumthan*

Appane Manukkalukku pidikkum kaalam

Thaamda thuttakana Pootha menbar

Thappathe ethchiyathai thodarb yenbar

Vemada saasthirangal ariyamattai

Veenaka pulampuvathal varuvathethu

Naamada athanudaya kunangal kandu

Nandraka unakkariya solvom paare’^[2]

These words by *Agathiyar* in *Tamil* can be translated as-

“Human psychiatric illness is classified into 18 types. Illiterate who doesn’t have knowledge on *Siddha* literature will say that it is caused by evil forces and black magic. I have explained in detail about the Psychiatric illness in detail for you to neglect those bemoans.”

Siddha pathophysiology of Psychiatric illness (*Kirigai*):

The cause of any psychiatric illness is dryness in *Moolatharam* caused by derangement of *Pitham* as explained by *Siddha* text, *Thirumoolar Gunavakadam* as

‘*Piranthidum pithanaadi pirandume nirkumagil*

Varandidum moolatharam vaathaiyal madvu seiyum

Karandathu pithanaadi kathippodu thudithu nindral

Irandidum pathiyamthan adaivodu vanthu koodum’

- *Thirumoolar Gunavakadam*

The dryness of *Moolatharam* and derangement of *Naadi* is in turn influenced and aggravated by bio energy called *Amirtha nilai* while it circulates through the 6 *Aatharangal* of human body following the phases of lunar cycle.^[3]

The bio energy of human body (*Udal amirtha nilai*) communicates with energy of universe (*Prapanja amirtha nilai*) through *Pranan* (*Breath*). *Pranan* is influenced by energy of moon. This is the reason for the change in the position of *Amirtha nilai* with accordance to phases of moon. The *Amirtha nilai* remains in

Moolai (Brain) on full moon day and Big toe of left lower limb on New moon day^[3]. So the derangement of *Naadi* which is the basic cause of illness will be on its peak extreme on full moon and new moon day expressed by aggravation in the symptoms of illness.

Cross sectional study:

The cross sectional study was designed to estimate the influence of lunar cycle on psychiatric illness by recording the observations made in questionnaire given to relatives of the hospitalised psychiatric patients and statistical analysis of the data collected.

Materials and methods:

Study enrollment :

In the study, patients reported at the OPD & IPD of Govt Siddha Medical

College Hospital and OPD & IPD, Palayamkottai, Tamilnadu and Department of Psychiatry, Govt Thoothukudi medical college, Thoothukudi, Tamilnadu with the clinical symptoms of Psychiatric disorders were recruited. The study was conducted after getting approval from Institutional ethical committee. After ascertaining the patient's willingness, a written informed consent was obtained from the parent or guardian of the patient. Complete clinical history, complaints and duration, examination findings were recorded in the prescribed proforma in the history and clinical assessment forms separately. Questionnaire was given to each patient recruited and collected.

Number of patients recruited for the study – 40 Patients

Sampling method- Convenience sampling

The following symptoms were taken into account for the observation:

Table 1: Symptoms taken into account with respect to symptoms of 18 *Kirigai* mentioned by *Agathiyar*.

S.No	Symptoms of <i>Kirigai</i>	Symptoms consolidated as in questionnaire
1.	Not remains in his/her residence, Runs for a long distance, Roams around in funeral ground	Running Issues
2.	Does not wear any clothes, Turn clothes in funeral ground.	Dressing Issues
3.	Eats more food, Does not eat at all, Eats garbage, Eats Faecal materials	Eating pattern issues

4.	Drinks more water	Drinking issues
5.	Does not sleep at all	Sleeping issues
6.	Sprays water on his own head, Runs away from water, Dips in water, Stands in rain	Bathing issues
7.	Rolls on ground, Falls on ground suddenly and then rolls on ground, Wakes up suddenly from sleep and then falls down	Rolling issues
8.	Scolds all those who are around, Bites teeth, Bites human beings, Bites infants, Beats the ground with hand	Angry
9.	Shouts aloud, Shouts the name of ghosts	Panic
10.	Cries frequently, Throws stones on others and then cries,	Crying
11.	Spits frothy saliva from mouth, Vomits frequently	Spitting
12.	Closes eyes, Rolls eye ball all around, Shrunken eyes	Eyes
13.	Obeys by bending down body, Dances frequently, Flexes fingers, Make movements with fingers.	Body movements
14.	Obeys all commands given	Obeying commands
15.	Laughs on seeing opposite sex, increased sexual desire	Sexual thoughts

Inclusion criteria:

Patients diagnosed with Psychiatric illness, *Kirigai* by *Siddha* physician

Age above 18

Both Male & Female

Criteria for Exclusion:

Patient having symptoms associated with diagnosis of *Biramai*, *Unmadham*, *Madha azhivu noi*, *Madha noi*, *Moolai valarchi kuraipadu* as mentioned in *Siddha* literature.

STUDY PERIOD :

Total period- 22 months

Recruitment for the study - Upto 18 months

Data entry analysis - 4 Months

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS:

S.No	Symptoms	Total No. Of patients	No.of patients with symptoms aggravated on New moon day	Chi square value of observation	No.of patients with symptoms aggravated on Full moon day	Chi square value of observation	level of significance at 5% (P<0.05).(d.f=1)
1	Running issues	40	3	3.12	1	1	Not significant
2	Dressing issues	40	2	2.05	2	2.05	Not Significant
3	Eating pattern	40	7	7.66	7	7.66	Significant
4	Drinking habit	40	0	0	0	0	Not Significant
5	Sleeping disturbance	40	15	18.46	14	16.96	Highly significant
6	Bathing	40	0	0	0	0	Not Significant
7	Rolling	40	1	1	1	1	Not Significant
8	Angry	40	21	34.27	19	25.44	Highly Significant
9	Panic	40	10	6.42	11	12.74	Significant
10	Lacrimation	40	2	2.05	2	2.05	Not Significant
11	Salivation	40	6	6.48	5	5.32	Significant
12	Eyes	40	5	5.32	4	4.20	Significant
13	Body activities	40	15	18.46	15	18.46	Highly Significant
14	Obeying commands	40	3	3.12	3	3.12	Not Significant
15	Sexual thoughts	40	0	0	0	0	Not Significant

The observed values were recorded and Chi-square test was applied. 5% Level of significance was taken into account for interpretation.

Discussion:

Siddha text of *Agathiyar* classifies Psychiatric illness into 18 types. The diagnosis and treatment has been followed based on *Thodam* theory. The underlying basic principle relies on the bio energy (*Amirtha nilai*) variation during the various phases of lunar cycle. The symptoms of the psychiatric illness were being observed to vary with respect to lunar cycle expressed by aggravation of symptoms. Results of the study reveals that the symptoms such as Angry, Aggressive body movements and Sleep disturbances were more aggravated in the study participants during both Full moon day and New moon day. Aggravation of symptoms related to eating habits, eye ball movements, Salivation issues, were also observed. So, phases of lunar cycle have impact on the human body as mentioned in traditional *Siddha* texts.

References:

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